

**A Cross-Linguistic Study of Requestive Speech Acts in Email
Communication**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of
doctor of philosophy

The University of Leeds
School of Education

Date 2002

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and appropriate credit
has been given where reference has been made to the work of others

Abstract

The study investigated the formulations of requesting strategies in writing by ESL PhD students. The aim was to discover the extent to which their performance converged or differed from that of English L1 participants. Furthermore, in order to account for the ESL participants' possible differential performance from that of native speakers of British English, the study also examined how the candidates' formulations related to their perceptions of two controlled contextual constraints, namely, status and distance. Data for this study were obtained from three groups including Farsi L1, ESL, and English L1 participants.

The main research instrument was a set of four discourse production tasks. The tasks, which comprised prompts depicting four problem situations in which the contextual constraints of status and distance were systematically varied, were designed to elicit the speech act of requesting. In addition to the first instrument, a metapragmatic questionnaire was also constructed to assess the cross-cultural suitability of the situations, and to further examine the participants' awareness of the contextual constraints, and their reported perceptions of the effect of the constraints on their request formulations.

The data obtained from the groups was analyzed according to the CCSARP coding scheme with modifications at the level of the query preparatory. The analyses of the speech act comprised four dimensions: strategies, perspective orientations, internal modifiers, and external modifiers, which in turn involved further sub-types.

The results of the analysis of the discourse production data suggested that though the ESL group's performance was very similar to that of native speakers of British English at the main level, their performance differed from the English L1 participants at sub-types. The differences were mostly not traceable to L1 transfer. The ESL group also showed substantial differences from both native groups particularly in their use of requesting strategy sub-types, perspective orientations, and internal modifiers.

The results of the analysis of the questionnaire data, as well as the discourse production data for contextual constraints, suggest that the ESL group's sensitivity to the controlled contextual constraints in terms of their awareness and in terms of their perceptions of the effect of the constraints was different from those of native speakers of British English. The difference was partly suggested to be related to the ESL participants' L1-related perception. The study concludes that the ESL participants' overall formulations of requests or interlanguage request schema are affected by their formal interlanguage stage as well as their L1-related sociocultural conceptualisation of contextual constraints.

Acknowledgements

I would like first of all to acknowledge my indebtedness to my supervisors, Dr. Martin Bygate and Dr. Alice Deignan for their unfailing assistance in broadening my entire perspective on research, and for their thoughtful comments on my innumerable documents and queries. Certainly, without sharing their knowledge, this thesis would have been neither possible, nor enjoyable.

I wish to thank the Iranian Ministry of Science, research and Technology for granting me the scholarship, and Mazandarn University for the study leave which enabled me to follow up my studies at Leeds university.

I also wish to thank my colleague Dr. R. Rayati Damavadi for his assistance in my data collection, Mr. F. Farokkhi, R. Anani Sarab, and A. Delice for their support, friendship, and valuable views on my work. My thanks also go to Dr. A. Loxley – the research support tutor- for his comments on my statistical analyses, and to M. K. Karaagac for his assistance in my learning of SPSS.

Finally, as a token of my deepest gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to A. Amiri for all her goodness.

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study is located in the field of interlanguage pragmatics which deals with “nonnative speakers’ use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns” (Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993:3). However, it does not embrace both dimensions, nor does it address all types of linguistic action patterns. The scope is much narrower. Rather than focus on the acquisitional dimension of interlanguage pragmatics, this study will investigate the dimension of language use. However, as the dimension also involves both the comprehension and production of language actions, the focus will be further narrowed down to the production of linguistic action in writing.

Concerning the types of linguistic action, the present study will focus on requesting speech acts which according to Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1985:114) “express the speaker’s expectation toward some prospective action, verbal or nonverbal, on the part of the hearer.” In other words, requests are pre-event linguistic acts that the speaker produces to express a desire to be carried out by the hearer. This study, however, is only concerned with the ‘verbal’ aspect of requests. From a definitional perspective, I will use Speech Act (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), and Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Politeness theories to describe requesting speech acts.

Besides investigating the nonnative speakers’ production of requests, this study will also explore some of the underlying contextual constraints that affect the choice of request strategies and their essential and non-essential parts. For the selection of the constraints, I will be specifically using Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory, though this study does not directly explore the politeness dimension of requests. Overall then, this study will be specifically looking at the nonnative speakers’ choice of request formulations in writing plus some of the underlying constraints that seem to operate on their choices. The reason for the inclusion of the second dimension to this study is essentially explanatory. However, from the outset, I must acknowledge that the limited choice of contextual constraints does not bring out the full interrelationship between the constraints and the request formulations. This is

because there may well be other intervening constraints interacting, known or unknown, with those chosen for this study. However, as far as the samples of this study are concerned, the selection of the constraints may reveal dimensions of the nonnative speakers' interlanguage pragmatic competence with relation to request formulations.

The ESL participants (English L2) in this study consist of Iranian scholarship PhD students in Britain. However, in order to better understand how their interlanguage requesting behaviour compares with that of native speakers, a cross-cultural dimension is associated with the interlanguage one. Indeed, along with other researchers (Ellis 1994; Nelson *et al.* 2002), I feel that it is important in interlanguage pragmatics to design methodologies that are inclusive of L1 controls. The reason for this is that they will allow us to better understand nonnative speakers' overall performance in comparison with that of natives. Hence, in this study, besides the nonnative group, there are English L1 and Farsi L1 groups, too.

1.2 Email communications

As mentioned earlier (1.1.), the present study is concerned with the production of requesting speech acts in writing. However, it does not examine requesting behaviours in all written forms (notes, commercial letters, etc. in hard copy), but largely focuses on those formulated in academic settings through email. The choice of the setting was essentially methodological. That is, because the present study examines a corpus of data elicited through carefully designed tasks, it was necessary that the tasks be familiar to the participants so as to provide relatively valid data. Consequently, it was decided to focus on those situations that were immediately related to them, i.e., university settings. Another important factor in the choice of the electronic mail was its increasing importance and prevalent use in institutional environments. It seems that in many academic circumstances the choice of electronic mail is well established and is sometimes both more effective and popular than other mediums (Chang and Hsu, 1998). Gains (1998) argues that computer-mediated communications are particularly used in academic settings for requests.

1.3 Rationale

Since about the 1980s when cross-cultural and interlanguage studies on the formulation of speech acts took off with much interest, a great deal of interesting information has been empirically obtained about them. However, the studies have also been criticised for their lack of diversity (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Rose, 1994; Nelson *et al.*, 2002). That is, the studies have not been particularly extended to samples of different L1 backgrounds. Hence, it is not entirely clear whether the previous findings are applicable for linguistically and culturally different groups. A case in point is Persian. To rationalise her study of speech acts in Persian, Eslamirasekh (1993: 98) says that her study “was ... a response to the need to move away from Anglo-cultural ethnocentricity in the study of speech acts by widening the scope of the languages and cultures investigated, thereby, testing the basis concepts on which the study of speech acts have so far been based, to see the extent to which they are appropriate to describe non-western societies”. Furthermore, in cases where a study was conducted on a cross-cultural basis for a particular language, it is only suggested by implication how the findings might have implications for learners of an L2.

Concerning the requesting speech act, the same line of criticism can be put forward. Firstly, this speech act has been underresearched in Persian, and secondly it is not clear how the findings obtained thus far can be related to Persian learners of English. The present study is particularly a response to the second dimension; that is, the ways in which the English L2 Persian users perform the speech act of requesting in English as an L2. Hence, the study can be valuable from two aspects. It contributes to a better understanding of the interlanguage pragmatics of the nonnative speakers’ requesting behaviour, in this case particularly that of English L2 Persian speakers. Secondly, the study may lead to some pedagogical implications and show some patterns in nonnative speakers’ performance that may provide a basis for further research.

Besides the need to diversify the study of cross-cultural and interlanguage speech acts, the present study can make another contribution to interlanguage pragmatics. As mentioned before (see 1.1.), the present study focuses on the production of requests *in writing*. This modality of producing requesting speech acts has not been particularly

studied in the interlanguage pragmatics literature. Hence, it is interesting to see how the participants in the present study perform on this dimension.

1.4 Aims of the study

The purpose of this study is twofold: firstly, to determine the specific pragmalinguistic choices that the English L2 Iranian participants make to formulate their request sequences. This level of investigation involves the request components of perspective orientations, strategy, internal, and external modifiers. Secondly, this study aims to examine how the requesting sequence relates to the controlled contextual constraints of status and distance. In essence, the study is an attempt to answer the following two general questions:

- ***Research Question One***

What are the features of the requesting sequences that the English L2 Iranian participants use to formulate their requests in writing?

- ***Research Question Two***

How do the sequences relate to the controlled contextual constraints of status and distance?

Here, I should note that the above research questions will be broken down into sub-research questions in Chapter Three to specifically address the components of request sequences, and how the sequences compare across groups. Hence, the above questions are only indicative of the direction of this investigation.

1.5 Overview of the methodology

As will be explained in Chapter Three, two instruments were used to address the research questions mentioned in 1.4. The first will be a total of four problem situations which are specifically designed to elicit the intended speech act. In the situations, the controlled situational constraints will be systematically varied in order to investigate how the elicited speech acts show variation with the perception of the controlled situational constraints. Besides the first instrument, an assessment questionnaire was also applied to the participants to further investigate the

relationship between the sequences and the contextual constraints, and to further examine how the situations were perceived.

The samples in this study were three groups of participants. However, the group particularly focused on was English L2 Iranian PhD students in Britain. The other two groups were English L1 and Farsi L1 PhD participants in Britain and in Iran, respectively. The elicited data were largely coded using the CCSARP (1989) coding scheme.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

In this section, an overview of the rest of the thesis is provided. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two provides the literature review. The chapter first discusses the dimensions of pragmatics as related to cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics and then discusses issues relating to Speech Act Theory in an attempt to discover the distinct characteristics of request illocutions. This will be followed by a discussion of Politeness Theory to further elucidate the dimensions of the speech act under investigation.

Chapter Three explains the methodology adopted for this study. It first provides specific research questions, and their accompanying hypotheses. This will be followed by an explanation of the methods of data collection, the rationale behind them, the construction of the instruments, the implementation of the piloting phase and the adjustments made on the basis of the pilot study. Finally, the chapter provides the design of the main study, and categories of analysis.

Chapter Four reports the analysis of data elicited through discourse production tasks, and Chapter Five is concerned with the analysis of the data elicited by the assessment questionnaire.

Chapter Six is concerned with the discussion of the major findings of the present study and its implications. The thesis concludes in Chapter Seven with a summary of the findings, evaluation of the study, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of requesting particularly from the point of view of interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics. The chapter proceeds as follows: first, I provide a definition of pragmatics outlining the scope of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics research. This will be followed by a review of both. In the section devoted to interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), issues including the scope of ILP studies, transfer and pragmatic failure will be discussed. Then, I will review certain areas of speech act theory, and Brown and Levinson's (1989) politeness model so as to characterise the speech act of requesting.

2.2 Pragmatics

Considering the scope of pragmatics which includes such broad topics as context, speaker meaning, and other dimensions of communication, it is hardly surprising that none of the definitions suggested to date are entirely satisfactory (Mey, 1993; Schiffrin, 1994). Indeed, Levinson (1983) devotes an entire chapter to defining pragmatics, but none of the definitions seems to adequately demarcate its boundaries (see Levinson, 1983 for detail). However, when pragmatic theory informs cross-cultural and interlanguage research, one particularly serviceable definition though not necessarily comprehensive, as selected by Kasper (1997), is Crystal's (1985). In Crystal's words, "Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effect their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (Crystal, 1985:240). There are three fundamental issues in this definition that are particularly relevant to the study of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. Firstly, Crystal suggests that for communicating intention, interactants have to make meaningful choices from a repertoire (whether consciously or unconsciously) that particular languages make available to them. Secondly, their choices are possibly mediated by the constraints they face in interaction. Regarding the issue of constraints, Crystal (1987:120) further observes, "In theory, we can say

anything we like. In practice, we follow a large number of social rules (most of them unconsciously) that constrain the way we speak”. Thirdly, the choices that they make from the repertoire for a particular function (apologies, requests, compliments, etc.) have effects or consequences on the intended addressee, some foreseeable and some not (Grundy, 2000). Schematically, Crystal’s definition of pragmatics can be, in my understanding, represented by the following flow chart.

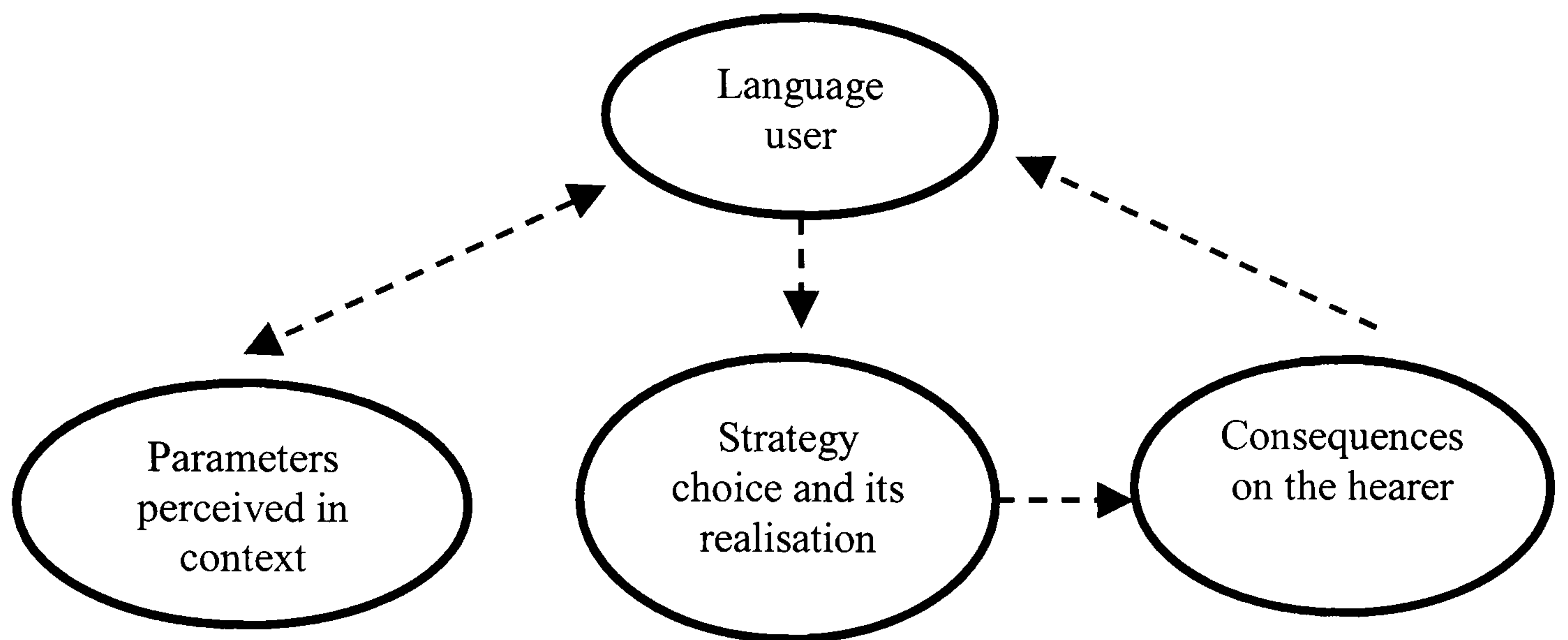


Figure 2.1 Components of a pragmatic study

Briefly, the figure demonstrates that pragmatic studies involve three interrelated dimensions of language users’ discourse. The figure shows that prior to the encoding a message by means of a particular strategy, the speaker makes a prior assessment of the context or contextual constraints in which the intended act will take place. The motivation behind the speaker’s assessment is to linguistically produce a sociolinguistically appropriate utterance with a certain planned consequence on the hearer. The consequence, in turn, will affect the hearer.

Crystal’s (1985) definition of pragmatics and its components has important implications for both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic studies. In regard to cross-cultural pragmatics, the definition makes explicit some of the potential dimensions (strategy set, for example) along which languages may diverge or converge. Further, because the choice of strategies for particular illocutions is at least partly a function of the user’s perception of contextual components, any divergence of strategies found across different speech communities may be in part explainable

from this dimension. As to interlanguage pragmatics, the definition, besides the implications mentioned for cross-cultural pragmatics, implies that socioculturally inappropriate choices made by L2 users from the linguistic repertoire, for example, as a result of their evaluation of the parameters involved, can lead to unwanted consequences. For example, the intended message may fail to come off.

A similar but clearer definition of pragmatics is given by Leech (1983). Leech (1983:10) conceives of pragmatics as “the general conditions of the communicative use of language”. He sub-divides the field of pragmatics into two parts, each with their specific focus. These sub-divisions, which have turned out to be extremely useful in both cross-cultural and ILP research, comprise pragmalinguistics and socio-pragmatics. According to him, pragmalinguistics, which concerns the linguistic aspect of pragmatics, deals with “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying illocutions (11)”. Examples of pragmalinguistic resources include such features as strategies for realising speech acts, directness, indirectness, forms of address, etc. Socio-pragmatics, on the other hand, “is the sociological interface of pragmatics” (*ibid.*:10). Issues related to how cultural and situation-dependent constraints interact with linguistic resources are within the province of sociopragmatics. Figure 2.2 illustrates Leech’s sub-division of general pragmatics.

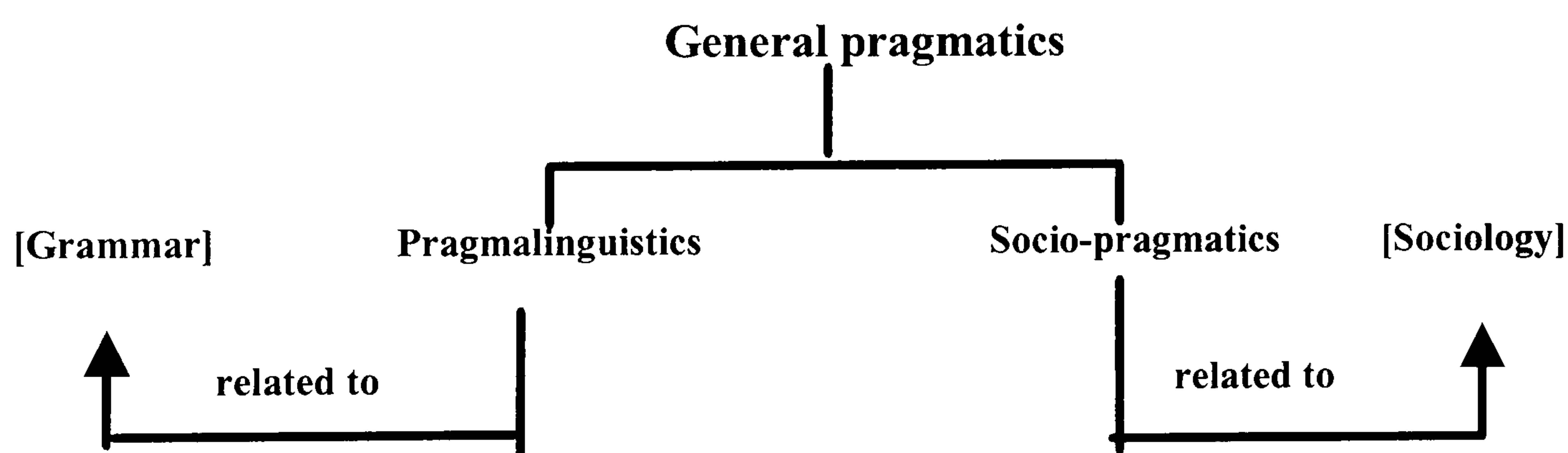


Figure 2.2 Leech’s (1983:11) model of general pragmatics and its components

To illustrate the difference between the two components of pragmatics, an example might be in order. Consider the following two utterances taken from Holmes (1990:167):

- a) *I am sorry.*
- b) *I promise it won't happen again.*

Both of the above utterances are expressions of apology, though in different circumstances they could function differently. Irrespective of other functions, whereas the first utterance uses an explicit expression of regret to realize the illocution, the second one is an elaborate promise of forbearance. There are, of course, other potential semantic formulas available in English for performing the same apologetic act (see Owen, 1983 for details). Reverting to the examples, it can be seen that for expressing the same illocution, English provides its users with a range of *pragmalinguistic* strategies. However, the actual formulation of the utterances is susceptible, among other things, to the perception and interpretation of contextual constraints such as the severity of the offence and the social roles of the participants (Lipson, 1994). In Leech's model (1983), the sub-discipline of pragmatics that deals with how pragmalinguistic resources are affected in light of social situations, different cultures, etc. is *sociopragmatics*. Harlow (1990:328) defines sociopragmatic competence as the speaker's ability of "[T]o vary speech-act strategies according to the situational and social variables present in the act of communication". In the above example, the second strategy in the pair seems to be reserved largely for occasions when a serious offence is committed. Hence, the choice is sociopragmatically motivated because the pragmalinguistic choice is affected by the perceived contextual constraints.

Crystal's (1985 and 1987) and Leech's (1983) definitions of pragmatics are remarkably similar along two dimensions. Firstly, they share the view that pragmatics involves investigating strategies allowing language users to convey illocutions. Further, they concur that the use of strategies is susceptible to contextual constraints. What distinguishes the two models of pragmatics, however, is the inclusion of *utterance effect*. Crystal's definition captures this by including it within pragmatics. Indeed, what has generated much of the ILP research has been the realization of the unwanted consequences that L2 illocutions bring about (Rintell and Mitchell, 1989), though the dimension seems to have never been investigated systematically in ILP. Concerning the inclusion of the effect of language use within pragmatics, Fraser also (1983) argues that because intended effects are not part of linguistic communication,

in the sense that there is no guarantee that a particular consequence is brought about via a particular utterance, they could not be systematically studied in pragmatics.

Taking Crystal's definition as a starting point, I draw on Leech's distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics to provide a review of cross-cultural and particularly ILP research in the following sub-sections. The rationale for starting with cross-cultural pragmatics is that the overall approach and methodology it took to its research questions have had significant impact on the overall development of ILP.

2.2.1 Cross-cultural pragmatics

As a sub-discipline of pragmatics, cross-cultural pragmatics attempts to empirically investigate pragmatic phenomena to ascertain their universality and whether or not there exist culturally different interactional styles (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). The scope of cross-cultural pragmatics includes both pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics (see section 2.2). A particular strand of investigation in cross-cultural pragmatics that is still being vigorously pursued is the contrastive study of speech acts. Such studies are particularly oriented towards identifying "(a) the value and function of politeness and deference in speech act realizations, and (b) the universality of politeness phenomena across languages and cultures" (*Ibid.*, 1989:7). Being particularly instrumental to the development of interlanguage pragmatics, I will review briefly the contrastive study of speech acts in the following paragraphs.

Historically, the interest in speech acts and politeness from a cross-cultural perspective was largely engendered following the appearance of the politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1978 and 1987). In a sense, contrastive speech act studies are theoretically anchored to both speech act (see section 2.3), and politeness theories, particularly the politeness theory propounded by Brown and Levinson (1978 and 1987). Typical questions addressed in the cross-cultural study of speech acts include the following (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996:150):

- What are the pragmalinguistic resources by which particular speech acts are realized?
- Are they universally available?
- Are the strategies invoked to realize particular speech acts identically polite across cultures?
- Are the strategies susceptible to contextual parameters (sociopragmatics)?

- What particular contextual parameters carry greater significance in the choice of a particular speech act?
- Do the parameters mediating the choice of particular strategies carry the same weight across speech communities?

As the questions illustrate, a cross-linguistic comparison of speech acts can be conducted along two independent but related dimensions: pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics (see section 2.2). The pragmalinguistic dimension involves the identification of the repertoire of strategies which makes it possible for a particular speech act to be realized, modified, etc in a given speech community. Examples of such studies focusing on cross-cultural pragmalinguistic differences are numerous. House and Kasper (1981), in their study of complaints and requests in German and English, found that German native speakers, from an etic standpoint, are more direct (impolite) than the British because of choosing utterances transparent in proposition and illocution. Similarly, Eslamirasekh (1993) in her comparative study of request sequences in Persian and American English found that Persian speakers were significantly more direct than Americans. de kadt (1992 and 1995) in her study of requests in Zulu and South African English found that the Zulu speakers were significantly more direct and indirect than South African English speakers. As to the politeness of strategies, Blum-Kulka (1987), in her study of indirectness and politeness in the speech act of requesting, has shown that indirect requesting realizations manifest different measures of politeness. In essence, studies conducted cross-culturally on speech acts indicate that all languages appear to have a repertoire of strategies for particular speech acts, but the strategies do not necessarily have the same social meaning. Furthermore, the cross-cultural variability of strategy choice and assigning different politeness values to speech acts “reveal culture specific features of discourse and hence can be construed as further evidence for the claim that speech communities tend to develop culturally distinct interactional styles” (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989:7).

As to the sociopragmatic dimension, cross-cultural comparisons partly revealed the important social constraints influencing the choice strategy for particular speech acts, and further, determined to some extent whether speakers of different languages react

to them in similar ways. For example, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1985) found that whereas in Hebrew request variability is systematically correlated with the dimension of power (see sub-section 2.4.1.1), in American English request choices vary with the dimension of distance. In other words, whereas in Hebrew being in power licenses the issuance of direct requests to the less powerful, in American English it is usually the symmetric dimension of familiarity. In the same vein, Ervin-Trip (1976) found that the illocutionary transparency of request directives in American English was clearer when a request was addressed to familiars. Bilbow (1993, as quoted in Bilbow, 1995) in his study of pragmatic failure in cross-cultural business meetings suggests that Chinese speakers' choice of politeness strategies may be more influenced by the hearer's rank or status than is the case for Western speakers. Blum-Kulka (1989) in her study of requesting behavior in relation to different situations found that all her participants from five languages agreed on the need that they had to choose a particular pragmalinguistic strategy according to the demands of the situations.

Overall, cross-cultural studies which have been directed to compare and contrast pragmalinguistic strategies and sociopragmatic dimensions have made it clear that members of different speech communities have their own specific resources to realize specific speech acts which they may or may not share with other speech communities. Furthermore, such studies show that patterns of choosing particular speech acts might be different across different speech communities on the basis of their sociopragmatic conceptualizations. As to politeness, cross-cultural contrastive pragmatic research has demonstrated that speech communities do not share the view that similar choices at the pragmalinguistic dimension carry the same politeness value.

2.2.2 Interlanguage pragmatics

This sub-section deals with ILP, within which this study can be placed. In this sub-section, I will proceed as follows: first based on the literature I will provide a discussion on how ILP found its way into second language research. This will be followed by a definition of interlanguage pragmatics. Finally, I will turn to a discussion of the issues addressed in IL, including transfer, pragmatic transfer, and pragmatic failure.

2.2.2.1 Historical perspective and definition

That a model of language should involve components other than syntax is well documented in the literature involving investigation of language in use (discourse). Concerning the inadequacy of a solely syntax-oriented linguistic theory to explaining language use, Levinson (1983), for example, argues for a compromise solution in which a pragmatic component is added to the model of linguistic competence. He observes: “[a]s knowledge of syntax, phonology and semantics of various languages has increased, it has become clear that there are specific phenomena that can only be described by recourse to contextual concepts. On the one hand, various syntactic rules seem to be properly constrained only if one refers to pragmatic conditions; and similarly for matters of stress and intonation (36)”.

That a model of linguistic competence needs to be complemented by other theoretical components is of course not an argument made only by pragmaticists only. Sociolinguist and social anthropologist Hymes (1974), for example, in his reaction to the Chomskyan revolution observes: “a child from whom any and all grammatically acceptable sentences [of a language] might come with equal likelihood would be ... a social monster” (75). He also highlights the fact that the language used in communication is a complex product of the interaction of various components. Indeed, it is this recognition that made him propose the complementary notion of communicative competence, in which the focus is particularly on utterances appropriately used in terms of content and form in its context. Concerning the identification of the components of communicative competence, Hymes (*ibid.*:75) emphasizes an empirical approach:

The most novel and difficult contribution of sociolinguistic description must be to identify the rules, patterns, purposes, and consequences of language use, and an account of their interrelations. In doing so it will not only discover structural relations among sociolinguistic components, but disclose new relationships among features of the linguistic code itself.

Hymes’s notion of communicative competence (*ibid.*) has had particular implications for theorists, researchers and practitioners involved in second language research and

pedagogy. Indeed, the concept was responsible for the emergence of communicative language teaching in which “it was postulated that the second language learner must acquire not just control of the basic grammar of the sentences but all the communicative skills of a native speaker” (Spolsky, 1989:139). Furthermore, since the introduction of the notion of communicative competence at least two influential models have been formulated in which in parallel with linguistic components, other components such as sociolinguistic competence is regarded as constitutive (Canale and Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). Canale and Swain’s (1980) model, for example, outlines three major components of a communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence.

It was the result of such re-conceptualizations that led to the gradual development of interlanguage pragmatics. As a sub-discipline of second language research, ILP deals with L2 speakers’ use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge (Kasper, 1992 and 1996; Gass and Selinker, 1994; Kasper and Schmidt, 1996). This extensional definition first and foremost acknowledges Hyme’s conception that language comprises components other than syntax, and further focuses descriptively on the pragmatics of L2 learners’ interlanguage. While the acquisitional dimension of interlanguage pragmatics has been a comparatively recent line of second language research (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999), the study of the speaker’s use (processing and execution) of linguistic illocution (speech acts) dates back to the late 70s (Hackmann, 1977; Carrell, 1979; Scarcella, 1979; Walters, 1979). Indeed, since that time investigations on L2 speakers’ pragmatic dimension of language use from different dimensions picked up pace. The most important reason for this was that interlanguage pragmatics borrowed both its methodological and theoretical needs from CCSARP (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999). In this regard, Kasper (1992: 205) succinctly observes, “The bulk of interlanguage pragmatics research derived its research questions and methods from empirical, and particularly cross-cultural, pragmatics. Typical issues addressed in data-based studies are whether NNS differ from NS in the 1) range and 2) contextual distribution of 3) strategies and 4) linguistic forms used to convey 5) illocutionary meaning and 6) politeness – precisely the kinds of issues raised in comparative studies of different NS communities”. In other words, cross-cultural

pragmatics had already established a valid framework that interlanguage pragmatics researchers could profitably borrow for their own purposes. Interestingly, some of the well-known cross-cultural pragmatics researchers such as Blum-Kulka and Kasper had dual interests, as the literature shows. They were both cross-cultural as well as interlanguage pragmatics researchers. This seems to be also instrumental in expanding the study of second language speech act use.

Overall in this sub-section, I attempted to show that the emergence of interlanguage pragmatics was concurrent with Hymes' proposal for a study of communicative competence. Further on the basis of the literature, I attempted to show that ILP as a branch of second language research has been modeled on cross-cultural pragmatics. As a result, it has tended to be more focused on second language use than the acquisition of pragmatics in second language. In the next sub-section, I will turn to the issue of transfer which is a major concern of ILP.

2.2.2.2 Transfer

The concept of transfer, which dates back to the 1950s and 1960s, is usually associated with behaviourist theory in which knowledge was assumed to be a process of habit formation and capable of being transferred. That is, what is established as prior knowledge is transferred over to the acquisition of new knowledge. Furthermore, in behaviourist terms transfer can be either facilitative or debilitating. When debilitating, transfer was considered as an impediment to new learning, and when facilitative it was assumed to speed up the formation of new habits. Obviously, this theoretical conceptualization of what constitutes knowledge and particularly of transferability had important implications for L2 acquisition. Indeed, this conceptualization was the chief motivation for the emergence of contrastive analysis in which languages to be learnt by L2 learners were systematically compared and contrasted with their L1s (see Lado, 1957 for an early attempt). The purpose was motivated by the thinking that if a component of a learner's L1 is different from their L2, their L1 will be negatively transferred and slow down the L2 component from being formed as new knowledge. Indeed, much of the traditional account of transfer in language learning revolves around the identification of negative transfer, which

was believed to cause error. Another related assumption in contrastive analysis involved the relationship between difference and difficulty. According to this thesis when L1 and L2 manifest different patterns regarding a component, the effort needed on the part of the learner to form a habit about it will be more protracted and hence more difficult (Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin, 1965).

Later, when the assumption of transfer as propounded by behaviorist contrastivists was subjected to empirical analysis, it was found that it “overpredict[s] both the transferability of specific items (that is, they fail to explain when they are transferred and when they are not), and transfer load (how much is transferred)” (Ellis, 1994:315). Also, as mentioned by Long and Sato, (1984) what constituted the downfall of contrastive analysis was its exclusive concentration on product data, without consideration of the psychological processes that learners go through.

The disenchantment with contrastive analysis on account of its poor explanatory adequacy led theoreticians and practitioners to assess their findings with a new linguistic theory. Interestingly, the disenchantment with contrastive analysis and the rise of the mentalist linguistic theory are not temporally very distant from each other. In 1959, Chomsky challenged the theoretical underpinnings of behaviorism, and in the struggle behaviorism was undermined by considerable empirical evidence. The paradigm shift from behaviorism, as can be expected, had significant repercussions on the theoretical explanation of language acquisition. In the 1970s, we see that the notion of transfer is almost completely sidelined by the ‘minimalist’ position (not to be confused with the minimalist approach in contemporary linguistics) in which L2 acquisition is considered as a developmental process, very much like L1 as Dulay and Burt’s (1972) L2 = L1 hypothesis demonstrates (Ellis, 1994). Hence, errors were explained away by recourse to developmental considerations, rather than transfer only (Benson, 2002). Indeed, transfer itself, from the minimalist position, is sometimes seen as a communication strategy as suggested by Newmark and Reibel (1968) in what has come to be known as the ignorance hypothesis. Overall, from a minimalist perspective, emphasis is placed on the universal process of language acquisition (Dulay and Burt, 1974).

Though the minimalist position was a giant step towards explaining L2 acquisition, it also came under criticism for its over preoccupation with the universal processes involved in language learning, and too much denigration of the role of L1 transfer. In Ellis's (1994:311) words, "the assumption that errors must be either the result of interference or interlingual is unwarranted". In other words, the processes may possibly, among other things, work in conjunction with one another.

Currently, it is widely accepted on empirical grounds that transfer plays a significant role in second language acquisition, so much so that Ellis (*ibid.*: 300) observes "no theory of L2 acquisition that ignores the learner's prior knowledge can be considered complete". However, this theoretical view on transfer is completely different from the behaviourist and apparently complementary to the minimalist perspective. Hence, the theoretical view is in a sense more complex (Benson, 2001) and comprehensive.

Unlike the first theoretical perspective which almost solely addressed errors as originating from L1, and unlike the minimalist perspective which almost solely concentrates on the creative construction process, Ellis (1994) asserts that the current notion of transfer is that it is a cognitive phenomenon and can lead to a range of consequences. He specifically mentions three instances of L1 transfer based on the transfer literature. First and foremost, in addition to the creation of errors, transfer can be facilitative. By that he means that when L1 and L2 are identical in some areas, the former will positively affect the latter, particularly if it is consistent with interlanguage too. The influence will be more likely when transfer is in line with universal factors (Gass, 1979). Secondly, transfer can result in avoidance in the sense that when a linguistic structure does not exist in L1, L2 users will consciously and strategically avoid using or under-represent an L2 pattern to a certain stage (Schachter, 1974). Kellerman (1992, as cited in Ellis, 1994) attributes avoidance to L2 users' general language proficiency and/or attitude towards L1-related norms. Finally, transfer can result in the overuse of certain patterns resulting, for example, from avoiding difficult patterns. In Ellis's (*ibid.*: 305) words, transfer can occur "... as a consequence of the avoidance or underreproduction of some difficult structures".

2.2.2.3 Pragmatic transfer

Transfer studies, which have a long-standing tradition in second language pedagogy, have predominantly revolved around issues including phonology, syntax, and lexis. However, with the appearance of ILP studies came the general notion that transfer can occur at pragmatic level also. In this context, “pragmatic transfer ... refers to the influence exerted by learners’ pragmatic knowledge of languages and culture other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information (Kasper, 1992:207). Historically, unlike other areas of transfer studies, ILP research appeared on the scene when the notion of transfer from a behaviourist perspective was defunct. However, there was an uncontested assumption from the very beginning in ILP studies that L1 pragmatic knowledge at a cognitive level is active. Hence, there was general consensus that transfer is compatible with the cognitive approach to second language acquisition (*ibid.*, 1992).

Research on transfer in ILP has in common with other transfer studies the assumption that L1 related pragmatic transfer can have consequences for L2 acquisition. Pragmatic transfer can either contribute to or delay L2 acquisition depending on the pragmatic similarities and differences existing between particular languages (Faerch and Kasper, 1989; Nikula, 1996). However, ILP research has almost entirely tended to investigate L1-related negative transfer because of the negative consequences that it brings about. That is, whereas native speakers manifest tolerance to non-pragmatic IL deviations which differently affect communication, they show reactions of different types when miscommunications occur as a result of pragmatic violations. In this regard, Gass and Selinker (1994: 244) observe:

Miscommunication resulting from NS perceptions of relatively proficient NNSs (as opposed to learners with low-level comprehension and productive skills) is often serious in terms of interpersonal relations because the source of the difficulty is more likely to be attributed to a defect in a person (or culture) (e.g., Americans are insincere, Israelis are rude, Japanese are indirect), than NNS’s inability to map the correct linguistic form on to pragmatic intentions.

That NS's negative interpretation of pragmatic violation is only directed to proficient NNSs may not be entirely true. NSs also may show more or less the same attitude to low-level L2 users.

ILP transfer studies have been focused on two pragmatic levels, based on Leech's (1983) subdivision of general pragmatics into sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics. ILP transfer research on sociopragmatics has particularly investigated how cultural and situation-dependent social variables are sized up by L2 users of particular languages in communication. On the other hand, ILP transfer research on pragmalinguistics focuses on the possible transfer of linguistic resources of particular illocutions. As the scope of each subdivision illustrates, they are perpetually in interaction. That is, for an L2 user to produce a particular illocution, they have to consult the former first.

2.2.2.4 Pragmatic failure

In the sub-section dealing with pragmatic transfer, I mentioned that there is a general consensus among ILP researchers that L2 speakers of a given language tend to fall back on their L1 pragmatic knowledge, which comprises both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic dimensions, to perform linguistic illocutions. It was further emphasized that L1-related pragmatic transfer can be either positive or negative. The concept of pragmatic failure, which was introduced by Thomas (1983), relates to, but does not exhaust, negative pragmatic transfer. Thomas (*ibid.*: 94) defines pragmatic failure as L2 speakers' failure to conform to L2 sociocultural norms in comprehending and producing illocutions. In her words, pragmatic failure, refers to

[M]isunderstandings which arise, not from any inability on the part of the H to understand the intended sense/reference of the speaker's words in context in which they are uttered, but from an inability to recognize the force of the speaker's utterance when the speaker intended that this particular hearer should recognize it (Thomas, 1983:94).

Thomas argues that pragmatic failure does not necessarily occur between NSs and NNSs only. It can happen between interactants of the same sociocultural and

linguistic background as well. Further, she argues that pragmatic failure can occur when the hearer has poor command of a given L2.

Based on Leech's (1983) distinction between sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics, Thomas distinguishes between two conceptual levels of pragmatic failures: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failures. Pragmalinguistic failure occurs "when the pragmatic force mapped by S onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of that language, or when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from L₁ to L₂" (Thomas, 1983:99). Thomas' definition of pragmalinguistic failure demonstrates that it is essentially linguistic. She claims further that the failure originates from two rather divergent sources. First, she attributes it to 'teaching-induced error' by which she means errors generated by inappropriate teaching techniques. My own reading of the first part of the definition is that Thomas is also implicitly attributing the failure to overgeneralization. The second source of pragmalinguistic failure is when semantic formulas, which are pragmatically different from L2, are carried over from L1 to L2. An example of transfer from Farsi to English by a Persian learner of L2 English is the following utterance:

I am asking you to leave me alone.

While Persian and English share the semantic formula (explicit performative) to realize the request illocution, their respective underlying pragmatic forces are very much different. In Farsi the strategy sounds very much like an imploring, whereas in English it carries a peremptory undertone.

Thomas (*ibid.*) names the second type of pragmatic failure as 'sociopragmatic', which she defines as "the social conditions placed on language in use" (1983:99). In other words, unlike pragmalinguistic failure which has to do with force-form mappings, sociopragmatic failure occurs when L2 illocutions considered appropriate by L2 users of a given language are not pragmatically considered appropriate by NSs. For example, if a Persian academic starts calling another Persian colleague by the first name during or after the first meeting, the Persian may very well consider it inappropriate in the context (sociopragmatic failure). This is because of the fact that

whereas the use of first name in English predominantly signals egalitarianism, and only marginally friendship, in Farsi it only indicates close friendship (Amouzadeh, 2001).

2.2.2.5 Studies of interlanguage pragmatics

The study of L2 learners' illocutionary acts which dates back to the late 70s has involved such speech acts as apologies, requests, compliments, refusals, suggestions, complaints. However of the speech acts cited, requests and apologies seem to have been more subjected to ILP research. There seem to be two underlying reasons that can be found in ILP literature explaining researchers' biased interest towards these two speech acts. The first one, which is only implicitly recognizable, is that these two illocutionary acts have been the focus of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (1989). Secondly, from a pragmatic perspective "requests are particularly rich in both their linguistic repertoires and the social meanings attached to their use, while apologies offer special insight into how interactants seek to right social wrongs" (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989).

Interlanguage pragmatics studies have involved both perception and production of speech acts with a particular focus on politeness. In the following sub-sections, I will first briefly review two illustrative studies of NNS perception, followed by a review of interlanguage speech act production.

- **Perception of speech acts**

In the initial studies of NNS perception of speech acts respondents are presented with a set of decontextualised speech act realizations to rate their absolute politeness. For example, in a frequently cited study, Walters (1979) investigated how politeness in 14 generic (unmarked) request directives were rank ordered by 30 male and 30 female native speakers of American English and 75 advanced ESL learners of varying language backgrounds (males: females = 45:30). The requests were all decontextualised and the groups were instructed to rank order the politeness level of each directive without setting them in the typical context that they imagined they might occur in. The rank order value of politeness obtained demonstrated that L1

English males differentiated “a much narrower range from the most to the least polite request strategy” (292) than females. Females, on the other hand, showed more agreement about the relative politeness standing of directives, and were more categorical: “Either a form is extremely polite or extremely impolite for a female speaker of English” (292). It should also be noted that despite partial lack of unanimity, the two groups’ politeness judgement was positively correlated. On the other hand, though the correlation between native and non-native speakers’ politeness judgement was significantly high, the latter’s rank assignment of two directives markedly deviated from L2 norms and “the request strategies tended to cluster more for this group (L2 Learners), especially at the impolite end of the scale” (295). Walters also found that like female native speakers, non-native learners made more strategy distinctions and exhibited more unanimity.

Decontextualised studies of the perception of politeness have been criticised for being subjectively influenced by the respondents’ dialogical knowledge of the world (Kasper and Dahl, 1991). Put differently, respondents may very well base their metapragmatic judgement of politeness on schematic knowledge. In Kasper and Dahl’s (1991:219) words, “if utterances to be judged for their politeness or illocutionary force are stripped of content and context, subjects are likely to supply some of this information anyway and base their judgements on mentally elaborated versions”.

In addition to off-line metapragmatic judgements, there are ILP research studies investigating on-line metapragmatic processing (Carrell and Konneker, 1981; Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985). The addition of situation into the study of politeness perception seems to be a great improvement because it precludes the possibility that respondents’ perceptions are purely a function of a static metacognitive dimension. Carrell and Konneker (1981) investigated cross-cultural perception and rank ordering of 8 requestive illocutions with respect to their politeness value. They presented each native and non-native participant in their two groups with four sets of cards. Each set included nine cards, the first sets the scene and the remaining eight cards each had a context-related requestive act on it, i.e.,

there were eight strategies in all. Group I consisted of 73 adult ESL learners of mixed L1s at intermediate and advanced level; Group II included 42 native speakers of English. The two groups were instructed to read each context and the eight accompanying requests, and then to sort them according to their politeness value. While the result revealed a strong cross-cultural rank ordering correlation of the eight strategies, ESL learners were found to differentiate seven distinct levels of politeness as opposed to five by the native speakers. Furthermore, ESL learners failed to perceive the politeness distinction between two strategies that native subjects did. Carrell and Knonneker provide the following justification for oversensitivity: “we suggest this [overdifferentiation] may be due to a kind of ‘oversensitivity’ to syntactic/semantic form distinctions -a kind of expectation on the part of the ESL learners that all differences in form should correspond to a difference in communicative intent” (27).

Overall, perception studies of speech acts, which are essentially aimed at uncovering “relatively permanent states of pragmatic knowledge” (Kasper and Dahl, 1991), suggest that L2 learners are first of all aware that different pragmalinguistic resources communicate different pragmatic intentions, especially politeness. Secondly, the studies confirm that L2 learners are aware of the inter-functional relationship between pragmalinguistic resources and contextual factors.

- **Interlanguage speech act production**

Another line of research in ILP study involves investigation of NNSs’ production of speech acts. Historically, such studies were concurrent with interlanguage pragmatic studies of speech act perception, however, studies of speech act production have received more attention from researchers. Part of the reason for this imbalance might possibly be attributable to the negative consequences that the productive side, as opposed to pragmatic comprehension, brings about for NNSs, a mistake in production seems to be usually more damaging than a mistake in perception. As regards its research agenda, interlanguage studies of speech act production are very similar to perception studies, and particularly to cross-cultural pragmatics studies (see subsection 2.2.1.). In brief, three main research questions seem to underlie many

production studies. The first involves the identification of NNSs's pragmalinguistic repertoire with regard to particular speech acts as opposed to that of NSs. The second involves the identification of contextual constraints and the determination of their interrelationship with pragmalinguistic repertoire. Finally, production studies attempt to trace L1 transfer of the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge base to performance of L2 speech acts. It is worth mentioning that speech act production studies have not involved serious examination of the conditions conducive to L1 transfer (Takahashi, 1993).

To address the research questions cited above, production studies of L2 speech acts have employed (1) discourse completion tasks, (2) role play, and (3) naturally occurring speech samples (see sub-section 3.4.1). However, of the three methods of data collection, the first two, which rely on elicitation procedures, have been comparatively more in use because of the methodological advantages they yield (see sub-section 3.4.1). Interlanguage pragmatics studies involving the production of illocutionary acts include particularly the speech acts of apology, compliments, and request.

The results of speech act production studies first demonstrate that learners have access to the same range of linguistic resources realizing particular speech acts as native speakers (Beebe *et al.* 1990; Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993a). However, their pragmalinguistic choices do not necessarily converge in similar contexts, whether constructed or natural. For example, in their study of refusal illocutions using elicitation techniques, Beebe, *et al.* (1990) found that Japanese ESL learners' choice of semantic formulas for refusal in similar situations is markedly different from those chosen by native American-English speakers. The study illustrates that whereas the learners tend to use more 'excuses' to communicate refusal, native speakers opt for a combination of 'excuses and regrets'. Secondly, results indicate that learners' use of internal modifiers (see sub-section 3.14.5.1) on speech acts is significantly less frequent than those used by native speakers (Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; House and Kasper, 1987; Hassall, 1997 and 2001). In his study of request modifiers, Hassall (2001), for instance, found that L2 Indonesian learners use far fewer internal

modifying devices than native participants do. Thirdly, results coming from speech act production studies have shown that L2 learners tend to display verbose pragmatic behaviour by frequent and lengthy external modifying devices (see sub-section 3.14.5.2) in their production of speech acts (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; Faerch and Kasper, 1989). Fourthly, results indicate that L2 learners tend to show sensitivity to contextual parameters like native speakers (Beebe et al., 1990; Cohen and Olshtain, 1981). In a study of native (American) and non-native (Hebrew) production of apologetic illocution, Cohen and Olshtain (1981), for example, found stylistically inappropriate L2 strategies in situations where status and distance were controlled.

In brief, studies of speech act production which have methodologically and theoretically drawn on cross-cultural pragmatics suggest that L2 learners' production of illocutions have certain characteristics that distinguish them from those of NSs. At a pragmalinguistic level, for example, it has been shown that combinatory strategy choice made by NNSs sometimes reveal differences. Also, NNSs use of internal and external modifiers has been shown to differ from those selected by NSs.

2.2.3 Summary

Up to now, I have attempted to outline the issues covered in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. Drawing particularly on Leech's (1983) dichotomy of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, the above sections have outlined the scope of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics, and discussed how the latter drew its methodological and theoretical underpinnings from cross-cultural pragmatics. Further, ILP was defined and discussed from a historical perspective and the basic issues, including transfer and pragmatic failures, dealt with in ILP were presented. Finally, a brief review of the types of studies, which are carried out in ILP, was presented and their basic results were discussed. In the next section, I will briefly review some aspects of speech act theory, the cooperative principle, and the politeness theories focusing on aspects relevant to my concern for characterising the speech act of requesting.

2.3 Speech acts from a historical perspective

In the following sub-sections, a brief outline of speech act theory from a historical perspective will be provided. To begin with, Austin's conception of language as doing acts will be briefly outlined to (1) contextualize the subsequent survey for characterising requests and (2) introduce some relevant terminology. Having done this, I will review Searle's and Grice's work to characterise the underlying properties of request from the viewpoint of speech act theory.

2.3.1 J. L. Austin

“A speech act is created when speaker/writer S makes an utterance U to hearer/reader in context C.” (Allan, 1998: 927).

Interest in speech acts- utterances in their total situation in which they are issued (Austin, 1962:52)- originally stems from the lectures delivered by J. L. Austin as the William James Lectures at Harvard University in 1955. The lectures were posthumously published in book form entitled '*How to Do Things with Words*'. In his lectures, Austin made it explicit that in addition to communicating a range of meanings, language can be used to perform action (Stubbs, 1983). Speech act essentially provided strong empirical arguments against the then-current logical positivist philosophers' notions about language. Thomas (1995a) identifies two recognisable lines of thought in logical positivism in relation to language. The first line of thought has to do with the verifiability issue. According to logical positivist philosophers, while statements are descriptions of some state of affairs they should be amenable to truth-value, that is it should be provable in a logical sense whether they are describing an event truly or falsely. Secondly, philosophers tended to consider the ordinary people's use of language as flawed. Thomas (*ibid.*:29) succinctly describe their stance in these words:

Russell and others took the view that everyday language is somehow deficient and defective, a rather debased vehicle, full of ambiguities, imprecision and contradictions. Their aim was to refine language, removing its perceived imperfections and illogicalities, and to create an ideal language.

Referring to the verifiability issue, Austin cites numerous instances where utterances cannot be either true or false because they are not intended at all to describe but uttered to 'do' something. He calls a sentence or utterance of this type a performative sentence or utterance to distinguish them from constative- declarative sentences, which have truth-values. The following examples from Austin (1962:5) illustrate performative sentences:

Examples:

'I do (sc.). Take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife'- as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony.

'I bequeath my watch to my brother'- as occurring in a will.

On analysing the above two examples, we can see that they cannot be judged as either true or false and therefore are not truth conditional, because they are simply actions. Manktelow and Over (1990:50) define action as a performance which is, "caused by the beliefs and desires of an agent and is done with a certain *intention* or goal in mind" (italic in original). Regarding the debased nature of ordinary language as held by positivist philosophers, Austin takes a diametrically different stance. He contends that the language of ordinary people adequately serves its purpose despite its seeming inadequacies. He suggests that instead of expending futile efforts to refine language, we need to approach everyday language heuristically to work out its mechanisms (Thomas, 1995a: 29).

Austin's interest essentially revolved around the interrelationship between meaning and action in language. According to him, we perform a hierarchy of three different types of actions when we utter a sentence. In other words, speech acts can be analysed on three levels: locution, illocution, and perlocution. A locutionary act, which constitutes the most basic component of an utterance, is roughly "uttering a certain sentence with certain sense and reference" (Austin, 1962:109). For example, by saying 'the cat is on the mat' we are doing a locutionary act because in context the lexical choices have identifiable sense and reference. An illocutionary act is performing actions with certain force. For example, in 'I promise to send you a copy of my paper' the explicit performative verb 'promise' signals the type of illocutionary

act being performed. Finally, a perlocutionary act is causing an effect on the addressee via the utterance. Of the three dimensions of an utterance, the illocutionary act is most discussed in the literature (Yule, 1996; Mey, 1993). Indeed, the study of illocutionary act is so important to the investigation of speech acts that *speech act* is usually taken to be synonymous to illocutionary act (Sadock, 1988).

According to Austin, for an illocution to be felicitous (achieve its intention) it should be appropriate both psychologically and sociologically to the circumstances. He goes on to classify the conditions that conventionally allow a performative utterance to be successful. Austin's (1962:14-15) felicity conditions for illocutionary acts as simplified by Fasold (1990:149) are as follows:

- A.1 There has to be such a speech act recognised by the society.
- A.2 It has to be performed by the right person under the right circumstances
- B.1 It has to be performed correctly
- B.2 It has to be performed completely
- T1 The person or persons involved in performing the speech act have to have the thoughts and feelings connected with that speech act, if any.
- T2 The person or persons have to conduct themselves subsequently as if they had the right thoughts and feelings.

Austin does not assign equal weight to the rules of felicity conditions governing illocutionary acts. Concerning the first four rules, failing to uphold them will make an illocutionary act misfire (the act does not come off). For example, the act of assigning someone to office (i.e., "I assign you as ...") will misfire if the speaker is not in a position to do so (contextual constraint). The last two, however, will abuse the procedure in the sense that although the act is achieved, it is insincere. For example, saying "I apologise" without having the necessary feelings.

Based on his notion that the number of illocutionary acts we do with words is limited, Austin attempted a taxonomy of illocutionary acts. His taxonomy has the following five categories:

1. **Verdictives:** speech acts such as acquit, describe, assess, etc. which indicate delivering of a verdict.
2. **Exercitives:** this category include speech acts indicating "exercising of power, rights, or influence" (Austin, 1962: 151). Examples of this category include speech acts such as beg, command, direct, etc.

3. **Commissives:** speech acts such as promise, pledge, vow which “commit you to doing something” (Austin, *ibid.*: 151-152) fall into this category.
4. **Expositives:** speech acts in this category are used for clarifying arguments, introducing view. Examples of this category include speech acts such as report answer, concede, etc.
5. **Behabitatives:** this category includes speech acts such as apologize, thank, commiserate, etc. which deal with attitudes and social behavior.

The above taxonomy was, however, criticized by Searle (1976:9-10) for a number of shortcomings. In Searle’s words (*ibid.*: 9-10):

There is a persistent confusion between verbs and acts, not all the verbs are illocutionary verbs, there is too much overlap of the categories, too much heterogeneity within the categories, many of the verbs listed in the categories do not satisfy the definition given for the category, and most important, there is no principle of classification.

Overall, Austin’s Speech Act Theory made two important contributions to linguistic theory (Yli-Jokipii, 1994). Firstly, it introduced the concept of utterance or act as a unit of description of linguistic data. Secondly, he allowed extra-linguistic elements such as speaker, circumstances, etc. to enter into linguistic analysis. In other words, he integrated pragmatic considerations into the analysis of linguistic units. However, in spite of these contributions, his account of speech acts met with a number of criticisms. Thomas (1995a:46), for example, argues that there are ways of doing illocutionary acts that do not require the use of performative verbs. For example, an illocutionary act can be performed indirectly without the presence of an explicit illocutionary verb. Furthermore, Austin’s account of felicity conditions governing the performance of speech acts is too broad and varied to systematically relate them to different types of illocutionary acts.

2.3.2 J. R. Searle

Searle’s (1969) account of speech acts, which builds on Austin’s seminal work, advances a framework which integrates speech acts into linguistic theory (Flowerdew, 1988; Schiffrin, 1994; Thomas, 1995a; Verschueren, 1999). His contribution to the study of speech acts can be grouped into the following three categories for the purposes of this study. They are felicity conditions, classification of speech act, and indirect speech acts. In the following sub-sections, I will provide an

outline of his contribution, aiming to characterise the properties of requests from speech act theory.

2.3.2.1 Felicity conditions

Building on Austin's (1962) work, Searle (1969:66) similarly formulated a number of textual and contextual conditions that must be fulfilled before a speech act is felicitously performed (Verschueren, 1999:32). In Searle's (1979: 44) words, "Each type of illocutionary act has a set of conditions that are necessary for the successful and felicitous performance of the act". However, Searle's account of felicity conditions is qualitatively different from that of Austin's in that his classification of conditions over the successful performance of a given speech act relies on what aspect of text or context is focused on (Schiffrin, 1994). Searle (1969:66) cites the following felicity conditions for advice:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1) Propositional content: | Future act <i>A</i> of <i>H</i> |
| 2) Preparatory: | 1. <i>H</i> has some reasons to believe <i>A</i> will benefit <i>H</i> .
2. It is not obvious to both <i>S</i> and <i>H</i> that <i>H</i> will do <i>A</i> in the normal course of events |
| 3) Sincerity | <i>S</i> believes <i>A</i> will benefit <i>H</i> . |
| 4) Essential | Counts as an undertaking to the effect that <i>A</i> is in <i>H</i> 's best interest. |

As can be seen from the four felicity conditions for the speech act of advising, each rule focuses on a particular aspect of the act. As Schiffrin (1994) points out, four aspects of the conditions can be distinguished. The propositional content condition, which has to do with the semantic content, is the most textual aspect. The preparatory condition, on the other hand, has to do with background circumstances and knowledge. For example, in the speech act of advising, the advisor must know that the act is beneficial to the hearer. The sincerity condition has to do with the psychological state of the speaker in issuing the illocutionary act. The state includes belief, desire, etc. Finally the essential condition has to do with the illocutionary point of the utterance.

2.3.2.2 Classification of speech acts

Searle's (1976) other contribution was his taxonomy of illocutionary acts into a small number of categories on semantic criteria. To classify the acts, Searle (*ibid.*: 2-7) lists twelve dimensions of variations in which illocutionary acts can be distinguished from one another. However, in practice he uses only four of them to construct his five categories of speech acts. The following are the four criteria he uses for his classificatory system:

- (a) **Illocutionary point:** this is the purpose of performing an illocution. For example, a request attempts to get the hearer to do something.
- (b) **Direction of fit:** This refers to the interrelationship between words and the world. For example, assertions, descriptions and explanations have words-to-world direction of fit whereas requests have a world-to-word direction of fit because the world has to be manipulated to fulfil the speaker's request.
- (c) **The expressed psychological state:** this refers to the fact that in the performance of an illocutionary act with a propositional content the speaker expresses some attitude, state, etc. to that propositional content. For example, a request expresses the speaker's desire that the hearer should do something. A promise expresses the speaker's intention to do something.
- (d) **Propositional content:** This criterion distinguishes speech acts on a temporal basis. The difference between report and prediction is that the former can be about the past whereas the latter must be about the future.

Based on the four major criteria cited above, Searle (*ibid.*) advanced his five categories of speech acts. The categories are as follows:

- (a) **Representatives:** the point of this category of speech act is to "represent a state of affairs". Speech acts that belong to this category can be assessed on a true-false dimension. The fit direction is word-to-world and the psychological state expressed is belief. Examples of this category include boast, complain, suggest, etc.
- (b) **Directives:** the illocutionary act of this category of speech act is to prospectively (propositional content) get the hearer to do something, or in other words eliciting some action from the hearer. The direction of fit is world-to-words and the sincerity condition can be want, wish, or desire. Also, directives can vary in their attempts (force) to elicit action on the part of the hearer "from pious wish to peremptory, harsh order" (Mey, 1993: 164). Examples of this category include order, command, request, advise, etc.

- (c) **Commissives:** the speech acts in this category commit the speaker to some future action. The fit direction is world to words and the propositional content always denotes a future action. Examples of this category include promise, vow, threaten, etc.
- (d) **Expressives:** speech acts in this category express the speaker's feeling or psychological attitude concerning a state of affairs that the expressive refers to. There is no direction of fit in expressive speech acts and the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed. Examples of this category include apologise, condole, welcome, etc.
- (e) **Declarations:** Speech acts in this category bring about a change in the world. The direction of fit is both ways. There is no sincerity condition.

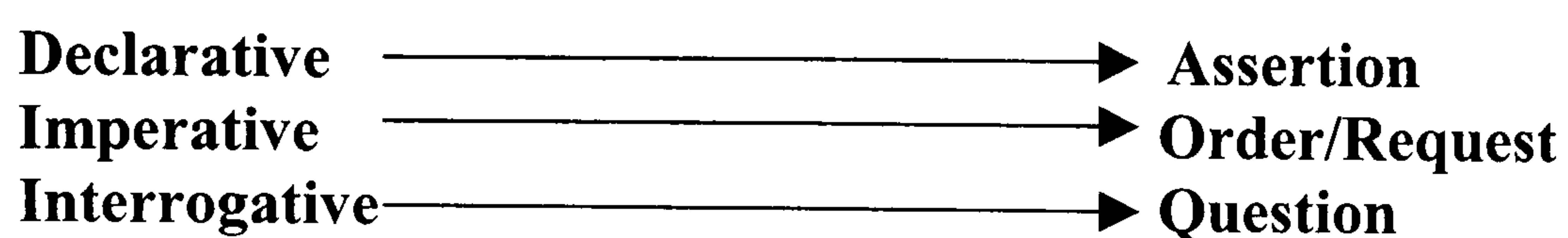
Although Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts on the basis of the above criteria boils down the huge number of illocutionary acts into a small number of types, it is quite obvious that within each category the paradigm examples are very different from one another in spite of the fact that they share some significant properties. In order to distinguish paradigm examples in each category from one another, consultation with the four dimensions of variation that Searle heavily relied on will not suffice. Rather, reference should be made to the relevant remaining criteria that Searle postulates. This is indeed what Fraser (1983: 38-41) attempted in order to distinguish the paradigm examples from each category. For example, in order to distinguish a **command** from a **request**, Fraser turns to Searle's status criterion. According to this criterion, whereas a request does not assume the speaker has control or authority over the person addressed, the other does.

Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts has obviously not been free from challenges on the principles on which it has been based (see Flowerdew (1988) for an overview). However, as Blum-Kulka, (1997) notes, it has been very influential in such disciplines as cross-cultural, developmental, and interlanguage pragmatics.

2.3.2.3 Direct and indirect speech acts

Searle's (1975; 1979) third major contribution to our understanding of illocutionary acts is the distinction that he made between direct and indirect speech acts. A direct speech act involves instances in which "the speaker utters a sentence and means exactly and literally what he says" (Searle, 1979: 30). An indirect speech act, on the

other hand, is one in which “one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another” (*ibid.*: 31). A different way of putting this is to classify speech acts on a structural basis. Whenever there is a correspondence between a structure and its illocutionary function, there is a direct speech act (Leech, 1983; Yule, 1996; Grundy, 2000). The following illustrates this form-function mapping:



As the arrows indicate, whenever a declarative is used for an assertion, an imperative for an order or request, and an interrogative for a question, the relationship is one of direct speech act. An indirect speech act, on the other hand, does not bear this one-to-one correspondence. The following illustrates this.

Example:

A and B are both being treated in hospital. B has drawn the curtains around her bed and cannot see A who is about to close the window.

A: It’s a bit cold here.

B: Would you like to borrow my jumper?

In the above exchange, A intends her utterance to be taken at face value as a description of the ward’s temperature and as a reason for closing the window, however, it is misunderstood by B who interprets it as a complaint and who offers to improve the situation. In other words, A’s use of a declarative sentence to make an assertion is an instance of a direct speech act because of the interrelationship between form and function. However, B’s reply is an example of indirect speech act because of the existing structural mismatch, i.e., an interrogative is used for making an offer.

Concerning the processing of requests, Searle (1975) argues for a literalist model where the processing of conventionally indirect requests relies initially on the literal interpretation of what is said, prior to any checks with other available information. As his model of processing partially relies on the Gricean cooperative principle (1975), and further because it is heavily drawn on in politeness theory I will briefly outline the principle before explaining his model.

- **The cooperative principle**

The thrust of Grice's (1975) cooperative principle (CP) is that parties to an intentional verbal or nonverbal communication work on the assumption that a set of principles are operative in their exchanges facilitating goal achievement and behaviour interpretation. In Grice's words the principle runs as follows, "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (45).

Grice (1975:45-46) further analyses the principle into four conversational maxims:

Quantity:

Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality:

Do not say what you believe to be false

Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

Relation:

1. Be relevant

Manner:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression

2. Avoid ambiguity

3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)

4. Be orderly

Unlike rules which are invested with absolute standing, that is, "there is no question of rules being applied to a *certain extent*, of one rule *conflicting* with another, of one rule *overruling* another, etc., according to variable factors in context" (Leech, 1983:21), the maxims are a set of constraints operating on language in an ongoing conversational interaction. Therefore, whereas the non-observance of a grammar rule leads to ungrammatical sentences, the non-observance of maxims does not necessarily lead to pragmatically ill-formed utterances. On the contrary, flouting a maxim makes it available to the speaker to mean more than they say. Conversational implicature is a related concept that Grice has introduced. According to Grice, on many occasions speakers deliberately do not observe the maxims cited above in a joint activity so as to generate what Grice calls conversational implicatures which are

implicit meanings inferred inductively. Let us see what actually happens to the maxims in a talk exchange. Consider this example (Leech, 1983:80).

A: We'll all miss Bill and Agatha, won't we?

B: Well, we'll all miss Bill.

In the above example, B's remark deliberately fails to observe the maxim of quantity by confirming only part of A's opinion. However, working on the assumption that B's move is in line with the cooperative principle, A realizes that there is an underlying implicature involved, that is B implicates that they will not miss Agatha. In essence, Grice's cooperative principle can be invoked to explain how an utterance can be seen as an indirect speech act.

A particular type of implicature recognized by Grice (cited in Thomas, 1995a:74) is generated from the non-observance of conversational maxims without the intention of producing one. It is called 'infringing a maxim'. Implicatures of this kind might be generated by any one of such things as that the speaker has an imperfect mastery of a specific language (L2 learners, for instance), or the speaker has a (temporary) psychological or physiological impairment.

From what has been outlined above, it may follow that the principle is only operative in linguistic interaction in conversations but not in writing. This is of course not a far-fetched inference given that the maxims of CP are called conversational and that most examples given in the literature to illustrate the point are taken from invented talk exchanges. However, this is not the case at all. Indeed, writers also abide by the conversational maxims, and like speakers they sometimes intentionally fail to observe maxims to make implicatures. White (2001:63) writes "the CP is not suspended when communicating in writing" and he emphasises that skilled writers tend to deliberately flout maxims to generate implicatures.

Though Grice's CP has contributed greatly to our understanding of (1) the processes involved in the generation of implicature (indirect speech acts) and of (2) how hearers

manage to infer speaker intention, it has also met with criticisms (Lakoff, 1973; Keenan, 1976; Wierzbicka, 1985; Hymes, 1986; Thomas, 1995a and b). One such criticism relates to the universality of the maxims of the CP. Keenan (1976) in her study of Malagasy speakers (especially men) has argued that the Gricean maxim of quantity does not hold the same status as it does in western societies. For a Malagasy, failure to meet the informational needs of the speaker is generally seen locally as a norm whereas this is not usually seen as conventional in western society. More importantly, according to Keenan whereas the deliberate non-observance of the quantity maxim triggers a conversational implicature in western countries, it does not for a Malagasy. In a nutshell, the maxims are not identically observed across cultures but are culturally relativized.

2.3.2.4 Searle's account of processing indirectness

Concerning the dimension of conventional indirectness in requests, where form and function do not converge, there has been much theoretical discussion in the literature to account for how the illocutionary force is worked out (Sadock, 1974; Searle, 1979; Morgan, 1978; Clark, 1979; Ervin-Tripp, *et al.* 1987; Blum-kulka, 1987 & 1989). Searle's (1979) account argues for a literalist model where the processing of conventionally indirect requests relies initially on the literal interpretation of what is said, prior to any checks with other available information. In his *Expression and Meaning* (1979), Searle argues that for the hearer to work out the illocutionary force of an utterance like 'Can you pass the salt?' they have to go through a long inferential process involving at least 10 steps. The process starts with the literal meaning of the utterance and continues by resorting to the CP and felicity conditions. Furthermore, in order to give systematicity to his account of conventionally indirect speech acts, Searle advances his conventionality thesis in which conventions of usage make it possible for the hearer to work out the force being communicated. Building on Searle's (*ibid.*), and Morgan's (1978) conventionality thesis, Blum-Kulka (1987) distinguishes between conventional and non-conventional indirect speech acts. An example of each from my own data is given below

Examples:

Conventionally indirect requests

I need the following data for global land areas to run soil temperature model under current and future climate data. *I will be extremely grateful if you could let me have your points on this matter.*

Nonconventionally indirect requests

This is a slightly adapted version of the talk I gave at RIDE in February (for those who may have attended that meeting). *Gloss: Getting the point across to the hearer that those who already attended the first seminar may find very few new points in the second.*)

Blum-Kulka (1989) argues that for the hearer to work out the illocutionary force of a conventionally indirect speech act they need to focus on the propositional (semantic) and wording features. The former refers to the semantics underlying a conventionally indirect request. For example, questioning the addressee's ability is a conventional way of requesting indirectly. The latter (convention of form) refers to the actual wording used to formulate indirect requests. For example, though "can you" and "are you able to" are more or less semantically synonymous, they are pragmatically different in that only the former can be conventionally used to realise an indirect request. Furthermore, in order to distinguish conventionally indirect speech acts from nonconventional ones, Blum-Kulka invokes the ambiguity issue. She argues that conventionally indirect requests manifest pragmatic duality in terms of their semantic content, i.e., conventionally indirect requests are ambiguous only between two readings: literal and requestive, and "the locus of ambiguity is mainly at the level of utterance meaning" (Blum-Kulka, 1989:43). This is in stark contrast to non-conventionally indirect requests (hints) where force is pragmatically open-ended. Finally, the pragmatic force of conventionally indirect requests is negotiable in the sense that the hearer and the speaker alike can ignore the interpretation of it.

2.3.3 Properties of request from speech act theory

Relating the above overview of speech act theory to this study, it is possible to identify some of the properties of requests. To start with, a request is an illocutionary act (speech act) formulated by a speaker to get the addressee (hearer) to do something. Hence, it falls in the category of directive in Searle's taxonomy of speech

acts. Secondly, for an utterance to count as a request certain felicity conditions have to be satisfied. Searle (1969:66) provides the following felicity conditions for requests:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1) Propositional content: | Future act <i>A</i> of <i>H</i> |
| 2) Preparatory: | 1. <i>H</i> is able to do <i>A</i> . <i>S</i> believes <i>H</i> is able to do <i>A</i> .
2. It is not obvious to both <i>S</i> and <i>H</i> that <i>H</i> will do <i>A</i> in the normal course of events of his own accord |
| 3) Sincerity | <i>S</i> wants <i>A</i> to do <i>A</i> . |
| 4) Essential | counts as an attempt to get <i>H</i> to do <i>A</i> |

The above felicity conditions firstly demonstrate that the propositional content of a request must denote a future act. In other words, request illocutions are prospective or pre-event in the sense that “they express the speaker’s expectation toward some prospective action... on the part of the hearer” (Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1985). It is possibly inconceivable that a speaker should ask the hearer to do something in the past. This property contrasts sharply with, for example, an apologetic speech act, which seems to be necessarily post-event: one usually apologises for a past action (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983). Consider the following examples of requests:

- a) **The staff requests that you reconsider your resignation.**
- b) **I want you to take out the books.**

The propositional contents (the proposition remaining subsequent to cutting off the request part, underlined in the above examples) of the above utterances denote a future action. In (a) what is requested by the staff is that the addressee reconsider her¹ resignation, and in (b) what is wanted is that the addressee take the books out. Both possibly denote immediate future.

Secondly, not only must the speaker believe that the hearer is able to fulfil the request but also it is not obvious to either of them that what is requested will happen anyway. In other words, there is no sense in asking the hearer to do something if he cannot do it. In addition, to the preparatory condition of ability, there can be others as conventionalised in a given language. For example, the preparatory conditions of willingness, and possibility can be used in English for making a request.

¹ In this study, the RT convention of making all speakers one gender and all the addressees the other will be used.

Thirdly, as suggested in the last two felicity conditions, the speaker must sincerely want the request goal to be fulfilled, and what he utters must be perceived and counted as such by the hearer.

Fourthly, requests can take a range of forms starting from the most direct to the most indirect. In the two examples cited above, the illocutions have been performed most directly because the action is done by a self-referential performative verb. In contrast to these direct speech acts, requests can also be done indirectly without the explicit presence of a metalinguistic performative verb .

2.3.4 Summary

In the above sections, I discussed the Speech Act Theory particularly in order to characterize the request illocution. In the discussion, the theoretical underpinnings of speech act theory were mentioned, and important issues including illocutions, felicity conditions, classification of illocutions, and direct and indirect speech acts were reviewed. Mention was also made of the cooperative principle in the discussion of indirect speech act. From the review of the speech act theory, the fundamental characteristics of request illocution were mentioned. That is, a request illocution was characterised as belonging to the directive class which is in essence pre-event. Besides the propositional content of a request illocution, it was mentioned that other felicity conditions as formulated by Searle should also be met for the act to come off.

Concerning the cooperative principle, it was mentioned that the theory does not provide a comprehensive teleological explanation for people's choice of indirect strategies. The following section which deals with politeness theory complements this shortcoming.

2.4 Politeness theories

The pragmatic motivation lying behind the speaker's choice of indirect strategies has been addressed by Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983), Brown and Levinson (1978: revised

edition, 1987) and Fraser (1975 and 1990). Fraser (1990) has grouped the theoretical stance of politeness into four classes: the social norm-view, the conversational-maxim view, the face-saving view, and the conversational-contract view. Except for the first view, which is fundamentally a folk theory, the last three see politeness from a pragmatic view in which consideration of politeness in linguistic exchanges entails reference to the language user as well as the context of language use (Levinson, 1983; Mey, 1993). Kasper (1990: 678) calls these three views of politeness scientific conceptualisations. Common to the three pragmatic views is the assumption of politeness as “strategic conflict avoidance” (Kasper, 1990 and 1998). From this viewpoint, ongoing unmarked interactions are not free from conflict because of the set of wants that interactants bring into them that may not be mutually desirable. Hence, politeness is needed to maintain social equilibrium. Concerning the necessity of politeness in human societies, Lakoff (1990:34) observes:

If societies did not devise ways to smooth over moments of conflict and confrontation, social relationships would be difficult to establish and continue, and essential cohesion would erode. Politeness strategies are the means to preserve at least the semblance of harmony and cohesion.

Besides the first conceptualisation of politeness, the three theories collectively share a view of language and communication which builds up on CP and speech act theory. As this study is largely related to the Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, I only review their views.

2.4.1 The face-saving view

Fraser (1990:219) describes the face-saving view as “the most clearly articulated and most thoroughly worked out”. The reasons for the popularity of the model seem to have to do with its theoretical consistency, economy, generalizability, and coverage of data across cultures. The face-saving model is based on the construct of ‘face’ taken from Goffman’s (1967) work, but the model looks at the face construct from a different perspective (Mao, 1994). To begin with, Brown and Levinson’s model takes the CP as the point of departure in that it assumes that it provides an ‘unmarked’ or socially neutral (indeed asocial) presumptive framework for communication”.

Against this Gricean backdrop, the model introduces the concept of face to teleologically account for deviations from the presumptive framework. Face in Brown and Levinson's model (1987: 61) is "the public self image that every member wants to claim for himself". This construct in their view consists of two interrelated aspects:

(a) Negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction- i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition

(b) Positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61)

To paraphrase, the negative side is associated with individuals' wants to be unimpeded by others as well as their territorial claims. The positive side relates to the individuals' psychological wants of being appreciated and approved of (etc.) in their actions. A natural corollary of this is that, first, maintaining the negative face wants and enhancing the positive face wants of one another in an interaction is a mutually beneficial activity, or polite to the interactants. And secondly, there exists an associating set of illocutionary acts threatening the different sides of face. Indeed, Brown and Levinson classify acts according to the kinds of face threatened and whether the threat is to the hearer's face or to the speaker's or to both. For example, orders and requests encroach on the hearer's negative face wants because the speaker suggests through performing an illocutionary act that they do not intend to leave the hearer unimpeded in their actions.

Due to the existence of a range of acts that are inherently face threatening, and that must be performed for some reason, Brown and Levinson argue that rationality entails that they should be performed in such a way that they counterbalance the inherent tension (impoliteness) that they may bring about. Again a natural corollary of this is that the speaker has a repertoire of communicative strategies enabling them to meaningfully choose the one that best realises their intention in a context without creating any face damage. The following are the potential strategies that, according to

Brown and Levinson (1987:69), the speaker may choose to perform a face-threatening act (FTA) in order to mitigate the threat to face.

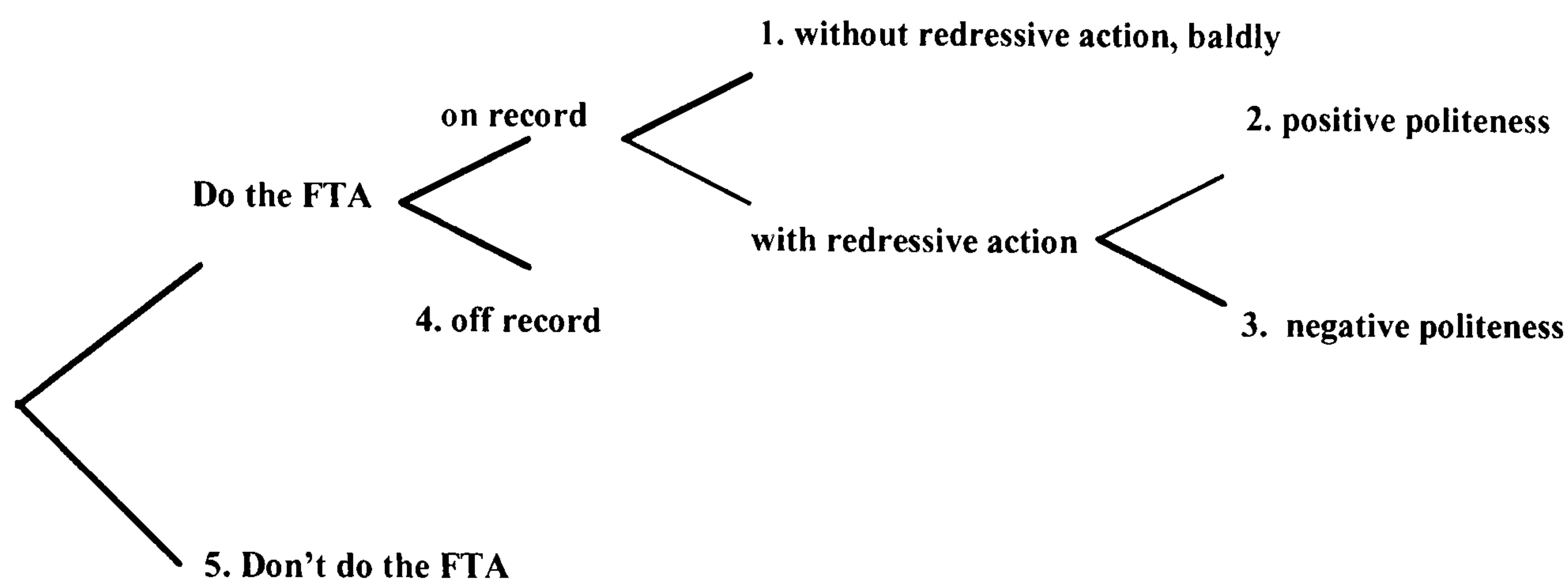


Figure 2.3 Politeness Strategies

As the above figure illustrates, at the initial psychological level the speaker is free about whether or not to perform a FTA. However if he decides to do so, prior to performing the FTA (one in which the speaker risks losing face), the speaker has to two strategies available: either going on record or off record. If he chooses the latter, the speech act itself does not commit them to one unambiguous intent. For instance, if I say “ Oh, I seem to have left my pen in my workstation” with the ulterior intent of borrowing my classmate’s pen, I cannot be definitely taken to have meant that. In other words, the addressee, as well as the speaker, is given the choice of ignoring it. In this regard, Lakoff (1975 as cited in Tannen, 2001) argues that indirectness benefits the speaker from two fronts: defensiveness and rapport. The first more or less resembles Brown and Levinson’s view. As to the second, Tannen (2001: 155) observes “The rapport benefit of indirectness results from the pleasant experience of getting one’s way not because one demanded it but because the other person wanted the same thing”. Off record strategies are face-saving for both parties.

However, if the speaker chooses to do the FTA on record, he has two options: (1) baldly without redressive action, or (2) with redressive action. The former strategy involves performing a straightforward face-threatening act where the sense and force of an utterance converge. For instance, by uttering “Give me your pen!” with

appropriate prosodic features, the speaker has gone baldly on record in performing the act because they unambiguously communicate their intention. In contrast, the latter alternative involves performing a face-threatening act with due consideration of the hearer's face. Or, in Brown and Levinson's (1987:69) words, the speaker "attempts to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA". For instance, by saying, "Would you mind if I borrow your pen?" the speaker maintains the addressee's face by, *inter alia*, giving her the option of noncompliance, and simultaneously safeguards her positive face. Moreover as the above figure illustrates, on record strategies with redressive actions are oriented either to the positive or negative face. Positive politeness in this context emphasises common ground between speaker and hearer, focus on cooperation, and fulfilling addressee's wants which are achievable by a number of strategies including making use of in-group language markers, statements of friendship, solidarity, etc. Negative politeness, on the other hand, is oriented to the hearer's negative face, her desire for autonomy, maintenance of social distance. Some of the common strategies which are used to redress negative politeness include such pragmalinguistic features as indirectness, internal/external mitigating devices, and perspective orientation (see section 3.14 for detail).

The issue of how speakers go about choosing a particular speech act is discussed in the next sub-section. To summarise this sub-section, Brown and Levinson's treatment of politeness is based on the notion of face which consists of a negative and a positive aspect. Further, as speakers need to perform a range of FTAs in interactions, speakers frequently use politeness strategies to counterbalance the damaging effects of FTAs.

2.4.1.1 FTA and sociological parameters

Another dimension of the face-saving view of politeness is the determination of contextual parameters influencing the assessment of FTA, which in turn governs the choice of the politeness strategy. In Brown and Levinson's (1983: 60) view, "the more an act threatens S's or H's face, the more S will want to choose a higher-numbered strategy". According to them the 'weight' or more simply the assessment of a face threatening act depends on the independent trio of social distance (D)

between the H and S, the relative power (P) of S and H, and the rank of imposition (R). The weightiness of a FTA is claimed to be computed using the following formula: $W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$. The authors explain the above formula along these lines:

W_x is the numerical value that measures the weightiness of the FTA x, D (S,H) is the value that measures the social distance between S and H, P(H,S) is the measure of power that H has over S, and R_x is the value that measures the degree to which the FTA is rated an imposition in that culture.” (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 76).

Hence, according to Brown and Levinson, a higher value of any of the three sociological parameters will result in a higher value for the weightiness of the FTA. This in turn will lead to choosing a higher-numbered strategy for realising the act. For example, if the value of power (which is intrinsically asymmetrical) between S and H is such that the latter holds a higher position over S, it is likely that S be predisposed to use more off-record negative politeness in an unmarked interaction.

Distance refers to the symmetric relationship based on stable attributes which is mutual knowledge between the S and the H in an interaction. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 77), the value of this construct between participants is based on “the frequency of interaction and the kinds of material or non-material goods exchanged between S and H”. But they note in passing that the value is not exhausted by the definition. In this connection, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1985: 118) measure the value of the construct on the basis of “social network membership”. In the same vein, Brown and Gilman (1972:258), whose comments on power and distance predate those of Brown and Levinson, claim that this value can “depend on whether the contact results in the discovery or creation of like-mindedness”, which seems to be focusing on a slightly different aspect of distance. Going back to Brown and Levinson’s conceptualisation of the construct, they note that they are not interested in how the components making up the construct of distance are compounded because they are culture specific. In this regard, Fukushima (2000) claims that since the possible components might be cross-culturally different, this may result in differences in perception of context in different cultural groups.

With the above description in mind, the value of the distance construct cannot possibly be viewed as being discrete. That is, distance cannot be imagined to be existing dichotomously. Rather, it exists along a continuum where it can be theoretically measured on a scale from 1 to n .

In Brown and Levinson's (*ibid.*: 77) framework, power refers to the asymmetric social dimension existing between the speaker and the hearer. It is asymmetric or non-reciprocal because the hierarchical relationship existing between the S and the H in an area of behaviour can not be imagined to be equal (Brown and Gilman, 1972). Moreover, focusing on the behavioural control that the power differential between H and S causes, Brown and Levinson assert that power is basically an empowering attribute allowing the H to "impose his plans and his own self-evaluation (face) at the expense of S's plans and self-evaluation" (*ibid.*:77). Concerning the sources of power, Brown and Levinson (*ibid.*: 77) write:

In general there are two sources of P, either of which may be authorised or unauthorised- material control (over economic distribution and physical force) and metaphysical control (over the actions of others, by virtue of metaphysical forces subscribed by those others)

As for power, Brown and Levinson say that the component constructing the construct can be a range of factors, but they claim that it is essentially related to both individual attributes and role-relationship. Cansler and Stiles (1981) in their study of the verbal behaviour of status-discrepant dyads also construe status on the basis of these two attributes. In cross-cultural pragmatics, it is the second attribute, role relationship, that researchers have treated central in their study of speech acts. For example, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1985) in her study of requesting says "by power we mean the power of the speaker over the hearer in a given role relationship". Finally, the absolute rank of imposition in Brown and Levinson's' model refers to the degree to which an act infringes on face wants (negative or positive wants). Infringement in this sense is not an absolute value but situationally and/or culturally determined.

To summarise this sub-section, Brown and Levinson argue that there is a trio of social factors that have to be considered to assess the weightiness of a FTA. The factors are power, distance and the size of imposition. Furthermore, they argue that the choice of a politeness strategy depends on how weighty a FTA is calculated.

2.4.1.2 Critique of the face-saving view

Though Brown and Levinson's theory has "given enormous impetus to two decades of politeness studies" (de Kadt, 1998:173), it hasn't been free from challenges and criticisms. One such criticism concerns the universality of the face construct. Some research studies (Mao, 1994; Ide, 1989; Gu, 1990; Matsumoto, 1988; de Kadt, 1998; Wierzbicka, 1985) have demonstrated that the principles underlying Brown and Levinson's model, which explain interactional styles on the basis of face wants, are not applicable to the analysis of Eastern languages, whose politeness values are not based on individualism, but on group identity. Matsumoto (1988), for example, argues that although politeness strategies as described in the politeness model are found in Japanese, the underlying motivations for their use in exchanges are not those of the model. Matsumoto argues that typifying the Japanese language and culture as a negative-politeness culture according to the western value system conceals the function of deference in Japanese. Whereas deference tends to mitigate the size of imposition in English (Foley, 1997), in Japanese deference not only marks relation in an interaction but also contributes to the addressee's self image.

Another criticism that has been made of the model has to do with its suggested relationship between indirectness and politeness. Brown and Levinson's model considers indirectness and politeness as parallel dimensions, i.e., off record strategies are the most polite. In this regard, Blum-Kulka's (1987) study of indirectness and politeness in requesting suggests that politeness with regard to requesting illocutions is perceived as a function of pragmatic transparency and avoidance of coerciveness. Hence, off record requesting speech acts are not the politest of all requesting strategies in either English or Hebrew as apparently predicted in the politeness theory.

2.5 Components of requests: speech act and politeness theory

Having discussed the literature on speech acts and politeness theory, it is possible to identify with a fairly comprehensive completeness the properties of requesting illocutionary act. In enumerating the properties I will follow Ellis (1994:167) in distinguishing illocutionary aspects from sociolinguistic ones. To these I will add a cross-linguistic aspect as well. The properties of requesting illocutions are as follows:

a) Illocutionary aspects

- 1) Request illocutions are directive (see sub-section 2.3.2.2)
- 2) For a request to be felicitous certain felicity conditions should be met (see sub-section 2.3.2.1).
- 3) Requests are characterized by their degree of requestivity. Put differently, request realizations can take a range of strategies starting from the most direct to the most indirect (see sub-section 2.3.2.3)
- 4) Requests can be both internally and externally modified (see sub-section 2.4.1).
- 5) Requests can be encoded from different perspectives (see sub-section 2.4.1).

b) Sociolinguistic aspects

- 6) Requests are face threatening (2.4.1.1).
- 7) Choice of request strategy is sensitive to social parameters (see sub-section 2.7.1.1).

c) Cross-linguistic aspect

- 8) Languages both converge and diverge in their resources and uses of request illocutions (see section 2.2 and its sub-sections).

The above features, which summarily characterise request illocutions from three main perspectives, suggest that from the point of view of second language acquisition and production, the performance of appropriate interlanguage request illocution which conforms both pragmalinguistically and sociopragmatically to L2 actual patterns of use calls for substantial linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge. In this regard Ellis (1992:5) contends “the target-like performance of this particular illocutionary act (request) calls for considerable linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge on the part of the learner. The learner needs to develop a range of linguistic devices and also to learn how to use these in socially appropriate ways”. The same argument can of course apply by extension to the comprehension of L2 request illocutions as well, in which for the learner to reconstruct the speaker’s pragmatic intention they have to have the above knowledge base.

Considering that the performance of a request illocution involves a complex interaction of the various dimensions cited above, Blum-Kulka (1991) provides a model of request schema which provides a fairly comprehensive picture of the components involved in producing a comprehending of request illocutions. The model is presented in Figure 2.4.

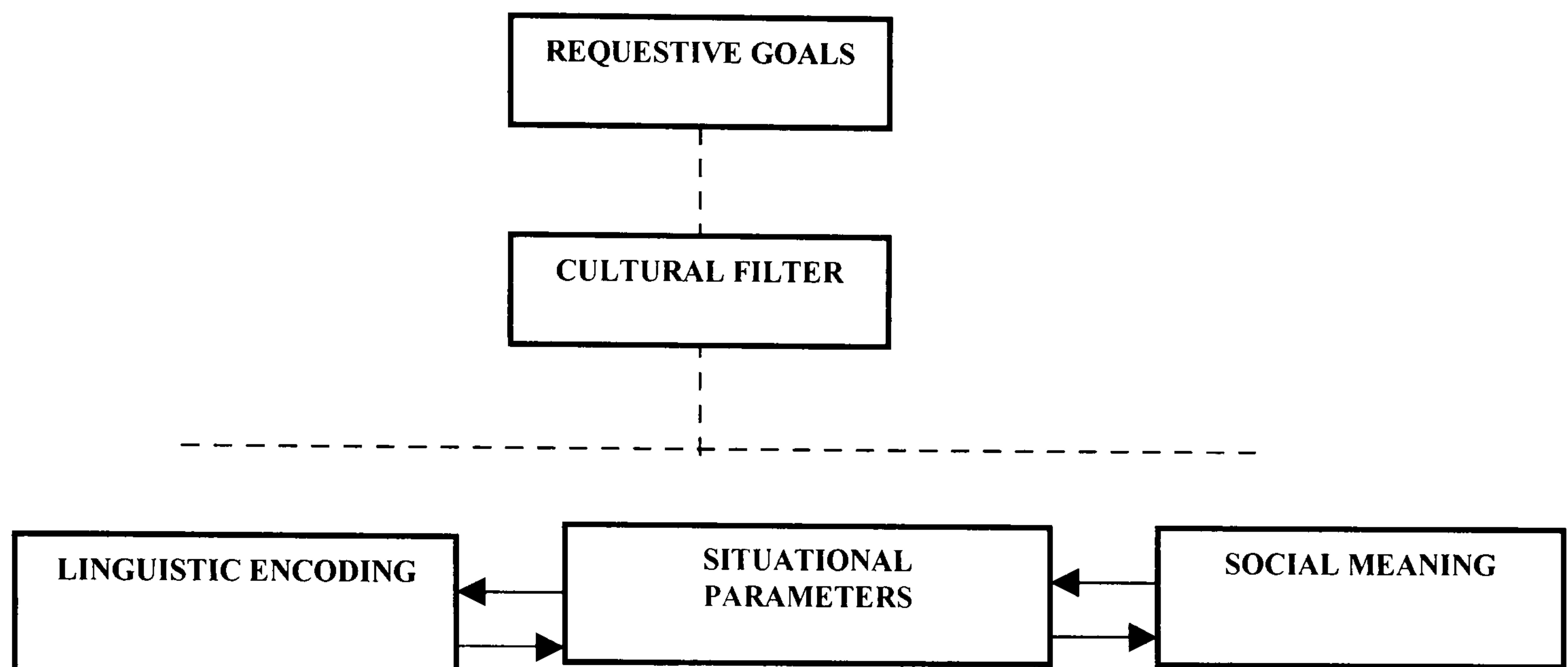


Figure 2.4 General model of request schema (Blum-Kulka, 1991:257)

According to the above model, the motivational drive for enacting a request illocution is a requestive goal. Requests can be made for action, goods, information or permission (Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1985). However, prior to the actual linguistic formulation of a requesting goal at a pragmalinguistic level a cultural filter first evaluates the legitimacy of the request goal. It is well known that cultures can differ in their estimation of the legitimacy of a request goal. For example, the type of legitimate questions asked on the first social encounter is very much culturally determined. Secondly, the cultural filter affects the requester's evaluation of the contextual parameters (see sub-section 2.4.1.1) and finally appropriate linguistic encoding of a request will be carried out in terms of its social appropriateness. According to Blum-Kulka (*ibid.*: 261), the model in empirical terms predicts that for a request to be verbalised "Speaker A, wishing to attain goal X, appraises the social situation as a member of culture C1 and selects from the available pragmalinguistic repertoire R the utterance that carries the maximum effectiveness combined with

politeness” (261). In brief, the model characterises request performance as being mainly a culturally determined way of speaking. As to L2 learners the model not only highlights the complexity of performing L2 request illocutions as mentioned above but also implicitly predicts L2 learners’ request illocution performance can have a particular intercultural style

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter started with a definition of pragmatics which outlined the various issues addressed in both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. Further, by reviewing the fields of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics, I emphasised the point that the latter owes much of its theoretical and methodological underpinnings to the former. Concerning the properties of requesting illocutions, I reviewed relevant parts of speech act and politeness theories. In general, I made the point that request illocutions can not be adequately described from the point of view of one particular theory, that is speech act, and that they need to be complemented by politeness theory.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research methodology used in this study. To begin with, six research questions, followed by a number of associated hypotheses stating the possible outcome of this research study will be presented. Secondly, subsequent to a methodological overview of the data collection procedures in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics, I will explain the design of the data collection instruments in this study, of their procedure of implementation, and of their piloting phase. Then comes the main study. Finally, details of the categories of the analyses will be introduced.

3.2 Research questions

This section introduces the proposed research questions which are introduced in two sub-sections. The first consists of the questions addressing the components of request illocutions under investigation (see sub-section 3.14 for description). The second comprises those related to the contextual constraints, which were systematically controlled and distributed in the data collection instrument (see sub-section 3.4.4).

3.2.1 Pragmalinguistic components of request

The following first three research questions relate to the pragmalinguistic components of requests. The components involve requesting strategies, perspective orientations, internal modifiers, and external modifiers. Unlike the research questions in 1.4 that roughly suggested the overall direction of this research, in this sub-section the questions will be more focused.

- 1) *Do the English L2 Iranian PhD candidates in Britain and the Farsi L1 Iranian PhD candidates in Iran differ in their choice of requesting strategies, perspective orientations, and external/internal modifiers to realise requests in writing?*

- 2) *Do the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British, PhD candidates in Britain differ in their choice of requesting strategies, perspective orientations, and external/internal modifiers to realise requests in writing?*
- 3) *Do the choices of requesting strategies, perspective orientations, and external/internal modifiers made by the English L2 Iranian PhD candidates in Britain relate to the ones used in their L1?*

There are three research themes running through the above three research questions. Firstly, they aim to identify the components of requesting sequences that each group may possibly invoke consistently. Secondly, they aim to contrastively juxtapose pairs of languages to identify occurrences of divergences or convergences in the tokens of their elicited requesting sequences. Finally, the third question aims to investigate whether or not the occurrences of divergences or convergences in English L2 users' production of requesting sequences are attributable to their L1.

The rationale on which the inclusion of the British-speaking and Farsi-speaking participants is based is explanatory. Without the two groups, it would probably be difficult on empirical grounds to identify normality or deviance in the request behaviour of the English L2 (ESL) group compared with that of native speakers. Even if it were possible to determine the instances, it would probably be difficult to provide an adequate explanation for it. Hence, the addition of the two groups besides the ESL group can be helpful from at least three perspectives. Firstly, it would probably show if transfer was active in the production of the speech act under study. Secondly, the inclusion would probably show the degree of the ESL group's accommodation to the patterns that could be seen in the native group's performance of the speech act. Finally, it could provide a basis to explain the patterns which are independent from both languages.

3.2.2 Contextual constraints

Besides the pragmalinguistic features of the speech act of requesting, this study also examines how certain contextual constraints operate on its formulation in writing (see

sub-section 3.4.4). The rationale for the inclusion of the constraints in this study is once again explanatory. That is, it might be the case that though the elicitation tasks are similarly perceived by all groups, the possible deviant pragmalinguistic features produced by the ESL group might stem from their sociopragmatic competence rather than pragmalinguistic ability.

Also, because the collection of data is carried out through a number of tasks, it was also important to ascertain whether participants in this study similarly perceived the task prompts used for elicitation. Concerning the contextual constraints, the following research questions are asked.

- 4) Are the situations used for the elicitation of requesting behaviour perceived to be similar in terms of the controlled contextual constraint of status?*
- 5) Are the participants similarly aware of the controlled contextual constraints of status and distance while formulating their requests?*
- 6) Do the participants similarly perceive the effect of the controlled contextual constraints of status and distance on their request formulations?*

As the formulations of the research questions show, the fourth question is concerned with the validity of the situations designed for the elicitation of the intended speech act. The fifth research question is concerned with the controlled contextual constraints involving status and distance (see sub-section 3.4.4.). The question addresses the groups' awareness of the controlled constraints. Finally, the sixth research question is concerned with the effect of the controlled constraints. The rationale for drawing a distinction between 'awareness' and 'effect' is that the two notions might function independently of one another. That is, one might well be aware of a constraint in the planning and execution of a task without letting it influence the task. In the context of this study, it was interesting to see the function these two dimensions in the act of producing the intended speech act.

3.3 Hypotheses

Based on the research questions presented above, the following hypotheses relating to the specific components of request illocutions, and the controlled contextual constraints are presented. Hypotheses 1-11 are concerned with the components of requests, and hypotheses 12- 16 address the controlled contextual constraints.

(a) Requesting strategies

1: *There are no significant differences between the Persian L1, and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of requesting strategy types.*

2: *There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice of requesting strategy types.*

3: *The English L2 Iranian group do not rely on their L1 requesting strategies to structure their requests in English.*

(b) Perspective orientation

4: *There are no significant differences between the Persian L1, and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of perspective orientation.*

5: *There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice of perspective orientation.*

6: *The English L2 Iranian group do not rely on their L1 perspective strategies to structure the perspective orientations of their requests in English.*

(c) Internal modifiers

7: *There are no significant differences between the Persian L1, and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of internal modifiers for their request formulations.*

8: *There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian- and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice internal modifiers for their request formulations.*

9: *The English L2 Iranian group do not rely on their L1-related internal modifiers for their request formulations in English.*

(d) External modifiers

10: *There are no significant differences between the Persian L1, and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of external request modifiers.*

11: *There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice of internal request modifiers.*

(e) Status

12: *There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian PhD candidates in their perception of the contextual constraint of status as operationalised in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations.*

13: *There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian PhD candidates in their consideration of the contextual constraint of status while formulating their requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations.*

14: *There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian PhD candidates in the extent to which the contextual constraint of status affects their formulations of requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations.*

(f) Distance

15: *There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian PhD candidates in their consideration of the contextual constraint of distance while formulating their requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations.*

16: *There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian PhD candidates in the extent to which the contextual constraint of distance affects their formulations of requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations.*

3.4 Methods of data collection

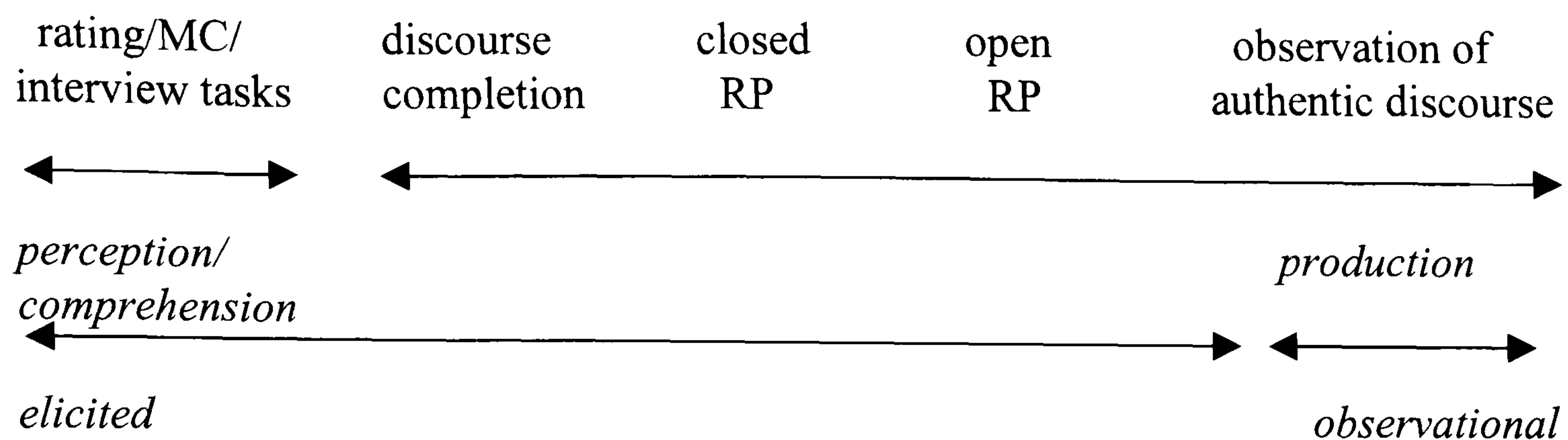
In this study, two data collection methods will be used to address the research questions and their accompanying hypotheses. The first, which I name ‘the open-ended discourse production tasks (ODPT)’, mainly focuses on eliciting written data involving request sequences. The instrument will be further used to discover how the elicited data are susceptible to the contextual constraints controlled in this study. The

second instrument, which is labelled ‘the metapragmatic questionnaire’ aims to assess the participants’ perception and awareness of the contextual constraints and the effect of the constraints on the request sequences elicited by the first instrument. In a sense, the second instrument serves two purposes. Firstly, it attempts to complement part of the findings from the first instrument which deals with the controlled contextual constraints. Secondly, it aims to assess the cross-cultural comparability of the situations. It should be noted that in the original design of the study, it was decided to complement the metapragmatic data through the implementation of an interview. However, on the basis of the feedback from the piloting phase it was later decided that it was adequate to respond to the objectives of this study by the first two instruments. The reason for this was that the function of the interview could be undermined by the former (see 3.11.2.).

3.4.1 Methodological issues in eliciting pragmatic data

In the area of cross-cultural pragmatics, there exists a challenge for researchers to capture the authenticity, creativity, and richness of natural speech while attempting to control the many variables inherent in language use so that data from different individuals can be meaningfully compared. (Ebsworth et al. 1996: 90)

In the interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics research, there are essentially two methods for obtaining production data, both largely intended to capture oral pragmatic repertoire. The first consists of a range of elicitation procedures relying on tasks for obtaining the intended speech act sequences. It includes such procedures as discourse completion, and role-play tasks which also come in different adaptations. The second method, which as yet has been rarely used especially in ILP studies, hinges on collecting naturally occurring data through observation. Kasper and Dahl (1991: 217) use the following flow chart to show the types of data collection procedures.



Note: MC = multiple choice questionnaire
RP = role play

Figure 3.1 Data collection methods

Concerning the elicitation procedures of data collection, both role-play and discourse completion tasks (DCT) have been extensively used in ILP research (see Kasper and Dahl, 1991 for an extensive overview). However, role-play has been gaining more favour in the collection of spoken pragmatic data because of the correspondence existing between the channel and the elicitation mode (Sasaki, 1998). Discourse completion tasks, on the other hand, in Kasper and Dahl's words "have been a much used and much criticised elicitation format in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics" (1991:21). Because the present study will be using the underlying assumptions of DCT and its format, a brief introduction to DCT is given.

DCTs in their original format are short incomplete discourse sequences involving mini-dialogues. The minialogues are preceded by brief descriptions of socially differentiated situations, i.e., showing where they are occurring with systematic distribution of contextual constraints (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984). Each mini-dialogue contains one sentential blank after the introductory prompt, which each subject fills in with the appropriate speech act. Besides the first descriptive prompt and the sentential blank, conventional DCTs also contain an uptake (rejoinder) from the addressee which makes the intended illocutionary act more explicit to the respondents.

Example:

At the professor's office

A student has borrowed a book from her teacher, which she promised to return today. When meeting her teacher, however, she realises that she forgot to bring it along.

Teacher: Miriam, I hope you brought the book I lent you.

Miriam: _____

Teacher: OK, but please remember it next week.

(Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984)

As the above example shows, the introductory prompt sketches a hypothetical situation enabling respondents to visualise themselves in it. The typical prompt also has a predetermined arrangement of controlled contextual constraints. In this case the constraints involve a *statusful professor* whom the addressee *knows*. Following the prompt, there is an incomplete exchange involving roughly an initiation, response, and feedback. This overall discursive structure is very much reminiscent of IRF (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). However, the response turn on the part of the addressee is left blank for the respondent to fill in. The two acts lying at the either side of the blank make sure that the intended speech act, in this case apology, is elicited.

As a pragmatic data elicitation procedure, Kasper and Dahl (1991: 217) characterise DCT as lying towards the lower end of production tasks (see Figure 3.1), possibly implying the procedure is mismatched with its object. That is, spoken data is elicited in writing. Despite this obvious incongruity, DCT has enjoyed considerable popularity in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig and Harford, 1993; Johnston *et al.* 1998). This is most possibly because of its theoretical and methodological advantages. Beebe and Cummings (1996: 80), while acknowledging that each approach to data collection has its own strengths and weaknesses, state the following advantages of DCT. It has the properties of

- 1) Gathering a large amount of data quickly;
- 2) Creating initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural speech;
- 3) Studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response
- 4) Gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance; and

5) Ascertaining the canonical shape of speech acts in the minds of speakers of that language.

Concerning the first strength, the reason for the ease of obtaining a large amount of data through DCT is manifold. For example, it can be so constructed as to elicit just the required illocution; it can be self-administered without requiring the presence of the researcher; it can be distributed to a large sample simultaneously without the need for any difficult pre-arrangements, and a large sample can be targeted beforehand with relative ease. The advantage, however, not only conceals but also gives the impression that its construction process is easy, which is far from being true. Concerning the second advantage, Beebe and Cummings argue that the data obtained through DCT can help construct an initial pragmalinguistic classification of a particular illocution which can be supported or rejected later by naturally occurring data. In other words, classifications resulting from DCT data can serve as an exploratory tool. Arguing from the opposite direction to Beebe and Cummings, Wolfson *et al.* (1989b), comment interestingly that DCT “is an excellent means of corroborating over a wider population results that have been obtained by ethnographic studies” (184).

The third advantage of DCT is that it can adequately serve as an elicitation device to identify the conventionally acceptable requirements of responses to specific speech acts. For example, Beebe and Cummings (1996:73), argue that the stereotypical requirements of a response involving refusal in American English are an adjunct + regret + negative ability + excuse. The fourth advantage of DCT is that it can identify the operative social and psychological parameters such as power, distance, etc. that influence illocution performance. Regarding this point, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) strongly argue that under field conditions obtaining an adequate amount of data for specific speech acts produced under specific circumstances with the same internal characteristics is logistically, if not theoretically, very difficult. Hence for experimentally meaningful comparative analyses of speakers’ speech act behaviour, they suggest carefully designed DCTs, in which prompts and social parameters are controlled. This reductionist approach to a phenomenon in which complex situations are ideally simplified for methodological and/or theoretical considerations is not new

in scientific research. In this regard, Brown *et al.* (1996:2) argue that “all grammarians of whatever theoretical type, like scientists, have always found it necessary to idealise their descriptions in order to be able to make them at all. In giving a textbook account of childhood disease like measles, a medical writer takes to begin with the ideal, typical case of measles. Having established the ideal type, you can think about the range of variation”. Finally, DCT can be used to capture the basic formulas used to perform particular illocutions.

Despite these methodological and theoretical advantages, DCTs have been criticised for not accurately reflecting natural language use on a number of dimensions (Beebe and Cummings, 1996; Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Mey, 2001). Beebe and Cummings (1996: 80), for example, cite the following limitations of DCT as compared to the observation of authentic discourse:

- 1) The range of formulas and strategies used (some, like avoidance, tend to be left out).
- 2) The number of repetitions and elaborations that occur.
- 3) The length of response or the number of turns it takes to fulfil the function.
- 4) Actual wording used in interaction.
- 5) The depth of emotion that in turn qualitatively affects the tone, content, and form of linguistic performance.
- 6) The actual rate of occurrence of a speech act- e.g., whether or not some one would refuse at all in a given situation.

It should be noted that Beebe and Cummings do not put the limitations strictly according to the above order. In fact, they do not prioritise the limitations. I changed the order for economy of description and I do not feel I am contradicting them. In general, the first three limitations highlight the point that DCT encourages the respondent to “summarise rather than elaborate” (*ibid.*: 71), and it “disfavours long negotiated sequences” (*ibid.*: 73), mostly because everything has to be said in the first turn. However, Beebe and Cummings report that like the data obtained from observation, in DCT, respondents have used all semantic formulas and their sub-categories. Concerning the fourth and fifth limitation, Beebe and Cummings report that the actual words and the attitudes expressed, for example by paralinguistic features, are not captured in DCT data. Finally, the sixth limitation points out that the

actual frequency of illocutions may not be adequately captured by DCT. Having discussed the limitations of DCT, it is important to note that almost all the limitations emerge when DCT is used to capture spoken data. However, if it is used with some minor modifications for written data, the limitations may well disappear to a considerable degree.

The above comparison between DCT and authentic discourse observation reveals some of the shortcomings of the former. However, in real world research there exists no limitation-free instrument of data collection. For example, authentic discourse observation, which I used as a yardstick to evaluate DCT, is not without its own problems in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic research. Beebe (1992, as cited in Beebe and Cummings, 1996) shows that samples collected from spontaneous interactions in a natural setting usually provide an unsystematic picture, in that some of the important demographic characteristics of the informants, and their role relationships cannot be known. Further, there are the ethical issues involved. Furthermore, following Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993), Cohen (1996: 392) adds the following list of methodological limitations of samples derived from naturally occurring data:

- 1) The speech act being studied may not occur naturally very often
- 2) Proficiency and gender may be difficult to control
- 3) Collecting and analysing 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

Hence, like DCT, collecting data through the observation of naturally occurring data is not free from theoretical and methodological problems. The question that has to be adequately addressed in a research project is what is the most feasible approach considering the constraints involved.

To summarise, I have attempted to discuss the data collection methods in interlanguage pragmatics and to show that each method of data collection is

necessarily associated with certain strengths and weaknesses. I have also shown that in interlanguage pragmatic studies, out of the two methods of collecting production data, ie elicitation and ethnography, the elicitation procedure has enjoyed greater popularity despite its inherent limitations. Finally, I noted that the limitations associated with DCT are particularly relevant when it is used as method for collecting spoken data.

3.4.2 Data collection method in this study

Relating the issues discussed in 3.4.1 to the present study, it is necessary to choose from the available methods of collecting interlanguage pragmatic data the most feasible one considering the purposes and constraints of the present study. To begin with, role-play cannot be validly used as it particularly focuses on spoken pragmatic data. As already mentioned (see sub-section 3.4.1), role-play in itself was a legitimate attempt on the part of researchers to develop a data elicitation procedure that would approximate to the form of the object they were interested in. This study, however, focuses on written requesting sequences. This incongruity of form rules out the possibility of validly using it for the purposes of this study. Using naturally occurring data was also ruled out in spite of the fact that it might have a lot to offer. The reason for this is that as this study focuses on cross-culturally similar situations in terms of setting and texture (contextual constraints), it is certainly not possible to collect a validly consistent data set of this kind within the time line, if at all possible.

DCT, on the other hand, seems to have great potential for this study despite the limitations which were cited above (see sub-section 3.4.1). First, unlike previous studies that used the procedure to collect **spoken** pragmatic data, this study focuses on how pragmatic data, in this case requesting sequences, are realised **in writing**. The focus thus avoids the incongruity and some of the limitations mentioned by Beebe and Cummings (1996), thus contributing to the validity of the study. Secondly, DCT as an elicitation procedure allows the manipulation of requesting internal and external parameters to specifically investigate the differential role they play in performing

requesting sequences. It further allows the choice of specific contexts in advance. Finally, considering the constraints involved in the present study, including timeline and logistic considerations, DCT seemed to be the most feasible procedure.

Despite the justifications for choosing DCT for the present study, it is clear that the procedure cannot be used in its original form for the reasons mentioned (see subsection 3.4.1.). It had to be refined and adapted to the purposes of this study. This procedure will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

3.4.3 Design: adapting discourse production tasks

In the previous section, it was argued that for gathering data on requesting sequences in writing an adaptation of DCT could be the most appropriate and feasible data collection instrument. To adapt DCT, the first question concerned the ways in which DCT could be profitably refined to address the research questions. Prior to any refinement, DCT was critically analysed in light of relevant literature to determine what roles its components play in the elicitation of data (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989; Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Rose and Ono, 1995; Hinkel, 1997). What emerges from the literature seems to suggest that the discourse frame (introductory frame) constitutes the pivotal component of DCT, in that it orientates the participants by specifying the context and their specific features. Besides the orientation property, the frame allows its predetermined features to be systematically varied to capture a range of contextual constraints. For instance, the contextual constraint of social distance can take either + or – value. Thirdly, by enriching the internal content of the discourse frame, the desired speech act can be elicited without any recourse to rejoinder and the mini-dialogue (Lee and McChesney, 2000; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000). The former directs the respondent towards the intended illocutionary act, and the latter in the case of requesting has the respondent write the act. A variation of DCT without the rejoinder also exists in the interlanguage pragmatics known as ‘NoHR DCT’ (Rose, 1992). This variation is reported to have stronger construct validity in that it allows the respondent the possibility of opting

out.

In the light of the features of the DCT and given that the present study aims to investigate requesting sequences in writing, it was decided that a ‘NoHR DCT’ format suits the purposes of the present study for a number of reasons. Firstly, because the study focuses on requesting sequences in writing in email correspondence, the inclusion of a rejoinder is unnecessary for the simple reason that the addressee is not immediately present for response. We did not have the canonical situation. Secondly, the discourse frame of the DCT where prompts signalling the value of contextual constraints are integrated could elicit the intended illocutionary act. The frame, however, was enriched (Billmyer and Varghese, 2000; Lee and McChesney, 2000) so that the participants could adequately process the situation before embarking on producing the intended illocution. The adaptations having been thus decided, I came up with an Open-ended Discourse Production Task (ODPT), which is in essence an adaptation of DCT. It seems that this variation can no longer be designated as DCT because there is no incomplete discursive interaction for a participant to complete. Furthermore, in light of the methodological decisions on the overall configuration of the instrument in relation to the objectives of this study, ODPT cannot be rated as lying on the lower end of production tasks to collect pragmatics data (see Figure 3.1). I think that like the open-ended role plays, ODPT moves nearer to the observation of authentic discourse.

Having chosen the format of the instrument, the next step was to decide on the contextual constraints to be integrated in ODPT prompts. This will be discussed in the next sub-section.

3.4.4 Contextual constraints

Besides deciding on the elicitation format, a decision had to be made about the contextual constraints to be systematically integrated into the ODPT for eliciting requesting sequences. In this connection, following the interlanguage and cross-

cultural pragmatics literature, Brown and Levinson's (1978 and 1987) politeness model was used for its underlying theory (see section 2.4.). Following Yli-Jokipii (1994), I can set forth two reasons for my choice of the theory. Firstly, the theory provides a useful conceptual framework which makes it possible to explain variability in linguistic choices. In this study, the framework is also preferred to the other existing politeness theories because of its consistency, coverage of data, predictive strength, and economy. Secondly, as Yli-Jokipii (*ibid.*:89) has put it "the value of this theory ...lies in its linguistic contribution. It goes down to the level of tangible linguistic elements in explaining the intricacies of language use". In other words, the theory can provide a basis with which to explain variability in language use.

In the case of requests as well as many other speech acts, Brown and Levinson (*ibid.*) argue that the illocution inherently threatens the hearer's negative face since it is inherently disruptive of their claim to freedom. Knowing that it is in the interests of both parties to satisfy the mutually-assumed face wants, speakers tend to use redressive actions to counter threat to face. Brown and Levinson further contend that the extent of using redressive actions is a function of how contextual constraints are perceived in terms of assigned weightiness. The social variables that they view as most influential in the formulation of face requesting illocution are social distance (D), relative power (P), and absolute ranking of imposition (R). Brown and Levinson's (1987:76) politeness model calculates the weightiness of a face-threatening act by the following formula:

$$W_x = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + R_x$$

where W_x is the overall value of the weightiness of a face threatening act, D stands for distance, P for power, and R_x stands for the assessed degree of imposition as rated by the actors in the situation. In the context of the present study, power represents the differential institutional status in *a given role relationship* (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1985) within the bounds of academic settings between the speaker and addressee. In this sense, the status relationship can take three numerical values. The

role relationship in terms of the addressee's institutional status can be described as 'high' as in the case of student-tutor where the latter has higher status than the former. The relationship can be described as equal as in a student-student interaction in certain spheres. Thirdly, it can be low in the case student-tutor where the former has lower status. It is notable that status as taken in this study cannot be a function of one monolithic factor, rather, it derives from one or more of a range of factors including academic degrees, knowledge, expertise, responsibilities, etc. (Cansler and Stiles, 1981; Spencer-Oatey, 1996).

In this study, distance refers to the symmetric relationship between participants, based on the frequency of previous and ongoing interaction (Brown and Levinson, 1978; 1987). In this sense, distance can be either present (+) or absent (-). For instance, friends can be assigned as having – distance, whereas strangers can be assigned as having + distance.

Regarding the constraints of distance and status, there is admittedly a huge grey area between the theoretically assigned numerical values. Friends, for instance, can be anywhere between close to very close. This can be a very difficult problem when it comes to collecting a corpus of naturally occurring data. However, this can be avoided by elicitation as the constraints can be predetermined in advance.

In this study no attempt was made to control the R parameter. This is for the following reasons. Firstly, the value of the constraint seems to be substantially more variable than the other ones. The reason for this seems to be that its value is more anchored to the other variables. In this regard, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1985:118) observe that “The degree of imposition involved in the request might vary with the type of goal, but can also cut across goals. ...the degree of imposition might depend on the real or symbolic value of the goods requested” (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1985). Besides the type of goal, the dimension of imposition seems to be susceptible to the value of the other two variables as well (feedback from my piloting). For example, in a status-

unequal exchange between a student and a teacher, a minor request for action (a request to open the door) from the former to the latter might well be considered substantially imposing by the student which may well involve substantial redressive action. However, when the direction of the request is reversed, it may well be considered to be minimally imposing. It seems that it is also because of these difficult interactions that most studies, including those carried out within the CCSARP project, do not integrate the parameter in the elicitation prompts.

Considering the above, I decided to integrate the contextual constraints of status and distance in the situational prompts. However, as in requests all types of goals seem to be imposing, I decided to choose among those that are not particularly high, and quite valid in an academic setting (see section 3.5).

3.4.5 Factors criterial to the selection and construction of the tasks

Prior to the construction of the ODPT items, I reviewed the literature to determine what criteria had been established in cross-cultural and interlanguage research for the construction of DCT besides the inclusion of social parameters. Surprisingly, I found that although DCT is reported to be the most frequently used method of data elicitation in the area of interlanguage pragmatics research (Bardovi-Harlig and Harford, 1993), the issue of how it is constructed and on the basis of what criteria have in contrast received comparatively little treatment (also see Rose and Ono, 1995). The concern of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic research seems to have centred especially on the issue of contextualisation of the speech acts with certain texture and on the transposibility of the situations (see Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1989). Despite these suggestions, they have been but little explained. To these I also added the criterion of prompt enrichment following the works of Lee and McChesney (2000) and Billmyer and Varghese (2000). All the criteria are detailed below.

- **Typicality of situations**

The motivation to incorporate typicality into the selection process of ODPT items was

essentially a conceptual one, ultimately allowing the situations to be a closer approximation to the ones actually occurring in natural settings. In principle, the more individuals are interactively involved in and/or exposed to a situation, the more stable their schemata will become, which can contribute to their efficient operation in the situation (Bygate, 1996; Brown and Yule, 1983). Hence, instruments incorporating typical tasks should be able better able to tap participants' underlying conceptualisations. In contrast, in new situations where individuals are unable to connect new experiences with what they experienced in the past, due to, for instance, a partial lack of experience, behaviour appropriate and adequate to the situation –be it linguistic or social- is very likely to be fraught with initial inconsistencies (Tannen, 1993). In this connection, a major criticism levelled at the classic dialogue completion task is that some of the situations chosen for eliciting pragmatic data are conceptually foreign to the participants (Eisenstein and Bodman, 1986; Rose, 1992; Zuskin, 1993; Rose and Ono, 1995). Participants are asked to take on roles that they have never actually played in real-life situations. Hence, most frequently they do not produce what they themselves would actually say in such situations, but what they believe to be the appropriate response research (Bardovi-Harlig and Harford, 1993; Eslamirasekh, 1993; Eisenstein and Bodman, 1986; Rose and Ono, 1995). The following example taken from Blum-Kulka (1982: 56) demonstrates the incongruity between the assigned role and the pragmatic points under investigation.

Driver and policeman

Policeman: *Is that your car there?*

Driver: *Yes. I left it there only for a few minutes.*

Policeman: -----?

Driver: *O.K. O.K. I'm sorry. I'll move it at once.*

In the above scenario where the informants are to fill in a response to the interlocutor rejoinder, they have to assume the role of a policeman of which they may well have no reliable schematic information. Therefore, the response obtained from the respondents may well be neither pragmalinguistically nor sociopragmatically valid. On this basis, in this study attempts have been made to select only those situations

that are familiar to respondents (see section 3.5).

- **Distribution of contextual constraints in ODPT's**

It was decided that the contextual constraints chosen from Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness theory would be systematically distributed among ODPT items (see sub-section 3.4.4). There are a number of reasons for adapting this procedure. Firstly, were they not systematically distributed among discourse frames, potential differences in request sequences could not be related to particular constraints. Further, lack of systematicity in the distribution of contextual parameters will basically render them qualitatively different. Finally, by being systematically varied, the interrelationship between the parameters and request sequences could be further explored.

- **Cross-cultural comparability of situations**

Because the present study attempts to elicit requesting sequences from different groups, one criterion that had to be particularly attended to was that the situations were in close cross-cultural correspondence to each other so as to allow meaningful comparison. In this context, correspondence simply refers to *the suitability of the setting and the function of the speech act* (Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1989:274). Obviously the absence of intercultural correspondence of the chosen situations could jeopardise the validity of the study, in the sense that its outcomes could be argued to be attributable to parameters not controlled in the study. In this study care was taken to maximise transposability (see section 3.6).

- **Content of the situations**

In the construction of the situations, attempts were made to ensure adequate provision of information in ODPT items to elicit the required speech act sequence. The reason was that some studies in the interlanguage pragmatics literature suggest that enriched discourse frames incorporating adequate contextual information prompt participants to provide a richer data-base of responses than content-poor frames do (Lee and McChesney, 2000; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000).

3.4.6 Summary

In 3.4, I discussed the three types of data collection procedures in interlanguage pragmatics research, namely, role-play, DCT, and observation of naturally occurring data. Against the backdrop of obtaining data through the observation of naturally occurring data, I discussed the weaknesses and strengths of DCT, and highlighted the point that some of the weaknesses associated with DCT are particularly relevant when the instrument is used to elicit spoken rather than written data. This discussion led me to argue that because of the nature of my study which looks at requesting illocutions in writing, the appropriate elicitation device would be an adapted form of DCT which I labelled ODPT. Having discussed the format of the elicitation procedure, I elaborated on the contextual constraints to be systematically included in DCT and discussed the criteria for the construction of ODPT. Having discussed these, I shall now turn to discuss the selection and construction of DCT in the next section.

3.5 Selection of the situations

After the overall consideration of the first instrument, two preliminary studies were conducted to identify typical and comparable academic situations for the construction of the ODPT items. The reason for carrying out two preliminary studies was that the first did not yield adequate data for the identification of situations. Both identification procedures more or less follow that of Rose and Ono's (1995). In the first preliminary study, I contacted on a 'friend of a friend' basis (Milroy and Milroy, 1978; Shamim, 1993; Embi, 1998) a group of 15 English L1 British, and 17 English L2 Iranian second and third year PhD candidates in the Universities of Leeds, Liverpool, and Bradford and asked them to send me as many academically related request messages as they could from their computer files. I informed them that I was particularly interested in the messages sent to *British* students, faculty members, clerical staff either in their own or other universities in Britain. I also told them, in general terms, the purpose of the study and particularly assured them of its confidentiality. In the end, although every care was taken to secure their co-operation, the return rate was very low. Only two Iranian and five British candidates replied with twelve messages

in all. On further approach, the sample told me that they usually did not keep messages in their files, or could not possibly afford the time rummaging through all their messages.

As the first method did not produce a sufficient database for identifying ODPT items, I contacted the same participants to tell me from memory about ten recent academically-related situations that had them make requests by email. They were also informally asked, among other questions, to rate the status of the addressee, and to say whether or not they knew them. Some of the questions that were asked were distractors because I did not want to sensitise them to the purpose of the investigation since I hoped that some of them would participate in the main study. I also asked a colleague in Iran to collect the same information from fifteen Farsi L1 PhD candidates. The addressees, however, were not native British but *Farsi* L1 students, faculty members and civil servants in their or some other university in Iran. The procedure, however, did not prove to be useful in Iran because electronic mail within university settings was then not common in the same way as it is in Britain. Instead, the participants generally reported that they had to use letters or notes for such purposes. Despite this, the participants were asked about the situations in which they had made requests in writing for academic purposes. Though this generated a constraint as to the medium of formulations, I decided use the reported situations in order to identify similar ones.

This procedure enabled me to collect 287 responses, covering four main addressees, including supervisors, administrative office workers, specialists, and fellow students. However, the reasons for the requestive messages were relatively varied. As to the messages addressed to the supervisor, the reasons included such topics as the provision of material for laboratory work, specialised queries, funding for participating in conference, arrangement, postponement or readjustment of an already fixed supervisory meeting, editing of academic writings. Regarding the messages addressed to specialists, the motivation chiefly comprised provision of academic

material. However, the messages addressed to clerical staff had many reasons. They consisted of such topic as the application for experimental facilities, accommodation, registration on a course, fees, and employment. Finally, the motivation for the requestive messages addressed to friends chiefly included notes from a lecture, academic assignments, specialised queries, and borrowing of academic material. The situations elicited were further classified in terms of the contextual constraints of status and distance, yielding the following combinations:

	Distance	Status
1.	+ D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} < Y_{\text{Hearer}}$
2.	- D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} < Y_{\text{Hearer}}$
3.	+ D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} > Y_{\text{Hearer}}$
4.	- D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} = Y_{\text{Hearer}}$
5.	+ D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} = Y_{\text{Hearer}}$
6.	- D	$X_{\text{Speaker}} > Y_{\text{Hearer}}$

The categorisation of the situations was based on the perception of the participants on the values of the parameters. This revealed greater frequency for four combinations including (a) $\{+ D\}$, $\{X_S < Y_H\}$; (b) $\{- D\}$, $\{X_S < Y_H\}$; (c) $\{+ D\}$, $\{X_S > Y_H\}$; (d) $\{- D\}$, $\{X_S = Y_H\}$. The four frequent combinations were chosen to be systematically distributed in four ODPT items. Furthermore, the addressees and the motivations for requesting were also taken from the second preliminary phase.

3.6 Construction of discourse production tasks (the English version)

Having obtained the data, the first version of the four situational prompts was constructed in English. The first situation, having the following distribution of controlled constraints $\{+ D\}$, $\{X_S < Y_H\}$, concerned a PhD candidate needing a well-known professor's recent paper for his research. I labelled this situation the 'Paper situation' as a shorthand. The second situation with the following constraints $\{- D\}$, $\{X_S < Y_H\}$ concerned a PhD candidate needing to send an email to his supervisor so as to postpone his already scheduled supervision meeting. I labelled this the 'Supervision situation'. The third with the following constraints $\{+ D\}$, $\{X_S > Y_H\}$ had to do with a PhD candidate who decided to email a clerical staff to see if he could

make a late registration on a course. I labelled this the ‘Registration situation’. The last situation, having $\{-D\}$, $\{X_S = Y_H\}$, was about a PhD candidate needing his friends’ lecture notes. I labelled this situation the ‘Borrowing situation’.

In the process of constructing the prompts which were to be used for piloting, I took counsel with English L1 native and Persian-English bilingual speakers for their views on the appropriateness of lexical items, grammar, and transparency of content at sentence and textual levels. It should be noted that I decided to tell the prospective participants whether or not they knew their addressee. This was done by providing the necessary information in the prompts. However, they were not explicitly provided with their comparative status relative to that of the hypothetical addressee as this was considered to completely give away the purpose of the study. Furthermore, it was possible that providing the explicit information might lead to negative reactions on the part of the participants. That is, they might disagree with the description at a conscious level.

3.7 Metapragmatic questionnaire

In order to cross-check the original perception of the groups regarding the value of the controlled contextual constraint of status (see section 3.4.4), a metapragmatic questionnaire was also developed for this study in addition to the discourse production tasks. The questionnaire was designed to serve three purposes. The first had to do with the validity of the contextual constraint of status as operationalised in the elicitation tasks. As explained in 3.4., status was systematically varied across the four elicitation tasks on the basis of the responses obtained from the preliminary study (see section 3.5). In order to ascertain the validity of these responses which were actively used to construct the elicitation tasks, the metapragmatic questionnaire could serve the purpose by putting a relevant question to the respondents. The second purpose was to address whether the participants were equally aware of the constraints. The rationale on which this question was based was that it was hypothesised that the groups would be equally aware of the constraints. If other patterns would emerge

from the data they could be used to explain any possible divergences in the production of the speech act elicited by the first instrument. Finally, the questionnaire could be used to assess the group's perception of the effect of the constraints to provide a further basis for explaining the data obtained from the first instrument. In a sense, the metapragmatic questionnaire could both triangulate and provide a further explanatory basis for the data collected by the first instrument.

- **The design of MQ**

On the basis of the above explanation, a 28-item metapragmatic questionnaire was designed. For the contextual constraint of status, three questionnaire items were constructed for each of the four situations. In the first item, participants were asked to rate the status of the addressee on a five-point scale on the grounds that status was not assumed and elaborated in any of the four situations. The motivation for adopting a five-point scale was that it allows participants to be more discriminating while avoiding confusion (Fukushima, 2000). The purpose of the first item was to assess whether or not the different groups of participants in this study would similarly rate status. The second item asking whether or not the participants were aware of the parameter served two purposes. First, it provided participants time to retrospect, and secondly primed them for the next if they opted for the 'Yes' option. The third item addressing the issue of status differential was designed to address participants' perception of the effect of the parameter in their actual requesting behaviour.

Distance, which was formulated in the questionnaire as 'not knowing' and 'relationship', included two items because, unlike the first constraint, it is assumed and elucidated in the elicitation tasks. For example, in the Paper situation the participant is explicitly told that he does not personally know the addressee. It follows from this that the questionnaire item addressing whether or not he knows him is not needed because relevant information is already provided. In general, in all four situations items addressing the issue of distance were designed to start with awareness

questions, having the same features as mentioned for the second item dealing with status. The second item was designed to deal with the effect of the constraint on actual requesting behaviour.

Lastly, though the contextual constraint of imposition was not controlled in the design of the study, I constructed a set of two questions for the constraint similar to those of distance. There were two reasons for this. The first was to ascertain that the situations were also cross-culturally perceived in similar ways in terms of the imposition involved. Secondly, I was interested to see whether the patterns that would probably emerge from the data related only to the controlled contextual constraints, or were actively affected by the imposition dimension as well. The response to both dimensions could further determine the validity of the study.

3.8 The interview

In connection with cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic study, though the use of the interview is a relatively new method of collecting pragmatic data, it seems the few studies that are reported in the literature have used it in conjunction with other elicitation methods. For example, Cohen (1996) reports a few studies (Robinson, 1991; Fescura, 1993; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993) in which the interview was used alongside other elicitation techniques, including role-play and DCT, to gain further insight into the factors contributing to the participants' production of speech acts. Similarly, a semi-structured interview was also designed to gain additional information about the controlled contextual constraint. Regarding the interview, it was decided that the schedule incorporate three sets of questions for the first situation and four for the subsequent ones, following a 'hierarchical focusing' method (Tomlinson, 1989). The addition of one question could help participants to form a clearer relationship of the constraints by comparing different situations.

3.9 Data collection procedure

Prior to the implementation of piloting, the data collection procedure via ODPT and

MQ was designed to be carried out by email. That is, the two instruments could be sent one after the other to a few targeted participants and from among them a few of the participants could be randomly selected from the start for the interview. This procedure could enable the researcher to collect a relatively large database from participants within a reasonable time.

The interview, however, was designed to be conducted individually, subsequent to the administration of MQ with 12 participants, 4 from each group. The interview was designed to be conducted with each participant at most 7 days following the collection of the data from the first two instruments. Interviews were designed to be conducted in Persian for the English L2 and Persian L1 candidates because their dominant language would enable them to better handle the questions addressed to them. For English L1 participants, the medium of interview was naturally designed to be conducted in English for the same reason. Furthermore, it was decided to audio-record the interviews with the prior consent of the interviewee. The interviews were designed to last for about 20 minutes.

For the administration of the three elicitation instruments, the order was designed as follows. Firstly, ODPT would be sent to the targeted participants electronically. Upon receiving a response, MQ would be sent immediately to be filled in. Then, the interview would be conducted at most within a week after the administration of MQ. Because the sample of participants could be chosen beforehand, the interviewees could be randomly selected in advance. Concerning the order designed for this study, it should be noted that if ODPT were to be administered either second or third, the result could be cross-contaminated. In other words, the questions constructed for the metapragmatic questionnaire or the interview could bias the participants' responses to ODPT items.

3.10 Summary

In the above sections, I discussed the three data collection instruments in the present

study, namely, ODPT, the metapragmatic questionnaire, and the interview. Concerning ODPT which aims at eliciting requesting sequences, I discussed the process through which I identified the situations, and described the construction of the four ODPT situations for the present study. This led to a discussion of the metapragmatic questionnaire, which aims at investigating the social parameters included in ODPT. Finally, I discussed the overall format of the interview schedule which aims to provide further information about the findings from the metapragmatic questionnaire. Concerning the order of administration, I noted that the ODPT would be administered first followed by the metapragmatic questionnaire.

3.11 Pilot study

The following sub-sections outline the piloting phase of the instrument designed for this study. The piloting of the first two instruments, namely, the discourse production tasks, and the metapragmatic questionnaire was carried out twice with different participants. The first piloting phase enabled the researcher to obtain on-the-spot feedback from the participants about the first two instruments, such as the processability of items including the formulations of tasks and questionnaire items. It further allowed a check on the feasibility and appropriateness of the selected instruments and to “ throw up some of the inevitable problems deriving from converting design into reality” (Robson, 1993:301). The second piloting phase enabled the researcher to further assess the modified versions of the instruments, and their implementation procedure.

3.11.1 Pilot I

The following sub-sections are concerned with the first piloting phase of the instruments.

3.11.1.1 The discourse production tasks and metapragmatic questionnaire

The participants for the first piloting phase of this study were two groups of second- and third- year PhD candidates. Both groups consisted of three PhD candidates at the

University of Leeds. The participants in the first group consisted of English L1 British candidates and in the second group, there were three English L2 Iranian candidates. I met the participants individually by prior arrangement for collecting the pilot data.

Before participants completed the preliminary phase which involved reading the aims of the study, completing the demographic and other background information, and reading the instructions for completing the first instrument, they were informed that they could ask any clarification questions about the research being conducted. The purpose was chiefly to defuse any sense of tension, especially in English L2 participants who might have possibly felt vulnerable at subjecting their language to the scrutiny of the researcher. After this phase, each participant was informed that they could also ask any clarification questions about the situations that they were about to read while or before responding to them in writing on their computer screen. The reason was to identify problem areas such as the formulation or wording of the prompts, and contextual information. Following the first two phases, the researcher asked the participants to open the window for email messages and start the activity. In the meantime, the researcher responded to their queries and made careful notes of their feedback responses. Having responded to the tasks, the participants were informally asked about their impressions of the situations, including the typicality, contextual information, and the level of difficulty.

Shortly after the administration of the first instrument, their ODPT responses were printed out, if one was immediately available, so that the participants could conveniently refer back to their responses when completing the metapragmatic questionnaire. The procedure prior to having each participant complete the questionnaire was identical to the one explained for the first instrument. That is, they were informed in broad terms about the purpose of the questionnaire and told that they could ask any clarification queries about the items they were about to respond to. In the meanwhile, the researcher recorded in writing the feedback responses to the instrument. Some of these responses were later used in revising the instruments.

3.11.1.2 The interview

The participants for piloting the interview schedule were four of the PhD candidates who had already completed the two earlier instruments. Two of the participants were L2 PhD candidates from Iran, and the other two were British English native speakers. All the participants were students at the University of Leeds.

The interview session was conducted individually by prior arrangement either in the researcher's office or in the participants' offices three to five days after the completion of ODPT and the metapragmatic questionnaire. Before the start of the interview, the consent of the interviewees was obtained for audio recording and the general purpose of the interview was briefly explained. The interviewees were also informed that they should feel free to ask any clarification questions about the interview, including the items and its purpose. They were further informed that the researcher would willingly wipe any portion of the interview from the recorded tape immediately after the interview if they were not feeling happy with it. This was intended to establish and maintain mutual trust. To jog the interviewees' memory of their responses to the first two instruments, a hard copy their responses was given to them. As explained in 3.8, the interview was conducted in Farsi for English L2 participants.

3.11.2 Pilot findings

In addition to discovering some of the problems related to the formulation of the first two instruments, which led to their overall revision, the first piloting phase highlighted the following important aspects of the present study. First, the analysis of ODPT data demonstrated that all four prompts consistently elicited the illocutionary sequence under study. However, contrary to the expectation of the researcher, who estimated that the L2 participants' written responses to the prompts would not take more than forty minutes, it took considerably more time. In fact, each of the first three messages took the English L2 participants a period of about 25 minutes on average to compose. The last message, namely, the 'Borrowing Situation' took about 15

minutes. In this regard, the researcher's observation indicates that prior to formulating their messages, participants spend a few minutes carefully analysing the situation so as to make themselves familiar with the circumstances described by the prompts. In general, both groups of participants' perception of the ODPT prompts, as elicited informally subsequent to their completion of ODPT, suggests that the situations were very familiar to them.

As to the participants' rating of the status, the analysis of data suggested that both groups held similar perception for all situational prompts. But meaningful statistical analyses were not possible due to the limited amount of data collected. Finally, I found the participants quite co-operative in the research.

Concerning the interview schedule, the interview data as well as my observation of the interview process indicated that because the participants had already been sensitised to the objectives of the research through the metapragmatic questionnaire, their responses to the interview items which focused on the controlled contextual constraints were very similar to those provided by the second instrument. In other words, I came to realise that the function of the interview was undermined or biased by the implementation of the second instrument. Hence, because the interview was found not to provide important complementary information to the second instrument, I decided to leave the third instrument out from the study.

3.11.3 Pilot study II

Based on the feedback responses from the first piloting, the first two original instruments were revised in consultation with British-English native speakers including faculty members and postgraduate research students in the School of Education at Leeds University, as well as competent English L2 Iranian postgraduate students. The revision involved such aspects as the rewording as well as the further enriching of ODPT prompts, and rewording of the MQ items. The revised ODPT was piloted again with six different participants from the University of Leeds (three

English L1 British and three L2 Iranian Ph.D. candidates) to assess the effect of the revisions. Unlike the procedure used in the first piloting in which the instruments were administered with the researcher present, this time the first two instruments were sent to the participants electronically in accordance with the planned design of the study. The participants were asked to send them back to the researcher in the same way. However, despite careful advanced arrangement with the participants and their promise of full cooperation to send back their responses within a week or so, it took me about a month to receive replies from three of them. The researcher got in contact with them a number of times before they responded. Their lack of full cooperation was understandable to the researcher in light of their demanding academic commitments and in light of the irrelevance of the research to their immediate needs.

Almost immediately after a participant's response, I contacted them individually to check if they had encountered any problems with the items. Their responses were mostly negative. After this check, the metapragmatic questionnaire as well as their responses to the first instrument were sent to them electronically. Once again I had to get back to them individually a few times to have them complete the questionnaire. Finally, after receiving the participant's completed MQ, I contacted them with the same question as asked for the ODPT. Their responses were also mostly negative. Having conducted the second piloting phase which far extended the researcher's time plan, I decided that if each participant had been met individually for the administration of the instruments as in the first pilot, data collection would have been much faster.

3.12 Translating and piloting the data collection instruments

Having constructed, piloted and subsequently revised the English ODPT, MQ and interview items, I and two other competent Persian-English bilinguals translated the items into Farsi. The translated versions were subsequently compared by the researcher to produce a draft version building on all the previous ones. The version was finally given along with the English version to one more competent Persian-

English bilingual for his comments on their overall appropriateness, fluency, and faithfulness to the English text. The items having been thus translated were slightly modified as to the names and locations (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989:274) for the purpose of achieving suitability (contextualisations) for the context of Iran. For example, in the 'Paper situation' where the Ph.D. candidate requests a well-known professor from the University of London to send him a copy of his paper, the name of the university is substituted with one in Iran.

There were two participants for piloting the translated instruments. They were then studying on an extra-mural basis in Britain. Such candidates are basically directed by two supervisors, one in Iran and one in Britain. The piloting procedure was first planned to be implemented twice as described for English L1/L2 candidates. That is, the first two instruments could be first administered with the researcher being present for immediate feedback on the instruments, and later through electronic mail. However, following the first piloting phase the researcher realised that there was very little and consistent on-the-spot feedback from participants. The significant reduction of clarification queries from the participants about the instruments must have been a consequence of earlier piloting phases. In other words, the first two piloting stages may very well have had a beneficial effect on the Farsi version. The reduction of clarification queries led the researcher to conclude that a second pilot was not necessary. Concerning the typing of messages, it should be noted that because powerful software programs are not yet available on the net, the participants used the Roman alphabet for the Persian letters. This is a common practice in Iran.

3.13 The main study

Having explained the overall methodology and the piloting phase of this study, I will proceed to provide the details of the main study in this section. The section comprises three sub-sections including the participants of the present study, instruments, and the procedure of data collection.

3.13.1 Participants

Ideally, the study of illocutionary acts in learner language should involve the collection of three sets of data: (1) samples of the illocutionary act performed in the target language by L2 learners, (2) samples performed by native speakers of the target language, and (3) samples of the same illocutionary act performed by the learners in their L1. Only in this way it is possible to determine to what extent learner performance differs from native speaker performance and whether the differences are traceable to transfer from the L1. Relatively few L2 studies, however, have provided such a base of data. (Ellis, 1997:162)

The present study roughly follows the above approach quoted from Ellis to eliciting data. However, there is a major difference regarding the third point that Ellis makes. The difference is that because this study attempts to elicit data from English L2 users who have resided in the host country for a relatively considerable span of time (minimum a year), it is very likely that their L1-related conceptualization of how to do appropriate illocutionary acts has unconsciously undergone substantial modification (acculturation) as result of interaction in the target speech community. The same line of argument- albeit to a lesser extent- can also be extended to L2 learners in an EFL environment. Hence, the illocutionary act data elicited from L2 users, which does not conform to target norms, cannot be entirely attributed to their L1. To circumvent this problem, the data constituting the L1 reference point for comparative purposes was collected from Ph.D. candidates in their natural L1 environment, i. e., Iran. Based on the above considerations, data was elicited from three groups of participants, who were chosen on a friend of a friend basis (Shamim, 1993; Embi, 1998). For the discourse production tasks the following groups who were selected participated in this study.

- **Group 1:** 30 second- or third-year English L2 Iranian PhD candidates in Britain with a mean age of 33.8.
- **Group 2:** 30 second- or third-year English L1 British PhD candidates in Britain with a mean age of 27.1.
- **Group 3:** 30 second- or third-year Farsi L1 Iranian PhD candidates in Iran with a mean age of 34.3.

All the participants in this study were male PhD candidates, because at the time of the data collection, the majority of the ESL Iranian PhD candidates were men. Concerning the samples, the first two groups were chosen from the Universities of Leeds, Liverpool, Bradford, York and UMIST from a wide range of fields. Only candidates reading TESOL or related fields were excluded from the present study lest their possible familiarity with the research objectives should affect their responses. Concerning the proficiency level of Group 1, all of them had already done a pre-sessional English course and then had taken IELTS to achieve the minimum English language requirement for admission to a research degree. Their IELTS band scores ranged between 5.5 to 6.5. Given the courses they had done, their length of stay in Britain, and their full time academic engagements, their proficiency must have improved further since the commencement of their study. The third group was from four universities in Iran: Mazandaran University, Tehran University, Tarbiat Modares University, and Azad University in Tehran. The participants were also from a wide range of fields. For the reason mentioned earlier, none of the participants in Group 3 were specialising in English. All the participants in the three groups were either in their second or third year of study.

The metapragmatic questionnaire was administered to the same three groups who completed ODPT. The number of participants is as follows:

- **Group 1:** 25 English L2 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in Britain
- **Group 2:** 27 English L1 British Ph.D. candidates in Britain
- **Group 3:** 26 Farsi L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in Iran

Though all the participants who had completed ODPT were invited to fill in the metapragmatic questionnaire, some were not able to, due to a number of personal reasons.

3.13.2 Instruments

The two instruments which were used in the main study to elicit data from the three

groups of participants included open-ended discourse production tasks and the metapragmatic questionnaire. However, whereas for the Farsi L1 group, the translated versions were applied (Appendix 3 and 4), the ESL and the English L1 participants took the English versions (Appendix 1 and 2). The order of administration of data collection instruments follows the same pattern as outlined in 3.9, namely, first the ODPT will be administered followed by the metapragmatic questionnaire.

The ODPT, which is the first instrument for eliciting written data, comprised four tasks which were specifically designed and later piloted to elicit request illocutions. In the construction of the four tasks, which drew both methodologically and theoretically on ‘discourse completion tasks’, two social parameters, namely power and distance were systematically varied in accordance with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory. The degree of imposition, which was held relatively unmarked, was not systematically distributed across the four tasks. The four situations, which were chosen for the present study, are the following:

Situation 1

You are a Ph.D. student in Britain and currently you are working on your thesis. You have recently attended a conference on your area of study at the University of London. At the Conference, a well-known British professor from the University of Nottingham presented a paper that you think is relevant to your work. You know the British professor only through his publications and have seen him only once at the Conference while he was presenting his paper. However, for the purposes of your research project you want to email him a message now asking for a copy of the paper.

What do you think you’d write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 2

You are a Ph.D. student in Britain supervised by a British professor. Since you started on your Ph.D. programme, you have had lots of opportunity to know each other. And your academic relationship is fine. Next Thursday you are scheduled to have your supervision meeting with him. However, because of an unexpected problem--you have to move into new university accommodation --you decide that you will not be able to attend the meeting. Therefore, you need to email your supervisor now asking him to re-arrange the supervision meeting.

What do you think you’d write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 3

J. Robson is a senior member of clerical staff in the Higher Degrees Office at your department. But you haven’t met yet. He has recently emailed a message to the department’s Ph.D. students informing them that there is going to be a workshop on Project Management next month. The workshop deals with

issues including planning and organising Ph.D. projects. However, you realise that because you had made a mistake in noting down the dates you have already missed the registration deadline for a week. You feel that you need the workshop; therefore, you are going to email a message to J. Robson in the Higher Degrees Office to ask him to register you now.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 4

Because of bad flu, you missed a class yesterday. But you know that John, your close British Ph.D. classmate who started the Ph.D. program with you a year ago, attended the class. You feel you need his lecture notes of the class to catch up with the course. Therefore, you decide to email him a message to borrow his notes for a couple of hours when you meet on Thursday. On a couple of occasions, you also shared your notes with him.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

The distribution of the parameters of power and distance, which are in systematic variation from one another in the ODPT prompts, is shown below

Request situations	Distance	Status
Situation 1	+D	X<Y
Situation 2	-D	X<Y
Situation 3	+D	X>Y
Situation 4	-D	X=Y

The four role constellations can be roughly glossed as follows. Situation 1 involves a relatively high distance between the addressee (recipient of email message) and the speaker, but the former holds the position of academic power over the latter (sender of the email). Situation 2 does not involve distance difference between the addressee and the speaker, but the latter holds a higher position of academic power over the addressee. Situation 3, like Situation 1, involves a distance difference between the interactants, however, it is the speaker who holds a higher power. Finally, Situation 4, like Situation 2, neither involves distance difference nor power differential between the interactants.

Concerning the metapragmatic questionnaire, which is the second instrument in this study, it was designed to serve two purposes in this study (see 3.7 for detail). First it aimed to cross-check the pilot findings and ascertain the cross-cultural comparability of the situations concerning the contextual constraint of status, and secondly it aimed

to partly account for possible divergences and convergences in the components of requesting sequences in terms of the two social parameters.

3.13.3 Procedure of data collection

Though prior to the implementation of the piloting phase it was envisioned in accordance with the planned design of this study that the instruments could be sent by electronic mail to the participants, the piloting established that due to the many academic demands on research students' time, and the absence of immediate contribution of the study to their ongoing research work, the procedure was found not to be entirely feasible (see sections 3.11.3) for obtaining the relevant data. Consequently, collecting data from the English L1/L2 data were carried out either through electronic mail without the presence of researcher, or individually with the presence of the researcher either in his office or in the participants' depending on the participant's preference. In other cities, data were collected either in computer clusters or in the participants' offices, depending on feasibility. Concerning Farsi L1 in Iran, the ODPT data were collected by a colleague researcher. Prior to the administration of the ODPT with the presence of the researcher, the researcher discretely informed the participants that he could not respond to their possible queries. They also made the effort to make their presence less obvious to discourage any potential queries. This was because I wanted the responses to be a product of the tasks and the metapragmatic questionnaire without other intervening variables.

3.13.4 Summary

In the above section which dealt with the overall methodology of the main study, first I talked about the participants in this study. In this regard, I explained that because of the nature of this study there would be three groups of participants. Further, the instruments for collecting data on the participants' requesting behaviour as well the procedure of their implementations were described.

3.14 Categories of data analysis

Data gathered on request sequences was coded, and analysed mainly following the CCSARP scheme (1989: 17-19 and 273-289). However, drawing on the works of Takahashi (1993 and 1996), Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1987), Blum-Kulka (1989) in relation to the ongoing analyses of the collected data for this study, the scheme was modified to include more micro-level categories at the macro-level of query preparatory. The reason for expanding the category was because the overwhelming proportion of request formulations produced by the ESL and English L1 participants involved this category. If I adhered to the original classificatory scheme without differentiating between the sub-formulas that existed in the formulations using the query preparatory, only similarities of requesting behaviour between the two groups would have emerged. This, in turn, would have effectively hidden the substantial differences that actually existed in their formulations. Hence, in order to explore group differences and similarities the category was subdivided. Overall, in the present study, based on the CCSARP scheme (1989), I analysed data in terms of request strategies, perspective orientations, supportive modifiers, and internal modifiers. The following sub-sections describe the analytic process to investigating request illocution.

3.14.1 Segmentation of requests

The realisation of an actual request is obligatorily constrained by the finite number of the strategies available in any given language. Requesting sequences elicited by means of ODPT first underwent a segmentation process whereby various components surrounding, but not intrinsic to, the request proper (Head Act) were isolated analytically in line with the CCSARP scheme. This first stage further allowed the Head Act to be analysed both in terms of pragmalinguistic strategies and perspective.

3.14.2 Identification of Head Act

According to the CCSARP framework, a Head Act, which comprises both perspective orientation and request strategies, refers to “the minimal unit which can realise a

request” (275). Example:

Would it be possible for you to register me at this late date for this workshop, as I feel that the subjects covered would be of great benefit to my research.

Following the CCSARP scheme, the minimal unit emerging subsequent to analysing the above sequence will be ‘*Would it be possible for you to register me at this late date for this workshop*’ because it can stand conventionally as a request by itself. In cases where a request is implied by means of pre-requests like supportive elements without being co-present with a formally transparent Head Act, the framework predictively subsumes it as a requestive Head Act because it can be interpreted as such by turning to relevant clues like the context. Example:

I won't be making antigens from these until later in my project, but all good advice is always greatly appreciated.

Here, the underlined, though not transparently conveying a request, is coded as such because it functions and is construed thus. Having separated the requesting Head acts from the other parts, the Head acts had to be labelled in terms of strategies. The following sub-section describes the categorisation of request strategy types.

3.14.3 Strategies for requesting

Requesting strategies refer to the entire linguistic resources available to the requester to realise a request. In the CCSARP scheme (1989: 278-281, for details) nine strategy types, hierarchically ordered in terms of the length of inferential processes needed for processing, have been empirically recognised. In this study, these categories were further fine-grained at the query preparatory. The categories are described below. It should be noted that unless stated otherwise, definitions are taken from Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 17-19 and 273-289). The clarification examples, however, are largely taken from my own data.

- ***Mood-derivable***

The illocutionary intent is derived by resorting to the grammatical mood, or other functional equivalents (*ibid.*: 278-279). Requests realised using this strategy typically involved the imperative in the data of this study.

*I missed the ... class yesterday. Please **bring your notes on Thursday** because I want to copy them.*

In the above example, the utterance in bold type is a request derivable as such by its mood. In this study, all ‘mood-derivabale’ requests were formulated by the grammatical mood, rather than other functional units. In the CCSARP classificatory scheme (CCSARP, 1989: 279), elliptical examples such as “*The menu please*” is cited as a request as well.

- ***Explicit performative***

The illocutionary verb explicitly names the illocutionary intent.

I ask you for a copy of the paper.

In the above example, the performative verb “ask” conveys the requestive intent. It is interesting to note that if the above citation is translated into Farsi it loses its impositive force, and changes it into a pleading. The performative verb ‘request’ also conveys the same illocutionary intent.

- ***Hedged performative***

A hedging expression such as a modal verb or verbs softens the illocutionary intent being conveyed by an explicit illocutionary verb.

I wanted to ask you if possible to rearrange the meeting.

In the above example the bare illocutionary verb is modified by ‘wanted’, possibly to show politeness. Other modal verbs used to soften requests include ‘must’, ‘have to’, ‘would like to’.

- ***Locution derivable***

The illocutionary intent of the utterance is derivable from the propositional content.

You must give me your notes so I copy them.

The modal verbs that the classificatory scheme cites as examples of conveying a (moral) obligation include 'have to', 'should', 'must' and 'have to'. Of course as the definition provided shows, the illocutionary force is not derivable from the modal verbs alone. Rather, the force is a function of the locution.

- *Want statements*

The illocution explicitly conveys a desire to be satisfied by the hearer. The illocutionary intent is largely a function of the modal verb.

I would like to reschedule our supervisory meeting, if possible.

In the above example, the intent is conveyed by 'would like'. Other examples of verbs conveying the same intent include 'would rather' and 'hope'.

- *Suggestory formulae*

The illocutionary intent is conveyed by conventional suggestory expressions.

Finally, the next supervision- how about 14 September at 2.00 p.m.?

Suggestory formulas seem to be more common in speaking than in writing, especially in exchanges where there exists no power differential between the interlocutors. In the data collected for this study, there were few instances of the sub-strategy, which may possibly provide some evidence for its being preferred in speaking.

- *(Query) Preparatory*

The illocutionary intent is underdetermined in the sense that the utterance typically conveys more than one transparent meaning as conventionally established in the given language, and it is reliant on the hearer's inductive inference as to which is most relevant.

Based on the data from the main study, this category was broken down into further sub-categories. There were two main reasons for this. First, the majority of the elicited data from the ESL and English L1 British participants clearly indicated that the two groups had used the category significantly more often than the others.

Secondly, despite the similarity, the two groups' use of the level was very different from each other in terms of actual sub-strategies. Hence, in order to capture the exact nature of their requesting behaviour at the pragmalinguistic level, the category was expanded drawing on the work of Takahashi (1993 and 1996) and Blum-Kulka (1989). The sub-categories are as follows:

a) *Reference to ability*

The requesting formulation contains reference to the preparatory condition of ability.

Could you bring your notes along so that I can copy them?

Can you please let me know if there is still a place on the workshop?

In the above examples, the sub-strategies convey the illocutionary intent by the semantic content of modal verbs as well as the grammatical choice of the pronouns. If, for instance, instead of 'you', 'I' were used in the first example, the strategy could not be a request by virtue of its preparatory condition because the pronoun would render it a permission question.

b) *Reference to possibility*

The requesting formulation contains reference to possibility. The sub-strategy in the data for this study contained the formulaic expressions 'Is it possible to' and 'would it be possible'.

Is it possible to arrange for the meeting for alternative day next week?

c) *Reference to the hearer's volition*

The requesting formulation contains reference to the preparatory condition of willingness, starting with 'will you', 'would you'.

Will you bring me any notes you have when we meet at the pub next Thursday?

Would you please send me a copy of it by attach file to my email address or send it to my home address?

d) *Mitigated-preparatory*

The requesting formulations are embedded within routine formulas which further

soften the requestive force. In the present data, the mitigated preparatory level included the following formulas:

*I was wondering if there was a chance of getting a place on the course.
I would be pleased if you could forward a copy of it to the above address.
I'd be grateful if you'd send me a copy of your paper.
I would appreciate it if you could put my name in the registration list.
It would be highly appreciated if you kindly send me some relevant articles,
or let me know any recommendations that you have in this regard.*

e) Permission questions

The requesting formulation contains reference to permission. Such sub-strategies as used in the present data largely started with 'May I'.

*May I have a copy of your notes?
I had a wicked cold yesterday and couldn't make it to the meeting. Can I
borrow your notes?*

• **Strong hints**

The illocutionary intent is not entirely transparent in the locution but retrievable from rules of talk.

I won't be making antigens from these until later in my project, but all good advice is always greatly appreciated.

• **Mild hints**

The illocutionary intent is not transparent from the locution but retrievable from rules of talk. In the present study there were no occurrences of this category.

This is a slightly adapted version of the talk I gave at RIDE in February (for those who may have attended that meeting)

*Intent:
Getting the point across to the hearer that those already
attended the first seminar may find very few new points in
the second.*

Based on empirical research on Germanic and Romance languages, Blum-Kulka (1987 and 1989) claimed that the above scales could be validly conflated into three main universal levels of directness. The conflated categories are as follows:

Table 3.1. Main levels of requestive directness levels

Main levels of directness	Scales collated
Direct strategies (the impositive)	Levels 1-5
Conventionally indirect strategies	Levels 6-7
Non-conventionally indirect strategies	Levels 8-9

The above categories are claimed to have universal standing (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). However, cross-cultural studies have provided evidence indicating that languages show different preferences for them (Song, M. L., 1994; Eslamirasekh, 1993; de Kadt, 1992). Despite the preferences, the conflation provides a basis for comparing languages on the basis of the main levels. This has had important impact on interlanguage pragmatics as well because it allows comparison of interlanguage requesting behaviour. Indeed, most interlanguage studies on request production have only focused on these levels.

3.14.4 Perspective orientations

In addition to the pragmalinguistic resources that obligatorily constrain request realizations, requests are further constrained by the way that they are formulated in terms of the requester's choice of perspective orientations (CCSARP, 1989). Choice of perspective orientations also affect the politeness weight of request illocutions (*ibid.*, 1987). Requesters can choose to phrase their requests from four different mutually exclusive perspectives (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989). The orientations are as follows:

- ***Hearer-oriented perspective***
Can you bring your PM notes in to Uni on Thursday? Then I can catch up with the lecture.
- ***Speaker-oriented perspective***
May I have a copy of your presentation, please?
- ***Speaker and hearer oriented perspective***
Can we rearrange the meeting for a more convenient time?

- *Impersonal*
Would it be possible to obtain a copy of the paper?

3.14.5. Optional elements

Requestive acts can be modified in terms of their force by a number of non-essential elements positioned internally and externally. The potential elements are elaborated on in the following sub-sections.

3.14.5.1 Internal modifiers

Internal modifiers are the optional elements of requestive illocutions internal to the Head Act. They have both indicating and sociopragmatic roles. In their indicating function, internal modifiers give a prior indication that a requestive act may follow, and in their sociopragmatic function, they change the requestive force. Internal modifiers come under three headings: syntactic downgraders, lexical-phrasal downgraders, and upgraders (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989).

(a) *Syntactic downgraders*

Syntactic downgraders are added grammatical elements to a request act to weaken its force. The following categories of internal modifiers occurred in the data collected for this study. For a full list of the categories, the interested reader is referred to Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:273-289).

- *Aspect*
Coded as mitigating only if the durative aspect marker is substitutable with the unmarked form.

Wondering if you could lend me the lecture notes.

- *Tense*
Coded as mitigators only if the formal time reference is substitutable with the present form.

I wanted to ask you if possible to rearrange the meeting.

- *Conditional clause*

I would be grateful if you could let me know as a matter of urgency.

- **Combinations of above**

I was wondering if there was a chance of getting a place on the course.

(b) Lexical and phrasal downgraders

The sub-categories given below serve as pragmalinguistic optional elements to soften the impositive force of the request by internally modifying the Head Act through specific lexical and phrasal choices. The categories of internal modifiers presented here occurred in the data collected for the present study. For a full list of the categories, the interested reader is referred to Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:273-289).

- **Politeness markers**

Markers added to solicit the hearer's co-operation and/or involvement.

*Could I please borrow your notes from yesterday's biodiversity seminar?
Would it please be possible for you to send me a copy of the paper for my personal use?*

- **Downtoner**

Sentential or propositional modifying elements added to mitigate the requestive force.

Could you perhaps track her down by calling her former department?

- **Combinations of the above**

Combinations of the above may be co-present.

Could you possibly enrol me as a late entry, please?

(c) Upgraders

Upgraders are the non-essential elements that can be added to requests to upgrade the force they convey. Out of the all possible types of upgraders the following occurred in the data. For a full list of the categories, once again the interested reader is referred to Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:273-289).

- **Intensifiers**

Adverbial elements added to upgrade chosen elements in the proposition.

I would really appreciate it if you could send me a copy.

I would greatly appreciate it if I could still register.

- *Time intensifier*

Please can you register me on the course A.S.A.P, as I'm in great need of self management.

- *Repetition of request*

Repetition subsumes both exact and paraphrased requests.

I'd be grateful if you'd send me a copy of your paper. Please send it to my address.

3.14.5.2 External modifiers

External modifiers (supportive moves) refer to a range of optional strategies exploited to mitigate the requestive force. External modifiers are external to the Head Act (request proper) in the sense that they can occur either to the left or to the right of it. The following categories of supportive moves occurred in the data of the present study.

(a) Mitigating supportive moves

- *Preparators*

An off-record preparing utterance giving a prior signal that a request may follow to ensure that the conditions for successful fulfilment of a given request hold. For a full list of the categories, the reader is referred to Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:273-289).

I am going to ask you for a favour – Could I borrow your notes from yesterday's lecture for a couple of hours when we meet on Thursday?

- *Grounder*

Reasons, explanations, or justifications provided for making a request.

Due to a great personal error I am late, by one week, for submitting the registration of the Project Management Skills Workshop module. Please can you register me on the course A.S.A.P.?

Unfortunately, today I realised that I have missed the registration of the workshop last Wednesday. Since the workshop is very related to my research project, Please let me know if there is still the possibility of registration.

- *Imposition minimizer*

Utterance such as apologetic expressions made to mitigate imposition,

Unfortunately I had copied down the date incorrectly. I hope that this late request does not inconvenience you in any way.

3.15 Chapter summary

In this chapter, following the presentation of the research questions and their concomitant hypotheses, I discussed the methodological issues in both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. The aim was to design and rationalise the instrument in light of the overall constraints of this study. After this, I discussed the criteria used for the selection of elicitation tasks, their construction, and the piloting. Finally, the categories of data analysis were presented.

Chapter Four

Discourse production tasks: Analysis and results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the analysis and results of the data collected by the open-ended discourse production tasks (ODPT). Brief comments also accompany the main results. The purpose of the analyses was to address the research questions and their concomitant hypotheses presented in Chapter Three. In this chapter, the analysis related to data obtained by the first instrument proceeds in the following order:

1. The result of analysis of requesting strategies used by the Iranian Ph.D. candidates in Iran (IPI), Iranian Ph.D. candidates in Britain (ESL), and British Ph.D. candidates in Britain (BPB) in the following four ODPT situations: the Paper, the Supervision, the Registration, and the Borrowing situations .
2. The result of analysis of perspective orientations, internal, and external modifiers used by the above three groups in the above four situations.

It should be noted at the start that in the analyses of the ODPT data to address the research objectives, the statistical procedures of the chi square test of goodness of fit, the chi square test of independence, and *t*-test, which were used along with descriptive statistics, were intended for descriptive rather than inferential purposes (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991).

4.2 Analysis of request strategies

The following sub-sections provide the analysis of the ‘main requesting strategies’ (MRS) and the MRS sub-types. The purpose of this section was to determine not only in what ways requesting sequences converged or diverged at MRS levels but also in what ways the sequences converged or diverged at MRS sub-types. Hence, the analyses of the ODPT data and by extension the testing of the first three hypotheses were conducted at two levels. The first level involved analysing data for individual groups on the basis of combined situations, i.e. without linking the data with particular

situations. This preliminary level allowed not only a holistic picture of the data and comparison between groups but also useful statistical analysis as well. The second level involved analysing ODPT data for individual groups by situations. This level allowed more detailed analyses of the data though in some cases this precluded using statistical procedures.

4.2.1 Analysis of main requesting strategies

Main requesting strategy (MRS) types were made in accordance with the CCSARP scheme by coding the request illocutions for three main categories (see section 3.14). The main categories involved direct strategies (DS), conventionally indirect strategies (CIS), and non-conventionally indirect strategies (NIS). Table 4.1 presents the percentage and frequency distribution of MRS types used by each group for all situations combined.

Table 4.1 Distribution of MRS types by group for all situations combined

Groups	Main Requesting strategies		
	Direct strategy	Conventionally indirect	Nonconventionally indirect
IPI	80.8 (97)*	17.5 (21)	1.7 (2)
ESL	13.3 (16)	82.5 (99)	4.2 (5)
BPB	9.2 (11)	88.3 (106)	2.5 (3)
Total	34.4 (124)	62.8 (226)	2.8 (10)

* The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are shown in parentheses.

Table 4.1, which outlines the percentage and frequency of the MRS occurrences for all situations combined, shows that the MRS data patterns in three distinct ways on the basis of their concentration. The first pattern, which concerns the data obtained from the ESL and BPB groups, shows that the MRS responses elicited from both groups tend to concentrate mainly on the category of CIS. There are 99 (82.5%) occurrences of CIS in the ESL data and 106 (88.3%) in the BPB data. For both groups DS is the second most frequently used category followed by NIS. The second pattern, which relates to the IPI group, shows that unlike the other two groups which showed a pronounced preference for CIS, the IPI participants' responses mainly concentrate on DS. As can be seen, DS account for 80.8% of the IPI data. Also in contrast to the other two groups, there are only 21 (17.5%) occurrences of CIS in the entire IPI data. Finally

the third pattern which is common to the three groups is the low frequency of NIS across all three groups. Looking at the column total for the NIS category, we can see that there are only 10 (2.8%) NIS occurrences in the entire data. These overall patterns represented by Table 1 is also displayed by Figure 4.1

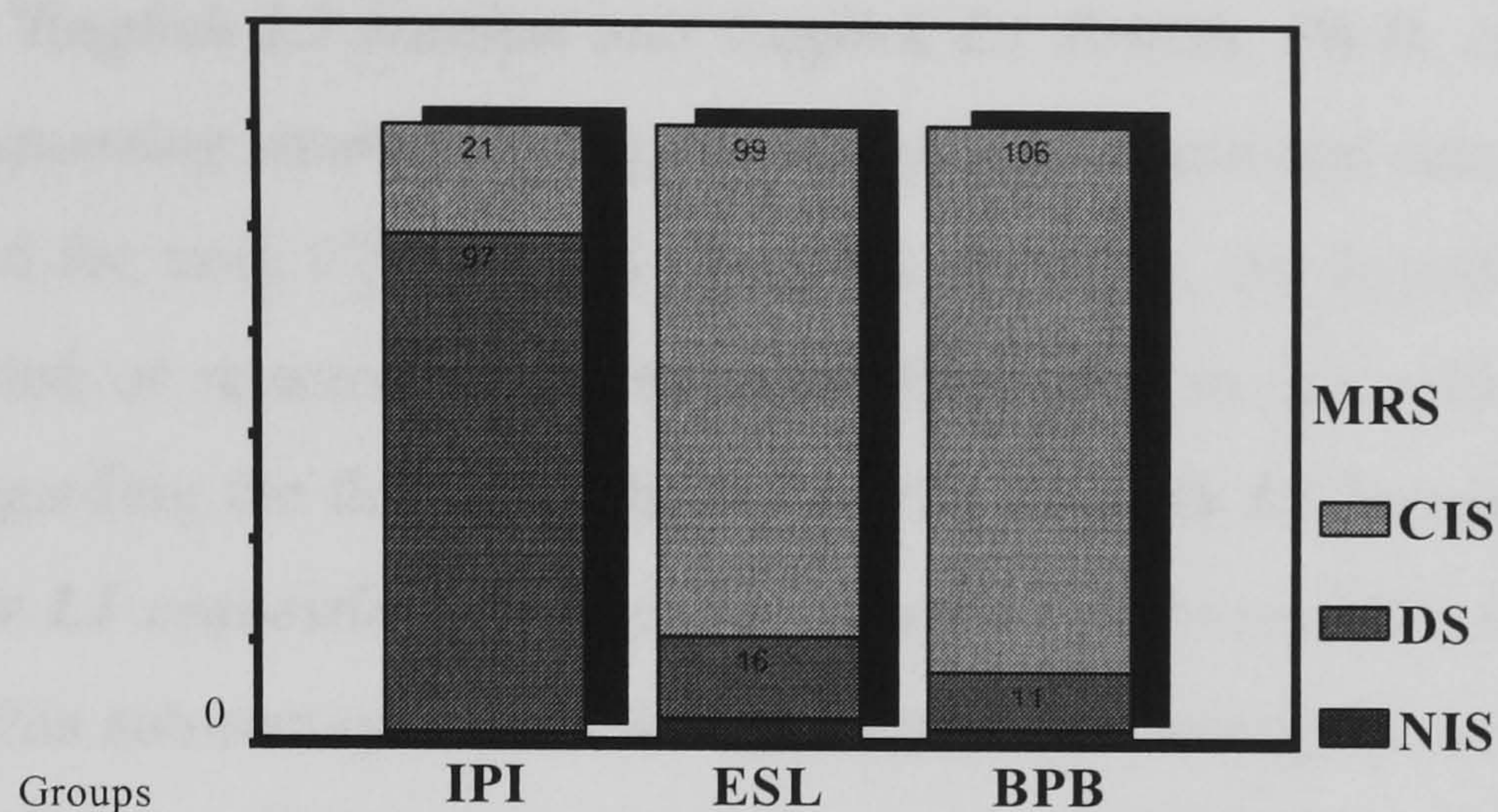


Figure 4.1 Distribution of the MRS responses for all situations combined

In order to test the first three hypotheses, the chi-square test of independence was conducted in order to determine whether or not there was a statistically significant level of difference between (a) the Iranian groups in their use of direct and conventionally indirect strategies, and (b) between the IPI vs ESL groups, and their preference for the same strategy types. No χ^2 analysis was carried out for the NIS strategy for either pair because of its low frequencies in the entire database (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The χ^2 test between the Iranian groups for their preference of CIS and the DS strategies showed that there were statistically significant differences between the observed and expected frequencies (chi square = 108.74, $df = 1$, $<.05$). In contrast, the χ^2 analysis carried out for the ESL and BPB groups showed no statistically significant difference (chi square = 1.15, $df = 1$, $<.05$).

In the light of the above results obtained from both the chi-square test of independence, and inter-group comparisons, the hypotheses concerning the use of MRS were addressed. As to the first hypothesis (**1: *There are no significant differences between the Persian L1 and English L2, Iranian Ph.D. candidates in their choice of***

requesting strategy types), the x^2 test and the descriptive analysis for combined situations show that it is rejected for both categories, namely, CIS and DS. As to NIS, no x^2 analysis was conducted for the above groups because of the low frequencies in the cells. Therefore, the hypothesis related to this category cannot be either confirmed or rejected. Concerning the second hypothesis (**2: *There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian and English L1 British, Ph.D. candidates in their choice of requesting strategy types***), the analysis for combined situations showed that it is accepted for both CIS and DS. For NIS, however, the hypothesis could not be either accepted or rejected as the expected frequency in the cells did not allow x^2 analysis. Regarding the third hypothesis (**3: *The English L2 Iranian group does not rely on their L1 requesting strategies to structure their requests in English***), the x^2 analysis in this sub-section shows that at least for the categories of CIS and DS, L1-related transfer is unlikely to have been a major influence in the ESL participants' strategy choices as the pragmalinguistic choices made by the IPI and ESL groups to formulate their requesting illocutions were significantly different in terms of their frequency.

So far then, I have reported on the basis of the analysis that there are no significant differences between the ESL and BPB groups at MRS levels, but that in contrast there are significant differences between the IPI and the ESL groups. Having seen the overall frequencies of strategy types by group, we now consider in more detail the variations in the use of strategy types by situation and by group. This more detailed analysis allows further investigation of the first three hypotheses with reference to ODPT situations. Table 4.2 provides the three groups' pattern of preference by situations.

Table 4.2 Main request strategy types by situation and by group

Situations	Groups	Main requesting strategies		
		DS	CIS	NIS
Paper situation	IPI	70 (21)*	30 (9)	**
	ESL	6.7 (2)	93.3 (28)	
	BPB		100 (30)	
	Total	25.6 (23)	74.4 (67)	
Supervision situation	IPI	86.7 (26)	6.7 (2)	6.7 (2)
	ESL	13.3 (4)	76.7 (23)	10 (3)
	BPB	20 (6)	80 (24)	
	Total	40 (36)	54.4 (49)	5.6 (5)
Registration situation	IPI	90 (27)	10 (3)	
	ESL	16.7 (5)	80 (24)	3.3 (1)
	BPB	6.7 (2)	86.7 (26)	6.7 (2)
	Total	37.8 (34)	58.9 (53)	3.3 (3)
Borrowing situation	IPI	76.7 (23)	23.3 (7)	
	ESL	16.7 (5)	80 (24)	3.3 (1)
	BPB	10 (3)	86.7 (26)	3.3 (1)
	Total	34.4 (31)	63.3 (57)	2.2 (2)

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

** The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the designated category.

As can be seen, the breakdown of frequencies by situation and by group in Table 4.2 provides quite a similar picture to the one provided by Table 4.1. As Table 4.2 shows most of the ESL and BPB data tend to concentrate evenly on the CIS category across all four ODPT situations. In addition, the setup of the data shows that the category of NIS has a very low frequency. In contrast, the IPI data show that for this group it is the category of DS which accounts for most occurrences of request realizations, not the CIS. Despite this difference, the IPI participants' low use of NIS is very similar to that of the other two groups.

Having looked at these general patterns, I will now turn to describe the other patterns and trends by group in the order of their arrangement. That is, I start off with the IPI sample and continue in turn with the ESL and BPB groups. Unless otherwise mentioned, I will keep to this procedure for all the tables in this chapter. As can be seen in Table 4.2, the IPI group's choice of request directness level largely concentrates on DS in all the four situations irrespective of the content of the prompts. This pattern of routinized preference is possibly more distinct in the Supervision and

Registration situations. However, in the Paper and Borrowing situations, and the former more markedly so than the latter, the IPI group's choice of directness level shows a trend towards CIS (see sub-section 6.6.2.). Table 4.2 shows there are 9 (30%) occurrences of CIS in the Paper situation and 7 (23.3 %) in the Borrowing situation. Compared to the CIS and particularly the DS categories, the NIS category has a very low frequency so that it does not show any clear pattern for this group. In contrast to the IPI data, it is the category of CIS which accounts for most of the ESL data. In the paper situation, the CIS category is used by 93.3% of the ESL group, in the Supervision situation by 77%, in the registration situation 80%, and in the Borrowing situation also by 80%. The frequency distribution of the NIS and DS categories in the ESL data across all four ODPT situations is so low that no pattern of usage can be pinpointed. Finally, the data elicited from the BPB group shows a considerable and consistent pattern of preference for the CIS category across all ODPT situations. In the Paper situation, the CIS accounts for 100% of request formulations, in the supervision for 80%, in the Registration for 86.7% and in the Borrowing situation for 86.7%. Considering the NIS and DS categories, the BPB participants showed consistent dispreference for them irrespective of the content of the situations. However, there is possibly a slight rise in the use of DS in the Supervision situation. However, the occurrences are too low to show a clear pattern.

To test the first three hypotheses by situations, chi-square tests of independence were conducted in order to determine whether or not there was a significant level of difference between the two pairs of groups, namely, the IPI vs ESL and ESL vs BPB groups, and the preference for the main request strategy types. Table 4.3 illustrates the results of chi-square test of independence by situations.

Table 4.3 Chi-square statistics for main request strategy types

Groups	Paper situation		Supervision situation		Registration situation		Borrowing situation	
	<i>df</i>	x^2	<i>df</i>	x^2	<i>df</i>	x^2	<i>df</i>	x^2
IPI-ESL	1	9.76*		**	1	15.13*	1	20.88*
ESL-BPB	1	0.07	1	0.26	1	0.08	1	0.08

* indicates significant difference.

** indicates x^2 could not be performed

With regard to the IPI and ESL groups, a significant level of difference was present for the Paper situation with chi square = 9.76, $df = 1$, $p < .01$; for the Registration situation with chi square = 15.13, $df = 1$, $p < .01$, and for the Borrowing situation with chi square = 20.88, $df = 1$, $p < .01$. Considering the three groups' distribution and frequency of strategy choices in Table 4.1, it can be concluded with absolute certainty that DS was preferred more by the IPI group, while the ESL participants preferred CIS. Hence, the first hypothesis is rejected. With regard to the ESL and BPB groups, no significant level of significance was found in any of the four situations, suggesting both groups tend to use CIS to a great extent. Hence, the second hypothesis is accepted. As to the third hypothesis, the analyses show that the ESL group's use of requesting strategies to structure their request illocutions could not be directly related to their L1-related pragmalinguistic knowledge base because the strategic forms in L1 and L2 differed greatly (see also Chapter 6 for further explanation). Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. It should be noted that in the chi square analysis of main requesting strategies, cells with fewer than five occurrences of relevant categories were not included in the analyses to meet the underlying assumptions of the test (Hatch and Lazaranton, 1991; Burns, 2000). But in spite of this, the test was used for descriptive purposes.

To summarize this sub-section, the analysis conducted for the situations showed that the ESL and BPB groups consistently used CIS more often than DS and NIS. The IPI group, on the other hand, opted consistently for one particular main strategy type in all situations, namely, DS. These consistent patterns also show that despite the underlying differences between English L1/L2 groups and the IPI group, their use of request formulations at main levels are prominently routinized. Having seen the overall

patterns of MRS by group, I proceed in the next sub-section to consider in more detail the variation in requesting strategies in sub-types.

4.2.2 Analysis of the sub-types of main requesting strategies

In this section, the first three hypotheses, which deal with requesting strategies are investigated at the level of MRS sub-types (see 3.14 for explanation). The analyses in this section proceed as follows. First comes the analyses of DS sub-types, followed by CIS sub-types and finally NIS will be analysed at sub-types.

4.2.2.1 Direct strategies

In order to address the first three hypotheses for request illocutions, the main strategies were coded in accordance with the CCSARP manual. Table 4.4 illustrates the descriptive statistics of the DS sub-types for combined situations.

Table 4.4 Distribution of DS sub-types by group

Groups	Direct Strategies					Total 1 (% per group)
	Mood derivable	Explicit performative	Hedged performative	Locution derivable	Want statement	
IPI	21.6 (21)*	76.3 (74)	1 (1)	**	1 (1)	78.2 (97)
ESL	62.5 (10)	6.3 (1)	25 (4)	6.3 (1)		12.9 (16)
BPB	27.3 (3)	36.4 (4)			36.4 (4)	8.9 (11)
Total 2 (% within groups)	27.4 (34)	63.7 (79)	4 (5)	0.8 (1)	4 (5)	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

With reference to the row and column total and individual cells, we should first note that the low frequencies, particularly in the ESL and BPB data, make it impossible to have much confidence in some of the patterns. Indeed by looking at Table 4.4, we can see that the frequency of twelve individual cells out of fifteen is less than five. Further, it is not at all clear that a larger sample would a provided a different distribution.

Having highlighted this, I move to look at individual groups' data distribution in turn in the order of their arrangement.

Concerning the IPI group, the data shows that the IPI participants' use of DS sub-types to realise request illocutions is mainly limited to the first two sub-types, namely, 'Mood derivable' which accounts for 21.6% of the IPI sample's use of the DS sub-type and 'Explicit performative' which accounts for 75.3%. The last three categories only account in total for 2% of the entire data. What these suggest in general is that the IPI responses to the ODPT prompts generally follow a routinized pattern of very limited variations. In contrast to the IPI data, the ESL frequency distribution shows that the DS sub-categories have very low frequency. Indeed, as the column total shows there are only 16 occurrences of DS in the entire ESL data, out of which 10 (62.5%) occurrences concentrate on the DS sub-category of Mood derivable. The frequencies of the other sub-categories, namely Explicit performative, Hedged performative, Locution derivable, and Want statement are too low to show any particular trends except that they were dispreferred. Like the ESL data, the BPB frequency distribution shows that the DS sub-category has a low frequency. Indeed, as the row total shows, the BPB group has the lowest frequency in the use of DS subcategories. There are only 11 occurrences of DS sub-categories. But unlike the other two groups whose use of DS sub-strategies concentrate on a particular sub-type, theirs are spread almost equally across the subcategories of Mood derivable (3 occurrences), Explicit performative (4 occurrences), and Want statement (4 occurrences). Despite the greater spread of the strategies, the very low frequency of the data does not show any clear patterns. For the distribution of the DS sub-strategies for the IPI group by situation, the reader is referred to appendix 5.

As to the first three hypotheses, though the data frequency distribution show considerable inter-group variations, particularly between the English L1/L2 groups and the IPI group, it was not statistically appropriate to run the chi square tests (except for the category of 'Mood derivable' between the IPI and the ESL groups) because of the very small number of occurrences of DS sub-types (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). Hence, the first two hypotheses could not

be either confirmed or rejected for the DS sub-types of 'Hedged performatives', 'Explicit performative', 'Locution derivable', and 'Want statement'. However, based on the frequency distribution of the data, it can be said with a certain degree of certainty that the first hypothesis has to be rejected for the second DS sub-category due to the differences found. For the category of 'Mood derivable', a goodness of fit chi square test was conducted and the result was also found significant (chi square =3.903, $df = 1$, $<.05$). Hence, the first hypothesis is not supported for this category either. For the second hypothesis, which involves the ESL and BPB groups, the hypothesis cannot be tested for any one of the categories even at a descriptive level because of low frequencies. Finally, concerning the third hypothesis, which deals with the issue of transfer, the hypothesis cannot be either accepted or rejected for the DS sub-categories of 'Hedged performative', 'Locution derivable', and 'Want statement' due to low frequency of data. However, for the DS sub-categories of Mood derivable and 'Explicit performative', the hypothesis is supported.

Overall then, the analysis of the DS sub-types show that the IPI group tend to formulate their requests largely by the DS sub-types of 'Mood derivable' and particularly 'Explicit performative'. As to the other two groups, the frequency of the data was too low to show any particular pattern, suggesting that they are largely ignored by the ESL and English L1 participants. Hence, the ESL and BPB groups general dispreference for the DS sub-types for the formulations of requests converge.

4.2.2.2 Conventionally indirect strategies

As mentioned above in 4.2.1, while most of the MRS types used by the ESL and BPB groups involved the CIS category, the IPI group preferred the DS main category most. Keeping these overall preferences and dispreferences in mind, we shall now consider in more detail the CIS variations by situation and by group. First, let us see the frequency of CIS sub-types for combined situations. This is provided in Table 4.5

Table 4.5 Distribution of the CIS sub-strategies by group for all situations combined

Groups	Conventionally indirect strategies						Row total
	Suggestory formula	Ability	Possibility	Volition	Mitigated preparatory	Permission question	
IPI	*	9.5 (2)**	9.5 (2)		81 (17)		9.3 (21)
ESL		19.2 (19)	9.1 (9)	23.2 (23)	36.4 (36)	12.1 (12)	43.8 (99)
BPB	1.9 (2)	32.1 (34)	24.5 (26)	1.9 (2)	36.6 (42)		46.9 (106)
Column total	0.9 (2)	24.3 (55)	16.4 (37)	11.1 (25)	42 (95)	5.3 (12)	

*The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

**The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

Once again, as can be seen in the column total of Table 4.5, the ESL and the BPB groups have used the CIS strategy considerably more often than the IPI group. Whereas there are 21 occurrences of CIS in the IPI data, there are 99 instances in the ESL data and 106 in the BPB data. Keeping these frequencies in mind, we shall now turn to look at the distribution of the data in turn. I start off by looking at the IPI group first and then continue, in turn, with the ESL and BPB groups.

Concerning the IPI group, the distribution of the CIS sub-strategy types indicates two interesting patterns. The first pattern, which has already been highlighted (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), is that the group has made comparatively little use of CIS. Secondly, the few CIS sub-strategy types that the group has used converge almost exclusively on the 'Mitigated preparatory' which is the strategy most frequently used by the other two groups to realise request illocutions. In contrast to the IPI group, the ESL group's distributions of the CIS sub-strategies indicate that they have used almost the whole range of the CIS requesting sub-strategies. The only strategy that was not used was 'Suggestory formula'. As to the frequency and the distribution of the ESL data, Table 4.5 shows the group preferred certain patterns to others. To arrange the strategies preferred in order of frequency, 'Mitigated preparatory' with 36.4% is the most frequently used strategy followed by 'Volition' with 23.2%, 'Ability' with 19.2%,

'Permission question' with 12.1%, and 'Possibility' with 9.1%. In contrast, in BPB requests, the spread of the CIS sub-strategies show a little more concentration in that most of the occurrences are accounted for by three sub-strategies, namely, 'Mitigated preparatory' (36.6%), 'Ability' (32.1%), and 'Possibility' (24.0%). Comparing the ESL data with that of BPB, Table 4.5 shows that, except for 'Mitigated preparatory' and to a lesser degree the 'Ability' categories, the frequencies of the sub-strategies that the two groups have used are quite different. For example, whereas the BPB group has quite frequently used the CIS sub-strategy of 'Possibility', the ESL group has only marginally used it to realise request illocutions. Also, Table 4.5 shows that in contrast to the ESL group which has quite extensively used the 'Volition' sub-strategy, the BPB group did not invoke the strategy for request formulations. The CIS patterns and trends as provided in Table 4.5, are shown Figure 4.2.

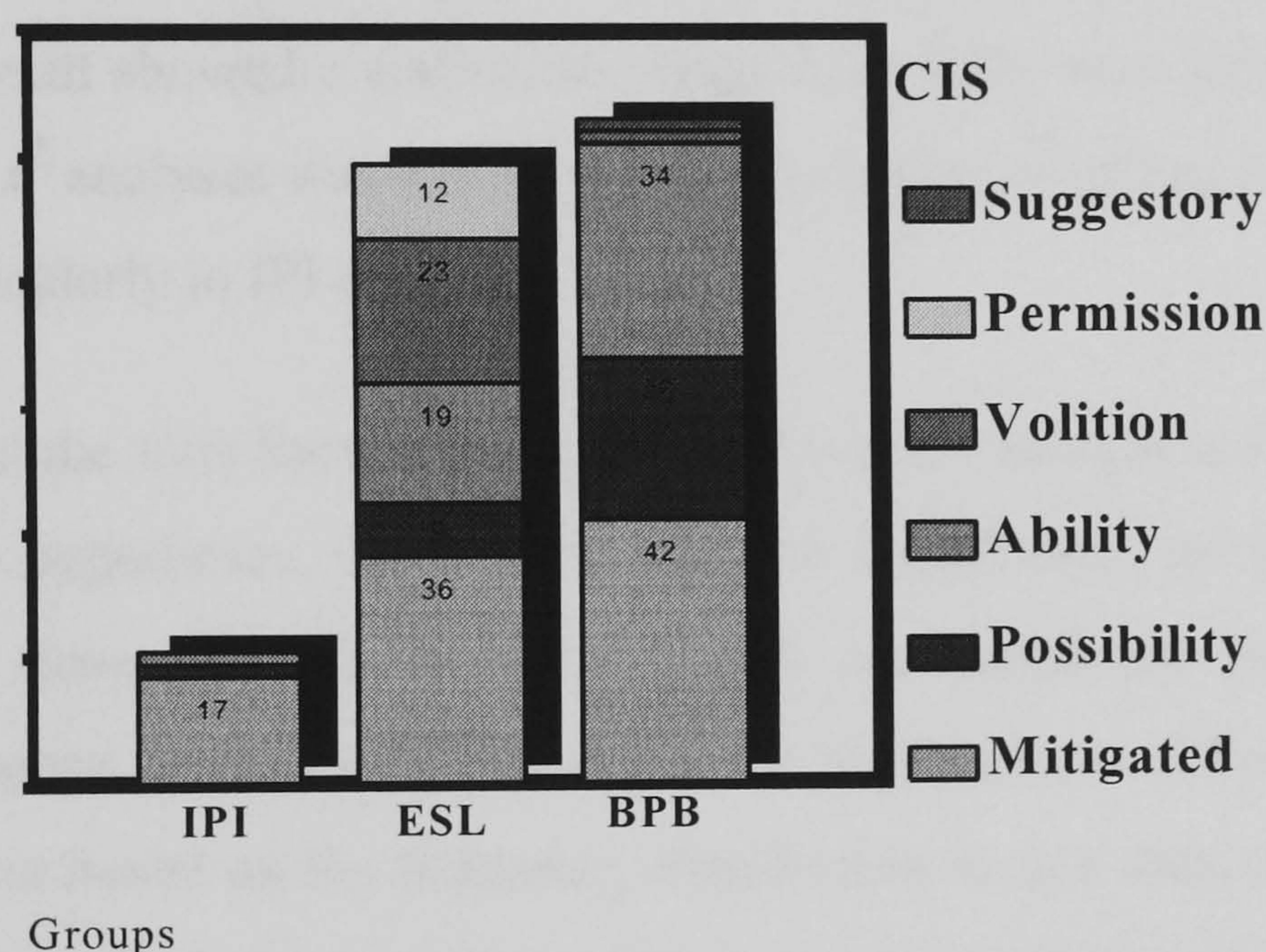


Figure 4.2 Distribution of the CIS sub-strategies for all situations combined

As Figure 4.2 shows, the biggest area of commonality between the three groups is their use of 'Mitigated preparatory'. Concerning the ESL and BPB groups, Figure 4.2 shows that only in the 'Mitigated preparatory' and the 'Ability' categories do the samples share considerable agreement. Otherwise the two groups are very much different in their range and frequency of preferences for the CIS sub-types.

In order to determine statistically significant level of difference between the ESL and BPB groups and their use of the CIS sub-strategies, the chi square test of independence was carried out for the sub-strategies of 'Ability', 'Possibility', and 'Mitigated preparatory'. No x^2 analyses were carried out for the CIS sub-types of 'Suggestory formula' because of its low frequencies in the data obtained from both groups. Nor was it carried out for the 'Permission question', and 'Volition' sub-strategies because of their low frequencies in the BPB data. The result (chi square = 4.50, $df = 2$, $P < .05$) suggested no statistically significant difference between the groups. However, as to the sub-categories for which x^2 analyses were not carried out, Table 4.5 shows that the frequency of the sub-types of 'Volition' and 'Permission question' is considerably higher in the ESL data, suggesting possible significant difference. Concerning the IPI and the IBB groups, the goodness of fit chi square test was only carried out for the CIS sub-strategy of 'Mitigated preparatory' because of the low frequencies of other sub-strategies. The result showed a statistically significant difference (chi square = 6.811, $df = 1$, $< .05$). No x^2 analyses was carried out for the other categories because of the low frequencies, particularly in IPI data.

Having conducted the tests for the above CIS sub-types, I shall now turn to relate them to the first three hypotheses. Concerning the first hypothesis, the chi square test of goodness of fit show that the hypothesis was not supported for the 'Mitigated preparatory' category. For the other sub-types the hypothesis could not be tested by x^2 statistics. However based on the frequency distribution in this data, it could be further claimed with a degree of certainty that the two groups are different in their use of the CIS sub-types of 'Ability', 'Volition', and, possibly, 'Permission question' also. Concerning the CIS sub-types of 'Suggestory formula' and probably 'Possibility', low frequencies do not provide any clues for testing the hypothesis. Concerning the second hypothesis, the chi square test of independence showed that the hypothesis is to be accepted for the CIS category of 'Mitigated preparatory' 'Ability' and 'Possibility'. For the categories of 'Suggestory formula', 'Volition', and 'Permission question' the hypothesis could not be tested by chi-square procedure because of the low frequencies in the BPB data. However, based on the frequency distribution explained earlier in this sub-section, the difference seems to be quite high for the sub-types of 'Volition', and

'Permission question'. As to the third hypothesis, the descriptive analysis gives a complex picture. It is probably not supported for the sub-strategy of 'mitigated preparatory'. However, in Chapter six it will be argued that despite the significant difference, the strategy might have been actively transferred (see 6.4.4.). Concerning the other sub-strategies, transfer may well have not been active.

Overall then, the data analysis for the CIS sub-strategies for all situations combined show two general patterns for the IPI group. Firstly, compared to the other two groups, the IPI participants used fewer CIS sub-types to formulate requests. Secondly, it was the CIS sub-strategy of 'Mitigated preparatory' that accounted for almost all the IPI formulations. As to the ESL group, the descriptive analyses show that the group used a wide range of CIS sub-strategies, but the CIS sub-types of 'Ability', 'Volition', 'Mitigate preparatory', and 'Permission question' account for most of the formulations. Hence, what seems to be only a point of similarity between the IPI and ESL groups is their predilection to use more of the MP sub-type, though the χ^2 analysis showed that even on this sub-type they were also greatly different. Finally, the analyses for the BPB group, showed that most of their formulations were made by means of the sub-strategies of 'Ability', 'Possibility', and 'Mitigated preparatory'. Furthermore, in contrast to the ESL group, the BPB participants' use of the sub-strategies showed that they did not use the sub-type of 'Permission question' at all, and 'Volition' was used only minimally.

Keeping these findings in mind, let us look at the frequency distribution of CIS sub-types in more details by situation and by group. This is provided by Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 Distribution of CIS by situation and group

Situations And Groups		Conventionally indirect strategies						Row total
		Suggestory formula	Ability	Possibility	Volition	Mitigated preparatory	Permission question	
Paper	IPI		0	11.1 (1)*	0	88.9 (8)	0	13.4 (9)
	ESL		10.7 (3)	0	17.9 (5)	60.7 (17)	10.7 (3)	41.8 (28)
	BPB		0	20 (6)	0	80 (24)	0	44.8 (30)
Column total			4.5 (3)	10.4 (7)	7.5 (5)	73.1 (49)	4.5 (3)	
Supervision	IPI	0	0	0	0	100 (2)	0	4.1 (2)
	ESL	0	26.1 (6)	13 (3)	17.4 (4)	39.1 (9)	4.3 (1)	46.9 (23)
	BPB	8.3 (2)	37.5 (9)	45.8 (11)	0	8.3 (2)	0	49 (24)
Column total		4.1 (2)	30.6 (15)	28.6 (14)	8.2 (4)	26.5 (13)	2 (1)	
Registration	IPI		0	0	0	100 (3)		5.7 (3)
	ESL	**	20.8 (5)	12.5 (3)	37.5 (9)	29.2 (7)		45.3 (24)
	BPB		19.2 (5)	26.9 (7)	0	53.8 (14)		49.1 (26)
Column total			18.9 (10)	18.9 (10)	17 (9)	45.3 (24)		
Borrowing	IPI		28.6 (2)	14.3 (1)	0	57.1 (4)	0	12.3 (7)
	ESL		20.8 (5)	12.5 (3)	20.8 (5)	12.5 (3)	33.3 (8)	42.1 (24)
	BPB		76.9 (20)	7.7 (2)	7.7 (2)	7.7 (2)	0	45.6 (26)
Column total			47.4 (27)	10.5 (6)	12.3 (7)	15.8 (9)	14 (8)	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS sub-types. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

As can be seen, the breakdown of the CIS category into its sub-types by situations and groups once again shows that whereas the frequency of CIS is very high for the BPB and ESL groups, it is very low for the IPI group. Concerning the English L1/L2 groups, the distribution of the data also shows that when the CIS category is broken down into its sub-types by situations, they show patterns of convergence and divergence. To see these patterns, I proceed to look at the data distribution by groups. I start by looking at the IPI sample first and continue with the ESL and BPB groups.

As to the IPI group, the frequency distribution of the CIS sub-types shows that, except for the Paper situation where there are eight occurrences of 'Mitigated preparatory', the sub-types are not particularly used for formulating request illocutions in the ODPT situations. Despite this dispreference, what is particularly interesting is that the set-up suggests that even if CIS is used by the IPI participants, the choice of the sub-strategy converges on one particular sub-type, namely, 'Mitigated preparatory' regardless of the ODPT situations. However, we must bear in mind that the frequencies are too low to show any significant patterns.

Concerning the ESL group, the frequency distribution of the CIS sub-strategies shows that the main CIS sub-strategies used to formulate request illocution concentrate on 'Mitigated preparatory', 'Volition', 'Ability', 'Permission question' and to a lesser degree 'Possibility'. The only CIS strategy that was not used in any of the situations is 'Suggestory formula' possibly because it is more suited to more relaxed settings where exchanges are oral. Further, by linking the CIS frequency distribution to ODPT situations, we can see that except for the paper situation where 'Mitigated preparatory' accounts for most occurrences of the data, the frequency distribution of the CIS sub-strategies is pronouncedly spread across the remaining three situations. It is also interesting to note that although in the Paper situation the most frequently used CIS sub-type is 'Mitigated preparatory', which accounts for 60.7% of the ESL data in the situation, in the remaining three ODPT situations, there is both a substantial decrease in the use of the sub-strategy and a substantial spread in the occurrences of the CIS sub-types.

Having remarked on these overall patterns, we proceed to look at the CIS frequency by situation. In the Paper situation, as mentioned above, most occurrences of the CIS sub-strategy concentrate on 'Mitigated preparatory' (60.7%), followed by 'Volition'. In the Supervision situation, the 'Ability' (26.1%) and 'Mitigated preparatory' (39.1%) categories account for most occurrences of the CIS sub-type whereas in the Registration situation it is the categories of 'Volition' (37.5%) and 'Mitigated preparatory' (29.2%). Concerning the Borrowing situation, the CIS sub-strategies of

'Permission question' (33.3%), 'Volition' (20.8%), and 'Ability' (20.8%) account for most formulations of requests. All in all, the frequency distribution of the ESL data shows that whereas there is considerable agreement in the ESL group concerning the use of the particular CIS sub-type in the first situation, this agreement does not exist as much for the other situations.

Finally, we turn to look at the BPB group. As can be seen in Table 5.6, the group's frequency distribution of CIS sub-types demonstrates a substantial convergence around the categories of 'Mitigated preparatory', 'Possibility' and 'Ability'. The strategies of 'Suggestory formula', 'Volition', and, particularly, 'Permission questions' are virtually ignored by the BPB participants in their formulations of request. Furthermore, if we look at the CIS frequency distribution by situation, we can see that it is only in the Paper and Borrowing situations that the BPB participants formulate their requests with the greatest agreement, mainly with either of two CIS sub-strategies, i.e., 'Mitigated preparatory' and 'Ability'. In the other two situations, the participants use of the CIS sub-strategy shows dispersal. Keeping these in mind, we proceed to look at the distribution by situation. In the Paper situation, the distribution is concentrated on only two categories, 80% of the BPB participants' requesting strategy choices converge on 'Mitigated preparatory', and 20% on the category of 'Possibility'. In the Supervision situation, in contrast, the CIS sub-strategies that are chosen mostly involve 'Possibility' (45.8 %) and 'Ability' (37.5 %). Only 8.3 % opted for the 'Mitigated preparatory' sub-type. In the Registration situation, where requesting strategy choice is spread across three CIS sub-types, most choices (53.8 %) converge on the 'Mitigated preparatory' sub-type, followed by 'Possibility' (26.9 %) and 'Ability' (19.2 %). The frequency distribution of data in the Registration situation is particularly similar to the Paper situation in that in both situations the categories of 'Mitigated preparatory' and 'Possibility' account for most of the data. Finally, in the Borrowing situation, it is the category of 'Ability' (76.9%) which accounts for most of the data.

In order to determine whether or not there was a significant level of difference between the ESL and BPB groups and their use of the CIS sub-strategies, the goodness of fit chi square tests were separately conducted for the sub-strategies of 'Mitigated preparatory'

in the Paper situation as well as the Registration situation, and 'Ability' in the Supervision and Borrowing situation. No χ^2 analyses were carried out for the other CIS sub-types because of their low frequencies. The results of the tests concerning the sub-type of 'Mitigated preparatory' for the Paper situation (chi square = 1.195, $df = 1$, $P < .05$), and the Registration situation (chi square = 2.333, $df = 1$, $P < .05$) showed that there were no significant differences between the two groups. As to the sub-type of 'Ability', the test also showed no significant difference in the Supervision situation (chi square = .600, $df = 1$, $P < .05$). However, there was a significant difference in the use of the sub-type in the Borrowing situation (chi square = 9, $df = 1$, $P < .05$). As to the IPI and ESL groups, the test could be only conducted for the sub-type of 'Mitigated preparatory' in the Paper situation, as the frequencies of the other sub-types were too low. The result showed no significant difference between the two groups (chi square = 3.240, $df = 1$, $P < .05$).

Having thus described the data, we shall now proceed to relate the description to the first three hypotheses. As to the first hypothesis, the descriptive analyses showed that, except for the sub-type of 'Mitigated preparatory' where the hypothesis was accepted, it was not possible to address it due to the very low frequency of the CIS sub-types in the IPI data and in the ESL data. However, this an interesting finding in that the analysis for combined situations suggested that the groups were significantly different on this sub-strategy. Also, the relatively higher frequency of the CIS sub-types in the ESL data suggests that the group was different from the IPI sample in their use of 'Mitigated preparatory' particularly in the supervision situation, 'Volition' in the Registration situation, and 'Permission question' in the Borrowing situation. Concerning the second hypothesis, the chi procedure supports the hypothesis for the sub-types of 'Mitigated preparatory' in the Paper situation as well as the Registration situation, and 'Ability' in the Supervision situation. However, the hypothesis was not supported for the sub-type of 'Ability' in the Borrowing situation. As to other CIS sub-types, the low and inter-group variable frequencies do not produce reliable trends. Concerning the third hypothesis, the substantial distribution and low frequencies of many cells do not produce a clear picture. However, as mentioned earlier, it is possible that transfer was active for the sub-strategy of 'mitigated preparatory'. This will be

discussed in Chapter Six.

Overall then, the data analyses of the CIS sub-types for individual groups show that in the IPI data the sub-types are too low and too widespread to show any clear patterns. As to the ESL group, the data shows considerable spread across the CIS sub-types in the Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations. However in the Paper situation, 'Mitigated preparatory' accounts for most formulations. Overall the most frequently used sub-types in the ESL data include 'Mitigated preparatory', 'Volition', 'Ability', and 'Permission question'. In contrast, the BPB data shows that the most frequently used CIS sub-types consist of 'Mitigated preparatory', 'Possibility', and 'Ability'. Their formulations also hardly used the sub-types of 'Volition' and 'Permission question'. In general, the BPB data shows both greater concentration and less variation across situations.

4.2.2.3 Non-conventionally indirect strategies

As mentioned earlier in 4.2.1, whereas most of the MRS types used by the ESL and BPB and IPI groups involved the CIS and DS categories, the groups unanimously ignored the NIS main category. Keeping this overall dispreference in mind, we now consider briefly the NIS variations for combined situation. Table 4.7 provides the frequency distribution of NIS chosen by the IPI, ESL, and BPB groups.

Table 4.7 Distribution of NIS for combined situations

Groups	Non-conventionally indirect strategy	
	Mild hint	Strong hint
IPI	100* (2)	
ESL	100 (5)	
BPB	100 (3)	
Total	100 (10)	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

As Table 4.7, shows there are too few NIS occurrences in the data obtained from the three groups to indicate any serious patterns. However, contrary to what might be expected, the absence of NIS data is meaningful in the general scheme of things. This will be discussed in Chapter 6. Hence, considering the above frequency distribution in connection with the category of NIS, the first three hypotheses cannot be tested

because of the low frequency of data.

4.2.3 Summary

To summarise this section, the analysis provided in connection with the main requesting strategies and their sub-types suggests that the three groups of participants show both similarities and differences in their choice of requesting strategies to realise request illocutions. The IPI group was found to be most different from the other two groups in terms of their choice of requesting strategies. The analysis for the other two groups provides a relatively complex picture. Firstly, though the two groups exhibit substantial similarities in their use of requesting strategies at the main level, the similarity significantly decreases when the main requesting strategies are considered as sub-types.

4.3 Analysis of perspective orientations

As mentioned earlier (see 3.14.4), the choice of perspective orientation (PO) is another potential source of variation in the formulation of requesting illocutions. Requests can be formulated by emphasising the role of the Hearer, Speaker, of both the Hearer and Speaker or they can be phrased without mentioning the agent (Blum-Kulka, 1987). On the basis of these four perspective orientations, the requesting data obtained from the three groups of participants were analysed and coded. Table 4.8 provides the frequency distribution of perspective orientations for combined situations.

Table 4.8 Distribution of perspective orientation by group for all situations combined

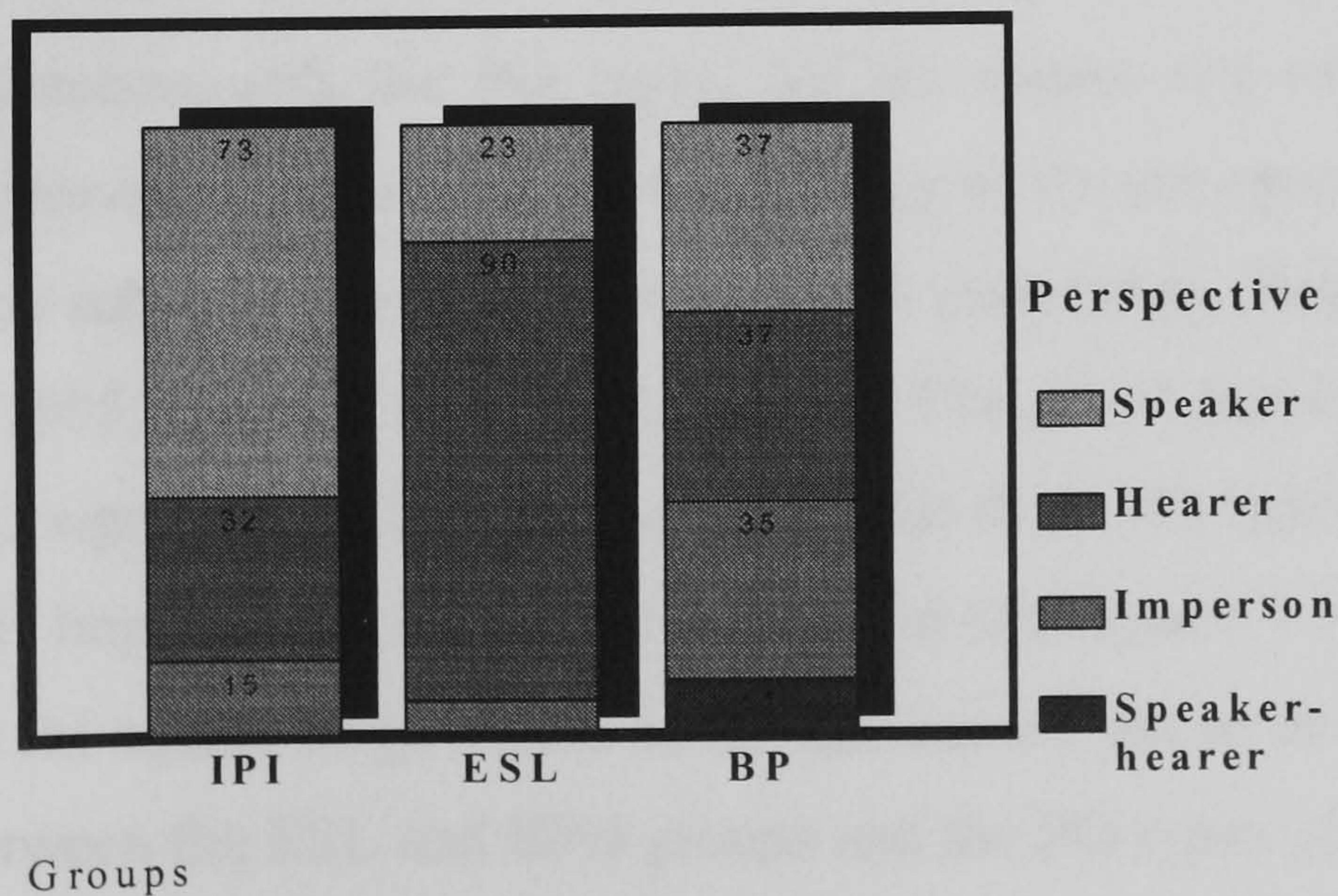
Groups	Perspective orientation			
	Hearer perspective	Speaker perspective	Speaker-Hearer perspective	Impersonal
IPI	26.7 (32)*	60.8 (73)	**	12.5 (15)
ESL	75 (90)	19.2 (23)	0.8 (1)	5 (6)
BPB	30.8 (37)	30.8 (37)	9.2 (11)	29.2 (35)
Total	44.2 (159)	36.9 (133)	3.3 (12)	15.6 (56)

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

Overall, the Total column of Table 4.8 shows that the Impersonal perspective (15.6%) and particularly the Speaker-Hearer (3.3%) perspectives have comparatively lower frequencies in the overall formulations of request illocutions. In contrast, the other two perspectives, namely, the Hearer oriented (44.2%) and the Speaker oriented (36.9%) account for most of the data. This overall frequency distribution pattern of PO types is captured by Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Distribution of perspective orientations for combined situations



Keeping these general patterns in mind, we now proceed to further describe the

frequency distribution of the data by group. I start with the ESL group, and continue with the BPB and IPI groups in turn. Concerning the ESL group, Table 4.8 shows that the group comparatively does not vary their performance on perspective types. Indeed as Table 4.8 shows, out of all perspective orientations in the ESL data, 75% of instances are formulated through 'Hearer' perspective orientation. The only other orientation that occurs in the ESL data with relatively marked frequency is 'Speaker' perspective which makes up 19.2% of the total occurrences. There is only one occurrence of 'Speaker-Hearer' and 5 (6.%) instances of 'Impersonal' perspective orientation. Overall, the ESL group's PO distributions, which largely converge towards one perspective orientation, are in marked contrast with their use of the CIS sub-types, which exhibited pronounced spread compared to the other two groups. In contrast, the BPB group's frequency distribution shows that the group used a spread of PO types. As Table 4.8 shows the group's PO frequency distribution almost evenly concentrates across 'Hearer' perspective (30.8%), 'Speaker' perspective (30.8%), and 'Impersonal' (29.2). The perspective orientation with lowest frequency is 'Speaker-Hearer' orientation, which comprises 9.2% of the PO data. Finally, the IPI data shows that the group's use of PO types largely concentrates on 'Hearer' (26.7%) and particularly on 'Speaker' perspective orientations which accounts for 60.8% of the data. There are no occurrences of 'Speaker-Hearer' orientation. The PO type of 'Impersonal', on the other hand, accounts for 12.5% of the IPI data.

In order to determine statistically significant differences between the IPI and ESL groups in connection with the PO types, the chi square test of independence was carried out. However, because of the low frequency of the sub-type of 'Speaker-Hearer orientation', the sub-type was not included in the calculation (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The χ^2 test between the IPI and ESL groups showed significant differences along all the three PO types, namely, 'Hearer', 'Speaker', and 'Impersonal' perspective orientation (chi square = 57.47, $df = 2$, $<.05$). Similarly, the chi square of goodness of fit was carried out to determine the level of differences between the ESL and BPB groups and the PO types of 'Hearer', 'Speaker', and 'Impersonal' orientations. No χ^2 analysis was carried out for the category 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective orientation because of its low frequency in ESL data. The

χ^2 test showed significant difference in the 'Hearer', 'Speaker', and 'Impersonal' perspective orientations also (chi square = 45.54, $df = 2$, $<.05$).

Having presented the description and analyses, we now proceed to address the relevant hypotheses. Concerning the fourth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the Persian L1 and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of perspective orientations*), the results show that the hypothesis is rejected for the categories of 'Hearer', 'Speaker', and 'Impersonal'. As χ^2 analysis could not be conducted for 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective orientation for its low frequency, the hypothesis could not be tested. Concerning the fifth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice of perspective orientations*), the results show that the hypothesis is rejected for the 'Hearer', 'Impersonal', and 'Speaker' perspective orientation. Concerning 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective, the hypothesis could not be tested because of its low occurrences in the ESL data. However, the frequency data suggests that the two groups are considerably different. Concerning the sixth hypothesis (*The English L2 Iranian group does not rely on their L1 perspective orientations to structure their requests in English*), the result of the chi-square shows that the hypothesis is accepted for all PO types except for 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective orientation, which was not analysed by the chi square procedure because of its low frequency.

Overall, the descriptive analyses of perspective orientation for combined situations show that the three groups generally follow their own patterns of using perspective orientations in their formulations of request illocutions for the four ODPT situations.

Having looked at the frequency distribution and the analyses of PO types for combined situations, we now proceed to look at each group's PO distribution in more detail by situation. Such analysis will make it possible to see how the PO types cluster in response to different ODPT prompts. Table 4.9 provides the distribution of perspective orientations by situation.

Table 4.9 Distribution of perspective orientations by situation and by group

		Perspective orientations			
Situations	Groups	Hearer	Speaker	Hearer-speaker	Impersonal
Paper situation	IPI	16.7 (5)	66.7 (20)		16.7 (5)
	ESL	90 (27)	10 (3)	*	0
	BPB	40. (12)	30 (9)		30 (9)
Column total		48.9 (44)	35.6 (32)	0	15.6 (14)
Supervision situation	IPI	13.3 (4)	83.3 (25)	0	3.3 (1)
	ESL	70 (21)	20 (6)	0	10 (3)
	BPB	20 (6)	6.7 (2)	36.7 (11)	36.7 (11)
Column total		34.4 (31)	36.7 (33)	12.2 (11)	16.7 (15)
Registration situation	IPI	26.7 (8)	50 (15)		23.3 (7)
	ESL	76.7 (23)	13.3 (4)		10 (3)
	BPB	33.3 (10)	23.3 (7)		43.3 (13)
Column total		46.6 (41)	28.9 (26)	0	25.6 (25)
Borrowing situation	IPI	50 (15)	43.3 (13)	0	6.7 (2)
	ESL	63.3(19)	33.3 (10)	3.3 (1)	0
	BPB	30 (9)	63.3 (19)	0	6.7 (2)
Column total		47.8 (43)	46.7 (42)	1.1 (1)	4.4 (4)

**The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

*The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

Following Table 4.8, Table 4.9 once again shows that overall the groups have used the 'Impersonal' and particularly the 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective orientations with a low frequency, and most of the PO types elicited are limited to the 'Hearer' and 'Speaker' perspectives. In light of this, we now proceed to examine in more detail the frequency distribution of PO types by group in turn. I start off with the ESL group first and continue with the BPB and IPI groups.

The ESL group's choice of perspective shows an over-representation of the 'Hearer' perspective in each of the four situations. In the Paper situation, the 'Hearer' perspective accounts for 90% of the data, in the Supervision for 70%, in the Registration situation for 76.7% and finally in the Borrowing situation for 63.3%. Furthermore, Table 4.9 shows that the 'Impersonal' and 'Speaker-Hearer' perspectives are particularly under-represented in all the ODPT situations. Indeed, there is only one occurrence of the 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective, which is in the Borrowing situation, and six occurrences of the 'Impersonal' perspective which are evenly distributed in the

Supervision (10%) and Registration situations (10%). Regarding the 'Speaker' orientation, Table 4.9 shows that their occurrences are largely very low. However, it is only in the Borrowing situation that the frequency of the 'Speaker' orientation is comparatively high. As the table shows, this perspective accounts for 33.3% of the data in the Borrowing situation. Overall, the ESL frequency distribution of the PO types shows that their choice of perspective is largely limited to the 'Hearer' perspective across all situations and the frequency of other types are too low, possibly except for the Borrowing situation, to show particular trends.

In contrast to the ESL group, whose choice of perspective orientations largely converged towards the 'Hearer' perspective, the BPB group's choice of perspective orientation is more variable across situations and presents a more complex distribution in response to ODPT situation types. Generally, Table 4.9 shows that the BPB group effectively used all PO types with relatively high frequency. The exception might possibly be 'Speaker-Hearer' perspective which has the lowest frequency (36.7%) and whose occurrences are limited to the Supervision situation. From the point of concentration, the frequency distribution shows that except for the Borrowing situation where two PO types, namely, the 'Hearer', (30%) and particularly the 'Speaker' perspectives (63.3%) account largely for most of the data, in other situations three PO types have largely been used. In the Paper situation, the PO types that account for most of the data are the 'Hearer' (40%), 'Speaker' (30%), and 'Impersonal' (30%) perspectives, in the Supervision situation they are the 'Hearer' (20%), 'Speaker-Hearer' (36.7%), and 'Impersonal' perspectives (36.7%). In the Registration situation they are 'Hearer, (33.3%), 'Speaker' (23.3%), and 'Impersonal' (43.3%) perspectives. Concerning the spread of the PO types, the type that most clearly cuts through all situations is the 'Hearer' perspective. In the Paper situation, the 'Hearer' perspective accounts for 40% of the data, in the Supervision for 20%, in the Registration for 33.3% and in the Borrowing situation for 30%. The 'Impersonal' perspective is used with comparatively high frequency in the first three situations. Moreover, 30% of the group in the Paper situation, 23% in the Registration, and 63% in the Borrowing used the 'Speaker' perspective orientation for their request formulations. Finally, the BPB group's PO frequency distribution shows that the 'Speaker' and the 'Impersonal'

perspective orientations in the Supervision situation have a low incidence. Overall, the BPB data shows that the group has largely used all the PO types but their usage suggests sensitivity to ODPT situations.

Finally, concerning the IPI group, the frequency distribution shows that the 'Speaker' orientation accounts for most of the data. In the Paper situation, the perspective accounts for 66.7% of the data, in the Supervision for 83.3%, in the Registration for 50% and in the Borrowing situation 43.3%. The second most frequently used PO type in the IPI data is the 'Hearer' orientation, which shows a relatively low frequency for the first three situations, but has a relatively high frequency (50%) in the Borrowing situation. The frequency of the 'Impersonal' perspective is too low to show any pattern, and there are no occurrences of 'Speaker-hearer' orientation in the IPI data.

In order to determine whether or not there were significant differences between the IPI and ESL groups in connection with the PO types by situation, the chi square of goodness of fit was carried out for the following PO types: the 'Hearer' perspective in the Paper situation, the 'Speaker' orientation in the Supervision situation, the 'Hearer' perspective in the Registration situation, and the 'Hearer' as well as the 'Speaker' orientations in the Borrowing situation. No x^2 analyses were carried out for the other PO types by situation because of their low frequency (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The x^2 test between the IPI and ESL groups showed significant differences for 'Hearer' perspective (chi square = 15.13, df = 1, $<.05$) in the Paper situation, for 'Speaker' orientation (chi square = 11.65, df = 1, $<.05$) in the Supervision situation, and for the 'Hearer' orientation (chi square = 7.26, df = 1, $<.05$) in the Registration. The x^2 test of independence showed no significant difference for the 'Hearer' and the 'Speaker' orientation (chi square = 0.85, df = 1, $<.05$) in the Borrowing situation.

Similarly, the chi square of goodness of fit was carried out for the ESL and BPB groups by situation for the PO types. The x^2 test showed significant differences for the 'Hearer' perspective in the Paper situation (chi square = 5.77, df = 1, $<.05$), the Supervision situation (chi square = 8.33, df = 1, $<.05$), and in the Registration situation

(chi square = 5.12, $df = 1$, $<.05$). In the Borrowing situation, the chi square test of independence was carried out between the two groups for the perspective orientation sub-types of 'Hearer' and 'Speaker'. The result also showed significant difference between the two groups (chi square = 6.35, $df = 1$, $<.05$).

In the light of the above analysis, the fourth hypothesis was not supported for the following PO types: the 'Hearer' perspective in the Paper situation, the 'Speaker' perspective in the Supervision situation, and the 'Hearer' perspective in the Registration situation. However, the hypothesis was supported for the PO types of 'Hearer' and 'Speaker' perspective orientations in the Borrowing situation. Also, on the basis of the descriptive statistics presented for Table 4.9, we can see that the frequency differences for the PO types of the 'Speaker' in the Paper situation, 'Hearer' in the Supervision and Registration situations, are considerably greater, possibly suggesting that the differences might well be significant. For the other perspective types, the hypothesis cannot be adequately addressed because of the low frequencies in the cells. Concerning the fifth hypothesis, the chi square test of goodness of fit shows that it is not supported for the 'Hearer' perspective in the Paper, Supervision, and Registration situations. The chi square test of independence also, was not supported for 'Hearer' and 'Speaker' perspectives in the Borrowing situations.

Finally, regarding the sixth hypothesis, both types of analysis show that the hypothesis is accepted for the 'Hearer' and 'Speaker' perspectives in the first three situations. However, the hypothesis cannot be adequately addressed for the other two perspective types in the first three situations because of the low frequencies. Regarding PO types of 'Hearer' and 'Speaker' in the Borrowing situation, the χ^2 analysis does not support the hypothesis, possibly suggesting that transfer might have been active.

Overall, the data analyses for the group's distribution of PO types show that each group tends to have its own pattern of using PO types in response to ODPT prompts. The IPI and ESL groups show more similarity in their use of PO types in that their request formulations manifest a narrower range. Despite this similarity, the two groups show significant differences in their use of PO types by situation. Concerning the ESL

group, the analysis show that the group's use of PO types is more varied in response to ODPT prompts.

Overall, in this sub-section, which dealt with the perspective orientations in request illocutions, two levels of analysis were carried out. The first, which was a stepping-stone to the next level, looked at the PO distribution for combined situations. The results indicated that except, for the 'Hearer-Speaker' perspective, which was not statistically tested, the IPI and ESL groups were significantly using different PO types in their requesting illocutions. Concerning the ESL and BPB groups, the same result was obtained except for 'Speaker' perspective. The chi-square of goodness of fit showed that the ESL and BPB samples were converging in their use of the perspective. The second analysis, which analysed the group's PO data by situation, showed that analyses were not possible for some PO types in all situations because of their very low frequency. Despite this, the analyses for the PO types of adequate frequency showed that, overall, the IPI and ESL groups were using significantly different PO types for the first three situations.

4.4 Analysis of internal modifiers

Internal modifiers (IM) which include upgraders, syntactic, and lexical-phrasal elements are the non-essential elements of requesting illocutions internal to the Head Act (see sub-section 3.14.5.1). The choice of internal modifiers generates another source of variation in the configuration of request acts. The following sub-sections provide the analysis of the internal modifying devices within requesting illocutions.

4.4.1 Analyses of internal modifiers for all situations combined

Following the analyses and coding of request sequences, the descriptive statistics of IM for combined situations were calculated for each group. Table 4.10 presents the statistics.

Table 4.10 Overall frequency of internal modifiers by group

Groups	N of IM Occurrences	Mean	SD
IPI (n = 74)	92	1.24	0.46
ESL (n = 94)	122	1.30	0.50
BPB (n = 69)	97	1.41	0.49

Table 4.10 shows that the frequency of internal modifying devices was not particularly high in any group considering the total number of requesting illocutions. There are 92 occurrences of internal modifiers in the IPI data, 122 in the ESL group, and 97 in the BPB group. In general, compared to the other two groups, the total number of internal modifiers in the ESL sample is higher. This is interesting in that several findings from previous research indicate L2 learners tend to under-use the modifiers on requests formulations (Rintell, 1981; House and Kasper, 1987; Hassall, 2001). In order to determine whether there were significant differences in the use of internal modifiers between the ESL and IPI groups on the one hand, and BPB and ESL groups on the other, a two-tailed *t*-test was carried out for each pair. Concerning the former pair, namely the IPI and ESL groups, the comparison showed no significant differences ($t(166) = 0.72, p < .05$). Neither was any significant difference found for the second pair ($t(161) = -1.36, p < .05$).

All in all, the analysis shows that the groups are very similar in the number of IM that they use on their request illocutions. Keeping this overall analysis in mind for all situations combined, we shall now turn to look in more detail at the descriptive statistics of internal modifiers by situation. They are provided in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Overall distribution of internal modifiers by situation and by group

Internal modifiers				
Situations	Groups	Total	Mean	SD
Paper Situation	IPI	29	1.26	0.45
	ESL	36	1.38	0.50
	BPB	42	1.68	0.48
Supervision Situation	IPI	17	1.13	0.35
	ESL	33	1.43	0.59
	BPB	10	1.00	0.00
Registration Situation	IPI	21	1.40	0.63
	ESL	33	1.22	0.51
	BPB	35	1.40	0.50
Borrowing Situation	IPI	25	1.19	0.40
	ESL	20	1.11	0.32
	BPB	10	1.11	0.33

Overall, Table 4.11 shows both inter-group and cross-situation variation in the incidence of internal modifiers in response to ODPT situations. Keeping this general pattern in mind, we shall now proceed to look at each group's IM distribution by situation. Concerning the IPI group, the frequency distribution shows that the participants in this group have used relatively fewer of the modifiers for the two mid-ODPT situations while the situations lying at the extremes, namely the Supervision and Registration situations, elicited more internal modifiers. In contrast, the ESL data shows that for the first three situations, the frequency of the internal modifiers is more or less evenly distributed. However, in the Borrowing situation the group has used relatively fewer of them. The group used a total of twenty internal modifiers in this situation. Finally, the BPB group's data distribution shows that whereas most of the BPB group's relevant data concentrates on the Paper (41.6%) and Registration (35.6%) situations, there are comparatively fewer of them in response to the Supervision and the Borrowing situations.

Having examined the overall use of internal modifiers by group and situation, I will proceed in the next section to look at the specific sub-types of internal modifiers.

4.4.2 Syntactic downgraders

Syntactic downgraders, which are a sub-type of internal modifiers, refer to optional syntactic devices that have mitigating function on request illocutions (see 3.14.5.1). The choice of syntactic modifiers is another source of variation in the formulation of requesting illocutions. Table 4.12 provides the distribution of syntactic downgraders used by the three groups for all situations combined.

Table 4.12 Overall distribution of syntactic downgraders by group

Syntactic downgraders					
Groups	Aspect	Tense	Conditional Clause	Combination	Row Total
IPI	4.8 (1)*	9.5 (2)	81 (17)	4.8 (1)	20.4 (21)
ESL	**		100 (36)		35 (36)
BPB	4.3 (2)		78.3 (36)	17.4 (8)	44.7 (46)
Column Total	2.9 (3)	1.9 (2)	86.4 (89)	8.7 (9)	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

Overall, the Column total of Table 4.12 shows that, except for 'conditional clause' as a sub-type of syntactic downgrader, the frequency of other of syntactic downgraders is too low to show particular patterns. It should be noted that the conditional clause which has a mitigating function was mainly used with the Mitigated preparatory sub-strategy which is a sub-type of the conventionally indirect requesting strategy (see 3.16.3). Besides the first two trends, the row total shows cross-group variation in the use of syntactic downgraders. That is, whereas the BPB group's data shows a total of 46 occurrences of syntactic downgraders on request illocutions, there are 36 occurrences in the ESL, and 21 in the IPI data. In order to determine whether or not there were significant differences in the use of syntactic downgraders between the IPI and ESL groups, on the one hand, and the ESL and BPB groups on the other, the chi square of goodness of fit was carried out by combining categories combination (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The χ^2 test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the first pair in their use of the downgraders (chi square = 3.947, $df = 1 < 0.5$). In contrast, the difference was not statistically significant for the second pair (chi square = 1.220, $df = 1 < 0.5$).

Concerning the seventh, eighth, and ninth hypotheses, χ^2 test can be used to address only the syntactic sub-category of ‘conditional clause’ as the frequency of other categories does not meet the precondition for the test. Based on the χ^2 calculation, the seventh hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the Persian L1 and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of internal modifiers for their request formulations*) is not supported due to significant differences between the IPI and ESL groups. In contrast, the test for the eighth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British PhD candidates in their choice of internal modifiers for their request formulations*) supports the hypothesis in that the test did not show any significant differences between the ESL and BPB groups. Concerning the ninth hypothesis (*The English L2 group does not rely on their L1-related internal modifying devices for their request formulations in English*), the analysis shows that the hypothesis is generally accepted for the syntactic modifiers. Hence, based on the data it is not very likely that transfer was a major influence.

4.4.3 Lexical and phrasal downgraders

Lexical and phrasal downgraders are a sub-type of internal modifiers which are optional elements which serve to soften the force of request illocutions (see sub-section (3.14.5.1). They include such elements as politeness markers, hedges, understaters. Choice of lexical and phrasal downgraders is another source of variation in the formulation of requesting illocutions. Table 4.13 provides the distribution of lexical and phrasal downgraders used by the three groups for all situations combined.

Table 4.13 Overall distribution of lexical and phrasal downgraders by group

Groups	Lexical and Phrasal downgraders			Row Total
	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Combinations	
IPI	13.3 (8)	81.7 (49)	5 (3)	44.1 (60)
ESL	93.8 (60)	4.7 (3)	1.6 (1)	47.1 (64)
BPB	100 (12)	*		8.8 (12)
Column total	58.8 (80)	38.2 (52)	2.9 (4)	

**The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

*The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

Overall, Table 4.13 shows that out of all the possible categories of lexical and phrasal downgraders, only two categories, namely downtoners (38.2), and particularly politeness markers (58.8), have been extensively used (see Column total). The category designated as 'combinations' has too low a frequency to show any trends. If, however, we proceed further by looking at Row total, we can see that it is the IPI and ESL groups that outnumber the BPB group in using lexical and phrasal downgraders. Having said this, we proceed to look in more detail at each group's performance. Concerning the IPI data, Table 4.13 shows cross-category variations in their frequency. That is, whereas 'downtoners' account for 81.7% of the data, politeness markers account for 13.3%, and combinations for only 5%. In contrast, the ESL data shows it is the politeness marker that accounts for most of the data. As Table 4.13 shows, whereas this category accounts for 93.8% of the data, downtoner account for only 4.7%, and combinations for 1.6%. In contrast to the first two groups, the BPB data clearly shows few occurrences of lexical and phrasal downgraders on requesting illocutions. Indeed, there are only twelve occurrences of lexical and phrasal downgraders, which are all politeness markers. The frequency distribution of lexical and phrasal downgraders can be found in appendix 6.

In order to determine a statistically significant differences in the use of lexical and phrasal downgraders between the IPI and ESL groups, on the one hand, and the ESL and BPB groups on the other, the chi square test for independence was first carried out by omitting the category of combination (Burns, 2000; Gravetter and Wallnau, 1985; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). The χ^2 test showed a statistically significant difference

between the first pair (chi square = 80.3, $df = 1 < 0.5$) in their use of lexical and phrasal downgraders. For the ESL and BPB group, the chi square test of goodness of fit was carried for the category of politeness marker because of the absence of any occurrences of downtoners in the BPB data. The test showed that the difference was statistically significant (chi square = 32., $df = 1 < 0.5$). It is interesting to note that when the researcher conducted χ^2 for the IPI and ESL group by combining all the above categories, the difference was found not to be statistically significant. This shows that keeping the analyses at higher levels can hide important differences.

Concerning the relevant hypotheses, the χ^2 test shows that for the sub-categories of 'politeness marker' and 'downtoner', the seventh hypothesis is not supported. This is because of the significant difference between the groups. Similarly, the χ^2 test for the sub-category of 'politeness marker' did not support the eighth hypothesis, in that the test showed significant differences between the ESL and BPB groups. Concerning the ninth hypothesis, the analysis shows that the hypothesis is accepted for the sub-category of Politeness markers and Downtoners.

4.4.4 Upgraders

Upgraders are request-internal elements that intensify the force of request illocutions (see sub-section 3.14.5.1). The choice of upgraders is another source of variation in the formulation of requesting illocutions. This sub-section deals with the analysis of upgraders for all situations combined. Table 4.14 presents the frequency distribution of upgraders used by each group.

Table 4.14 Overall distribution of upgraders by group

Groups	Upgraders			Row total
	Intensifiers	Time Intensifiers	Repetition of Request	
IPI	72.7 (8)*	**	27.3 (3)	15.3 (11)
ESL	18.2 (4)	9.1 (2)	72.7 (16)	30.6 (22)
BPB	43.6 (17)	7.7 (3)	48.7 (19)	54.2 (39)
Column Total	40.3 (29)	6.9 (5)	52.8 (38)	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category.

Table 4.14 shows that the overall frequency distribution of upgraders was limited to three sub-types including intensifiers, time intensifiers and repetition of request. Further, as the column total shows out of the three sub-types, time intensifiers were used minimally by the three groups. Concerning the overall frequency of upgraders by group, the row total shows cross-group variations. The group with the highest frequency of upgraders is the BPB group which used 54.2% of all the upgraders. This is interesting because the BPB group used very few lexical and phrasal downgraders. On a descriptive basis only, the frequency of upgraders used by the ESL group (30.6%) is closer to the IPI group (15.3%) than to the BPB group.

Having looked at the frequency distribution of upgraders in general, we shall now proceed to look at their frequency distribution for individual groups. Concerning the IPI sample, Table 4.14 shows that the IPI participants did not use upgraders with high frequency. Indeed, as the table demonstrates there are only eleven occurrences of upgraders in the IPI data, out of which most (72.7%) are intensifiers. In contrast, the ESL data shows a higher frequency of upgraders, but unlike the IPI data most of them cluster around the sub-type of 'repetition of request' (72.7%). Finally, the BPB data demonstrate that, compared to the other two groups, upgraders were used with considerably higher frequency which concentrate on two categories, namely intensifiers (43.6%) and repetition of request (48.7%).

To establish statistically significant differences between the BPB and ESL groups, the χ^2 test was carried out for the sub-category of 'repetition of request'. The result (chi

square = 0.26, $df = 1 < 0.5$) showed no significant difference between them. The low frequency of other cells did not meet the pre-condition of the test, hence no more test were carried for other sub-categories, nor between the other two groups. Concerning the hypothesis, χ^2 test for the eighth hypothesis showed no significant differences between the ESL and BPB groups in their use of upgraders. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. As for the other categories, the low frequencies do allow the hypotheses to be addressed adequately.

4.4.5 Summary

This section has reported the analyses of internal modifiers. The first phase of the analyses, which was carried out for all sub-types of internal modifiers combined, showed that the groups were performing similarly. However, when the same analysis was applied for individual ODPT situations, it emerged that the groups were not performing entirely similarly. The second phase of analyses looked at the specific sub-types of internal modifiers, including syntactic downgraders, lexical and phrasal downgraders, and upgraders. Concerning syntactic downgraders, the analyses showed that while the ESL and BPB groups performed similarly in their use of the downgraders, there was significant difference between the IPI and ESL groups. As to the lexical and phrasal downgraders, the analyses showed that in contrast to the IPI group which used Downtoners with a high frequency, Politeness markers predominated in the ESL data. As to the BPB group, the participants used very few lexical and phrasal downgraders. The chi square procedure showed significant difference in the use of lexical and phrasal downgraders between both pairs. Finally, the analysis of upgraders showed that the BPB group's use of upgraders significantly outnumbered those of the ESL group.

4.5 Analysis of external modifiers

External modifier (EX) includes supportive moves that serve to mitigate or upgrade the force of request illocutions. Such modifiers which are external to the request nucleus include a range of modifiers such as grounders, disarmers, etc. (see sub-section 3.14.5.2). Choice of external modifiers generates another source of variation in the configuration of request acts. This section provides an analysis of the external

modifying devices. It should be noted at the start that the data elicited for the present study contained supportive moves that only served to mitigate request formulations.

Following the analysis and coding of request sequences, I calculated for each group the statistics of external modifiers irrespective of their sub-types for all situations combined. Table 4.15 presents the statistics.

Table 4.15 Overall frequency of external modifications by group

Groups	Statistics	External modifiers		
		Preparator	Imposition minimiser	Grounder
IPI	Sum	6	34	158
	Mean	1.00	1.17	1.32
ESL	Sum	7	23	163
	Mean	1.00	1.00	1.36
BPB	Sum	8	26	174
	Mean	1.00	1.04	1.45
Column Total		21	83	495

Overall, as the column total shows that out of the three sub-types of supportive moves, the ‘Grounder’ predominates in the data. Further, the overall frequency of the sub-type for each group seems to be very similar. The second most frequent sub-type is the ‘Imposition minimiser’. Once again, there is a noticeable inter-group similarity. The ‘Preparator’ has the lowest frequency across the three groups. To determine statistically significant difference, we used a *t*-test for the categories of ‘Grounders’ and ‘Imposition minimisers’. The results of the test between the IPI and ESL groups ($t(238) = 0.48, p < .05$) and between the ESL and BPB ($t(238) = -101, p < .05$) for the category of the ‘Grounder’ showed no significant difference. Nor were any statistically significant differences and between the latter groups ($t(46) = 0.96, p < .05$) for the category of ‘Imposition minimiser’. However, there was a statistically significant difference between the Iranian groups ($t(50) = -2.15, p < .05$) for the sub-type.

Keeping the above results in mind, we shall now turn to the distribution of the sub-types by situation and group. Table 4.16 provides this.

Table 4.16 External modifications by situation and by group

Situation	Groups	Statistics	Grounder	Imposition minimiser	Preparator
Paper	IPI	Sum	46	3	1
		Mean	1.53	1.00	1.00
	ESL	Sum	43	5	4
		Mean	1.43	1.00	1.00
	BPB	Sum	52	*	2
		Mean	1.73		1.00
Supervision	IPI	Sum	37	17	1
		Mean	1.23	1.21	1.00
	ESL	Sum	45	12	
		Mean	1.50	1.00	
	BPB	Sum	41	11	
		Mean	1.37	1.00	
Registration	IPI	Sum	42	14	3
		Mean	1.40	1.17	1.00
	ESL	Sum	37	6	2
		Mean	1.23	1.00	1.00
	BPB	Sum	47	15	3
		Mean	1.57	1.07	1.00
Borrowing	IPI	Sum	33		1
		Mean	1.10		1.00
	ESL	Sum	38		1
		Mean	1.27		1.00
	BPB	Sum	34		3
		Mean	1.13		1.00

*The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category

Overall, Table 4.16 once again shows that there are too few occurrences of the subtypes of ‘Preparator’ and ‘Imposition minimiser’ to show any pattern. The external modifying category that accounts for most of the data involves ‘Grounders’. The results of the tests for the ESL and BPB groups for the Paper ($t(58) = -1.49, p < .05$), Supervision ($t(58) = 0.69, p < .05$), Registration, ($t(50) = -1.83, p < .05$), and Borrowing ($t(58) = 1.07, p < .05$) situations showed no statistically significant differences. The test results for the Iranian groups for the Paper ($t(58) = -0.49, p < .05$), Supervision ($t(58) = 1.52, p < .05$), Registration, ($t(58) = -1.04, p < .05$), and Borrowing ($t(58) = 1.29, p < .05$) situations also showed no statistically significant differences.

Based on the results, both the tenth (*There are no significant differences between the Persian L1, and English L2, Iranian PhD candidates in their choice of external request modifiers*) and the eleventh hypotheses (*There are no significant differences between the English L2 Iranian, and English L1 British, PhD candidates in their choice of internal request modifiers*) are supported. Overall, the analysis of the external modifiers shows that the groups have used the modifiers very similarly in terms of their choice and frequency of sub-types. These results will be discussed in Chapter six.

4.6 Chapter summary

In this Chapter, I have analysed and reported the results of the data obtained from the discourse production tasks in light of the research questions and their associated hypotheses. The analyses involved four dimensions of requests, namely, strategies, perspective orientations, internal and external modifiers. The analysis largely involved two levels. First, analysis was carried out for the major categories, followed by their sub-types. Overall, except for the external modifiers where the groups were found to be largely similar in their performance, the data for other dimensions of requests showed both differences and similarities. These results will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five

Metapragmatic Questionnaire: Analyses and results

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides the results of the metapragmatic questionnaire. Both the English and Persian questionnaires can be respectively found in appendix 2 and 4. The questionnaire was primarily constructed for the following objectives: firstly, to assess whether or not there is an inter-group similarity in the perception of the contextual constraint of status, which was systematically distributed in the ODPT frames. Secondly, the questionnaire was constructed to investigate the relationship between awareness of the controlled contextual constraints and request formulations, and the effect of the constraints on the requests (see section 3.7). As detailed in the methodology chapter (see sub-section 3.4.4), while status and distance were systematically varied, imposition size was held constant.

In the analyses of the data, we use descriptive statistical tools. Where chi square is employed in the analyses, it is largely for descriptive purposes also, as the sampling of the participants, as well as the low frequencies in cells, do not meet the assumptions of the statistical procedure (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991; Burns, 2000). For the sake of consistency, the description in this section first highlights the general patterns existing in each table. Subsequently, the focus will be shifted to the analysis of data for each group, drawing attention to the any similarities and differences. The latter analysis mostly starts with the IPI data and concludes with that of BPB. A summary will also be provided describing the important findings of related tables for each situation.

5.2 Status

Table 5.1 provides the distributions of the responses of the three groups of participants to the questionnaire items 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.3.1, and 1.4.1. The items addressed the groups' metapragmatic perception of the contextual constraint of status. It was expected that the option choices of the groups and the researcher's

systematic manipulation of status across the ODPT situations, which was based on piloting phase (see section 3.6), would converge.

Table 5. 1: Status assessment: Questionnaire items 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.3.1, 1.4.1

Situations	IPI					ESL					BPB				
	Lower	Same	Slightly higher	Higher	Much higher	Lower	Same	Slightly higher	Higher	Much higher	Lower	Same	Slightly higher	Higher	Much higher
PS	**		3.8* (1)	53.8 (14)	42.3 (11)	4 (1)	4 (1)	4 (1)	32 (8)	56 (14)			7.4 (2)	44.4 (12)	48.1 (13)
SS			7.7 (2)	73.1 (19)	19.2 (5)	4 (1)	12 (3)	4 (1)	36 (9)	44 (11)			14.8 (4)	66.7 (18)	18.5 (5)
RS	84.6 (22)	7.7 (2)	7.7 (2)			80 (20)	8 (2)	4 (1)	8 (2)		22.2 (6)	55.6 (15)	18.5 (5)	3.7 (1)	
BS	3.8 (1)	96.2 (25)					96 (24)	4 (1)				96.3 (26)		3.7 (1)	

** The shaded cells indicates that none of the participants chose the relevant option.

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

Table 5.1 demonstrates that there is a recognizable similarity of perception regarding status as operationalised in the situational frames. In the Paper and Supervision situations, most participants in the three groups have rated their addressee as having a higher academic status, and in the Borrowing situation the addressee is given the same status. The only exception is the Registration situation where 56% of the BPB group's responses suggest that they tend to consider their addressee as being the same status. Furthermore, the response distributions of the groups, particularly in the Paper and Supervision situations, suggest that despite the overall inter-group agreement regarding the value of the contextual constraint, there exist within-group perception differences. Having highlighted these overall patterns, we shall now turn to look in more detail at how individual groups rated status by situation.

Concerning the IPI data, Table 5.1 shows the following general patterns. In both the Paper and Supervision situations the addressee's status is largely rated as either higher or much higher. In the Registration situation, however, 85% rated the addressee's status as lower, and in the Borrowing situation 96% rated the addressee's status as the same. The ESL data displays an almost identical pattern for the first situation. However, in the second situation, which describes the

postponing of a forthcoming supervisory meeting, the distribution is almost equally split between higher and much higher, signifying sub-option disagreement regarding the status. In the remaining two situations the addressee is respectively rated as lower and same status. Along the same lines, the BPB data takes almost the same distribution as cited for the IPI group, except for the Registration situation where there is a pronounced disparity compared to the response distribution cited for the IPI and ESL groups. That is, 56% in the BPB group rated the clerical staff member as being the same status, while only 22% rated the status as lower.

In order to determine whether or not there were significant inter-group differences concerning the questionnaire items, the goodness of fit chi square tests were conducted separately for each item. It should be noted that because in the Paper and Supervision situations almost all data converge on the categories of 'slightly higher', 'higher', and 'much higher' without striking inter-group variation and because it was the trio of 'Lower', 'Same', and 'Higher', that was amenable to meaningful statistical analyses, the three options were merged. Concerning the Paper situation (chi square = 0.34, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), the Supervision situation (chi square = 0.84, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), and the Borrowing situation (chi square = 0.08, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), the result of χ^2 analyses showed no significant differences between the groups; hence, the twelfth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in their perception of the contextual constraint of status as operationalised in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations*) was supported. However, in the Registration situation the test showed significant inter-group difference (chi square = 9.5, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). Hence, the result did not support the hypothesis. With reference to Table 5.1, we can notice that what generated the inter-group perception difference over the status of the addressee was the BPB group's substantial agreement about the second option. In other words, in contrast to the Iranian groups which almost unanimously rated the addressee as less statusful, the English L1 participants mostly assessed the addressee as having equal status.

Overall, the data in Table 5.1 show that in three out of four situations there was an inter-group agreement on the status of the addressee. Only in the Registration situation, the BPB group's response distribution showed a substantially different direction, suggesting that the BPB group perceived their addressee as having the same status. Having analysed the rating data for the contextual constraint of status, we now proceed to find out whether or not the participants were similarly bearing status in mind while formulating their requests in writing.

Table 5.2. provides the response distribution of the groups to the questionnaire items 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 1.3.2, and 1.4.2 the items addressed the issue of whether or not the groups bore their status differential in mind while composing their requests.

Table 5. 2: Status awareness: Questionnaire items 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 1.3.2, 1.4.2

Situations	IPI			ESL			BPBB		
	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know
PS	84.6* (22)	3.8 (1)	11.5 (3)	84 (21)	16 (4)		81.5 (22)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)
SS	69.2 (18)	30.8 (8)	**	76 (19)	24 (6)		37 (10)	55.6 (15)	7.4 (2)
RS	50 (13)	50 (13)		56 (14)	44 (11)		25.9 (7)	66.7 (18)	7.4 (2)
BS	34.6 (9)	65.4 (17)		28 (7)	72 (18)		22.2 (6)	77.8 (21)	
Column total	59.6 (62)	37.5 (39)	2.8 (3)	61 (61)	39 (39)		41.6 (45)	51.8 (56)	6.4 (7)

** The shaded cells indicates none of the participants chose the relevant option.

** The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

Overall, the column total shows that the 'I do not know' option has the least frequency, which suggests that the respondents were subconsciously attentive to the status of their addressee in their formulations of request illocutions and when posed by the questionnaire item, they could mark their perception through retrospection without much difficulty. Furthermore, the data shows that the 'Yes' and 'No' options bear an interesting inverse relationship to each other. That is, as the percentage of the observations tapers off in the first column, it steadily increases in the second from the bottom. Also, the total shows that, compared to the other groups, the BPB group was in general least considerate of the contextual

constraint in their formulations of request illocutions. Having highlighted these general patterns in the data, we proceed to compare the data to each other.

Firstly, the data show that in the Paper and the Borrowing situations the groups' choices converge towards each other. That is, whereas in the Paper situation most respondents chose the 'Yes' option, in the Borrowing situation the respondents largely chose the 'No' option. In contrast, in the Supervision and Registration situations, the IPI and ESL groups stand in closer correspondence in terms of their choices. That is, in the Supervision situation the groups' response distribution indicates that they were aware of the addressee's status but in the Registration situation the distribution is almost balanced between the first two options. Unlike the IPI and ESL groups, the BPB data shows that in the Supervision and Registration situations the majority of the participants reported that they were not bearing in mind the addressee's status while formulating their request illocutions in writing. Secondly, despite the inverse relationship, there exists an interesting difference between the first two groups and the BPB group. As the percentage of responses shows that the decrease starting from the Paper to Borrowing situations is regular and gradual for the IPI and ESL group, but the patterning of data is sudden from the Paper to Borrowing situations in the BPB group. As Table 5.2 shows though the majority (82%) in the BPB group reports that they were bearing the status of their addressee in mind while composing their requests for the Paper situation, the percentage suddenly drops down to 37% in the second, and from there on the decrease is steady.

To test the existence of any differences concerning the questionnaire items 1.2.2, 1.3.2, and 1.4.2, the chi square test of independence was carried out without the inclusion of the 'I don not know' option because of its low frequencies. As to the questionnaire item 1.1.2, the chi square test of goodness of fit was carried out by excluding the last two options because of their low frequencies (Burns, 2000, Hatch and Lazaranton, 1991). The result of the test showed no statistically significant differences between the three groups for the questionnaire item 1.1.2 (The Paper situation) (chi square = 0.03, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), for 1.3.2 (the Registration situation) (chi square = 4.41, $df = 2$, $p < .05$) and 1.4.2 (The Borrowing situation) (chi square = 1.01, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). Hence, the results of

these three questionnaire items support the thirteenth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in their consideration of the contextual constraint of status while formulating their requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations*). In contrast, the χ^2 test showed a significant difference between the three groups with regard to the questionnaire item 1.2.2. (chi square = 7.71, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected for the Supervisions situation. With regard to this item, it should be noted that what generated the difference was the different frequency distribution in the BPB data. Otherwise, the χ^2 test showed that the IPI and ESL groups' frequency distribution of responses did not differ significantly (chi square = 0.29, $df = 1$, $p < .05$).

To summarise, the above analyses for the questionnaire items suggested that the three groups' responses largely converged on the 'Yes' and 'No' options. Further, the analyses showed that only in 1.2.2 (the Supervision situation) the groups' responses significantly diverged from each other. In connection with the 'I do not know' option, the low frequency of responses from the three groups shows that though they were given the option of reporting that they were unaware of the status, almost all the participants indicated otherwise by retrospection. Having looked at these data, we proceed to find out how far the participants' awareness of the contextual constraint of status affected their request formulations in writing.

Table 5.3 provides the groups' response distributions to the questionnaire items 1.1.3, 1.2.3, 1.3.3, and 1.4.3; the items explored the extent to which the groups' awareness of status differential affected their request composition. It should be noted that according to the design of the questionnaire only the participants that chose the 'Yes' option in items 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 1.3.2, and 1.4.2 could attempt 1.1.3, 1.2.3, 1.3.3, and 1.4.3.

Table 5. 3: Assessment of the reported effect of status: Questionnaire items 1.1.3, 1.2.3, 1.3.3, 1.4.3

Situations	IPI				ESL				BPB			
	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent
PS	**	4.8* (1)	36.4 (8)	59.1 (13)	4.8 (1)	9.5 (2)	57.1 (12)	28.6 (6)		13.6 (3)	68.2 (15)	18.2 (4)
SS	5.6 (1)	11.1 (2)	50 (9)	33.3 (6)		21.1 (4)	36.8 (7)	42.1 (8)		70 (7)	20 (2)	10 (1)
RS	7.7 (1)	46.2 (6)	23.1 (3)	23.1 (3)	21.4 (3)	21.4 (3)	42.9 (6)	14.3 (2)	42.9 (3)		57.1 (4)	
BS	33.3 (3)	11.1 (1)	44.4 (4)	11.1 (1)	14.3 (1)	28.6 (2)	14.3 (1)	4.29 (3)	50 (3)	16.7 (1)	16.7 (1)	16.7 (1)
Total	8 (5)	16.1 (10)	38.7 (24)	37 (23)	3.1 (5)	18 (11)	42.6 (26)	26.2 (19)	13.3 (6)	24.4 (11)	48.8 (22)	13.3 (6)

** The shaded cells indicates none of the participants chose the relevant option.

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

Overall, Table 5.3 shows that the effect of status on the formulations of request illocutions tend to further decrease and scatter over the options as we move down particularly from the Paper to the Borrowing Situation. That is, whereas in the Paper situation the responses largely converge towards the third and the fourth options suggesting that the contextual constraint had considerable effect on the formulations of requests, in the other situations the response patterns show that the effect decreases steadily. Looking more closely at the situations, we can also notice that in the Paper situation all groups have rated the effect of the addressee's status on request making to be high, ranging mainly from the third to the fourth option. In the Registration and the Borrowing situations, however, the pronounced spread of response distribution and the presence of comparatively fewer participants who chose the 'Yes' option (see Table 5.2) suggests that the effect of status was considerably lower and there is less inter-group agreement. Also, by looking at the column total, we can see that few participants chose the first option. Having highlighted these general patterns in the data, we now turn to look in more detail at each group's response distribution.

The IPI data shows that in the Paper and Supervision situations, responses are concentrated on the third and fourth options: in the former over 95% of responses are around the two options and in the Supervision situation it comes to 83%. In addition, starting from the fourth option (To a great extent) in the Paper situation, we can observe that the effect of status decreases in intensity at an angle by situation. For example, compared to the Paper situation with 59% of responses concentrating on the fourth option, in the Supervision situation, most participants (50%) chose option three. In the registration situation 46% of responses are on the second option and in the Borrowing situation 33% on the first option. As to the ESL group, the data for the first two situations also displays to a certain extent the same pattern in that in the Supervision and Paper situations most of the responses concentrate on options 3 and 4, probably signifying considerable effect of status. Despite this distributional similarity, the ESL data concentrate substantially on the third option in the Paper situation and are almost evenly distributed between the third and fourth options in the Supervision situation. In the Registration and particularly in the Borrowing situation the data exhibits a clear spread. In the Registration situation 43% (6 observations) of responses are on the third option, and 35% on the second and third options. In the Borrowing situation, the data is very small in number and very much distributed. Hence, it does not reveal any discernible pattern, other than the effect was very low. The distribution of the BPB responses also shows that the majority of responses in the Paper situation concentrate on the third option, indicating a consensus among the BPB participants that status was highly operative when they made their requests. In the Supervision, however, 70% of BPB responses (10 observations in total) are on the second option, possibly signifying that the status parameter was not actively involved in request making. In the last two situations because of the spread and low frequency of the data, a definite pattern cannot be detected, which may signify that the status parameter was not a concern to the BPB participants. Incidentally, the same oblique angle as mentioned for the IPI data can be detected for the BPB data, but with a little difference: in the BPB data the angle starts at the third option.

Concerning the fourteenth hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1*

Iranian Ph.D. candidates in the extent to which the contextual constraint of status affected their formulations of requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations), the above description shows that there are no striking inter-group differences between the three groups for questionnaire items 1.1.3, 1.3.3, 1.4.3. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted for these items. Concerning the questionnaire item 1.2.3, the descriptive analysis rejects the hypothesis. It should be noted that because of low frequencies in many cells, we could not carry out any non-parametric analyses on the responses obtained from the above items for descriptive purposes.

Overall then, the responses to questionnaire items suggest that the three groups had in general similar perceptions regarding the effect of the contextual constraint of status on their request formulations. However, in 1.2.3 (the Supervision situation) the BPB group's responses showed that the group perceived that the status of the supervisor did not particularly affect their request formulations.

- **Summary of Tables 5.1, 5. 2, and 5.3**

Having described the response patterns for questionnaire items displayed in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, I proceed to provide a summary by linking together the findings from the three tables. We first start off with the IPI group and continue with the ESL and BPB groups. Concerning the IPI group, most of the responses to items related to the Paper and Supervision situations show that the perceived status of the addressee was higher than that of the composer of the message. Further, their responses to these situations also seem to indicate that when status differential is markedly perceived, status operates appreciably on the making of the request. Of the situations just cited, the IPI participants seem to be more sensitive to the status differential in the Paper situation and to a lesser extent in the Supervision situation. In the Registration situation 85% of the IPI participants rated the addressee's status as lower, out of which 50% (13 observations) reported that their perception of the contextual constraint was influential in their composition of the request. However, the reported effect of the constraint was spread across the options, possibly suggesting that the status parameter was not as much active in their formulations. In the Borrowing situation, 96% considered the addressee's status as equal and 35% (9 observations) confirmed the influence of

this in their writing. The degree of the influence, however, was spread across options also. In general, the effect of status on request formulation decreases starting from the Paper to the Borrowing situation. Almost the same pattern as described for the IPI group exists in the ESL data. In both the Paper and Supervision situations the addressee was rated as having a more prominent status. In the Registration and Borrowing situations the addressee was respectively rated as lower and the same status. In general, the awareness and effect of status is more salient in the first two situations than the last two. In the Supervision situation, however, the status effect is evenly distributed.

The BPB data also shares in general the same distributional patterns as cited for the IPI and ESL groups: in the Paper and Supervision situations the addressee is rated as having higher status, and in the Borrowing situation the same. Also, the effect of status decreases from the Paper down to the Borrowing situations. In the Supervision situation, however, the pattern is different in one respect, in that only 37% consider the status parameter to be operative in their request composition, and unlike the other two groups the effect is perceived as being comparatively low. In the Registration situation the majority of the BPB participants (56%) rated the status of the senior clerk as the same, but less than the other two groups it influenced their requests.

5.3 Distance

Table 5.4 provides the distribution of the three groups' responses to questionnaire items 1.1.4, 1.2.4, 1.3.4, and 1.4.4, these items address the groups' metapragmatic perception of the contextual constraint of distance.

Table 5. 4: Distance awareness: Questionnaire items 1.1.4, 1.2.4, 1.3.4, 1.4.4

Situations	IPI			ESL			BPB		
	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know
PS	61.5 (16)	30.8 (8)	7.7 (2)	68 (17)	32 (8)		96.3 (26)	3.7 (1)	
SS	80.8 (21)	19.2 (5)		92 (23)	4 (1)	4 (1)	96.3 (26)		3.7 (1)
RS	38.5 (10)	61.5 (16)		64 (16)	36 (9)		92.6 (25)	7.4 (2)	
BS	96.2 (25)	3.8 (1)		100 (25)			100 (27)		
Total	69.2 (72)	28.8 (30)	1.9 (2)	81 (81)	18 (18)	1 (1)	96.2 (104)	2.7 (3)	0.9 (1)

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

* The shaded cells indicate none of the participants chose the relevant option.

Overall, Table 5.4 shows that the third option (I do not know) has the lowest frequency of the three options. Indeed, as the Table shows, most of the cells relating to this option are virtually empty. Furthermore, the column Total shows that out of the three options, the 'Yes' ones have the highest frequency. If we further proceed to look at the data by situation, we can notice that the greatest inter-group consensus concerning the issue of the awareness of distance parameter exists in the Borrowing and Supervision situations, and to a lesser degree in the Paper situation. However, the most pronounced disparity about distance exists in the Registration situation between the IPI and BPB groups. In the Registration situation, the ESL group's response distribution tends to approximate to their BPB counterpart. We can further observe that though the awareness of the constraint changes from situation to situation for the IPI and ESL groups, the BPB group's response distribution shows a great deal of uniformity.

Having highlighted these patterns, we shall now turn to look at the data by group. First, the IPI data displays two patterns concerning the issue of distance. In the Registration situation the issue of whether or not the participants know their addressee seems not to be of great concern in their making of request. Only 38.5% of responses concentrate on option 'Yes' indicating not many were sensitive to the constraint. But strikingly in Paper situation 61.5% of the participants indicate that they were aware that they did not know their addressee. In the Supervision (82%)

and Borrowing situations (96%), the participants also reported that they had it largely in mind that they knew their addressee. The ESL data reveals almost the same pattern for the Paper, Supervision, and Borrowing situations. But in the Registration situation, unlike the IPI group, the ESL group's responses indicate a reverse situation. That is, their responses (64%) suggest that they bore in mind that they did not know their addressee. Finally, the BPB data shows two very consistent patterns. In the Paper and Registration situations virtually all participants report their being aware that they did not know their addressee on a personal basis in their making of request, and in the Supervision (96%) and the Borrowing situations (100%) almost all the participants report that they had it in mind that they knew their addressee. In general, for the BPB group awareness of the distance parameter seem to be pervasive in all situations.

In order to discover statistically significant inter-group differences concerning the questionnaire items 1.1.4 (the Paper situation), and 1.3.4 (the Registration situation), the chi square test of independence, and for items 1.2.4 (the Supervision situation) and 1.4.4 (the Borrowing situation) the chi square of goodness of fit were conducted. In the chi square of independence, the tests were carried out without including the third option because of its very low frequency. However, in the chi square of goodness of fit both the 'No' and 'I do not know' options were omitted because of their low frequencies (Burns, 2000).

The result of the χ^2 test showed a statistically significant inter-group difference between the three groups for the questionnaire item 1.1.4 (chi square = 8.414, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), and the questionnaire item 1.3.4 (chi square = 17.179, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). Hence, the results do not support the hypothesis (*There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in their consideration of the contextual constraint of distance while formulating their requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations*) for these items. In contrast, the test for 1.2.4 (chi square = 0.543, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), and 1.4.4 (chi square = 0.104, $df = 2$, $p < .05$) showed no statistically significant differences. Therefore, the hypothesis is supported for these questionnaire items. It is worth mentioning that in the questionnaire items 1.1.4 and 1.3.4 where the χ^2 test results

showed significant differences, I carried out further tests and found the statistical differences between the two Iranian groups were not statistically significant.

Overall then, the descriptive analysis suggests three interesting things. First, the analysis shows that by retrospection the participants could say whether or not they had been bearing in mind the contextual constraint of distance as operationalised in the ODPT situations, although they could have chosen the third option. Secondly and importantly, the frequency distribution of the data shows that whereas for the two Iranian groups (ESL and IPI) the consideration of the contextual constraint was subject to particular situations, the BPB group's response patterns show that in all situations they were quite mindful of the constraint. Finally, the chi square analysis in general suggests that the response patterns of the IPI and ESL groups converge. Having analyzed the questionnaire items 1.1.4, 1.2.4, 1.3.4, and 1.4.4, we proceed to look at the data elicited by questionnaire items 1.1.5, 1.2.5, 1.3.5, and 1.4.5 which assesses the extent to which the contextual constraint of distance affected the formulations of requests in writing.

Table 5.5 provides the distribution of the three groups' responses to the above questionnaire items. It should be noted that only the participants that chose the 'Yes' option in items 1.1.4, 1.2.4, 1.3.4, and 1.4.4 could attempt 1.1.5, 1.2.5, 1.3.5, and 1.4.5.

Table 5. 5: Assessment of the reported effect of distance: Questionnaire items 1.1.5, 1.2.5, 1.3.5,1.4.5

Situations	IPI				ESL				BPB			
	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent
PS	12.5 (2)	25 (4)	25 (4)	37.5 (6)		17.6 (3)	41.2 (7)	41.2 (7)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)	38.5 (10)	53.8 (14)
SS	9.5 (2)	38.1 (8)	38.1 (8)	14.3 (3)		8.7 (2)	43.5 (10)	47.8 (11)	3.8 (1)	19.5 (5)	23.1 (6)	53.8 (14)
RS		10 (1)	30 (3)	60 (6)	6.3 (1)	50 (8)	31.3 (5)	12.5 (2)	12 (3)	24 (6)	36 (9)	28 (7)
BS		16 (4)	8 (2)	76 (19)	4 (1)	12 (3)	16 (4)	68 (17)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	22.2 (6)	70.4 (19)
Total	5.5 (4)	23.6 (17)	23.6 (17)	47.2 (34)	2.4 (2)	19.7 (16)	32 (26)	45.6 (37)	5.7 (6)	12.5 (13)	29.8 (31)	51.9 (54)

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency. Abbreviations:

In general, by looking at the column Total in Table 23 we can see that the options that account for most of the responses are the third and particularly the fourth options, and there very few responses concentrating on the first option. Further, comparing the frequency distributions of the four questionnaire items across the four situations, we can see that it is particularly in 1.4.5 (the Borrowing situation) that the data are largely concentrated on the fourth options, but in other situations the responses show greater patterns of spread. Having said this, we now proceed to look in more detail at the distribution of the data by group. I start off with the BPB data first and continue with ESL and IPI ones.

The column Total belonging to the BPB group shows that most responses to the above questionnaire items concentrate on the third (29.8) and particularly fourth (51.9%) option. However, there are inter-situation differences if individual items are compared. That is, whereas the responses to questionnaire items 1.1.5 (the Paper situation) and 1.4.5 (the Borrowing situation), and 1.2.5 (the Supervision situation) show concentration on option 2 and 3, the response distribution of 1.3.5 shows greater spread which includes more or less the last three options. Hence, in the Paper, Supervision, and Borrowing situations the effect of distance on request formulation seems to have had greater intra-group agreement. Overall then, the BPB group's response pattern show that for the participants in this group the contextual constraint of distance had substantial effect on their formulations of

requests. Similarly, in the ESL data, the response patterns to questionnaire items 1.1.5 (the Paper situation) and 1.4.5 (The Borrowing situation), and 1.2.5 (the Supervision situation) concentrate on the third and fourth options, possibly indicating that distance had a considerable effect on the formulation of the request. In the Borrowing situation, however, consensus is more pronounced in that 68% of responses cluster around the fourth option. In the Registration situation, the responses are relatively spread over the second and the third options. Finally, the IPI data basically shows that it is only in questionnaire item 1.4.5 (the Paper situation), where responses largely concentrate on the fourth option, that the participants are in collective agreement concerning the effect of distance on the their request formulations. The responses to questionnaire items 1.1.5 and 1.3.5 both have low frequency and show comparatively great spread. Concerning the questionnaire item 1.2.5 (the Supervision situation), the responses show that most participants chose the second and the third options.

In order to determine whether or not there were significant inter-group differences concerning the questionnaire items, we could only conduct a chi square test of goodness of fit for questionnaire item 1.4.5 (the Borrowing situation) by eliminating the first three options. The reason for this was that the spread of other responses was too great for a meaningful χ^2 analyses. The result of the χ^2 test for questionnaire item 1.4.5 showed no statistically significant difference between the three (chi square = 0.145, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). This confirms the 16th hypothesis for this item only (*There are no significant differences between the English L1 British, the English L2 Iranian, and the Persian L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates in the extent to which the contextual constraint of distance affects their formulations of requests in the Paper, Supervision, Registration, and Borrowing situations*). Concerning the questionnaire item 1.3.5, the descriptive data shows overall inter-group differences. Hence, we could possibly reject the hypothesis, but not on a purely statistical sense. For the other two situations i.e., the Paper and the Supervision situations, similar differences exist although there is a greater inter-group response agreement between the ESL and BPB group. Hence, the hypothesis cannot be adequately addressed.

Overall then, Table 5.5 shows that the groups' response patterns converge towards each other for the questionnaire item 1.4.5 (the Borrowing situation). Concerning questionnaire item 1.2.5 (the Supervision situation), and 1.1.5 (the Paper situation) and 1.3.5 (the registration situation) there is an overall inter-group difference.

- **Summary of Tables 5.4 and 5.5**

Having examined the metapragmatic response patterns for the questionnaire items presented in Tables 5.4 and 5.5, I proceed to provide a summary of the findings by relating the two tables. As to the IPI group, the data generally shows that for this group awareness of the contextual constraint of distance was relatively higher in the Borrowing situation (96.2%), the Supervision situation (80.8%) and in the Paper situation (61.5%). In the Registration situation, however, the majority of the group's option choices (38.5%) suggest that they were largely not bearing the contextual constraint in mind. However, concerning the effect of the variable, which was elicited by questionnaire items 1.1.5; 1.2.5; 1.3.5, and 1.4.5, the IPI data shows the participants in the group were largely agreed on the great effect of the variable in the Borrowing situation. In the registration and Paper situations, the distributions of the responses were spread and the frequencies too small to show any dependable pattern. In the Supervision situation, the effect of distance was mostly perceived to be on the second and third option.

In the ESL data there is a clear indication that the participants were aware of distance, particularly in the Supervision and the Borrowing situation. In the Paper and the Registration situations awareness was less heightened. Regarding the effect of distance, the ESL data shows that except for the registration situation the effect was thought to be considerably great. As to the BPB group, the response patterns to questionnaire items 1.1.4, 1.2.4, 1.3.4, and 1.4.4 show that the participants in this group were consistently aware of the contextual constraint of distance across all four situations. Furthermore, their responses to questionnaire items 1.1.5, 1.2.5, 1.3.5, and 1.4.5 show that, probably except for 1.3.4 (the registration situation) where the responses were more spread over the options, they consistently reported that the effect of the contextual constraint was great.

5.4 Imposition

Table 5.6 provides the distribution of the three groups' responses to questionnaire items 1.1.6, 1.2.6, 1.3.6, and 1.4.6. The items address each group's metapragmatic perception of imposition. It should be noted that the parameter was not systematically varied across situations. These items were basically constructed to serve explanatory purposes (see sub-section 3.4.4)

Table 5. 6: Imposition awareness: Questionnaire items 1.1.6; 1.2.6; 1.3.6; 1.4.6

Situations	IPI			ESL			BPB		
	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know	Yes	No	I do not know
PS	69.2 (18)	23.1 (6)	7.7 (2)	44 (11)	56 (14)		77.8 (21)	22.2 (6)	
SS	73.1 (19)	26.9 (7)		60 (15)	40 (10)		74.1 (20)	25.9 (7)	
RS	69.2 (18)	30.8 (8)		36 (9)	64 (16)		81.5 (22)	14.8 (4)	3.7 (1)
BS	48 (12)	40 (10)	12 (3)	24 (6)	72 (18)	4 (1)	63 (17)	33.3 (9)	3.7 (1)
Total	65 (67)	30 (31)	4.8 (5)	39.8 (41)	56.3 (58)	3.8 (4)	74 (80)	24 (26)	1.8 (2)

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

* The shaded cells indicates none of the participants chose the relevant option.

In general, the column total of Table 5.6 shows that although the groups' responses to the questionnaire items concentrate particularly on the first two options, there are inter-group variations. That is, whereas the IPI and BPB groups largely chose the first option, the ESL group's overall option distribution shows that they mostly selected the second option. This suggests that, unlike the other two groups, the ESL participants in general retrospect that they had not been attentive to the imposition of their request illocutions. Furthermore, the groups' response patterns show that there were few participants who had chosen the third option, possibly suggesting that the three groups were aware of the imposition that their request formulations might cause their addressee. Overall then, the response distributions show that the IPI and the BPB groups' response patterns come closer to each other. Further, the three groups collectively report that they were aware of the imposition of their request formulations. Having highlighted these overall patterns, we now turn to look in more detail at each group's response distribution.

Concerning the IPI sample, the questionnaire data for this group shows they were aware of the constraint with more or less the same heightened degree. 69.2% of participants in the Paper as well as the registration situations, and 73% in the Supervision situation reported that they had been bearing the variable in mind. In the Borrowing situation, however, the percentage drops to 48% indicating that the variable was thought to have been relatively less attended to while formulating the request message to a fellow student.

As to the ESL data, the group's response patterns show that in the Registration situation (64%), the paper situation (56%) and particularly in the Borrowing situation (72%), most participants think that they had not been bearing in mind the issues of imposition in their formulations of requests. In the Supervision situation, however, above half of the responses (60%) indicate that the participants were bearing the contextual constraint in mind in their composition. Finally, the response pattern in the BPB data shows that in all situations the BPB participants were bearing in mind the contextual constraint of imposition while formulating their requests as required by individual ODPT situations. The situation in which the variable was relatively least attended to was the Borrowing situation with 63% responses, indicating that most participants were nonetheless aware of the imposition variable. In general, the response distribution for the BPB group exhibits greater unanimity than the other two groups regarding the contextual constraint, suggesting that that the BPB group was aware of the parameter.

In order to determine statistically significant inter-group differences concerning the questionnaire items 1.1.6, 1.2.6, 1.3.6, 1.4.6, the chi square test of independence was conducted. It should be noted that the tests were conducted without incorporating the third option (I do not know) because of its very low frequency (Burns, 2000). The results of the test showed significant inter-group differences for questionnaire items 1.1.6 (chi square = 7.902, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), 1.3.6 (chi square = 13.548, $df = 2$, $p < .05$), and 1.4.6 (chi square = 8.594, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). In contrast, there was no significant inter-group difference in 1.2.6 (chi square = 1.478, $df = 2$, $p < .05$).

Having analysed the questionnaire items 1.1.6, 1.2.6, 1.3.6, and 1.4.6, we proceed to look at the data elicited by questionnaire items 1.1.7, 1.2.7, 1.3.7, and 1.4.7 which assesses the extent to which the contextual constraint of imposition affected the formulations of requests in writing. The response distribution is provided by Table 5.7. It should be noted that only the participants that chose the 'Yes' option in items 1.1.6, 1.2.6, 1.3.6, and 1.4.6 could attempt 1.1.7, 1.2.7, 1.3.7, and 1.4.7.

Table 5.7: Assessment of the reported effect of imposition: Questionnaire items 1.1.7, 1.2.7, 1.3.7, 1.4.7

Situations	IPI				ESL				BPB			
	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent	Not to any extent	2	3	To a great extent
PS	5.6* (1)	22.2 (4)	50 (9)	22.2 (4)		27.3 (3)	54.5 (6)	18.2 (2)	9.5 (2)	33.3 (7)	38.1 (8)	19 (4)
SS	5.3 (1)	5.3 (1)	42.1 (8)	47.4 (9)	6.7 (1)	33.3 (5)	26.7 (4)	33.3 (5)	5 (1)	15 (3)	55 (11)	25 (5)
RS	16.7 (3)	11.1 (2)	55.6 (10)	16.7 (3)		44.4 (4)	33.3 (3)	22.2 (2)		27.3 (6)	50 (11)	22.7 (5)
BS	8.3 (1)	25 (3)	66.7 (8)			83.3 (5)		16.7 (1)	1.63 (3)	70.6 (12)	5.9 (1)	5.9 (1)
Total	8.9 (6)	14.9 (10)	52.2 (35)	23.8 (16)	2.4 (1)	41.4 (17)	31.7 (13)	24.3 (10)	7.5 (6)	35 (28)	38.7 (31)	18.7 (15)

* The first figure shows %, and the figure in parentheses indicates the frequency.

Overall, as the column Total row in Table 5.7 shows, most of the responses are spread over the last three options. Indeed, there are very few participants in the groups that chose the first option for all items combined. Furthermore, the total column shows that the overall number of ESL participants who attempted questionnaire items 1.1.7, 1.2.7, 1.3.7, and 1.4.7 is lower than that of the other two groups. Having described the overall pattern, we turn to look in more detail at each group's response distribution.

Concerning the IPI group, Table 5.7 shows that except for questionnaire item 1.2.7 (the Supervision situation), where the response distribution is almost equally split between the third (42.1%) and fourth (47.4%) options, the group's choice for

other items tend to be the third option. That is, for questionnaire item 1.1.7 (the paper situation), 50% of the responses concentrate on option 3, for 1.3.7 (the Registration situation), the percentage is 56.6%, and for 1.4.7 (the Borrowing situation), it is 66.7%. This suggests possibly that the effect of the contextual constraint on request formulations was quite considerable for the participants who attempted the items.

As to the ESL group, the data exhibits a pronounced spread of response distribution particularly between the last three options for all questionnaire items. Hence, considering the number of ESL participants who chose the 'Yes' for the previous questionnaire items, and the spread of responses to the items dealing with imposition, no clear patterns can be found.

Finally, regarding the BPB data, the overall distribution of questionnaire responses shows inter-situation variation. Concerning item 1.1.7 (the Paper situation), the group's responses concentrate largely on the second (33.3%) and third (38.1%) options. However, in 1.2.7 (the supervision situation) and 1.3.7 (the Registration situation), the response data clusters mainly around the third option. In the Borrowing situation, however, 70.6% of the participants chose the second option. This possibly suggests that the imposition load perceived for the goal was lower than the other situations. Comparing the data across situations and between the groups, it would probably seem true to suggest the IPI and the BPB groups' responses are more similar. Further, considering the data provided in 5.6 as well as 5.7, the reported awareness of imposition and its reported effect also seem to suggest that the IPI and BPB groups were very similar.

Overall then, Table 5.7 suggests that the degree of influence of imposition was different between the groups. However, the IPI and BPB groups showed greater similarity. What is particularly interesting in the response patterns is that the ESL group's response distribution is very much different from the other groups. That is, the data is too spread and has too low a frequency to show any observable patterns.

- **Summary of Tables 5.6 and 5.7**

Having analyzed the data for questionnaire items presented in Table 5.6 and 5.7, we proceed to summarize the finding with reference to both tables. Concerning the ESL group, Table 5.6 suggested that, in comparison to the IPI and BPB groups, the participants in this group reported that they had not been particularly bearing the variable in mind while formulating their requests in writing. Further, Table 5.7 showed that even in the case of those ESL participants who reported that they had born the constraint in mind there was a substantial spread of responses concerning the effect of the variable on their requests. In contrast, the response distribution of the IPI and particularly BPB groups shows that most of the participants were bearing the variable in mind in their composition of request messages. Concerning the effect of the contextual constraint of imposition on request formulations, both groups were considerably more aware of it than the ESL groups.

5.5 Summary

Having descriptively analysed the data obtained by the metapragmatic questionnaire, I will review the main findings revealed by the questionnaire data. First, the analysis of metapragmatic data for the contextual constraint of status showed that, except for the registration situation, the three groups generally assessed retrospectively the parameters as having the same value. Hence, the option choice of the three groups for the Paper, the Supervision, and the Borrowing situations matched the systematic manipulation of status that the researcher had done on the basis of the piloting phase. In the Registration, however, whereas most BPB participants rated the status of their addressee as being the same, the piloting phase had conversely shown that British participants mostly rated a senior clerical staff as academically lower. Concerning the questionnaire item which attempted to assess whether or not the participants were bearing in mind the status of the addressee while formulating their requests in writing, the data showed considerable inter-group agreement concerning the Paper and the Borrowing situations, and to a lesser degree for the Registration situation. As to the Supervision situation, the analyses showed that whereas the IPI and ESL groups' responses were largely similar, the BPB group's responses showed that the participants reported that they had not been particularly aware of the

contextual constraint. Finally, the responses to questionnaire items, which dealt with the participants' perception of the effect of the contextual constraint of status, suggested that there were inter-group agreements regarding its effect in the Paper situation, where most participants in the three groups reported that the effect was at least high. Regarding the Registration and the Borrowing situations, responses were considerably spread over options across the groups, possibly signifying that the variable had not been particularly active in the formulations of their requests. Finally, concerning the Supervision situation, the responses showed that whereas most participants in the IPI and ESL groups reported that the status of the supervisor had been relevant in their formulations of requests, the BPB group mainly reported that it had not been as such.

Concerning distance, the BPB participants' responses demonstrate that they were strikingly aware of the constraint, and reported that the constraint had a considerable effect in their request formulations in all situations. The response distribution for the IPI group, on the other hand, shows that the participants in this group retrospectively reported that they had been aware of the parameter for the Borrowing, the Supervision situation and to a lesser extent in the Paper situation. However, only in the Borrowing situation did a considerable number of participants verify its considerable effect. Finally, the ESL response distributions suggested that, except for the Registration situation, the group's attention to distance was in general similar to that of the IPI group. In connection with the effect of the parameter on request making, the ESL groups' data distribution showed that the participants reported that the effect had been high particularly in the Supervision, Borrowing and to a lesser degree in the Paper situations. Concerning the Registration situation, the data suggested less agreement.

Finally, as to imposition, the ESL retrospective data shows that the participants had been generally less aware of the parameter than the other two groups across all situations. Also, their response distributions concerning its effect suggested low frequency and pronounced spread across categories. The BPB and IPI retrospective response distribution, on the other hand, suggested that both groups had been more aware of the factors than the ESL group. The IPI and BPB groups also

manifest comparatively greater consensus concerning the effect of the imposition on their writing of requests.

Chapter six

Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This study has attempted to investigate the pragmalinguistic features of the written request formulations of Iranian ESL PhD candidates through a detailed analysis of a set of data systematically elicited by open-ended discourse production tasks (ODPT) in which participants were required to respond in writing to a set of four tasks. The framework of the analyses was taken from the CCSARP project (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989), and was modified on the basis of previous research and particularly in light of the main data at the level of conventionally indirect strategies (see sub-section 3.18.3). Furthermore, drawing on previous research on interlanguage pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, 1982; House and Kasper 1987; Fukushima, 2000; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000), cross-cultural pragmatics (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1985), and Brown and Levinson's theory (1987), a metapragmatic questionnaire was also constructed in an attempt to further investigate how the overall configurations of request formulations relate to the speakers' conceptualisations of status and distance (see sub-section 3.4.4.). Hence, this study has adopted an interlanguage perspective and focused on how non-native speakers formulate requests in writing.

The present study has addressed two broad research questions: (I) What are the pragmalinguistic features of request formulations produced by ESL Iranian Ph.D. candidates in Britain and (II) How are their request formulations associated with their perception of status and distance. In order to answer these research questions, data were collected from three groups of participants, namely, ESL Iranian, English L1 British, and Persian L1 Iranian Ph.D. candidates. The reason behind the incorporation of the two native groups was that an answer to the questions involved understanding "to what extent learner performance differs from native-speaker performance and whether the differences are traceable to transfer from the L1 (Ellis, 1994: 162)". Having collected a database of request formulations in writing from the three groups, each request formulation was analysed from the point of view of strategy types, perspective orientations, external modifiers, and internal modifying devices, and then

group performances were cross-compared. The metapragmatic data were also analysed to discover the general patterns of perception of contextual constraints. Before discussing the main findings of this study in this chapter, I will proceed to present a summary of them.

6.2 Main findings

This section summarises the main findings from the data analysis reported in Chapters Four and Five. First, I will present the findings related to the different aspects of request sequences involving strategy types, perspective orientations, internal modifiers, and external modifiers. Then I will turn to those obtained from the analysis of the metapragmatic data.

6.2.1 Request formulations

As reported in Chapter Four, the elicited request formulations were analysed on the basis of their pragmalinguistic components. This sub-section presents the main findings of the analysis which are as follows:

- **Requesting strategies**

Requesting strategies were analysed at two levels. The first level involved the analysis of main requesting strategies (see 3.14.3). In contrast, the second level involved analysis of the sub-types of the main strategies. Concerning the first level of analysis, the results suggested that both the English L1 and the ESL groups' use of requesting strategies concentrated largely on the conventionally indirect strategies without any significant differences between the groups (see sub-section 4.2.1). Also, both groups largely avoided both direct and the non-conventionally indirect strategies. In contrast, the Farsi L1 group's strategy choice largely involved direct strategies. The group did not use either conventionally or non-conventionally indirect strategies with high frequency. Like the first level of analysis, the results from the second also suggested differences between the Iranian groups. However, the choice of requesting substrategies by the English L2 and the ESL groups showed both similarities and differences largely at the CIS level. In general, although the ESL group's choice of strategies were similar to those selected by the English L1 group,

their choices included more CIS sub-strategies and exhibited pronounced spread across situations.

- **Perspective orientations**

Perspective orientation (see 3.14.4 for description) was also analysed to identify possible areas of variation. Overall, the Farsi L1 group's choice was largely limited to the Speaker perspective orientation for most request formulations. In contrast, the English L1 group used all types of perspective orientations with high frequency. Unlike the other two groups, the ESL group largely preferred the Hearer perspective orientation for most formulations.

- **Internal modifiers**

Overall, the analysis of the internal modifiers (see 3.14.5.1 for description) suggested that though the English L1 group used fewer lexical and phrasal Downgraders than the other two groups, their choices showed more systematicity in that they suggested sensitivity to the controlled contextual situations. Concerning the Iranian groups, the results suggested that while Downtoners predominated in the Farsi L1 data, the ESL group frequently tended to use a Politeness marker on their requests. Concerning upgraders, the analysis suggested that the English L1 group used significantly more of these optional elements than the other two groups.

- **External modifiers**

The analysis of the overall incidence of external modifiers, which mostly consisted of Grounders and Imposition minimisers (see 3.14.5.2 for description), suggested no significant differences between the ESL and the English L1 groups. The Iranian groups, however, were found to be different in their overall use of Imposition minimisers. However, when the analysis was further extended to individual situations, the two groups were found not to be significantly different.

6.2.2 Main findings: Metapragmatic questionnaire

The main findings obtained by the metapragmatic questionnaire are as follows. First, the three groups' metapragmatic perception suggested that they held similar

perception as to the contextual constraint of status in three situations (see section 5.2). The exception was the Registration situation for which most English L1 participants rated the status of their addressee as being the same. Concerning awareness of status (see Table 5.2.), the data showed no significant inter-group difference in the Paper, Registration and Borrowing situations. In the Supervision situation, however, whereas the Farsi and ESL groups' responses were similar, the English L1 group reported that they had not been particularly aware of status while formulating requests. Finally, the responses dealing with the effect of status (see Table 5.3.) suggested that there were overall inter-group agreements regarding the effect of the constraint for the Paper situation, where most participants in the three groups reported that the effect was high. Regarding the Registration and Borrowing situations, responses were spread over options across the groups, possibly suggesting that the constraint had not been particularly active on the formulations of the requests. Finally, in the Supervision situation, most participants in the two Iranian groups reported that the status of the supervisor had been in their mind while formulating their requests, whereas the English L1 group mainly reported that it did not influence their requests.

Concerning distance (see section 5.3), the English L1 group's data suggested strikingly that they were aware of this constraint, and the group reported that it had considerable influence on their request formulations across all situations. The Farsi L1 group, on the other hand, reported that they had been aware of the constraint in the Borrowing, the Supervision and to a lesser extent in the Paper situations. However, only in the Borrowing situation did distance clearly influence their formulations. Finally, the ESL response distributions showed that, except for the Registration situation, the group's attention to distance was in general distributed similarly to the Farsi group's. Concerning the effect of distance, the ESL group reported that the effect of distance had been particularly high in the Supervision, the Borrowing and to a lesser degree in the Paper situations.

Having summarised the main findings obtained from the instruments, I will discuss them in more detail in the following sections. The discussion covers requesting strategies, perspective orientations, internal and external modifiers.

6.3 The choice of requesting strategies.

In this section, I will proceed to discuss the requesting strategies employed by the three groups of participants with particular focus on the ESL group. The aim is to relate the findings to the literature, provide explanations underlying each group's choice of particular pragmalinguistic features, and on that basis show in what ways the ESL group's strategy choice converged towards or diverged from either of the two other group.

6.3.1 Direct strategies

In the analyses of the data for main requesting strategies, we have seen that the Farsi L1 group generally tended to use the direct strategy for their formulations of requests. Indeed, as Table 4.1 showed, 80.8% of the Farsi request formulations are accounted for by the direct strategy. In contrast, only 17.5% of the Farsi data fall into the conventionally indirect strategy (CIS), and Hints only account for 1.7% of the data. These results in general support Eslamirasekh's (1993) finding that Persian speakers tend to use direct strategies to realise requests. Hence, the preference in Farsi seems largely to be language-specific. The finding also seems to partly support the claim that the three main levels of requesting, namely, direct, conventional indirectness, and non-conventional indirectness main strategy types are manifested universally (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). However, the consistent tendency of the Farsi L1 group to use direct strategies is at odds with the claim that the conventionally indirect strategy (CIS) is the most frequent of the three (Blum-Kulka, 1989; Blum-Kulka and House, 1989). Furthermore, the consistent use of a direct strategy by the Farsi participants who seem to be part of a collectivist culture (Eslamirasekh, 1993; Koutlaki, 2002; Milani, 2000) does not seem to support Triandis' (1994: 184, as cited in Fukushima, 2000:117) claim that "collectivists are not as explicit, direct, or clear as the individualists".

Indeed as shown earlier, for the Farsi group, the use of direct strategy predominates in each and every one of the ODPT situations (4.2.1).

Looking more closely at the Farsi L1 results (see Table 4.4.), we can see that the group's choice tends to concentrate on the sub-types of Mood derivable (21.6%), and particularly Explicit performative (76.3%), which is a prevalent formal requesting strategy in Farsi. The following is an example of Explicit performative from Farsi data

Example:

....*khaheshmandam cheneh barayeh shoma maghdoor ast noskhe'i az*
ask I if for you possible is copy from
maghalehtan ra barayeh man ersal darid
article your for me send

'Because the title of my thesis is also the subject of your seminar, if it is possible, I ask you to send me a copy of your paper'.

The prevalence of the strategies suggests that the request formulations were not particularly sensitive to the controlled constraints of situational frames. In other words, the group's use of the sub-types of direct strategy seems to be highly routinized, i.e., they consistently use a specific strategy to realise their requests. Also by looking at the distribution of the sub-types of direct strategy by situation (see Appendix 5), we can see that it is only in the Borrowing situation that a considerable number of participants (43.5%) chose to use Mood derivable to perform their requests. The first question that needs addressing is why the participants chose Explicit performative in the first three situations, and why in the Borrowing situation almost half of the Farsi participants chose a Mood derivable. What seems to account for the variable use of the strategies might be particularly attributable to the contextual constraints which were systematically arranged in the situational frames. The first three situations might be distinguishable from the last one in that the controlled contextual constraints in the first three give the situations an air of formality which is a negative politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Formality in the first three situations seems to arise from the contextual constraints of status and distance, and probably not that of imposition. It seems that when a request has to be made in writing in response to a situation where the controlled contextual constraint of distance is minus (negative) and the constraint of status is $X_{(S)} \geq Y_{(H)}$, the situation might be considered not formal. Otherwise, the situation seems to be formal. Before I proceed to use the notion of formality for explaining the pattern of the data, an immediate clarification is in order. I use the notion of formality on the basis of the data elicited for this study, and do not put a strong case that the notion is entirely a result of the contextual constraints that were controlled, nor do I claim that the notion is applicable for other data outside the present work. Having said this, let us look again at the distribution of the constraints in the design to see how the situations can be divided in terms of the suggested dichotomy, namely, formal and not formal.

Situation	Distance	Status
PS	+ D	$X < Y$
SS	- D	$X < Y$
RS	+ D	$X > Y$
BS	- D	$X = Y$

As can be seen in the above tabulation, the only ODPT situation, which cannot be regarded as formal, is the Borrowing one where distance is minus and the status differential is equal between the interactants. In all the other three situations, the arrangement of the contextual constraints renders them formal on the basis of the definition of formality given above. Given the definition of formality, and given that Explicit performatives are particularly suited for formal situations in Farsi, it becomes clear why in the first three situations the routine (Explicit performative) was consistently used. Despite this claim, one question that may arise is why the majority of the Farsi participants also used the same strategy in the Borrowing situation, which is an informal situation. The answer may lie in the fact that though the Farsi participants did use the same strategy, they changed the verb form slightly to make it more informal. For example, *Khaheshmandam* (I request, translated by Aryanpur-

Kashani and Aryanpur-Kashani, 1978) is delexicalised (Sinclair, 1991) to *Khahesh mikonam*, which roughly means ‘I make a request’.

In contrast to the Farsi group, the English L1 and the ESL groups’ use of a direct strategy was generally low. As to the English L1 group, this avoidance is well documented in the literature (House and Kasper, 1987; Blum-Kulka and House, 1989). The avoidance of the strategy will be discussed in the next sub-section. Regarding the ESL group, the infrequent use of the direct strategy suggests in general that the participants are pragmatically aware of the inappropriateness of the strategy in English speaking contexts. The awareness might have resulted from their length of stay in the target speech community as well as from their level of language proficiency. Hence, from the point of view of interlanguage pragmatics, the majority of ESL participants who avoided the direct strategy have acted in a native-like way in response to the features of the situational frames.

To summarise, in this sub-section I have attempted to link the findings from the present study to the literature, and contribute to its theoretical understanding. In this regard, the data for this study first provided clear evidence that Farsi varies in its preference for requesting strategies in writing, and does not fit into the universal category of conventionally indirect requesting strategy as claimed by CCSARP. Also, I have sought to provide an explanation for the Farsi group’s preference for direct strategy with reference to the formality hypothesis, and for the ESL group’s dispreference of the same strategy in terms of their awareness of L2 norms. In the next sub-section, I will discuss the patterns of conventionally indirect strategies (CIS) in the data obtained from the participants.

6.3.2 Conventionally indirect strategies: English L1 group

As shown in Chapter Four, conventionally indirect requesting strategies made up the majority of the responses made by the English L1 participants. Furthermore, Table 4.1 and 4.2 provided clear evidence that their use of CIS strategy was generally not sensitive to situational constraints. In other words, the group largely used one particular routinized directness level to formulate their requests. This routinized

requesting behaviour of British native speakers is widely documented in the literature (Rintell, 1979; Walters, 1979; Brown and Levinson, 1987; House and Kasper, 1987; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989; Fukushima, 2000), and is explained from three related perspectives. Brown and Levinson (1987) tie the routinization to conventionality from the viewpoint of their own politeness model. In this regard they say,

[I]n a given society particular techniques of face redress may become highly favoured as strategies, and therefore conventionalized. In English, for example, conventional indirect requests are so common that it is rare to hear a completely direct request even between equals (and in the middle class, it is even surprisingly rare from mother to child, unless she is angry). (Brown and Levinson, 1987:248).

Scollon and Scollon (1995:134) link the routinization to the British individualist culture, and argue that “In an individualist society, groups do not form the same degree of permanence as they do in a collectivist society. As a result, the ways of speaking to others are much similar from situation to situation”. Finally, Blum-Kulka (1987) holds that the consistent use of the strategy is associated with its property of pragmatic clarity and non-coerciveness. In the light of these theories, it would be unreasonable to deny that the use of conventionally indirect strategies is both a psychological and a psycholinguistic phenomenon, and equally unreasonable to deny that cultural aspects influence the strategy. It seems that any balanced account of the phenomenon has to give due attention to these and possibly other aspects.

From one point of view, the above explanation may be taken to mean that the English L1 group’s request formulations were not responsive to situational constraints. This runs counter to Rose’s (1994:9) claim. He observes:

It is unlikely that the same request strategy should be favoured across all situations. This seems to indicate that either the responses are not representative of face-to-face interaction, or there are problems with the assumption which underlies the construction of questionnaires, that is, that language use will vary according to the contextual variables on which they are based.

In other words, the occurrence of the same strategy across different situations with systematic variation of the contextual constraints is very unlikely. In general, Rose's claim seems to stand to reason because if language use were not in an interactive relationship with contextual constraints, there would not be the need of multiple strategies to perform the same linguistic act (see also Brown and Levinson, 1987). Hence, because linguistic behaviour is embedded in context, it is logical to anticipate that carefully designed DCT frames with systematic manipulation of contextual constraints should elicit different strategies appropriate to situations. Considering this, the English L1 data could be doubtful in terms of its validity. However, when the CIS was unpacked (see 3.14.3 for description), we had clear evidence that the group was indeed responsive to contextual constraints (see also 4.2.2.). That is, the analysis of main requesting conceals the extent of the interactive relationship between language use and contextual constraints. What follows from this is the claim that the British L1 speakers' requesting behaviour is mechanically routinized for reasons mentioned above is only superficially true. Based on this, one can reasonably claim that the group's performance was varied in response to contextual constraints. Hence, Rose's (1994) claim that carefully designed DCT items with systematic variation of the contextual constraints do not elicit routine speech act strategies is empirically supported. In order to provide an explanatory account of how the English L1 group's choice of CIS sub-types systematically links to contextual constraints in each situation, I will discuss the choices of their particular CIS sub-strategies in relation to the controlled contextual constraints.

The group's preferences for CIS sub-types in the Paper and Registration situations show considerable similarity. In both situations, the CIS sub-types of 'Mitigated preparatory' and 'Possibility' account for most responses. The motivation behind the preferences can be related to the arrangement of the contextual constraints (3.4.4.). In both situations the speaker does not know the addressee on a personal basis. That is, in the Paper situation, the professor is not known (+ distance), and in Registration the speaker has not met the senior clerk (+ distance). Besides this similarity, the metapragmatic questionnaire in Table 5.4 showed that most English L1 participants reported that in both situations they had the distance constraint in mind while

formulating their requests. Further, most respondents also reported that its effect had been high (see Table 5.5). In contrast to these common denominators, the situations were clearly different in status differential. Looking back to Table 5.2, we can see that while most English L1 participants in the Paper situation (81.5%) reported that they had the status of their addressee in mind, in the Registration situation it drops to 25.9%. Likewise Table 5.3 shows that whereas most English L1 participants reported that the status of the professor had a great effect on their formulations of requests, there were very few participants who considered the effect as great (see Table 5.5). Finally, the situation shows some differences in terms of imposition. By referring back to Table 5.6 we can see that while most English L1 participants in both situations reported that they had in mind the imposition constraint, the effect was reported to have been considerably greater in the Paper situation.

Based on the above observations, it seems plausible to suggest that what underlies the motivation to use the CIS sub-types of Mitigated preparatory, and Possibility in the two situations was largely English L1 group's responsiveness to the dimension of distance. To be more specific, the group's requesting behaviour seems to vary systematically along the dimension of distance. This finding is very similar to the other pragmatically-related studies that have empirically shown that American English varies with distance (Blum-Kulka, *et al.* 1985, Hashimoto *et al.* 1992, as cited in Fukushima, 2000). Keeping this general finding about the two situations in mind, we should also add that status seems to be interacting with the dimension of distance in the first two situations. Indeed it is this interaction that seems to provide a basis for explaining the different frequency distributions of the sub-strategies. Based on this data, it seems that when status has a positive value, and distance carries a negative one, the English L1 participants tend to use more of the CIS sub-type of 'Mitigated preparatory'. As can be seen in Table 4.6, in the Paper situation 80% of the English L1 participants' requesting strategy choices converge on Mitigated preparatory, and 20% on Possibility. In contrast, when distance carries a positive value and when status is equal it seems that the CIS sub-type of Possibility is a likely candidate. In the Registration situation, 53.8% of the responses converge on Mitigated preparatory, and 26.9% are concentrated on Possibility.

As to the dimension of imposition, the retrospective data seems to suggest that in both situations the dimension had a strong effect on request formulations. Despite this retrospective intuition, we cannot further investigate the dimension, as it was not systematically varied. However, we can conjecture that the influence was possibly because the participants did not feel that they were entirely within their rights to ask for the goods or service. Furthermore, we can conjecture that because in both situations the dimension had a similar effect on the formulation of requests, it could not have been as decisive a factor as the other two constraints.

Overall, the above observations about the Paper and Registration situations can be tentatively formulated along the following lines: In mediated encounters where the addressee is not known (+distance), with status differential in favour of the addressee, the English L1 participants are more likely to use the CIS sub-strategy of Mitigated preparatory if the addressee is perceived not to be obligated to comply with the request. However, when a status differential does not exist, the CIS type of Possibility is a likely candidate as well if the addressee is also perceived not to be obligated to comply with the request. Of course, these are only general data-based conjectures that need to be compared with comparable naturalistic data to more fully understand the group's requesting behaviour.

Having discussed the strategies used by the English L1 group in the Paper and Registration situations, I consider the Supervision and Borrowing situations in terms of the elicited CIS sub-types and their relationships to the situational constraints. As already shown (see Table 4.6) the sub-strategies that largely account for the data in these two situations consist of the sub-types Ability and Possibility. More specifically, while the CIS sub-strategy of Possibility predominates in the Supervision situation, most participants in the Borrowing situation opted for the Ability sub-type. Once again, to provide an explanation for the preference of the strategies, we need to see the interactive relationship between the pragmalinguistic choices and the contextual constraints. In this regard, the contextual feature that was common in the two situations once again involved the dimension of distance. But the dimension was designed to carry a minus (negative) value in these two situations.

Concerning the overall role of the dimension, the metapragmatic data showed that most respondents reported that they had the distance dimension in mind while formulating their requests (see Table 5.2.). Furthermore, most respondents said that the effect of the distance dimension on their formulations had been high (see Table 5.3.). Despite the similarity, there were differences between these two situations as well. For example, while in the Supervision situation the supervisor's status was designed to be higher than that of the speaker, in the Borrowing situation the status of the addressee was equal. Despite these differences, most participants reported that in both situations, particularly in the Borrowing situation, they did not bear the status of their addressee in mind while formulating their requests (see Table 5.2). Furthermore, the effect of status on request formulations was reported to have been low (see Table 5.3). Finally, concerning the dimension of imposition, the metapragmatic questionnaire showed that most respondents were aware of the constraint in both situations, but the effect was particularly perceived to have been higher in the Supervision situation.

In light of the above, it is possible to suggest that an explanation for the English L1 group's choice of requesting strategy in the Borrowing and Supervision situations. First, based on the above discussion it seems to be the case that the choice of the requesting strategy in the situations largely follows from the English L1 group's sociocultural conceptualisation of distance dimension, and to a less extent, status. That is, when the distance dimension carries a minus value and there is a status-equal relationship between the interactants, the English L1 group generally tends to use the requesting sub-strategy of 'Ability'. However, when distance has a minus value, but the addressee has a higher status in an interaction, the sub-strategies of 'Ability' and 'Possibility' are very likely to be used for formulating requests. The dimension of imposition might have some effect on their request formulations, but because this was not systematically varied it cannot be investigated in greater detail. However, it seems that the weight of imposition may vary with the status of the addressee.

Overall the above observations can be tentatively formulated along the following lines: In mediated encounters where the speaker knows the addressee well (-distance),

and is of equal status, the English L1 participants are likely to use the CIS sub strategy of 'Ability' if the addressee is perceived not be obligated to comply with the request. However, if the addressee is of higher status but known, the CIS sub-strategy of 'Possibility' can be a likely candidate if the addressee is perceived not to be obligated to comply the request. It should be noted that the above tentative relation between the requesting strategy and the contextual constraints is only proposed in terms of the relation between the speaker and the addressee as operationalised in the ODPT situations.

To summarise the discussion, I have suggested that the English L1 group's use of requesting strategies is not routinized, but highly responsive to situational constraints. Furthermore, the contextual constraints that seemed to have been most influential in the formulation of requests were discussed largely as a function of the distance dimension, and only secondarily in terms of status. As to the dimension of imposition, which was not systematically varied across the situations, the comments were highly tentative.

6.3.3 Conventionally indirect strategies: Farsi L1 group

As shown in Chapter Four, though the Farsi group's formulation of requests was largely concentrated on DS, CIS was also used for request formulations, though with a low frequency. Ignoring the frequency, it is interesting that when CIS is broken down into its sub-types it becomes clear that the sub-strategy of 'Mitigated preparatory' predominates. Though this predominance does not provide a reliable foundation for hypothesising the motivation of its occurrence in the Farsi data, it may possibly provide an explanation of the ESL group's extensive use of 'Mitigated preparatory' in their request formulations. The explanation might be supported on quantitative grounds because the chi-square procedure showed that the frequency of the data were significantly different (see sub-section 4.2.2.2). That is, because the 'Mitigated preparatory' is virtually the only CIS sub-type that the Farsi group used, and because the ESL group also used the strategy with a high frequency it would be possibly valid to hypothesise that the strategy might have been transferred by the ESL group from their L1 into the L2 performance. Certainly, this needs to be further

investigated for any serious claim to be made.

6.3.4. Conventionally indirect strategies: ESL group

Like the English L1 group, the routinized requesting behaviour clearly figures in the ESL data (see sub-section 4.2.1). That ESL learners tend to use CIS in their formulation of spoken requests is also reported in the interlanguage pragmatics literature (House and Kasper, 1987). Hence at the CIS level, the ESL group's use of requesting strategy does not seem to diverge from that of other non-natives, and shows considerable approximation to native response patterns in their mapping of form and meaning in relation to situation. Despite the routinized requesting behaviour, the analysis of the CIS sub-types showed that, like natives, the group's request realisations also varied from situation to situation, suggesting the group's sensitivity to contextual constraints (see sub-section 4.2.2.2.). This finding – L2 participants' responsiveness to contextual constraints- is consistent with previous studies (Blum-Kulka, 1982; Rintell and Mitchell, 1989; Rose, 1994; Hassell, 1997), and provides ample support for Kasper and Blum-Kulka's (1993: 7) observation that:

The available evidence suggests that regardless of particular L1 and L2, and the type of learning context (naturalistic vs. instructed), learners have access to the same range of realisation strategies for linguistic action as native speakers, and demonstrate sensitivity to contextual constraints in their strategy choice.

In other words, the overall speech act competence of advanced learners is similar to that of native speakers both pragalinguistically and sociopragmatically. The ESL group's sensitivity to the contextual constraints, and their ability to change their requesting behaviour -whether appropriately or non-appropriately - in response to them could be attributed to their universal pragmatic knowledge (Blum-Kulka, 1991; Hassall, 1997). That is, the participants seem to be aware that the reason languages provide them with a number of strategies for realising a specific speech act is not solely for transactional purposes, but also for interpersonal purposes as well (see section 2.4). However, when their requesting behaviour fits appropriately with that of L2 norms it can be related to positive transfer from L1 and/or the acculturation

process. In contrast, if the behaviour does not fit with the L2 norm, it may be related to negative transfer from L1 and/or their interlanguage.

Based on the data analyses presented in Chapters Four and Five, it seems that the ESL group's preferences in the use of requesting strategies does not reveal the same systematic relationship with the control contextual constraints as that of the English L1 group. Therefore, instead of extending the approach taken for the English L1 group, I will use the notion of formality which was postulated to be a function of the dimensions of distance and status. As mentioned earlier (see sub-section 6.3.1), it seems that when in a situation the dimension of distance is negative and when status can be represented as $X_{(S)} \geq Y_{(H)}$, the situation can be considered not formal for the Farsi participants. Otherwise, the situation seems to be formal. I should add that formality and informality are not postulated to be strictly dichotomous or absolutes. Rather, I take them as blanket terms for a range of situations for explanatory purposes. For example, it seems that for the ESL group the first situation is more formal than the second because of the values of the contextual constraints. Based on this notion, it seems that for some of the ESL participants what distinguishes the first three situations from the Borrowing situation is the degree of formality. On this basis, it seems that the motivation for the preference of 'Mitigated preparatory', by most participants in the Paper situation, and by some in the Supervision and Registration situations is related to their perception of the formality of the situations which in turn operated on their pragmalinguistic knowledge base. In other words, because some of the participants perceived the situations as formal, they retrieved from their pragmalinguistic competence the most appropriate strategy for the situations. On this basis, it seems that some of the participants who consistently used this sub-strategy had not adequately socialised with the metapragmatic knowledge of British culture.

In contrast to the Paper situation, the ESL participants used a wide range of strategies in the Borrowing situation. The reason for the intra-group disagreement on the appropriate requesting strategy does not seem to be related to the participants' difference in the perceptions of the situation. Indeed, as the data elicited from the metapragmatic questionnaire suggests, the group seems to be in unanimous

agreement that the situation is not formal. The reason for the disagreement seems rather to be related to the participants' interlanguage pragmalinguistic competence. I conjecture that the group's interlanguage pragmalinguistic competence for requesting encompasses two sets of strategies: (I) a set that subsumes a relatively small number of strategies appropriate for the formal situation, and (II) a set that subsumes relatively more strategies appropriate for informal situations. Furthermore, it is conjectured that the ESL group's unanimous response to the formal situation is largely because they can easily identify a formal situation in which a request is required, and because their pragmalinguistic repertoire of formal strategies is very limited, they can easily retrieve one for production. In this regard it is interesting to note that the ESL group's use of the 'Mitigated preparatory' category largely consisted of the formulaic stretch of 'I'd be grateful; I'd appreciate it if you could ...'. In contrast, though ESL speakers can roughly identify in-formal situations, they generally seem not to be able to choose appropriately the less formal requesting strategies. This might be for two reasons. First, because their pragmalinguistic repertoire of less formal requesting strategies consists of considerably more options. Secondly, they seem not to be adequately aware of the link between such strategies and the contextual constraints that affect their selection (Thomas, 1983; Bialystock, 1991 and 1993). In this regard, Bialystok (1993:53) argues that "The problem for adults is to learn the symbolic relation between forms and contexts appropriate to the second language."

As to the Supervision and Registration situations, which are roughly halfway in between the two extreme situations in terms of formality, the dispersal of strategies seems to be related both to divergent intra-group perception of the situations, and pragmalinguistic uncertainty. That is, while some participants perceive the situations as formal and accordingly use the CIS sub-type of mitigated preparatory, the others seem to see the situations as less formal and accordingly use their idiosyncratic requesting strategies.

On the basis of the above argument, the ESL participants may be subdivided, though at the risk of oversimplification, into two groups on the basis of their

pragmalinguistic performance in the first three situations. The first group is one whose choice of sub-strategies seems to have been influenced both by their L1 pragmalinguistic strategies and metapragmatic perception. The second group comprises participants whose pragmatic competence suggests signs of disengagement from their L1 but is at an interlanguage state. Interestingly, although the groups are at different levels of pragmatic competence, both groups' requesting behaviours show pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic errors (Thomas, 1983). As to the Borrowing situation, it is not entirely clear whether the ESL group's collective agreement about the informality of the situation is as a result of acculturation or L1 influence. However, based on the English L1 patterns of requesting behavior, the ESL group's use of CIS sub-types may result in both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failures.

Overall, in the above discussion I have argued that the differential use of the CIS sub-types by the ESL participants suggests that they attempted to adjust their request formulations in response to situational constraints. Also, I have suggested on the basis of the notion of formality that though some of the participants' use of CIS sub-types seemed to be related to their interlanguage pragmatic development, some seem to be traceable to their L1-related pragmatic competence. Both types were argued to result in pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983).

6.3.5 Non-conventionally indirect strategies

The analysis of data obtained by the first instrument showed that there were comparatively few occurrences of non-conventionally indirect strategies (see section 4.2.2.3). Indeed, as shown in Table 4.7, there was a total of ten such strategies in the whole data. What seems to have induced the avoidance is possibly linked to the content of the task prompts. The tasks provide straightforward reasons for the formulation of the requests, which would have immediate consequences to the requester. For example, in the Registration situation, failure to register for the course may have an unfavourable effect on the requestee's academic plan. Hence, as a means of accomplishing their academic goals without downplaying the urgency of their requests in the situation, they dispreferred off-record strategies involving propositional and illocutionary opacity, i.e., ambiguity (Weizman, 1989). The

dispreference for non-conventional indirectness in the Paper situation, however, seems to have stemmed from the quality of interpersonal relationship. As the strategy could be over-polite for the situation leading to unintended implicature, it was almost totally disfavoured. Overall, what seems to have lead to dispreference is probably the description of the circumstances in the task prompts. However, it should be noted that the tasks themselves do not seem to totally constrain them to avoid the strategies.

6.4 Choice of perspective orientation

The analysis of the data for the sub-categories of perspective orientations showed that the two Iranian groups were significantly different in their choice of the orientations for their request formulations. Also, the ESL group's choice of the sub-categories was found to be substantially different from that English L1 group. Keeping this overall pattern in mind, I will turn to provide a discussion of the patterns in the next sub-sections.

6.4.1 The English L1 group

As shown in 4.3, the English L1 group as a whole did not make a recognisably uniform pragmatic use of the perspective orientations in response to each situation. However, cross-situation similarity exists in the data. If for a moment we ignore the Supervision situation, we can see that the Paper and Registration situations are distinct from the Borrowing one in the consistent use of Impersonal perspective. From this point of view, the three situations can be reduced to two with regard to the perspective orientation. What seems to allow the use of an Impersonal perspective in the Paper situation seems to related to the combined effect of status and distance, and to distance in the Registration situation. Hence, the participants' use of perspective orientation in the two situations seems to be pragmatically motivated. The absence of an Impersonal orientation in the Borrowing also seems to be a response of the group to the contextual conditions. That is, it appears that because the addressee is well known and because there is no status differential existing between them, the use of an Impersonal orientation is not appropriate. Indeed, it seems that if they had used the orientation, the illocution might have lost its point because it could have become overly polite, which in turn could have generated unwanted implicatures. However,

the infrequent use of Hearer oriented perspective in the Borrowing situation suggests that the use of Speaker oriented perspective may be less face-threatening in that it minimises the imposition (Blum-Kulka, 1987). In general then, the overall use of perspective pronouns in the three situations reveals the social relation that the speaker perceives to exist between him and the addressee (Brown and Gilman, 1970).

Concerning the lack of a uniform pragmatic use of the perspective orientations by all English L1 participants in each situation, there might be at least two possible reasons. First, it is very unlikely that the degree of interpersonal skills in the formulations of requests is pragmalinguistically identical among the members of the groups. Certainly, some individuals are more skilled at “meta-problem-solving” (Leech, 1983). That is, they are better at attuning means with ends both in abstract and in performance. Hence, part of the intra-group variation on this dimension may be connected to intra-group pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence. Secondly, part of the reason might be related to the contextual constraints themselves. That is, it is possible that certain situations license the use of a number of perspective orientations whereas the others do not. For example, whereas the Paper and Registration situations may overlap with the Borrowing one in licensing the use of Speaker and Hearer, they may differ in the use of Impersonal perspective orientations.

Concerning the Supervision situation, I conjecture that the general distribution of responses makes the situation more like the Paper and Registration situation because of the peculiar distribution of its contextual constraints. However, the considerable use of Speaker-Hearer orientation might be attributed to the fact that the participants would probably consider the arrangement of the supervisory meeting a joint activity. This is interesting in that it shows that the choice of perspective orientation may not be entirely dependent on the contextual constraints that the design intended to control.

Overall, we have related the English L1 group’s use of perspective orientation largely to their perception of contextual constraints. I have further proposed that the lack of uniformity of perspective orientation in each situation might be partly related to the

participants' different sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence. Finally, we have conjectured on the basis of the data that the conceptualisation of some participants of their role in arranging a supervisory meeting might have led them to use the Speaker-Hearer orientation in their formulation of requests.

6.4.2 The Farsi L1 group

As shown in 4.3, the Farsi group's use of perspective orientation largely concentrated on Speaker orientation in the first three situations. Based on the definition of formality that I provided earlier (see section 6.3.1), it seems that what triggered the choice of perspective in the first three situations was largely that the group perceived the situation as being formal. In the Registration situation where there is an increase in the use of Impersonal orientation, the perspective seems to index a formal situation as well. It should be noted that the use of an Impersonal request perspective which conveys a sense of distance between the hearer and the speaker does not render a request impolite in Farsi. This dimension might be language specific, as in Polish where in contrast the perspective tends to make the request less polite (Wierzbicka, 1991). In general then, as with the choice of requesting strategy, which seemed to be more or less fixed in formal situations, so with the choice of perspective orientation. As to the Borrowing situation, the increase in the use of Hearer orientation may well show that the participants perceived the situation as not being formal. Overall then, the choice of perspective dimension by the group seemed to have been more related to the dimension of formality.

6.4.3 The ESL group

The ESL group's use of perspective orientation largely concentrated on the Hearer in the first three situations. Moreover, the results in 4.4 showed the group's overall use of perspective was significantly different from that of the other two groups. Even the comparison for individual situations suggested the same trend. In this regard, the first question that arises from the group's consistent use of perspective orientation is whether it makes the formulations inappropriate. Broadly speaking, the choice does not seem to result in either pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic inappropriateness. Neither does it seem to lead to any miscommunications. After all, the native speakers

themselves used the strategy with relatively high frequency. However, the choice may not be the best or the most rational means towards achieving the ends because it does not systematically index social motivation. As suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987, also see section 2.7), all types of requests impinge on the private territory of the hearer. Hence, it is in the interests of the requester to choose the pragmalinguistic components that lead them appropriately towards their ends with due consideration of the hearer's face. In other words, the choice of pragmalinguistic components should be contextually attuned to requestive goal, and the addressee's face.

A second question that arises from the choice of perspective orientation may deal with the issue of over-representation. The consistent choice of Hearer perspective in all situations does not seem to be related to the overloaded processing capacity of the group as the participants were not temporally constrained at the time of formulating their requests in writing (see sub-section 3.16.3). Nor does it seem to be related to their first or second language for the reasons cited earlier. What seems to account for the over-representation of the Speaker orientation may be related to its being the default form of the four (Bialystok, 1993). That is, for ESL participants, the perspective seems to be a relatively more easily retrievable than the other three perspective orientations, and they are less attended to. Furthermore, for ESL participants the Speaker orientation seems more message-oriented than socially motivated. Social motivation or negative politeness seem to be more frequently signalled in ESL participants' request formulations by other pragmalinguistic features like lexical items, modals, internal and external modifiers.

As to the Supervision situation, the reason for the absence of any occurrences of Speaker-Hearer perspective might be related to the perception of the controlled contextual constraints. In the situation, the ESL participants might possibly have felt that because their addressee was status-unequal with academically-related authority, they were not licensed, in contrast to native English speakers, to negotiate the timing of the make-up supervision. The reason for the avoidance could possibly be attributed to sociopragmatic negative L1 influence as there are not any occurrences of the perspective in Farsi L1 data either.

Concerning the Impersonal perspective, its absence in ESL data, might be attributable to two sources. First, it is possible that the use of the perspective requires the subsequent structure to be pragmalinguistically more complex (Hassall, 1997). Hence, they avoid the structure. The following example from the data of the present study shows the point

- a) *Would it please be possible for you to send me a copy of the paper for my personal use?* (Data from English L1 participants)
- b) *Could you please send a copy of your paper to me?* (Data from ESL participants)

Secondly, the impersonal perspective, as Hassall (1997) observes, may entail more demands on sociopragmatic competence. That is, because the perspective is pragmalinguistically more complex, with clear sociopragmatic motivation, the ESL participants may not be aware of its underlying motivations.

Overall, the study casts an interesting light on the use of perspective by ESL participants. First, it shows that the ESL participants' use of perspective tends to be fixed across situations. Secondly, in contrast to the use of requesting strategy, L2 choice of perspective seems less responsive to the contextual constraints. The fixed pattern of the application of perspective orientation, as argued above, may very well not be related to L1 knowledge. Rather, it seems to be more related to interlanguage processes. In this regard, it is also interesting to note that the results for the use of perspective suggest that it may be acquired later than that of requesting strategy.

6.5 Internal modifiers

As shown in 4.4, the results showed the groups were not statistically different in their overall use of internal modifiers. However, when the analysis was taken to sub-types, clear differences emerged. In the following sub-sections, I will discuss them in more detail.

6.5.1 The English L1 group

As shown in 4.6, there were about ninety-seven occurrences of internal modifiers in the English L1 data. Furthermore, the analysis of modifiers by situation revealed that the data were differentially distributed between pairs of situations. That is, whereas there was an increased use of internal modifiers in the Paper and the Registration situations, its incidence was considerably less in the other two (see Table 4.11). For an explanation of the increased use of the modifiers, we once again look briefly at the characteristics of the two situations and at the metapragmatic data. First, on the basis of the design of contextual constraints, the two situations were similar on the dimension of distance (see sub-section 3.4.4). That is, distance in both situations had a minus (negative) value. Furthermore, on the basis of the metapragmatic data, not only did the English L1 participants report that they were thinking about the dimension in their formulation of requests, but also their retrospective data suggested that the dimension had a good deal of effect on their formulations (see section 5.3). Hence, on the basis of the design of the situations and the metapragmatic data, it seems that it was the distance dimension that accounted for the systematic increase in the use of internal modifiers in these situations. To be more specific, the English L1 participants seem to have used more internal modifiers in situations where their addressee was not known and fewer in situations where their addressee was known. Interestingly, the use of the directness by the English L1 participants was also argued to be associated with the dimension of distance as well.

The infrequent use of lexical and phrasal downgraders when compared to the ESL group might be attributable to the general language proficiency. Hence, unlike the non-native speakers, they do not need to be overly explicit.

6.5.2 The Farsi L1 group

Unlike the English L1 group whose use of internal modifiers suggested strong association with the values of the controlled contextual constraints, the use of the modifiers by Farsi L1 group suggests no such association. However, the increased use of the modifiers in the Paper and Borrowing situations, which is in a way reminiscent

of bulge theory (Wolfson, 1988 and 1989b), might possibly be related to the relative certainty of the relationship in these situations compared with the relative instability of the other two situations. In other words, the Farsi L1 participants seem to use more internal modifiers when the contextual constraints are more fixed. Interestingly also, the choice of conventionally indirect strategies which were limited to the ‘mitigated preparatory’ sub-strategy also shows the same trend. That is, the group’s use of the sub-strategy predominated in these two situations (see section 4.2). This is, however, in contrast to bulge theory according to which certain types of speech behaviour increase when relationships are relatively unstable. Certainly, because the frequency distribution of internal modifiers from the Farsi participants is similar across situations, one cannot put a strong case for this explanation. Hence, more data is needed to support the argument. However, because the use of the ‘mitigated preparatory’ sub-strategy is similar to that of internal modifiers, it may be worth further investigation in future studies. Concerning the infrequent use of syntactic downgraders, the reason is clearly attributable to their preference for direct strategy (see 4.2). Concerning the increased use of ‘Downtoner’, my analysis of its distribution across situations shows that it has similar incidence across situations. The reason for the similar distribution might be related to politeness (see 2.4). That is, because in none of the situation was the requester entirely entitled to make the request, they might have felt the need to use redressive strategies at the pragmalinguistic level.

6.5.3 The English L2 group

The overall differences in the use of internal modifiers between the Farsi L1 groups, and between the English L1 and ESL groups were not quantitatively significant when the data were pooled across situations. This finding is at odds with some earlier studies which report that non-natives tend to under-use internal modifiers (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; House and Kasper, 1987; Harlow, 1990; Trosborg 1995; Hassall, 2001). In other studies, however, learners have been found to use as many internal modifiers on requests as native speakers (Blum-Kulka, 1986; Blum-Kulka and Levenston, 1987; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000). One explanation for the similar use of internal modifying devices might be related to the medium of production

which seems not to make the same processing demands as that of spoken language. Unlike the spoken language, in writing people can take their time to formulate and reformulate their productions (Brown and Yule, 1983; McCarthy, 1991). Along the same lines, Hassall (2001:271) speculates that “The processing task is much reduced for learners by allowing them to write their requests, as they have time to think, and so learners...may manage to use complex structures that they have not mastered well enough to draw on in spoken discourse”.

Another explanation for the quantitatively similar use of internal modifiers might be related to the situational prompts. That is, because the prompts illustrate situations which entail written responses, and because the first move is enacted without any immediate, on-the-spot feedback from the addressee, the participants might have considered it unnecessary to over-use the modifiers.

As to the frequency distribution of internal modifiers by situation, the data largely showed even distribution of the modifiers (see Table 4.11). However, in the Borrowing situation the incidence of the modifiers was slightly lower. On a distributional basis then, the data in general suggests that the use of the modifiers by the group was not sensitive to the controlled contextual constraints in situational frames. However, in the Borrowing situation it may be that the controlled contextual constraints of distance and status were operative on the application of the modifiers. That is, when there is no status differential or distance between the interactants, the ESL participants may use relatively fewer internal modifiers.

That the ESL group’s use of internal modifiers is not a response to the situational prompts is interesting because it suggests that though the group operates similarly to native speakers on a quantitative basis, their underlying pragmatic intentions might be different. Before we speculate on the basis of the data about the possible intentions, it should be noted that the type of internal modifiers used can provide clues about the speakers’ intentions (Faerch and Kasper, 1989; Blum-Kulka and Levenston, 1987). Looking back to the data in (see Table 4.11), we see that what makes the ESL group distinct from both the English L1 and Farsi L1 groups is their use of the politeness marker (please). The pragmatic motivations for the over-use of the politeness marker

by the ESL speakers seem to have two sources. First, the marker serves a double function in request illocutions (Stubbs, 1983; Blum-Kulka, 1987; Faerch and Kasper, 1989). On the one hand, it serves to make explicit the illocutionary force of the act. In this regard, Faerch and Kasper (1989:233) note that

... language learners tend to adhere to the conversational principle of clarity, choosing explicit, transparent, unambiguous means of expression rather than implicit, opaque, and ambiguous realizations. These qualities are exactly fulfilled by the politeness marker, in comparison with alternative lexical / phrasal downgraders.

On the other hand, the politeness marker can serve to redress the force of requests. However, it is not entirely clear which is the primary function. We conjecture, however, that when learners use the marker primarily as a mitigator, they have two immediate pragmatic motivations in mind, which we call interpersonal and instrumental. Rather than see the two motivations as separate, we hold that they are co-existent in most formulations. The use of the politeness marker is interpersonally motivated when the learners intend to show in their formulations that they are adhering to the norms of social interaction in their linguistic behaviour, that is they are being polite. In this regard, Faerch and Kasper (1989:229) note that "... the learners may perceive their role as non-native speakers as calling for more tentative verbal behaviour". However, the use is instrumentally motivated when the learners use it as a means of achieving their goal. The instrumental function may be largely a compensatory strategy because of insecurity arising from perceived inadequate language proficiency.

An important question that arises is whether the over-use makes the requests inappropriate. Certainly, the consistent over-indulgence in the politeness markers makes the requests non-native. However, from the point of view of sociopragmatics, i.e., the appropriateness of particular pragmalinguistic components in context, the over-indulgence does not seem to be appropriate because it gives the ESL speakers' formulations a specific character which is different from the dominant patterns of use, including communicative conventions, of the L1 speakers.

6.6 External Modifiers

As shown in 4.5, the overall use of external modifiers for all situations combined showed no significant inter-group differences. The parallel use of the external modifiers by the ESL group does not support most previous studies which report that non-native speakers prefer to use more external modifiers than native speakers (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; House and Kasper, 1987; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000). Indeed, the over-indulgence of external modifiers or ‘waffling’ (Edmondson and House, 1991) by learners has been considered as an interlanguage phenomenon which operates independent of language transfer (Blum-Kulka, 1986). Despite the consistent report of learner waffling, Edmondson and House (1991:279) report that in their oral data gathered from role-play in the Bochum project, there was no waffling in the learner data.

The arguments given in the interlanguage pragmatics literature for the over-use of external modifiers or waffling phenomenon result from studies that have almost exclusively focused on spoken language. Furthermore, although in most of these studies data are obtained in writing about spoken language, the prompts portray hypothetical *face-to-face* situations. Hence, the written responses about an oral interaction might well have elicited data that are more like samples of spoken data than written. In contrast to these studies, the present research elicited written data by prompts that portray situations that require *written* responses. Furthermore, unlike most other DCT situations like those constructed for the CCSARP, the tasks were enriched in terms of content to provide adequate situational and social information (see sub-section 3.4.5). Hence, the lack of waffling in the ESL data might have resulted from “constraints ... predetermined by the instrument” (Kasper and Dahl, 1991:215). This seems to be an interesting issue. That is, the application of production tasks designed specifically for eliciting of written data may not necessarily produce data which are similar to those obtained by DCT. Besides the nature of the tasks, what might also have contributed to the similar use of external modifiers by the ESL group might have been the process of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic acculturation as a result of their length of stay in the UK, and exposure to various

written academically related material in the form of correspondence. Indeed, as Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986:174) point out the quantity of external modifiers tends to vary systematically with length of stay. However, it should be noted that Blum-Kulka and Olshtain report that non-natives approximate more closely than Hebrew native speakers after five years of residence. In this regard, I am not seeking positive evidence to discredit their finding, but am simply saying on the basis of the data that shorter lengths of stay may also produce a similar effect in the formulation of written requests. The reason for this may be the sizeable exposure to email messages, and their proficiency level.

A contributory factor in the L2 participants' similar use of external modifiers could be related to the absence time constraint to respond to the tasks. That is, because the ESL participants were not temporally constrained by the tasks, and because their linguistic productions in writing were relatively permanent for inspection, they could take their time planning what to say, re-evaluate, rewrite, delete and/or rearrange their ongoing productions (Brown and Yule, 1983). Though this dimension of the tasks might not have lessened the cognitive load significantly, they could have at least provided the participants a better chance to formulate the text more in line with their communicative competence.

Concerning the last conjecture, it is certainly possible to hypothesise from the opposite direction. That is, the ESL participants' use of external modifiers might have been similar to the majority of previous studies, but because they were not temporally constrained and because their formulations were amenable to ongoing editing, it is not observable in the final formulations. This could be an interesting aspect for further research but because no record of the protocol is available, it cannot be further investigated.

Overall then, the use of the same amount of external modifiers by ESL participants was argued to be associated with four related dimensions that might have had a synergistic effect. The dimensions comprised prompt information, length of stay in

the host country, time constraint and the medium of formulations. The dimensions discussed may well not be exhaustive but seem to be inclusive of the major factors.

6.7 Overall picture of the ESL group

The discussion of the ESL participants' formulations of request sequences reveals a number of dimensions of their interlanguage requests. First, overall their formulations suggest that they were aware of the features of L2 requests. That is, requests can take different levels of directness, which can be internally and externally modified. Further, compared with Farsi L1 formulations, the L2 participants' request formulations suggest that they were pragmatically aware that the strategies which are used in their L1 for specific situations are not appropriate for the same situations in their L2, though the overall stock of strategies in the two languages converge substantially. This trend of formulations may well have resulted from the acquisition of L2. Thirdly, their formulations suggest that they were aware that the overall configuration of their request realisations must be responsive to contextual constraints. From these points of view then, the ESL participants' knowledge about the pragmalinguistic properties of requests, their overall divergence from their L1 conventional pattern of use, their sensitivity to contextual constraints, their consistent use of conventionally indirect strategies, and their use of internal and external modifiers all suggest that they are similar to the British English native speakers at some theoretical level.

Despite the above similarities, the overall patterns of requests made by the ESL participants show that their formulations have certain interlanguage properties that distinguish them from English L1 participants'. The distinct properties of their requests are as follows:

- a) In situations where the controlled contextual constraints have the following characteristics $\{-D\}, \{X_{(S)} < Y_{(H)}\}$; $\{+D\}, \{X_{(S)} > Y_{(H)}\}$; $\{-D\}, \{X_{(S)} = Y_{(H)}\}$, the ESL participants' use of request strategies do not show consistent native-like patterns. Further, they use strategies, such as Permission questions, and Volitional strategies that native speakers avoid (see sub-sections 4.2.2.2 and 6.3.4).

- b) Compared with English L1 participants, the ESL participants' use of requesting strategies does not vary systematically with the contextual constraints. In a sense, the motivation to use particular requesting strategies seem to result from different or uncertain conceptualizations of the constraints (see sub-section 6.3.4).
- c) The ESL participants do not seem to be aware of the sociopragmatic constraints on requesting strategies. For example, in the Borrowing situation with the constraints having the following characteristics $\{-D\}, \{X_{(S)}=Y_{(H)}\}$, a significant number of participants used the strategy of Permission question. The strategy seems to be a sociopragmatic error because implicit in the choice of the strategy, there is an acknowledgement of status difference (Faerch and Kasper, 1989). This is quite interesting because there is a clash between the actual performance, and their actual rating of their addressee's status (see sub-section 6.3.4).
- d) The non-natives' use of perspective orientation shows considerably less systematic variations than natives'. As a consequence, they are less indicative of negative politeness (see sub-section 6.4.3).
- e) The non-native speakers' use of internal modifiers is not systematically responsive to contextual constraints (see sub-section 6.5.3).
- f) Unlike the English L1 participants, the non-natives significantly used more politeness markers and fewer upgraders (see sub-section 6.5.3).

Given the overall similarity and differences of the two groups, a number of interesting findings seem to emerge from this study.

- a) The ESL participants have a general pragmatic knowledge base of communication, which in the case of requests is in form of a 'request schema' (Blum-Kulka, 1991). That is, they seem to be unconsciously aware that requestive speech acts are responsive to contextual constraints, i.e., sociopragmatically governed, can take various forms ranging from the most explicit type to the most implicit, depending on the operations of the contextual constraints, i.e., they have pragmalinguistic characteristics, have different levels of directness, and are face-threatening, i.e., they have real-world consequences (see Blum-Kulka, 1991 for more details). These dimensions of request schema seem to be independent of the

L2 and might have possibly been acquired as result of L1 acquisition in its sociocultural context.

- b) The ESL participants requesting behaviour is similar to that of natives on some fundamental dimensions but diverges from them in significant ways. From a sociopragmatic dimension, the ESL participants are like the natives in that they are aware that their requesting behaviour is face-threatening and must be adjusted to the contextual constraints in terms of pragmalinguistic features. Furthermore, the actual pragmalinguistic strategies that the group used suggest that they were similar to native speakers in that they are aware of its various components, and that the conventionally indirect strategies are most appropriate to the situations. Despite the similarity on both dimensions, the groups are importantly different in their responsiveness to the contextual constraints, and in the use of pragmalinguistic features. First and foremost, as the data suggests, though the natives' use of pragmalinguistic strategies, particularly internal modifiers, requesting strategies, and perspective dimensions, systematically varies particularly with the dimension of distance, the non-native speakers' performance in writing seems to be responsive to the dimension of formality. Hence, it is possible that despite the overall surface similarity in requesting behaviour in the situations, the underlying motivation for using particular strategies is different.

From the point of view of the pragmalinguistics, the ESL participants were significantly different from the natives in their use of the sub-types of the conventionally indirect strategies, particularly in situations which were not particularly formal. Also their use of both lexical/phrasal downgraders and upgraders was significantly different from the native in most of the situations.

- c) The ESL participants' requesting behaviour in writing suggests that L1-transfer could be more operative in their sociopragmatics than in their pragmalinguistics. At the sociopragmatic level, many of the participants seem to unconsciously perceive the dimensions of distance and status and the formality that they cause in terms of their L1-Knowledge. However, this perception seems only to facilitate

the transfer of the Mitigated preparatory to a considerable degree. This is in line with Blum-Kulka's (1991:256) claim that "The request schema is governed by a *cultural filter* which affect the ways requestive situations are evaluated and modes of situationally appropriate forms are selected" (*emphasis in original*).

- d) The data suggests that the ESL participants do not show parallel pragmalinguistic sophistication over the various components of a request sequence. At a general level, the illocutionary and cross-cultural aspects of requests seem to be learnt prior to the sociolinguistic aspects which particularly deal with contextual constraints. At the lower level, the various illocutionary aspects also show different rate of growth. In this regard, the perspective orientations and lexical downgraders show the least systematic variation and slower growth. In contrast, the use of strategies and external modifiers suggest relatively faster growth.

To summarise, I have attempted in this section to provide an overall picture of the ESL participants' requesting behavior on the basis of the previous discussions and tried to show in what ways it converged or diverged from English L1 and Farsi L1 participants. The general picture suggests that the non-natives' realisations of request sequences are both anchored to their first and second languages, but the sequences have peculiar characteristics that make them distinct from both.

6.8 Methodological issues

Although it is clear that DCTs are a valuable tool in speech act analyses, it is equally clear that tools are most effective only as they are continually developed and refined. (Rose and Ono, 1995:192)

In this section I will turn to a discussion of the instruments used to respond to the research questions that I put forward in Chapter 3. First, I will look at the open-ended discourse production tasks, and then the metapragmatic questionnaire. Firstly, the procedure over-simplifies the contextual constraints involved in communicative exchanges. For example, in most interlanguage pragmatics studies (Blum-Kulka, 1986; Takahashi, 1993; Piirainen-Marsh, 1995; Fukushima, 2000; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000) DCT contains a trio of contextual constraints systematically varied

across a number of prompts. Secondly, the tasks, like some of those used in the CCSARP data, are not adequately related to the real-life experiences of the respondents. As a consequence, they largely provide “[E]vidence of what the informants believe people would typically utter in a given situation” (Weizman, 1989:82). Thirdly, the modality of the DCT prompts are reported to constitute a constraint on the elicitation of the intended speech act (Rintell and Mitchell, 1989). Though the criticisms question the validity of the instrument as an elicitation procedure, in the context of interlanguage pragmatics the criticisms can be toned down by the objectives of a research study, and by readjusting the instrument according to the research questions. In the following paragraphs I will attempt address those criticisms on the basis of this study.

Concerning the second criticism, DCTs are open to readjustment. They can be so constructed as to be related to the respondents’ immediate experience. The claim that DCTs are sometimes estranged from the real-life experiences of the respondents does not seem to be an inherent flaw of the instrument, rather it stems from the process of prompt construction. The problem of unrelatedness to participants’ previous experiences could be partly avoided, for example, by prior ethnographic investigations (see Eisenstein and Bodman, 1986; Takahashi, 1996; Rose and Ono, 1995). That is, before the formulation of prompts, the characteristics of the participants need to be determined in advance of the study. For example, in this study the participants were found to be similar in terms of their academic status and experiences. Drawing on these similarities, a preliminary study was carried out to validly identify request situations and topics that they could relate to. Therefore, by anchoring and enriching the content of DCT prompts through an ethnography, it may be possible to avoid the unrelatedness of experience on the part of the participants, and obtain data that are more representative of naturally occurring data.

Concerning the first criticism, DCTs and its modified versions may well be downgraded as an instrument that neither fully captures nor appreciates the overall complexity of social situations. While this is a fair criticism, I’d think that the instrument, by being anchored to the empirically identified and stable contextual

constraints, makes it possible to determine how respondents react, at the very least prototypically, to the known socio-cultural stimuli. Further, by allowing researchers to control the constraints, the instrument provides a foundation to construct cross-culturally comparable prompts to see how similarly or differentially informants of different socio-cultural backgrounds respond pragmalinguistically to the same contextual constraints. This is both theoretically and practically impossible through ethnography (see 3.4.1 for discussion). In a sense, DCTs and its modified versions allow obtaining both representative pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic data regarding particular speech acts from a cross-cultural viewpoint. Hence, considering the feasibility and advantages of DCT and its modified versions from this angle, we may come to see it as a very effective way of addressing many research questions in both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics

The third criticism relates to the incongruence between the modality of the elicitation procedure and the modality of participants' production. In essence, through DCT and its adaptations, researchers aim to investigate patterns of the use of speech acts in speaking. However, the data that they obtain are in writing. To get round the problem, many researchers have turned to oral role play. For example, in their study of refusals, Nelson *et al.* (2002) read out DCT prompts to their participants for eliciting spoken data because the procedure allowed them to collect data that approximated to real life communication. The establishing of a match between the modalities will probably contribute to the validity of the study. Concerning this study, the open-ended production tasks, which were both theoretically and methodologically anchored to DCT, aimed to establish the congruity. That is, written data were collected through a written task. Hence, the data were probably more representative of the participants' actual production.

Considering the above discussion, the first and the third limitations of the DCT could be largely eliminated by careful experimental design. However, it is not easy to get round the reductionist dimension of DCT at this stage of research. Part of the reason seems to be that we do not exactly know the whole constellation of variables involved in the production of speech of acts, how they interact with one another, and their

relative status. Despite the limitation, the logistical, temporal, and theoretical advantages of the DCT make it a powerful research tool in both cross-cultural and interlanguage speech act research for eliciting both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic data on the basis of controlled contextual constraints. Indeed, it might be possible that as we progressively understand the types and nature of contextual constraints, we could include them in DCT situational prompts for greater validity. However, there is also the possibility that we would come to realise that it is virtually impossible to have cross-culturally similar situational prompts because all related constraints could not be held cross-culturally similar. In general, by addressing the criticisms, I did not intend to imply that DCT and its adaptations are a perfect substitute for ethnographic approaches. While acknowledging its limitations, I think that it can be very a helpful instrument for providing insightful answers to a range of questions.

The metapragmatic questionnaire was the second instrument in this study. It was designed to elicit data on contextual constraints and the DCT situations. From a methodological point of view, the application of an assessment questionnaire on controlled contextual constraints was useful for the following reasons. Firstly, it made considerable contribution by way of triangulation to show more explicitly the relationship between the request sequences made by each group and their perceived contextual constraints. Though the participants' assessment and their performance in formulating the requests were not similar in some cases, it provided a basis for explanatory conjecture on their performance. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the English L1 group seemed to be more metacognitively aware of their performance. Secondly, the questionnaire was useful in showing the participants' differential perception of the constraints, L1 transfer, and cross-cultural comparability of the situational prompts. It seems that without the administration of the questionnaire it could have been hard to make relatively strong claims about the operations of the contextual constraints on the request sequences. It is interesting to note that the questionnaire items that lead the participants to metacognitively retrospect their awareness of the contextual constraints seem to be more valid than their responses to the questionnaire items dealing with the effect of the constraints.

For example, though the ESL participants' retrospection suggests that the status of the addressee in the Registration situation was not influential in their writing, their performance suggests a different trend. In sense, it seems that whereas the participants could retrospect about their awareness of the variables with greater facility, they could not as validly retrospect about the effect of the variables. There might be at least two reasons for the participants' difficulty about this. Firstly, to retrospect about the effect of the awareness of the contextual constraints might be well below the level of their conscious awareness. The second reason might be related to the formulation of the question itself as it did not make explicit the specific meaning of the effect. Despite this, the use of metapragmatic questionnaire in the present study elicited useful information on the formulation of speech acts.

6.9 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 were first highlighted and were subsequently discussed. In the discussion, I first concentrated on explaining the requesting behaviours of individual groups and tried to relate some of them to the literature. I have subsequently attempted to relate the overall discussion to the requesting behaviour of the ESL participants. On the basis of the discussion, I also attempted to characterise the participants' interlanguage request formulations in terms of pragmalinguistic, sociopragmatic, and transfer features. Finally, I discussed the methodological dimensions of the present study.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, following a brief summary of the findings of this study, I will proceed to evaluate the present work on the basis of its overall features, consider its implications, and raise issues for further studies.

7.2 Summary of the findings

Based on the research questions that I put forward in Chapter Three (see section 3.2.), I will proceed in this section to review the answers provided by the elicited data. To begin with, I asked whether the written requesting sequences used by the English L2 participants in email communications differed in any ways from those of the English L1 and Farsi L1 participants. Further, I asked whether the English L2 participants relied on their L1-knowledge to formulate the requests. The analyses of the data included requesting strategies, perspective orientations, internal modifiers, and external modifiers. In answering the questions, I came to the following conclusions.

- **Requesting strategies**

- a) Both the English L1 and ESL participants' overall use of requesting strategies, with and without relating them to specific situational prompts, concentrated on conventionally indirect strategies. Also, both groups largely dispreferred both direct (DS) and the non-conventionally indirect strategies (NIS). Hence, as far as the main requesting strategies were concerned, the two groups' performance suggested considerable convergence, rather than difference.
- b) Direct strategies accounted for most of the request illocutions formulated by the Farsi L1 group. The group generally ignored both the conventionally and non-conventionally indirect strategies. Subsequently, based on the elicited data, the ESL participants' consistent use of the conventionally indirect strategies could not possibly be attributed to transfer from L1.

- c) Based on the Farsi L1 and ESL data for all situations combined, it could be the case that the use Mitigated preparatory, a subtype of the conventionally indirect strategy, by ESL participants was related to L1 transfer. However, it was not possible to strongly ascertain this because of the low frequency of the data in the Farsi L1 data.
- d) The ESL participants employed certain strategies for their requests that were largely absent in the English L1 participants' formulations. The strategies involved 'Volition' and 'Permission questions'. Hence, in this regard they were different from the British natives.
- e) The ESL and English L1 participants showed similar preferences for the sub-strategies of 'Mitigated preparatory', 'Ability', and 'Possibility'.
- f) Despite the similarity between the ESL and English L1 participants in their use of the sub-strategies, the actual distributions of the strategies across situations were importantly different between them.

- **Perspective orientations**

- a) Whereas the Farsi L1 group used particularly the Speaker perspective orientation, the ESL participants largely realized their written request formulations using the Hearer perspective. Hence, on this dimension the two groups were different. Consequently, it could be that the use of the perspective by the ESL group was not as a result of L1 transfer.
- b) The ESL participants' use of perspective was different from those of the English L1 participants in that whereas the former largely used fixed perspective orientation, the latter group's use was more inclusive of all perspective orientations and showed more situational variability. Hence, on this dimension the two groups were importantly different.

- **Internal modifiers**

- a) The English L1 and ESL groups were found not to be different in their use of syntactic downgraders. However, the data suggested that they were importantly different in their use of lexical/phrasal downgraders.

b) In contrast to the Farsi L1 group, which used ‘downtoners’ with high frequency, the use of ‘politeness markers’ predominated in the ESL data. Consequently, L1-related transfer could not have been active in the ESL group’s consistent use of the category.

- **External Modifiers**

a) The three groups’ overall use of external modifiers was very similar to one another.

Besides the above research questions, we also asked three further research questions to investigate how the requesting sequences vary in accordance with the controlled contextual constraints of status and distance (see section 3.4.4). In responding to the questions, the following findings were obtained:

- **Contextual constraints**

a) The English L1 participants’ realizations of requesting sequences were substantially responsive to the dimension of distance. However, when the addressee was both unknown and was academically perceived as more statusful, the latter dimension interacted with the first contextual constraint.

b) Though the ESL participants’ use of requesting sequences were sensitive to contextual constraints, it did not suggest the same degree of systematic variation as those of English L1 participants. It was conjectured that the variation was more responsive to the perceived formality of the situational prompts. Consequently, the results suggest that the groups were different in their responsiveness to the contextual constraints.

c) Though the Farsi L1 participants’ request sequences were strategically different from those of the other two groups, the sequences suggested that they were also more responsive to the perceived formality of the situations. Hence, on this dimension the Farsi L1 groups’ performance suggested similarity.

7.3 Evaluation of the present study

In this section, I will proceed to focus on the strengths and limitations of the present study. First, the strengths will be considered followed by the limitations.

7.3.1 Strengths

The following are the strengths of this study.

1. Collecting a corpus of data from English and Farsi L1 participants

The collection of data from English L1 and Farsi L1 speakers is strength of the present study for two reasons. Firstly, the data from the two groups provided a basis against which the interlanguage data obtained from the ESL group could be compared both pragmalinguistically and sociopragmatically. Concerning the Farsi data, it helped to establish whether or not the requesting patterns employed by the ESL participants have their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic roots in the first language. In other words, whether or not transfer from L1 was active from both dimensions. In this regard it may be of interest to note that if the Farsi baseline data were collected from the English L2 participants, the obtained sequences might well not have unravelled the typical patterns used in Farsi because the ESL participants' acculturation with English L2 could have affected their responses.

Concerning the English L1 data, it enabled the researcher to determine to what extent the interlanguage requests produced by the ESL participants converged towards or diverged from it. In other words, it provided a yardstick against which the L2 request sequences could be compared both pragmalinguistically and sociopragmatically. Secondly, a natural corollary of controlling the languages was that it enabled the researcher to look for interlanguage explanations for cases where divergence from the obtained norms could not be attributed to transfer. It is probably because of these reasons that in the interlanguage pragmatics research, it is suggested that the controlling of both the target and source languages can be helpful (Carrell and Konneker, 1981; Ellis, 1994)

2. Data collection instrument and modality of elicited responses

As discussed before (see sub-section 3.4.1), much of the criticism levelled at DCT and its adaptations stem from the fact that the elicitation procedure does not validly correlate with the modality of the elicited responses. That is, DCT's provide spoken data in writing. In this study, however, the discourse production tasks, which are both methodologically and theoretically anchored to DCT, have been used to collect written data in writing. Hence, it does not confront some the limitations that have been cited for the instrument, which in turn would probably contribute to the validity of this study.

3. Typicality of situational prompts

As mentioned before (see sub-section 3.4.5.), DCT's have sometimes been criticized for providing textual description that respondents are not familiar with. Hence, the elicited speech act data may well not reflect patterns of actual behaviour. In this study, relating the content of the situational prompts to the participants' immediate experience could be considered a strength as it could have contributed to more validly eliciting responses that approximate to the ones that the participants might actually use in their day-to-day communication.

4. Selection of participants

The three groups of participants in this study were all Ph.D. candidates in both Britain and Iran. Hence, besides controlling the educational level, they were demographically from homogeneous groups of only two different nationalities. Also, because the English L2 participants had the required proficiency level acceptable for their respective universities, they were roughly similar in this regard as well. It is possible that the controlling of the variables had contributed to finding trends of requesting behaviour in the three groups that might not be due to personal attributes (Fukushima, 2000).

5. Metapragmatic questionnaire

The application of the metapragmatic questionnaire contributed to the validity of this study in two ways. Firstly, it provided a richer data which triangulated the findings obtained through the piloting phase. In this regard, for example though the results obtained from the piloting phase indicated the cross-cultural similarity of perception on the controlled contextual constraints, the metapragmatic data collected for the

main study showed that it was not entirely the case. Secondly, the set of data collected by the instrument was used to further assess the relationship between pragmalinguistic choices and sociopragmatic perception.

7.3.2 Limitations

The limitations of the present study involved the number of situations, contextual constraints, sampling, and the elicitation procedure. I will expand on these in the following paragraphs.

1. Number of situations

In this study, data on request illocutions were collected from four situational prompts, in which out of six possible role constellations of contextual constraints, four were selected. Hence, for the two role constellations which can be represented as $\{X_{(S)} = Y_{(H)}\}$, $\{+D\}$; $\{X_{(S)} > Y_{(H)}\}$, $\{-D\}$, no situations were constructed. Theoretically, it would have been more insightful to include these two situations as well, or even ideal to have more of each situation with systematic variations of the controlled contextual constraints. However, if the participants were encumbered with more situations than they could handle, their performance could have been affected by the tasks. Besides, many participants could not afford the time to respond to more situations. In a sense, the selected number might be considered a strength because by putting less pressure on the participants they might have responded to the prompts more validly.

2. Contextual constraints

In the present study, there were two contextual constraints that were controlled. They involved distance and status. Though on the basis of the data, we found that the two constraints were operative to varying degrees on the formulations of requests illocution, it may well be the case that there were other constraints that played a role which had not been controlled. For example, the degree of imposition which was not systematically varied across the situations, might have been found to be operating on the controlled constraints if it had been experimentally controlled. Besides imposition, we conjecture that the language proficiency level, degree of interpersonal skills, personality traits, and the right to make requests in the situations might have also been influential in the formulations of requests. However, because at this stage of research we do not know the interactive relationship between various constraints and

request formulations, it might be logical to design research projects that specifically look at the operations of specific constraints. Or alternatively, longitudinal studies could be undertaken to look at how the various constraints interact with the speech act.

3. The representativeness and number of the participants

Though all the Farsi and British participants in the present study included Ph.D. students, they were most possibly not a uniform group in terms of other characteristics like gender, socio-economic background, age, social class, etc. Consequently, had the elicited data been collected uniformly from participants with identical characteristics, the results might have been different. Along the same line, because the participants were not randomly selected in a purely statistical sense, the data cannot be claimed to be generalizable to the whole Farsi and English L1 and English L2 population.

Another important limitation relates to the number of participants. The number was a limitation because it did not provide a sufficient amount of data in certain categories including direct, non-conventionally indirect strategies, certain categories of conventionally indirect strategies, perspective orientation, and certain categories of internal and external modifiers, for carrying out more meaningful statistical analyses. However, the absence of certain categories might not be so directly related to the number of participants as to the medium of responses. That is, because the prompts required formal responses in writing, the medium might have entailed less elaboration. Concerning written role play which is similar to the instrument used in the present study, Beebe and Cummings (1996:71) observe, "Written role plays bias the response towards less negotiation, less hedging, less repetition, less elaboration, less variety and less talk." Hence, a limited variety of linguistic behaviours might be a natural response to the situations. Also, we could not be entirely certain that we would obtain a different distribution of the data if we increased the number of participants.

4. Elicitation procedure

The instrument used for the present study shares many of its shortcomings with that of discourse completion tasks. Though in the construction of the situations we

attempted to anchor them to the participants' previous experience, the situational prompts were, in general, largely hypothetical with certain controlled contextual constraints. Consequently, it is possible that the responses were not representative of the requesting language used in natural discourse in which other variables not controlled in this study might have played a significant role. For example, it seems that in natural discourse where written requests has to be made for certain goals, people can more accurately relate themselves to their discourse and take considerably more time to plan it. However in elicitation, needs are forced upon them, and hence their overall sequence of discourse may be a poor reflection of their actual performance.

7.4 Implications of this study

- **Interlanguage pragmatics**

The findings of the present study have a number of implications for interlanguage pragmatics. First and foremost, the findings suggest that though the English L2 Farsi participants' use of main requesting strategies converge with those of British English native speakers, the convergence is possibly more at the main pragmalinguistic level, and not at a socio-cultural one. The lack of proportionate convergence between the strategies and their underlying motivations can be misleading in that it may give the impression that at the main level the participants are fully acculturated. But in fact they may not be acculturated. Hence, from the point view of interlanguage, it might be suggested that the rate of development of sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics is not similar. Or, in other words, the rate of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic acculturation to the norms of the target language even in the ESL context is different. The slow rate of sociopragmatic acculturation was largely attributed to L1 transfer, and their failure "to attend to a social distinction that needs to be marked linguistically" (Bialystok, 1993: 54).

The analyses of requesting sub-types and their essential and non-essential components, particularly in less formal situations, also suggested that many participants were neither pragmalinguistically nor sociopragmatically fully acculturated. Besides possibly leading to some intercultural misunderstanding, the

deviance may provide some further justifications to look again at the pragmatic competence of the English L2 participants.

- **Cross-cultural pragmatics**

Though the focus of the present study was not entirely on the pragmatics of requesting in Persian, the results of the study suggest that, unlike what is claimed in the cross-cultural pragmatics literature (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989), the conventionally indirect form is not the preferred form. Furthermore, the findings show in Persian the preferred pragmalinguistics of requesting strategies, and the overall effect of the controlled contextual constraints are different from those of English.

- **Pedagogical implications**

Based on the interlanguage pragmatics research, Nelson *et al.* (2002:164) argue that “one way to decrease instances of pragmalinguistic failure is for students to learn the pragmalinguistic aspects of the target language. These aspects cannot be taught, however, until teachers know what they are.” The findings of the present study suggest that as far as the request sequences of the English L2 Farsi participants are concerned, they are deviant from English L1 patterns both pragmalinguistically and sociopragmatically. Further, the present study makes some plausible suggestions as to the origin of the deviation. Hence, considering these dimensions language teachers may possibly be provided with some explanatory tool to better understand the deviation from L1 patterns. Concerning the dimension of pragmatic failure which was mentioned in the above quotation, it is not entirely clear that the request sequences made by non-natives necessarily result in pragmatic failure. Hence, additional research is needed.

From the point of view of teaching, knowing the interrelationship between the use of request sequences and contextual constraints may help language teachers to better appreciate the complexity between request illocutions and their underlying motivations. However, additional research is needed before language teachers can apply the present research findings in their practice.

7.5 Suggestions for further research

The findings of the present study raised some interesting issues, which need further investigation.

- In the present study, I investigated the request sequences which were formulated by English L2 Iranian participants in ESL context. It might be interesting to further the same line of research with relevant adjustments to the methodology in EFL contexts. This will be particularly interesting to see the operation of contextual constraints on the formulation of request illocutions.
- In order to investigate the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic acculturation to the L1 patterns of using request sequences, a longitudinal study of English L2 participants' request sequences in writing can be a substantial contribution to the field.
- In this study, the formulation of request sequences was not investigated in all possible variation of contextual constraints (see sub-section 3.4.4.); hence, further studies are needed to explore them. Considering the dimension of practicality, it will be more enlightening to have more than one situational prompt for each systematic variation of contextual constraint.
- In order to run inferential statistics on the sub-types of requesting strategies and other pragmalinguistic components of request illocutions, obtaining a larger sample of participants with close demographic features that also meet the underlying assumptions of the statistical procedure may well be very fruitful.
- The linguistic dimension of the instruments of the present study could be adjusted. In the present study, the English L2 participants were provided with a number of situational prompts in English. As the tasks were not pedagogical, I would suggest that instead of using English in the prompts, the participants' L1 be used. The reason for this is that using the L1 may well reduce the cognitive load in understanding the prompts, and may possibly lead the participants to better form the overall event. Also the L1 may well help avoid providing inadvertent clues that may bias the respondents' formulations. The same line of argument can be argued for the language of the metapragmatic questionnaire.

7.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter following a summary of the findings, I attempted to evaluate the present study in terms of its strengths and limitations. I also outlined the implications of the study for interlanguage, cross-cultural pragmatics, and language teaching. Considering the latter I suggested that further research is needed for the findings to be applied in teaching. Finally, based on the overall methodology, analyses of the data, and the findings of the present study, I suggested the implications for further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: The open-ended discourse production tasks (English version, first page constructed for ESL group)

Dear Colleague

This questionnaire is part of a larger research project that attempts to explore how Ph.D. candidates of different first language backgrounds construct e-mail messages. By completing this questionnaire, you help me a lot in my research. Any information you provide will remain confidential. The data will not be used for any other purposes than in our research study.

Thank you very much for accepting to take this questionnaire.

Date:.....

Participant's number:.....

Age:.....

Field of study:.....

Year of study:.....

Length of stay in Britain:

City:.....

English Language Courses taken before starting the Ph.D. program:

-
-
-

English Language Exams taken before starting the Ph.D. program:

- Exam:.....Score:.....
- Exam:.....Score:.....
- Exam:.....Score:.....

The open-ended discourse production tasks (First page constructed for the English L1 group)

Dear Colleague:

This questionnaire is part of a larger research project that attempts to explore how Ph.D. candidates of different first language backgrounds construct e-mail messages. By completing this questionnaire, you help me a lot in my research project. Any information you provide will remain confidential. The data will not be used for any other purposes than in our research study.

Thank you very much for accepting to take this questionnaire.

Date:.....

Age:.....

Field of study:.....

Year of study:.....

City:.....

Guidelines for completing the questionnaire

- There are four academic situations in this questionnaire, each requiring you to compose an email message. Please read **only one** situation at a time and try to imagine yourself in it.
- Then start composing your email message for the situation you studied on the email message composition window.
- There is no time limit to this task.

Situation 1

You are a Ph.D. student in Britain and currently you are working on your thesis. You have recently attended a conference on your area of study at the University of London. At the Conference, a well-known British professor from the University of Nottingham presented a paper that you think is relevant to your work. You know the British professor only through his publications and have seen him only once at the Conference while he was presenting his paper. However, for the purposes of your research project you want to email him a message now asking for a copy of the paper.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 2

You are a Ph.D. student in Britain supervised by a British professor. Since you started on your Ph.D. programme, you have had lots of opportunity to know each other. Also, your academic relationship is fine. Next Thursday you are scheduled to have your supervision meeting with him. However, because of an unexpected problem--you have to move into new university accommodation --you decide that you will not be able to attend the meeting. Therefore, you need to email your supervisor now asking him to re-arrange the supervision meeting.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 3

J. Robson is a senior member of clerical staff in the Higher Degrees Office at your department. But you haven't met yet. He has recently emailed a message to the department's PhD students informing them that there is going to be a workshop on Project Management next month. The workshop deals with issues including planing and organising PhD projects. However, you realise that because you had made a mistake in noting down the dates you have already missed the registration deadline for a week. You feel that you need the workshop; therefore, you are going to email a message to J. Robson in the Higher Degrees Office to ask him to register you now.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

Situation 4

Because of bad flu, you missed a class yesterday. But you know that John, your close British Ph.D. classmate who started the Ph.D. program with you a year ago, attended the class. You feel you need his lecture notes of the class to catch up with the course. Therefore, you decide to email him a message to borrow his notes for a couple of hours when you meet on Thursday. On a couple of occasions, you also shared your notes with him.

What do you think you'd write in your email message in this situation?

Thank you very much again

APPENDIX 2: Metapragmatic questionnaire (English version)

Dear colleague:

This follow-up questionnaire which is based on the first questionnaire attempts to investigate your formulation of messages and your perception of the four academic situations . Please answer frankly, Remember this is not a test; there are no 'right or 'wrong' marking. The answer required is your own personal perception. The information obtained by this questionnaire will be for research purposes only, and will remain confidential.

1.1. The following questions are about Situation 1. Please mark your options that best represent your perception.

1.1.1. Compared to yourself, how do you rate the academic status of the British professor in Situation 1?

Lower status	Same status	Slightly higher status	Higher status	Much higher status
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.1.2. When composing your request by email, were you bearing the academic status of the British professor in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.1.3., otherwise, go to Question 1.1.4.

1.1.3. To what extent do you think that the academic status of the British professor affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent		To a great extent
<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="1"/>	<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="2"/>	<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="3"/>
<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="4"/>	-----	

1.1.4. When composing your request, were you bearing in mind that you did not know the British professor personally?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.1.5., otherwise, go to Question 1.1.6.

1.1.5. To what extent do you think that not knowing the professor affected the way you composed the request?

Not to any extent		To a great extent
<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="1"/>	<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="2"/>	<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="3"/>
<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="4"/>	-----	

1.1.6. When composing your message by email, were you bearing in mind that fulfilling the request might cause the professor some inconvenience?

Yes-----
No-----
I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.1.7.

1.1.7. To what extent do you think the inconvenience that your request might cause the professor affected the way you composed the request?

Not to any extent

To a great extent

1

2

3

4



1.2. The following questions are about Situation 2. Please mark your options that best represent your perception.

1.2.1. Compared to yourself, how do you rate the academic status of the British supervisor in Situation 2?

Lower status	Same status	Slightly higher status	Higher status	Much higher status
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.2.2. When composing your request, were you bearing the academic status of the supervisor in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.2.3 , otherwise, go to Question 1.2.4.

1.2.3 To what extent do you think that the academic status of the supervisor affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent			To a great extent
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

1.2.4. When composing your request by email, were you bearing your relationship with the supervisor in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.2.6., otherwise, go to Question 1.2.7.

1.2.5. To what extent do you think that the relationship affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent			To a great extent
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

1.2.6. When composing your message, were you bearing in mind that fulfilling the request might cause your supervisor some inconvenience?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.2.8.

1.2.7. To what extent do you think the inconvenience that your request might cause the supervisor affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent

To a great extent

1

2

3

4

1.3. The following questions are about Situation 3. Please mark your options that best represent your perception.

13.1. Compared to yourself, how do you rate the academic status of the senior clerk in Situation 3?

Lower status	Same status	Slightly higher status	Higher status	Much higher status
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.3.2. When composing your request, were you bearing the status of the clerk in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.3.3, otherwise, go to Question 1.3.4.

1.3.3. To what extent do you think that his status affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent				To a great extent
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	



1.3.4. When composing your request by email, were you bearing in mind that you did not know the clerk personally?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.3.5., otherwise, go to Question 1.3.6.

1.3.5. To what extent do you think that not knowing the senior clerk affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent

To a great extent



1.3.6. When composing your message, were you bearing in mind that fulfilling the request might cause the clerk some inconvenience?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.3.7.

1.3.7. To what extent do you think that the inconvenience that your request may cause the clerk affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent

To a great extent



1.4. The following questions are about Situation 4. Please mark your options that best represent your perception.

1.4.1. Compared to yourself, how do you rate the academic status of your British friend?

Lower status	Same status	Slightly higher status	Higher status	Much higher status
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.4.2. When composing your request by email, were you bearing the academic status of your British friend in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.4.3. , otherwise, go to Question 1.4.4.

1.4.3. To what extent do you think that the academic status of your British friend affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent			To a great extent
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4



1.4.4. When composing your request, were you bearing your overall relationship with your classmate in mind?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.4.5., otherwise, go to Question 1.4.6.

1.4.5. To what extent do you think that the relationship has affected the way you composed your request?

Not to any extent

 1 2 3

To a great extent

 4

1.4.6. When composing your message, were you bearing in mind that fulfilling the request might cause your British friend some inconvenience?

Yes-----

No-----

I do not know -----

If 'Yes' go to Question 1.4.7.

1.4.7. To what extent do you think the inconvenience that the request might cause your British friend affected the way you composed the request?

Not to any extent

 1 2 3

To a great extent

 4

Thank you very much again

APPENDIX 3: The open-ended discourse production tasks (Farsi version for Farsi L1 group)

بنام خدا

همکار محترم

با سلام و احترام،

این پرسشنامه، که بخشی از پژوهش جامع تری می باشد، به بررسی ارتباطات بین زبانی می پردازد که از طریق پست الکترونیکی (email) بین دانشجویان مقطع دکتری انجام می پذیرد. شرکت شما در تکمیل این پرسشنامه کمک فراوانی به انجام این پژوهش خواهد کرد. هر نوع اطلاعاتی که از طریق این پرسشنامه گردآوری می شود، تنها در رابطه با اهداف این پژوهش خواهد بود و بهیچوجه در اختیار سایر افراد قرار نخواهد گرفت.

از مساعدت شما در تکمیل این پرسشنامه سپاسگزارم.

شماره
سن
رشته تحصیلی
مدت تحصیل

راهنمای تکمیل پرسشنامه

۱: این پرسشنامه به توصیف چهار موقعیت آکادمیکی می پردازد که هر یک از آنها مستلزم نوشتن پیامی از جانب شما می باشد. لطفاً به دقت توصیف هر موقعیت را بصورت جداگانه خوانده و از خواندن سایر موقعیت ها خوداری کنید.

۲: بعد از خواندن هر توصیف، خود را در فضای آن موقعیت فرض کنید و سپس پیام مربوطه را در صفحه email تایپ کنید.

۳: برای تکمیل این پرسشنامه محدودیت زمانی وجود ندارد. بنابراین میتوانید بعد از تکمیل هر پیام آن را اصلاح کنید.

موقعیت اول

شما در حال حاضر دانشجوی شاغل به تحصیل دوره دکتری در یکی از دانشگاه‌های ایران هستید و هم اکنون در حال انجام تز دکتری می‌باشید. اخیراً در کنفرانسی که در دانشگاه تهران در ارتباط با موضوعات تخصصی رشته تحصیلی شما برگزار شد، شرکت داشته‌اید. در این کنفرانس، استاد ایرانی شناخته شده‌ای از دانشگاه مشهد مقاله‌ای ارائه داده است که به نظرتان با پروژه تز در حال انجام شما مرتبط می‌باشد. آشنایی شما با این استاد تنها از طریق کتب و مقالات چاپ شده وی می‌باشد، و مضافاً اینکه او را برای نخستین بار در آن کنفرانس هنگام ارائه مقاله دیده‌اید. معذالک، جهت دریافت نسخه‌ای از این مقاله برای استفاده در پروژه تحقیقی خود اکنون می‌خواهید درخواستی را از طریق پست الکترونیکی برای وی ارسال دارید.

با توجه به این موقعیت، به نظرتان در این پیام چه خواهید نوشت؟

موقعیت دوم

شما در حال حاضر دانشجوی شاغل به تحصیل دوره دکتری در یکی از دانشگاه‌های ایران هستید و استاد راهنمای شما ایرانی می‌باشد. از زمان آغاز این دوره، هم برای شما و هم برای استاد راهنمای شما فرصت‌های متعددی فراهم شد که یکدیگر بشناسید. مضافاً اینکه روابط آکادمیکی شما نیز از وضعیت مناسبی برخوردار است.

طبق برنامه از قبل تعیین شده، روز پنجشنبه هفته آینده جلسه مشاوره‌ای با استاد راهنمای خود دارید. ولی به دلیل مسئله‌ای غیر مترقبه - اسباب کشی به خوابگاه جدید دانشگاه - نمی‌توانید در آن جلسه حضور بهم رسانید. بنابراین، می‌خواهید از طریق پست الکترونیکی پیامی برای وی ارسال دارید تا از او درخواست کنید که جلسه دیگری را برای شما تعیین کند.

با توجه به این موقعیت، به نظرتان در این پیام چه خواهید نوشت؟

موقعیت سوم

"پور حسین" مسئول دفتری دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی دانشکده محل تحصیل شما می‌باشد. با وجود این، شما تا کنون با وی ارتباطی نداشته‌اید. مدتی قبل، از طرف جناب پور حسین پیامی از طریق پست الکترونیکی برای دانشجویان دوره دکتری دانشکده محل تحصیل ارسال شده است مبنی بر اینکه در ماه آینده کارگاهی تحت عنوان "مدیریت پروژه" برگزار خواهد شد. این کارگاه که در ارتباط با فرایند انجام تز دوره دکتری می‌باشد به موضوعاتی از قبیل طرح و برنامه ریزی پروژه تحقیقی خواهد پرداخت. معذالک به دلیل یادداشت نادرست تاریخ ثبت نام متوجه می‌شوید که از آن تاریخ مدت یک هفته سپری شده است. آنجائیکه شرکت در این کلاس برایتان ضرورت دارد، می‌خواهید برای مسئول دفتری ارسال پیامی کنید تا از او درخواست نمائید که از شما ثبت نام بعمل آورد.

با توجه به این موقعیت، به نظرتان در این پیام چه خواهید نوشت؟

موقعیت چهارم

دیروز بخاطر سرما خوردگی شدید، قادر به شرکت در یکی از کلاسهایتان نبودید. ولی با خبرید که "حسین" هم رشته ای صمیمی شما، که تصادفاً همزمان دورهٔ دکتری را نیز سال گذشته با شما آغاز کرده است، در آن کلاس حضور داشت. از آنجائیکه یاداشتهای این درس مورد نیاز شما می باشد، می خواهید پیامی را از طریق پست الکترونیکی برای وی ارسال کنید تا در روز پنجشنبه برای مدت دو ساعت یاداشتهای آن درس از او به امانت بگیرید. او نیز در گذشته گاهی یاداشتهای شما را به امانت گرفته است.

با توجه به این موقعیت، به نظرتان در این پیام چه خواهید نوشت؟

با تشکر و سپاس فراوان

APPENDIX 4: Metapragmatic questionnaire (Farsi version)

همکار محترم

ضمن عرض تشکر و سپاس مجدد بابت شرکت در این پروژه تحقیقی

این پرسشنامه تکمیلی، که بر مبنای پرسشنامه قبلی تهیه شده است، به بررسی نظرات شما در مورد توصیف موقعیتهای آکادمیکی و به بررسی انشاء درخواستهای شما می پردازد. قبل از تکمیل این پرسشنامه، توجه شما را به این نکته جلب میکنم که هدف از اجرای این پرسشنامه ابتدا "ارزیابی سطح زبانی شما نمی باشد. لذا، در این پرسشنامه گزینه های صحیح یا نادرست وجود ندارد.

هر نوع اطلاعاتی که از طریق این پرسشنامه گردآوری میشود، تنها در رابطه با اهداف این تحقیق خواهد بود و بهیچوجه در اختیار سایر افراد قرار نخواهد گرفت.

پرسشهای ذیل در ارتباط با موقعیت اول میباشد. لطفاً بعد از خواندن هر یک از این پرسشها بهترین گزینه انتخابی را با علامت × مشخص کنید.

۱-۱: در موقعیت اول، مقام آکادمیک استاد مشروحه در مقایسه با شما در چه حدی قرار دارد؟

پائین تر

 ۱

هم سطح

 ۲

کمی بالاتر

 ۳

بالاتر

 ۴

بمراتب بالاتر

 ۵

۱-۲: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت دریافت نسخه ای از مقاله، به مقام آکادمیک استاد مشروحه موقعیت اول توجه داشتید؟

بلی.....

خیر.....

نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۱-۲>، لطفاً به پرسش ۱-۳ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۱-۴

۱-۳: به نظر شما تا چه حدی مقام آکادمیک استاد مشروحه موقعیت اول در هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی شما مؤثر بوده است؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

 ۱

 ۲

 ۳

 ۴

بسیار مؤثر بود

۱-۴: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی، به این نکته توجه داشتید که شخصاً استاد ایرانی را نمی شناختید؟

بلی.....

خیر.....

نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۱-۴>، لطفاً به پرسش ۱-۵ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۱-۶

۱-۵: به نظر شما، این امر که شخصا استاد ایرانی را نمی شناختید، تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

۱-۶: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی به این نکته توجه داشتید که انجام آن ممکن است برای استاد ایرانی اسباب زحمت باشد؟

..... بلی

..... خیر

..... نمی دانم

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۱-۶>، لطفاً به پرسش ۷-۱ پاسخ دهید،

۱-۷: به نظر شما این امر که، انجام درخواست شما ممکن است برای استاد ایرانی اسباب زحمت باشد، تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

پرسشهای ذیل در ارتباط با موقعیت دوم میباشد. لطفاً بعد از خواندن هر یک از این پرسشها بهترین گزینه انتخابی را با علامت × مشخص کنید.

۲-۱: در موقعیت دوم، مقام آکادمیک استاد راهنما در مقایسه با شما در چه حدی قرار دارد؟

- پائین تر ۱ هم سطح ۲ کمی بالاتر ۳ بالاتر ۴ بمراتب بالاتر ۵

۲-۲: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت تغییر جلسه مشاوره، به مقام آکادمیک استاد راهنما توجه داشتید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۲-۲>، لطفاً به پرسش ۳-۲ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۴-۲

۲-۳: به نظر شما تا چه حدی مقام آکادمیک استاد راهنمای شما در هنگام نوشتن پیام خواستی شما مؤثر بوده است؟

- ابداً مؤثر نبود ۱ ۲ ۳ بسیار مؤثر بود ۴

۲-۴: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی، به روابط ایجاد شده بین شما و استاد راهنمای تان توجه داشتید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۲-۴>، لطفاً به پرسش ۵-۲ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۶-۲

۲-۵: به نظر شما تا چه حدی روابط ایجاد شده بین شما و استاد راهنمای تان در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

۲-۶: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی به این نکته توجه داشتید که انجام آن ممکن است برای استاد راهنمای تان اسباب زحمت باشد؟

بلی.....

خیر.....

نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۲-۶>، لطفاً به پرسش ۲-۷ پاسخ دهید.

۲-۷: به نظر شما این امر که انجام درخواست شما ممکن است برای استاد راهنما اسباب زحمت باشد، تا چه حدی در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

پرسشهای ذیل در ارتباط با موقعیت سوّم میباشد. لطفاً بعد از خواندن هر یک از این پرسشها بهترین گزینه انتخابی را با علامت × مشخص کنید.

۳-۱: در موقعیت سوّم، مقام آکادمیک مسئول دفتری دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی در مقایسه با شما در چه حدی قرار دارد؟

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| پائین تر | هم سطح | کمی بالاتر | بالاتر | بمراتب بالاتر |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ۱ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۲ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۳ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۴ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۵ |

۳-۲: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت ثبت نام با تاخیر، به مقام آکادمیک مسئول دفتری توجه داشتید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۳-۲>، لطفاً به پرسش ۳-۳ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۳-۴

۳-۳: به نظر شما تا چه حدی مقام آکادمیک مسئول دفتری دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی در هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی شما مؤثر بوده است؟

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ابداً مؤثر نبود | | | بسیار مؤثر بود |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ۱ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۲ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۳ | <input type="checkbox"/> ۴ |

۳-۴: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی به این نکته توجه داشتید که شخصاً مسئول دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی را نمی شناختید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۳-۴>، لطفاً به پرسش ۳-۵ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۳-۶

۳-۵: به نظر شما این امر که شخصاً مسئول دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی را نمی شناختید، تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام درخواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

۳-۶: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت ثبت نام با تاخیر به این نکته توجه داشتید که انجام آن ممکن است برای مسئول دفتری اسباب زحمت باشد؟

بلی.....

خیر.....

نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۳-۶>، لطفاً به پرسش ۷-۷ پاسخ دهید،

۳-۷: به نظر شما این امر که انجام درخواست شما ممکن است برای مسئول دفتر تحصیلات تکمیلی اسباب زحمت باشد، تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام درخواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

پرسشهای ذیل در ارتباط با موقعیت چهارم میباشد. لطفاً بعد از خواندن هر یک از این پرسشها بهترین گزینه انتخابی را با علامت × مشخص کنید.

۴-۱: در موقعیت چهارم، مقام آکادمیک "حسین"، دوست هم رشته ای، در مقایسه با شما در چه حدی قرار دارد؟

- بمراتب بالاتر بالاتر کمی بالاتر هم سطح پایین تر
- ۵ ۴ ۳ ۲ ۱

۴-۲: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت به امانت گرفتن یاداشتهای کلاسی، به موقعیت مقام "حسین" توجه داشتید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۴-۲>، لطفاً به پرسش ۳-۴ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۴-۴

۴-۳: به نظر شما تا چه حدی مقام آکادمیک "حسین" در هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی شما مؤثر بوده است؟

- بسیار مؤثر بود ابدأ مؤثر نبود
- ۴ ۳ ۲ ۱

۴-۴: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی جهت به امانت گرفتن یاداشتهای کلاسی "حسین"، به رابطه خود با وی توجه داشتید؟

- بلی.....
- خیر.....
- نمی دانم.....

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۴-۴>، لطفاً به پرسش ۵-۴ پاسخ دهید، در غیر اینصورت به پرسش ۴-۶

۴-۵ به نظرتان رابطه شما با حسین تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

۴-۶: آیا به هنگام نوشتن پیام درخواستی به این نکته توجه داشتید که انجام آن ممکن است برای حسین اسباب زحمت باشد؟

..... بلی

..... خیر

..... نمی دانم

در صورت انتخاب گزینه "بلی" در پرسش <۵-۶>، لطفاً به پرسش ۷-۵ پاسخ دهید،

۴-۷: به نظر شما این امر که انجام درخواست شما ممکن است برای حسین اسباب زحمت باشد، تاچه حدی در نوشتن پیام در خواستی شما مؤثر بود؟

ابداً مؤثر نبود

بسیار مؤثر بود

APPENDIX 5: Distribution of direct sub-strategies by the IPI group by situation

Direct sub-strategy					
Situation	Mood derivable	Explicit performative	Hedged performative	Want statement	Row total
Paper	4.8 (1)*	90.5 (19)	4.8 (1)		21
Supervision	15.4 (4)	84.6 (22)	**		26
Registration	22.2 (6)	77.8 (21)			27
Borrowing	43.5 (10)	52.2 (12)		4.3 (1)	23

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category

APPENDIX 6: Distribution of internal modifiers by group and situation

Situation	Groups	Intenal modifiers		
		Politeness marker	Downtoner	Combination
Paper	IPI	0	93.3 (14)	6.7. (1)
	IPB	76.9 (10)	15.4 (2)	7.7. (1)
	BPB	100 (2)	0	0
Supervision	IPI	15.4 (2)	84.6 (11)	
	IPB	94.4 (17)	5.6 (1)	
	BPB	0	0	
Registration	IPI	14.3 (2)	78.6 (11)	7.1 (1)
	IPB	100 (18)	0	0
	BPB	100 (4)	0	0
Borrowing	IPI	22.2 (4)	72.2 (13)	5.6. (1)
	IPB	100 (15)	0	
	BPB	100 (6)	0	

*The first figure indicates the percentage of MRS. Frequencies are provided in parentheses.

**The shaded cells indicate that there are no occurrences of the relevant category