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**Investigating the Negative Pragmatic Transfer of the  
Algerian EFL Learners in the Realization of the Speech Act  
of Invitation**

**Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master Degree in  
Language Sciences (TEFL)**

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to:

My beloved mother to whom I wish long life.

My darling fiancé Souffien who's always there for me.

My big sisters Nabila, Soumia, Sarah, and the lovely Houda.

My naughtiests Rahma, Rima and Rania.

My big brothers Aissam, Abd essamad and Billal.

My humorous Hamza and Houssam.

My cousin Karima and all my relatives.

My lovely nephews Loukman and Amir.

My pretty little nieces Assil and Biba.

My best friends Sana, Hadjer, Fatiha, Ratiba, Hayat, Ahlam, Samia, Razika, Hassina, Ismahan and Wassila.

All who made it possible.

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All my sisters and brothers

My best friends, Amina, Ahlam, and Imane

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(David H. Hooker)

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the pragmatic transfer in the realization of the speech act of invitation by the Algerian university learners of English into English at the Department of Languages at Jijel University. The study aimed to find out the different strategies used by university learners of English in order to be compared to the strategies of English native speakers. Therefore, it is hypothesized that learners of different proficiency levels may exhibit pragmatic transfer in the realization of the speech act of invitation. Data are collected from 126 Algerian university learners of English and eight native speakers of English. The data in this study were collected through an open-ended discourse completion questionnaire designed to elicit the participants' invitation strategies in ten different situations. Data are divided following Wolfson's et al. (1983) taxonomy of how to give, interpret, and respond to invitations, and are analyzed in terms of the frequency and content of semantic formulas used by the participants. The results have shown that pragmatic transfer occurred in the learners' responses when making invitations. The results have also shown the reliance of all the participants on their native language and culture norms in most of their responses. However, the choice and frequency of the invitation strategies used by EFL learners has also been observed to converge to the target norms.

## **List of Abbreviations**

DCT: Discourse Completion Task

EFL: English Foreign Language

IL: Interlanguage

ILP: Interlanguage Pragmatics

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

NL: Native Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

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## **Discourse Completion Task**

### **Résumé**

ملخص الدراسة

## **General Introduction**

### **Background to the Study**

Researchers who have done investigations in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) have emphasized that the native language (NL) of the learners has a great role in acquiring the second language (L2). Hence, because second language students rely completely on their first language (L1) or their NL, they require not only the acquisition of the grammatical competence but also the pragmatic competence. The latter refers to the ability to understand the communicative function of language, to interact with speakers of other languages and to use language forms appropriately in specific contexts.

In this respect, the notion of communicative competence developed by Hymes in 1972 has led to an increasing interest in the importance of pragmatics related aspects in second language learning. "Since pragmatic competence is one of the major components of communicative competence", it is necessary to be taken into consideration. Thus, whereas linguistic competence is the knowledge required to construct well-formed sentences, pragmatic competence can be viewed as the knowledge required determining what such sentences mean in a particular context. Moreover, the notion of pragmatic competence has led to the study of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP).

Further, because speech acts differ across cultures, much attention in ILP has been devoted to speech acts realization. Non-native speakers performing certain acts in the target language may encounter communication breakdown. Thus, interlocutors from different cultures are likely to fall in communication breakdown. Thus, the influence that previous pragmatic knowledge has on the use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge leads to pragmatic transfer.

Pragmatic transfer refers to the imposition of one's language pragmatic rules on his/her communicative behaviour situations where the pragmatic rules of another culture would be more appropriate. Therefore, many studies have been carried out in order to explain pragmatic transfer in different speech acts such as refusals, requests, apologies, complaints, disagreements, and invitations. For example, disagreements (Farnia, Sohrabie, & Musurra, 2009), refusals (Beckers, 1999; Chen, 1996; Nelson, Carson, Al Batal, & El Bakary, 2002; Al Kahtani, 2005; Yamagashira, 2001), apologies (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Fraser, 1981; Goffman, 1971; Leech, 1983), and requests (Syahri & Kadarisman, 2007).

As far as the study of invitations is concerned, work on invitations has been mainly the focus of those who sought to study native speaker's lack of recognition of their own speech patterns. Thus, invitations are usually viewed as arrangements for a social commitment. Most cross-cultural studies focus on invitations as realized in different languages. For example, Clancy (1990) explores invitations in Japan. He states that in conversations between Japanese mothers and their children, mothers try to teach their children to read behind polite statements of other people. Through this kind of conversation practice, Japanese children gradually acquire the intended meanings of indirect speech.

Barron (2000) also studies invitations and refusals in an Irish/German context. He has found that realizations of invitations and refusals of invitations cause difficulty for Irish learners of German due to the presence of ritual refusals in Irish native speakers' (NS) realizations, and their absence from German NS realizations. Another scholar, Izadi (2012), explores a specific kind of refusals to ostensible offers and invitations in Persian language. The findings of the study highlight a very important fact that non-native speakers of Persian must be aware of these ostensible acts in Persian while communicating with Persian speakers.

Moreover, Bella (2009) investigates invitations and invitation refusals in Greek and their relationship to politeness within Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework. It is shown that the younger age group conceptualize invitations as face-enhancing acts for the addressee, thus, they insist more and prefer positive politeness strategies. By contrast, the older age group conceptualize invitations as addressee face-threatening acts, so they hardly ever insist and appear to favour negative politeness strategies.

Furthermore, the study of invitations in Polish and English examined by Rakowicz (2009) reveals that some Polish participants perceive the ambiguous invitations as concrete, and there is evidence of pragmatic transfer from Polish to English with similar L1 and L2 realization patterns in terms of strategy use and the volume of production. Eslami (2005) also explores invitations in American English and Persian. The study examines the intercultural differences in the realization of patterns of invitations in relation to the politeness theory. Findings of Eslami's (2005) study reveal that the structures of ostensible invitations in Persian are more complex than in English. The features of ostensible invitation in English are not sufficient to distinguish between ostensible and genuine invitations in Persian.

However, Scholars conducted few studies on invitations in Arabic, thus, there were very scant studies on the realization of invitations by Arab learners of English. Abdul Sattar et al. (2010) examine intercultural communication of the speech act of accepting and refusing an invitation between Iraqi and Malaysian postgraduates at the University Sains Malaysia (USM). The study has aimed at finding out the preferred semantic formulas or the appropriate strategies used in accepting and refusing an invitation.

Following from Wolfson's (1981) general descriptive analysis of American English oral invitations, Salih (1996) conducts a sociopragmatic analysis of oral invitation formulae and



responses to show the similarities and dissimilarities between American English (AE) and Jordanian Arabic (JA). Salih states that due to religious references in JA, and certain socio-cultural norms in AE and JA, inviters might use particular formulae or linguistic elements in their invitations that do not have any corresponding equivalents in the other language.

Al-Khatib (2006) also provides a detailed analysis of the pragmatic devices which are employed by Jordanian people in inviting, accepting an invitation and/or declining it. Several aspects of the many strategies are highlighted and approached from a sociopragmatic perspective. The analysis has shown that the interactional strategies utilized by Jordanian people for the purposes of inviting, accepting an invitation and rejecting it are culturally shaped by interactive elements and that could be understood and appreciated by people sharing the same cultural background. To the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted so far in the Algerian context to investigate the realization of the speech act of invitation by university learners of English. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap and contribute to the body of the existing research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Algerian learners of English are usually unaware of the socio-cultural differences that may exist between their L1 and the TL they are learning. Consequently, the strategies they use in different communication encounters result in serious misunderstanding. Thus, an Algerian learner is likely to make an invitation in English following his/her NL norms. This is sufficient evidence for the occurrence of pragmatic transfer. Invitations are interesting speech acts to investigate across cultures because failure to write or make an invitation appropriately impedes the invitee to do something or to take a particular action. This is particularly true of L2 learners with limited linguistic competence and

unawareness of the target socio-cultural norms. They are more likely to transfer their native norms to perform face-threatening acts like invitations

English foreign language (EFL) learners encounter difficulties in conducting conversations with speakers of different socio-cultural backgrounds because even though they can understand the utterances by native speakers after some years of learning, they seem to produce what is more likely to resemble their NL than the TL. This study, therefore, represents an attempt to highlight the nature of the pragmatic transfer learners are likely to make.

### **Aim of the Study**

The present study aims to investigate the strategies used by Algerian learners of English while performing the speech act of inviting and search for evidence of pragmatic transfer in the invitation strategies used by the learners. That is, it aims to investigate how Algerian EFL learners realize the speech act of invitation in English and how their performance is compared to native speakers of English. So as to raise the teachers' awareness of the importance of teaching pragmatics in L2 classes and to design appropriate methodology which would hopefully help increase the learners' awareness of the socio-pragmatic rules inherent to formal interactions with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

### **Research Questions**

The present study examines the strategies used by Algerian university learners of English and investigates their pragmatic transfer through the analysis of the realizations of the speech act of invitation. It addresses the following questions:

1. What are the invitation strategies adopted by the Algerian university learners of English?

2. Is there a difference between the strategies adopted by EFL learners and native speakers?
3. Do university students of English negatively transfer the social pragmatic norms of their native language and culture while inviting in English?

### **Hypothesis**

The general hypothesis that has directed this study is:

Invitations are usually difficult to perform in a written way. The Algerian learners of English at different university levels are likely to display pragmatic transfer in the realization of the speech act of invitation.

### **Methodology**

Studies on cross-cultural pragmatic transfer fall in two broad categories: qualitative and quantitative. As far as the present study is concerned, the data collected for this study will be analysed through a mix of the two types of analytical approaches; quantitative and qualitative. This will involve the collection of data from a considerable number of learners, the data obtained are analysed and interpreted statistically.

With regard to the research instrument, a discourse completion task (DCT) will be used. It is a production questionnaire consisting of ten situations. Each situation describes the context and social status of the interlocutors. The situations require the respondents to write four invitations to different invitees of a high status, other four invitations to those of an equal status, and two invitations to those of lower status. The learners' responses are classified according to the taxonomy of invitations developed by Wolfson, et al. (1983). Data are analysed in terms of the frequency and content of semantic formulas. The learners' responses are compared to the English native speakers' responses to identify

pragmatic transfer in the choice of semantic formulas. The participants, in this study, are Algerian learners of English from different levels (first, second, and third year students) at the Department of Languages at Jijel University.

### **Structure of the Dissertation**

This study comprises five chapters. The first chapter discusses different definitions of pragmatics in addition to some related issues. It also highlights the theoretical background of communicative competence, types of competences, the theory of speech act and its classification. The second chapter discusses the relevant literature on interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), the notion of pragmatic transfer and its types. It also presents the notion of pragmatic failure in addition to the speech act of invitation and some related studies. The third chapter describes the methodology of the study including the research instrument, its types, advantages and disadvantages in addition to the analysis procedure. The fourth chapter is devoted to the qualitative analysis of the results and discussion of the content of semantic formulas and the last chapter presents the quantitative analysis of the frequency of semantic formulas used by the participants.

## **Chapter One: An Overview in the Field of Pragmatics**

### Introduction

#### 1.1. Defining Pragmatics

#### 1.2. Related Issues

##### 1.2.1. Presupposition and Entailment

##### 1.2.2. Deixis

##### 1.2.3. Reference and Inference

#### 1.3. Culture

#### 1.4. Theoretical Background of Communicative Competence

#### 1.5. Types of Competences

##### 1.5.1. Grammatical Competence

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#### 1.6. Pragmatic Competence

#### 1.7. Speech Acts

##### 1.7.1. The Speech Act Theory

##### 1.7.2. Performatives

##### 1.7.3. Speech Act Classification

1.7.4. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Conclusion

## **Chapter One: An Overview in the Field of Pragmatics**

### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on a broad definition of pragmatics in addition to some related issues. It also provides a theoretical background of communicative competence in addition to the four types of competences (grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence) and the concept of pragmatic competence. Within the scope of this chapter, speech act theory, which is one of the major areas of pragmatics, and its classifications are also highlighted and clearly presented.

### **1.1. Defining Pragmatics**

Communication in society happens mainly through the use of language. However, the users of that language communicate and use language on society's premises; society controls their access to the way humans use their language in communication bases on those premises and determines how they affect human use of language, hence, Pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society (Mey, 1993). Moreover, according to Mey (1991), there are many single utterances that can have a variety of meanings according to the context in which they occur. Utterances like these provide evidence that speakers mean more than they say. Thus, as Mey (1991) indicated, pragmatics can be referred to as "the art of the analysis of the unsaid" (Mey, 1991, p. 245).

Additionally, Yule (1996) introduced pragmatics in four different definitions: pragmatics as "the study of speaker meaning," (p. 3), this first definition of pragmatics means that pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the listener. Pragmatics' second definition according to Yule is "the study of contextual meaning," this definition involved interpretation of what people

mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. Moreover, pragmatics is “the study of how more gets communicated than is said,” this definition explores how great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated (ibid.). Pragmatics is also “the study of the expression of relative distance,” from this definition one can understand that from the assumption of how close and distant the listener is, speakers can determine how much needs to be said (ibid.).

Furthermore, pragmatics distinguishes two intents or meanings in each utterance or communicative act of verbal communication. One is the informative intent to the sentence meaning, and the other is the communicative intent or speaker meaning (Leech, 1993; Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Thus, pragmatics is a study which explains language use in context and is concerned with speaker meaning and not utterance meaning; seeks to explain social language interaction). In this respect, pragmatics may also be described as “the study of the meaning of linguistic utterances for their users and interpreters” (Leech & Thomas, 1985, p. 173).

Not only that, Leech (1983) suggested that pragmatics can be divided into two components: *pragmalinguistics* which concerns appropriateness of form, and *sociopragmatics* which concerns appropriateness of meaning in social context. Leech also (1983, p. 10) used the term *sociopragmatics* to refer to the “sociological interface of pragmatics.” In other words, *sociopragmatics* is the study of the way in which conditions on language use derive from the social situation. Pragmatics, according to Leech (1983), can be mainly defined as the study of how utterances have meanings in situations. Through this definition, Leech (1983) clearly shows the differences between semantics, syntax, and pragmatics. He is trying to say that sentences are for syntax, while utterances are for pragmatics and that sentence meanings free from situations are for semantics, while utterance meanings bound with situations are for pragmatics. To sum up, it can be stated



that pragmatics is the study of the language users' ability to pair sentences in the contexts in which they would be appropriate (Levinson, 1983). In other words, pragmatics main focus had been on an area between semantics, sociolinguistics, and extra-linguistic context.

## **1.2. Related Issues**

### **1.2.1 Presupposition and Entailment**

According to Gazdar (1979), presupposition is identified as potential presupposition and sets of presupposition that are assigned to sentences in a completely mechanical way, they are what the presupposition would be if there is no ambiguity in negative sentences and no context sensitivity. As he stated, a compound sentence has all presuppositions of its components, but may not presuppose all its presuppositions. In other words, even if a given sentence can never presuppose all of its presuppositions, this fact makes the assignment of that presupposition to the sentence incorrect, this means also that presuppositions are entities whose only role is a technical one in the process of assigning actual presuppositions to utterances (Gazdar, 1979).

Stalnaker (1970) introduces the concept of pragmatic presupposition as one of the major factors of context. He defines pragmatic presupposition in the following way (Atlas, 2006, p. 33):

To presuppose a proposition in the pragmatic sense is to take its truth for granted, and to presume that others involved in the context do the same. This does not imply that the person need have any particular mental attitudes toward the proposition, or that he needs assume anything about the mental attitudes of others in the context. Presuppositions are probably best viewed as complex dispositions which are manifested in linguistic behaviour. One has presuppositions in virtue of the statements he makes, the questions he asks, the commands he issues.

Presuppositions are propositions implicitly ‘supposed’ before the relevant linguistic business is transacted.

Stalnaker’s definition clearly asserts that a speaker’s assumption of a certain proposition should be shared by his/her audience as well. Presuppositions, according to him, are what the speakers assume to be the common background for the participants in the context. If there is no background knowledge which the speaker or writer presupposes to be the case, this results in a failure of presupposition. Thus, because these presuppositions are not linguistically in nature, they are the felicity conditions that must be met for the utterance to be appropriate.

According to Karttunen (1974), a surface sentence A pragmatically presupposes a logical form B, if it is the case that A can be felicitously uttered only in contexts which entails B. Taking the example ‘even Kim left’, in this example, one asserts that Kim left while presupposing that others left and that Kim was unlikely to have left. Such presuppositions can be communicated as new information by a speaker who tells his auditor something by pretending that his auditor already knows it (Stalnaker, 1974).

In brief, presupposition is a restriction on the common ground; the set of propositions constituting the current context. Its failure or non-satisfaction results are not in truth value gaps or non-bivalence but in the inappropriateness of a given utterance in a given context (Stalnaker, 1974, Karttunen, 1974). Besides, to presuppose something means to assume it. In other words, if P (the presupposing sentence) is true, then Q (the presupposed sentence) is true, and if P is false, then Q is still true, and if Q is true, P could be either true or false. From this, one can easily capture the difference between entailment and presupposition; when negating entailing sentences, the entailment falls, but negating presupposing sentences allows the presupposition to survive (John, 1987).

### **1.2.2. Deixis**

Deixis is a technical term for one of the most basic things we do with utterances. It means ‘pointing’ (a Greek word) via language (Yule, 1996). That is, indicating by means of language. The linguistic forms of this pointing are called deictic expressions and sometimes also called indexicals or indexical signs. These indexicals are grammatical markers which tied directly of the circumstances of utterances (Levinson, 1983). Deixis, according to Levinson (2006, p. 100), is “the study of deictic or indexical expressions in language like you, now, today.” These deictic expressions are generally regarded as encoding the spatiotemporal context and subjective experience of the encoder in an utterance (Green, 2006). Therefore, the interpretation of these indexicals requires speaker and hearer sharing the same context, and also requires their use to be in face to face interaction, with the basic distinction between these deictic words being ‘near speaker’, or proximal terms, ‘this’, ‘here’, and ‘now’, and being ‘away from speaker’, or distal terms, ‘that’, ‘there’, and ‘then’ (Yule, 1996).

Deictic expressions are of three categories, they are used to point people via person deixis (‘me’, ‘you’), location via spatial deixis (‘here’, ‘there’), or time via temporal deixis (‘now’, ‘then’) (Yule, 1996). Moreover, as Levinson (1995) pointed out, there are five types of deixis: spatial, temporal, person, social and discourse deixis (spatial, temporal, and person deixis are the more common). Finally, deixis is clearly tied to the speaker’s context; it is implied to a word which specifies an identity or a temporal or a spatial location from the perception of a speaker or a listener in the circumstances in which the communication takes place (Yule, 1996).

### **1.2.3. Reference and Inference**

Yule defined reference as “an act by which a speaker, or writer uses language to enable a listener, or reader to identify something”(1996, p. 17). The linguistic forms used to identify this something are called referring expressions. Referring expressions can be proper nouns like ‘Brasilia’ or ‘Bill Clinton’, noun phrases which are definite like ‘the city’ or ‘the Ex-president’, noun phrases which are indefinite like ‘a place’ or ‘a man’, and they can also be pronouns like ‘it’ or ‘he, him’. The choice of a type of these referring expressions rather than another based mainly on what the speaker assumes the listener already knows (Yule, 1996).

Additionally, according to Strawson (1950), referring is not what an expression does, but it is something that someone can use an expression to do. In other words, almost any referring expression, whether an indexical, demonstrative, proper name, or definite description, can be used to refer to different things in different contexts. Strawson (1950) also went on to argue that what refers are speakers and not expressions, that is, what varies from context to context is not what a given expression refers to, but what a speaker uses it to refer to; referring expressions do not themselves refer, speakers use them to refer. Moreover, the concept of reference is tied to the speaker’s goals (for example, to identify something) and the speaker’s beliefs (for example, can the listener be expected to know that particular something?) in the use of language (Yule, 1996). Furthermore, reference is based on some locally successful choice of expression, thus, successful reference is necessarily collaborative, means that the speaker and the listener have the role of thinking about what the other has in mind (ibid.). Briefly, reference is not simply a relationship between the meaning of a word or phrase and an object or person in the world; it is a social act in which the speaker assumes that the word or phrase chosen to identify an object or person will be interpreted as the speaker intended.

However, for successful reference to occur, the role of inference must also be recognized (Yule, 1996). To start with, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000, p. 20) stated that:

Pragmatics also explores how listeners and readers can make inferences about what is said or written in order to arrive at an interpretation of the users intended meaning. Obviously, the emphasis in this kind of exploration must be placed not only on what is actually said but also on what is not being said explicitly but recognized implicitly as part of the communicative exchange, such as presupposition, implication, shared knowledge, and circumstantial evidence.

Therefore, the task of the learner is to infer the correct entity that the speaker intends to identify by using a particular referring expression because there is no direct relationship between entities and words or phrases (Yule, 1996). Moreover, to refer to some entity or person, one has to know exactly which name would be the best word to use. Vague expressions can even be used (for example, ‘the blue thing’, ‘that icky stuff’, ‘the thingamajig’), relying on the ability of the listener to infer what referent one has in mind (ibid.). Inference, then, is “any additional information used by the listener to connect what is said to what must be meant” (ibid., p. 116).

### **1.3. Culture**

Nowadays linguistic competence does not guarantee a successful communication, thus, it is an obligatory for L1 learners to master the cultural norms of the L2. the concept of culture, however, is very difficult to define. Despite the difficulty in defining culture, Schein (1992, p. 10) proposed a clarification of what culture means, “Culture somehow implies that rituals, climate, values, and behaviours bind together into a coherent whole.

This patterning or integration is the essence of what ‘culture’ means.” Schein (1992, p. 12) again offered a formal definition of culture:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems.

In other words, culture is built up through its continuing enhancement of an organization’s ability to deal with its problems in a way that fixes its identity. While culture is a systematic phenomenon, its primary architects are those at the very top (ibid.). In addition, understanding the nature of the relationship between language and culture is central to the process of learning another language, thus, learning to communicate in a foreign language involves developing an awareness of the ways in which culture interrelates with language whenever it is used (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino, and Kohler, 2003). Similarly, Brooks (1964) argued that language is the most advanced element of culture. According to him, culture is the sum of all the learned and shared elements and knowledge that characterize a social group.

Furthermore, cultural studies are included in the process of effective teaching a foreign language, thus, Byram and Morgan (1994), in their study on English language teaching students (ELT), mentioned that students can notably benefit from culture classes in order to develop their language skills, cultural awareness and views towards native and target nations. In other words, in learning another language, students are exposed to learn something about other societies and their cultural practices. Not only that, in his article on German culture teaching, Brockman (2009) argued that the goal of culture teaching should be to familiarize students with the target culture.

#### **1.4. Theoretical Background of Communicative Competence**

The term 'competence' is firstly proposed by Chomsky in the 1960s. Chomsky (1965) made a distinction between 'grammatical competence' and 'performance'. According to him, the former is the linguistic knowledge of the idealized native speaker; an innate biological function of the mind that allows individuals to generate the infinite set of grammatical sentences that constitutes their language, while the latter is the actual use of language in concrete situations. Moreover, he argued that the underlying knowledge of the grammar of the language by the native speaker is his 'linguistic competence'.

However, according to Hymes (1972), who was among those scholars who criticize Chomsky's ideas, Chomsky's linguistic competence lacks consideration of the most important linguistic ability of being able to produce and comprehend utterances which are appropriate to the context in which they are produced. Hymes also added that the competence that native speakers of a language possess must include their ability to handle linguistic variation and the various uses of language in context. Moreover, he considered Chomsky's idealized notion of linguistic competence inadequate and he introduced the broader and more elaborated concept of communicative competence. According to Him, communicative competence includes both linguistic competence, or implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar, and sociolinguistic competence, or contextual knowledge of the rules of language use in context.

After Hymes (1972), the concept of communicative competence continues to develop. A generally accepted definition begins with the idea that communicative competence entails knowing not only the language code or the form of language, but also what to say, to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation (Bachman, 1990). In addition, communicative competence deals with the social and cultural knowledge that the

speakers are presumed to have which enables them to use and interpret linguistic forms (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986).

Nevertheless, it was Canale and Swain (1980) who defined communicative competence in the context of second language teaching. Their view of communicative competence is as a synthesis of knowledge of basic principles of grammar, knowledge of the use of language in social settings to perform communicative functions according to the principles of discourse. Accordingly, Canale and Swain (1980) explained Hymes' four types of communicative competence in the following way: the first type 'what is formally possible' is the interaction of grammatical system of competence. The second type 'what is feasible' is the psycholinguistic system of competence. The third type 'what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance' is the sociocultural system of competence. And the last type, according to them, 'what actually occurs' is the probabilistic rules of occurrence that something is in fact done, actually performed.

Finally, it is necessary to talk about the latest and most comprehensive model of communicative language ability that Bachman (1990) introduced. This model, according to Bachman (1990) composes of three components: the first component is language competence which means a set of specific knowledge components that are utilized in communication via language and which is further subdivided into two parts, organisational competence which contains the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology, and pragmatic competence which intends to capture the speaker's or writer's ability to achieve his or her communicative intentions through language. The second component of communicative competence is the strategic competence which is, according to him, the mental ability for implementing the components of language competence in contextualized communicative language use. And the third component introduced by



Bachman is psycho-physiological mechanisms which is the neurological and physiological processes involved in the actual execution of language as a physical phenomenon.

## **1.5. Types of Competences**

### **1.5.1. Grammatical Competence**

Grammatical competence is one of the four areas of the communicative competence theory put forward by Canale and Swain (Gao, 2001). It focuses on the command of the language code, including such things as the rules of word and sentence formation, meanings, spelling and pronunciation (*ibid.*). In other words, grammatical competence is associated with expertise in the grammatical codes of a language and it is concerned with the knowledge and skills required to understand and express the literal meaning of utterances. That is to say, grammatical competence entails knowledge of phonology, orthography, vocabulary, structure, word formation and sentence formation, etc. (Canale & Swain, 1980).

To sum up, it is very important to note the goal of the grammatical competence. Its aim, as indicated by Diaz-Rico and Weed (2010) and Gao (2001), is to acquire knowledge of, and ability to use, forms of expression that are grammatically correct and accurate. It also acts to promote accuracy and fluency in SL production (Gao, 2001), and increases in importance as the learner advances in proficiency (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2010).

### **1.5.2. Discourse Competence**

Discourse competence is a component of communicative competence. Canale and Swain defined it (1980) as an ability to make larger patterns of stretches of discourse into meaningful wholes. In other words, discourse competence refers to the logical connection of sentences in larger patterns for a meaningful discourse (spoken or written). This type of

competence is considered as a complement of grammatical competence, “it attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause and larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts” (Stubbs, 1983, p. 1). Similarly, Schachter (1990) said that discursal knowledge clearly involves both cultural conventions and appropriate grammatical choices. Hence, discourse competence is connected with grammatical competence and also overlaps with sociolinguistic competence. Finally, it may be concluded that discourse competence is the logical connection of sentences into meaningful wholes in a given social context. But, discourse cannot be understood without studying both aspects of discourse; spoken and written discourse (cohesion).

### **1.5.3. Sociolinguistic Competence**

Sociolinguistic competence is an integral part of communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980) defined it simply as knowing and understanding how to speak given the circumstances you are in. Sociolinguistic competence, according to them, is an essential part of effective communication, that is, when someone speaks in his NL, he does not have to think about who he is talking to, or how he should say something, his words typically come naturally and he does not even realize all the complexities that go into the process of communication.

On the other hand, SL learners must learn how to produce and understand language in different sociolinguistic contexts, taking into consideration such factors as the status of participants, the purposes of interactions, and the norms or conventions of interactions (Canale & Swain, 1980). In other words, the learners should have the ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts, according to sociocultural rules. Similarly, Savignon stated that “this type of competence requires an understanding of the

social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. Only in a full context of this kind can judgements be made on the appropriateness of a particular utterance” (1983, p. 37). Briefly, sociolinguistic competence refers to the learning of pragmatic aspect of various speech acts, namely, the cultural values, norms, and other sociocultural conventions in social contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980).

#### **1.5.4. Strategic Competence**

Strategic competence is another component of communicative competence and it was defined by Canale and Swain as “verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (1980, p.30). In other words, strategic competence refers to the ability to get one’s meaning across successfully to communicative partners, especially when problems arise in the communication process. Moreover, strategic competence along with grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence constitute a framework for determining a language learner’s proficiency in communication (Canale & Swain,1980). In addition, Brown (1987) believed that all communicative proficiency arises out of a person’s strategic competence, as it is the way that participants manipulate language in order to meet everyday communicative goals. In short, strategic competence is a set of general abilities that utilise all of the elements of language competence in the process of negotiating meaning or in the determination of an individual’s language (Bachman, 1990).

#### **1.6. Pragmatic Competence**

In fact, pragmatic competence is an important component of communicative competence (Lihui & Jianbin, 2010). It refers, according to Kasper (2001), to the

acquisition of pragmatic knowledge and to gaining automatic control in processing it in real time. Pragmatic competence is defined by Fraser (1983, p. 29) as “the knowledge how an addressee determines what a speaker is saying and recognizes intended illocutionary force conveyed through subtle attitudes in the speaker’s utterance.” Pragmatic competence is also defined as “the knowledge of how to use the linguistic competence in a social context”(Fraser, et al., 1980, p. 76). In other words, whereas linguistic competence can be viewed as the knowledge required to construct or understand well-formed sentences of the language, pragmatic competence can be viewed as the knowledge required to determine what such sentences mean when they are spoken in a certain way in a particular context.

Therefore, for Bialystok (1993), acquiring pragmatic competence requires language learners to have the ability to make use of different language functions, the ability to understand the speaker’s underlying intention, and the ability to modify the speech according to contexts. Canale and Swain (1980), further, included pragmatic competence as one important component of their model of communicative competence. In this model, pragmatic competence was identified as sociolinguistic competence and defined as the knowledge of contextually appropriate language use (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983). Later on, Canale expanded this definition and stated that pragmatic competence includes “illocutionary competence, or the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, or the knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions appropriately in a given context” (1988, p. 90).

These components were taken up again in Bachman’s model of language competence (1990), in which he stated that pragmatic competence subdivides into illocutionary competence which is the ability to express and understand the illocutionary force of language functions and which is the ability to use the language to achieve certain

objectives, that is to say, the knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out, and sociolinguistic competence which is the ability to use language appropriately according to the context, that is, to make contextually appropriate utterances. To sum up, it can be understood that pragmatic competence is a communication of the linguistic and social aspects of the language in which people need to be competent and realize success in communication.

### **1.7. Speech Acts**

It has been assumed that the function of 'statement' can only be to describe some state of affairs, or to state some fact, on the other hand, it has been pointed out that not all 'sentences' are used in making statements but also there could be questions, exclamations, and sentences expressing commands or wishes or concessions. This cannot be denied, despite some miss use of 'sentence' for 'statement'. It is commonly known that many utterances which look like statements are either not intended at all, or intended in part, and many specially perplexing words embedded in seemingly descriptive statements do not indicate the circumstances in which the statement is made or the way in which it is to be taken and the like. Many traditional philosophical perplexities have arisen through the mistake of taking simple statements of fact utterances which are either non-sensical or else intended as something quite different (Austin, 1962).

Ninio and Snow (1988) indicated that the starting point for communication speech is when the speaker has an intention of carrying out some social communicative act which he performs through verbal means. The overtly communicative act is intended by the speaker to be interpreted by the hearer as performing that act desired by the speaker. This means that what is intended by the speaker is expected to be likewise decoded by the receiver. Such intentions of language are classified as speech acts.

The term of ‘speech act’ has been used by Crystal (1992) to refer to a communicative activity defined with reference to the intentions of a speaker while speaking and the effects achieved on a listener. Forms of language generally serve specific communicative functions; a question like ‘how much time will take?’ is usually a form functioning as a question. A question, however, can function as a request, for instance, the question ‘can you shut the door?’ functions as a request for action; this explains the fact that linguistic forms are not always clear in their functions. Take the following sentence uttered by a father who is late for his work ‘I can’t find my keys!’, this utterance may possibly be frantic request for all the people in the house to help him find his car keys (ibid.).

Communication is usually regarded as the combination of speech acts, a series of elements with purpose and intent. A good number of characteristics have been proposed for communication to be presented as purposive, functional, and designed to bring about some effect on the environment of hearers and speakers. According to Crystal (1992), “communication is the transmission and reception of information between a signaler and a receiver” (p. 72). In other words, it is the exchange of ideas, information, etc. between two or more persons.

Speech acts have traditionally been viewed as one of the major areas of pragmatic studies (Levinson, 1983), and importantly, the major dominant area of pragmatics in SLA research. In this regard, Olshtain and Cohen (1991, p. 155) noted that:

It seems that every language develops a set of patterned, routinized utterances that speakers use regularly to perform a variety of functions, such as apologies, requests, complaints, refusals, compliments, and others. By using a routinized utterance of this kind, the speaker carries out an act with respect to the hearer.

### **1.7.1. The Speech Act Theory**

Speech act theory has been known as one of the core issues of modern pragmatics, since it was initiated particularly by the Oxford philosopher, Austin (1962) and expanded by his student Searle (1970). Any attempt at understanding what is meant by the so-called speech act theory would be a failure unless one distinguishes between ‘speech situation’, ‘speech event’, and ‘speech act’. The most useful distinction between the three terms has been proposed by Hymes (1972). Within a community one finds many situations associated with speech, such as meals, parties... these situations, however, are not in themselves governed by consistent rules throughout. Consequently, a simple relabeling of them in terms of speech will not do much. It is, therefore, more useful to restrict the term ‘speech event’ to activities that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech. Samples of conversations occurring in such activities as private conversations, class lectures, etc. belong to this category. ‘Speech acts’, in narrower sense, are the minimal terms of the set which functions as a functional unit in communication. Speech acts are conditioned by rules of conduct and interpretation. Acts such as giving report, making promises, apologizing belong to this category (Hymes, 1972).

Austin (1962) defined speech acts as acts performed by utterances like giving orders or making promises. He proposed a set of simultaneous types of acts; locutionary act which is the physical uttering of a statement, illocutionary act which is the contextual function of the act, and the perlocutionary act which is the impact of the first speaker’s utterance on the listener. Whenever speakers produce an utterance, they perform locutionary act. Besides, people usually do not make utterances without having any purpose. At dinner for example, ‘can you pass me the salt?’ the speaker does not only utter that sentence to ask a question but also intends the listener to pass the salt. The intended meaning is a request, this kind of act via utterances which speakers produce with communicative purpose in

mind is generally known as an illocutionary act, i.e. the communicative purpose that is intended or achieved by the utterance.

Another example is the statement 'it is cold in here'; this sentence can have the illocutionary force of a statement, an offer, an explanation, or a request. It might be uttered by someone who is experiencing cold in a room and just comment on the weather. It can also be uttered by a person who intends to close the windows so that everyone in the room feels warmer. Perlocutionary acts occur when speakers want a speech act to have an effect when they utter that statement. When saying 'can you pass the salt?' the speaker wishes the act of passing the salt to be performed; this is its perlocutionary force (Austin, 1962).

Any account of speech act theory should never overlook the so-called felicity conditions. According to Austin (1963) the term felicity conditions refer to the criteria which must be satisfied if a speech act is to achieve its purpose. In other words, for a speech act to be appropriately performed or realized, there are some conventions. These are referred to as felicity conditions or the so-called social conventions. The speakers and listeners should heed these conditions to guarantee the achievement of the purpose for which any given speech act is performed. Several types of felicity conditions have been suggested. The first type is preparatory conditions which are related to whether the person performing a speech act has the authority to do so, the second is sincerity conditions related to the degree of sincerity with which a speech act is performed, and finally essential conditions which are related to the way the speaker has performed a speech act, is committed to a certain kind of belief or behavior (Searle, 1981).

Speakers of a language, however, may sometimes fail to commit the felicity conditions of an utterance for one purpose or another. According to Lyons (1977), the utterance 'will you drive?' is inappropriate as a request if the speaker knows that the hearer has not learnt



to drive, and the mutual recognitions of such inappropriateness would, in turn, lead to an interpretation of different order (e.g. joking, sarcasm, etc.). Such utterances are referred to as infelicitous (Austin, 1962).

### **1.7.2. Performatives**

Austin (1962) introduced basic terms and areas to study, he also came up with a new category of utterances called performatives. Performatives are historically the first speech acts to be examined within the theory of speech act. Austin defined a performative as an utterance which contains a special type of verb (performative verb) by force of which it performs an action. In other words, in using a performative, a person is not just saying something but is actually doing something. Austin further stated that a performative, unlike a constative, cannot be true or false (it can only be felicitous or infelicitous) and it cannot describe, report or constate anything. He also claimed that from the grammatical point of view, a performative is a first person indicative active sentence in the same simple present tense. This criterion is ambiguous that is why, in order to distinguish the performative use from other possible uses of first person indicative active pattern, Austin introduced a ‘hereby’ test since he found out that performative verbs can only collocate with this adverb.

- a. I hereby resign from the post of the president of the Czech Republic
- b. I hereby get up at seven o’clock in the morning every day

While the first sentence would make sense under specific conditions, uttering the second would be rather strange. From this it follows that (a) is a performative, (b) is not. In connection with felicity conditions as well, Austin later realizes that the category of performatives and constatives is not sufficient and, thus, in an attempt to replace it by a general theory of speech acts, he “isolates three basic senses in which in saying something,

and hence three kinds of acts that are simultaneously performed the locutionary, illocutionary and Perlocutionary acts” (cited in Levinson, 1983, p. 236).

### **1.7.3. Speech Act Classification**

Austin (1962) classified illocutionary acts into five types; verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives. Although it is often argued that Austin’s classification is not complete and those coined categories are not mutually exclusive, Austin’s classification is best seen as an attempt to give a general picture of illocutionary acts. The types of illocutionary act one can generally perform in uttering a sentence are as follows: one can exercise judgment (verdictives), exert influence or exercise power (exercitives), assume obligation or declare intention (commissives), adopt attitude, or express feeling (behabitives), and clarify reasons, argument, or communication (expositive).

The long list of illocutionary verbs in each class also illustrates how many subtly differentiated illocutionary acts exist in a language like English. Austin (1962) included the same word in two different classes but he did not regard it as a problem as he did not mind to which class a particular illocutionary verb/act actually belongs. The importance of introducing this classification of illocutionary acts is rather to explicate, as it was explained above, what type of illocutionary act one can generally perform by uttering a sentence; and, with additional specifications, how much more diversified illocutionary acts are then we are usually aware of. The purpose of the classification of illocutionary acts, if interpreted in this manner, is compatible with Austin’s beliefs as a major proponent of ordinary language philosophy. When Austin’s speech act theory is approached from this angle, it highlights some important issues addressed by Austin that still remains virtually

untackled. Generally speaking, the speech act theorists after Austin focus on explaining illocutionary acts in a narrow sense.

Searle (1976, 1979) took exceptions to Austin's original classification. He criticized Austin's work and took the stance that this is classification of illocutionary verbs and not acts. He proposed five classifications of speech acts which are based on illocutionary point, direction of fit, and expressed psychological state. These classifications are: first, representatives which represent statements that may be judged true or false because they purport to describe state of affairs in the world, such as asserting and concluding. Second, directives which aim to get the addressee to perform an action to fit the propositional content, such as comments and requests. Third, commissives which commit the speaker to a course of action as described by the propositional content, such as promising and offering. Forth, expressives which express the speaker's psychological state or attitude, such as apologizing and thanking. Finally, declaratives which bring about the state of affairs they name, such as appointing, marrying and declaring. These are speech acts that, when uttered, bring about a change to persons or things.

Following this classification, Leech (1983), who believed that it was impossible to form taxonomy of illocutionary acts, distinguished speech acts by the verbs that express them. Leech's speech acts categories are assertive verbs, directive verbs, commissive verbs, rogative verbs, and expressing verbs. Based on many of the classifications above, Cohen (1996) devised the classification of fourteen speech acts grouped into five major categories; first, representatives which contain the speech act of assertions, claims, and reports, second, directives which contain suggestions, requests, and commands, third, expressives which contain complaint and thanks, forth, commissives which contain promises, threats, and offers, finally, declaratives which contain decrees and declarations.

The names of groups of speech acts may vary in classifications given by scholars; there is no taxonomy which is considered the best because speech acts include real-life interactions and require not only the knowledge of the language but also the appropriate use of that language within a given culture to minimize misunderstandings especially since the speaker's intent and sentence meaning may differ (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Hatch, 1992). This may lead scholars to create their own categorizations of speech acts to fit with their specific needs of study.

Bach and Hornich (1979) divided much of their seminal monograph to separate the description of one or the other kind of illocutionary force, their classificatory system proposed four major categories, each sub divided into smaller classes; first, constatives which sub divided into assertives, suggestives; second, directives which sub divided into requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, advisories; third, commissives which sub divided into promises and offers; fourth, acknowledgements which sub divided into apologize, condole, greet, congratulate, thank, bid, accept, and reject.

According to Austin (1962), there is one general classification system that lists five types of general functions performed by speech acts including declaratives, representatives, expressive, directives, and commissives. First, declaratives which are speech acts that change the world via their utterances. The speaker has to have a special institutional role in a specific context, in order to perform a declaration appropriately. For example; priest: I now pronounce you husband and wife. Second, representatives which are speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be that case or not. Statement of fact, assertion, conclusions and descriptions are examples of the speaker representing the world as he or she believes it is. For example; it is a warm sunny day. Third, expressives which are speech acts that state what the speaker feels. They express psychological states and can be statement of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy and sorrow. For example, 'congratulations!'

Forth, directives, which are speech acts that the speakers use to get the hearer to do something. They express what the speaker wants. For example, ‘could you lend me a pen, please?’ Or ‘don’t touch that’. Finally, commissives, which are speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future actions. They express what the speaker intends. For example, ‘we will not do that’ Or ‘I will be back’ (cited in Yule, 1996).

#### **1.7.4. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts**

Another approach to distinguish different types of speech acts is based on the relationship between the structure and the function. Yule (1996) claimed that three structural forms (declarative, interrogative, and imperative) and three general communicative functions (statement, question, and command/request) can be combined to create two other types of speech acts; direct and indirect speech acts.

Yule claimed that “whenever there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function we have a direct speech act, and whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, there is an indirect speech act” (1996, p. 55). For instance, the example ‘would you like to come over for dinner tomorrow?’ (Tillitt & Bruder, 1999) is not only used as a question but also as a request, hence it is considered to be an indirect speech act. He added that indirect speech acts are generally associated with greater politeness in English than direct speech acts. A declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech act as in (it is cold outside), this utterance is a declarative, when it is used to make a statement as (I hereby tell you about the weather) it is functioning as a direct speech act. When it is used to make a command/request, as (I hereby request of you that you close the door) it functions as an indirect speech act. He added that different structures can be used to accomplish the same basic function, as in the following example:

- a. Move out of the way! (Yule, 1996, p. 55)

Where the speaker wants the addressee not to stand in front of the TV, the following interrogative structure in the following question is not being used only as a question; hence it is an indirect speech act:

- b. Do you have to stand in front of the TV? (Yule, 1996, p. 55)

A common type of indirect speech act in English has the form of an interrogative but is not typically used to ask a question; the speaker doesn't expect only an answer, but an action. As in the following example:

- c. Could you pass the salt? (Yule, 1996, p. 56)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with a broad definition of pragmatics and discussed some related issues. It also traced the theoretical background of communicative competence and gave an overview of the four types of competences. Within this chapter, one of the important areas of pragmatics; the theory of speech acts was also clearly presented.

## **Chapter Two: The Speech Act of Invitations in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

Introduction

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## **Chapter Two: The Speech Act of Invitations in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

### **Introduction**

This chapter deals, basically, with a field interested in non-native speakers' communicative competence and speech acts realizations in the target language; interlanguage pragmatics, and presents different definitions of it. Next, the notion of pragmatic transfer is deeply described followed by some significant definitions in addition to its types. Then, the notion of pragmatic failure is presented and categorized into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. This chapter also highlights invitations as speech acts and provides their characteristics in addition to some related studies.

### **2.1. Interlanguage Pragmatics**

With the advent of the concept of the communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and discussion of its components (Canal & Swain, 1980), the linguistic dominated focus of interlanguage studies, that was prominent up until the late of 1970, was expanded to cover research on sociolinguistics and discourse aspects of language acquisition, thus leading to the development of a new field called interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) (Blum Kulka et al., 1989). This new area of investigation developed as “the branch of second language acquisition research which studies how non-native speakers (NNS) understand and carry out linguistic action in the target language, and how they acquire second language pragmatic knowledge” (Kasper, 1992, p. 203). In other words, ILP study intends to analyze the performance and acquisition of pragmatic of the language learners in the second language.

Furthermore, Kasper (2007) stated that the study of second SL pragmatic development, due to its importance and close relationship with language learning and teaching, has been



broadly studied in recent years including topics such as the comprehension of indirectness, pragmatic awareness, the development of pragmatic and discourse competence from a cross-sectional and longitudinal perspective, pragmatic transfer and the influence of social- affective factors on the development of pragmatic ability, and the effect of instruction on classroom learning of L2 pragmatics.

ILP as a second generation hybrid (Kasper & Blum Kulka, 1993) belongs to two different disciplines, both of which are interdisciplinary. On one hand, as a branch of second language acquisition research, two sections within the wider domain of ILP are distinguished: as the study of L2 use, ILP examines how non-native speakers (NNSs) comprehend and procedure action in a target language, and as the study of L2 learning, ILP investigates how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform action in a target language (Kasper & Rose, 2000). On the other hand, as a subset of pragmatics, ILP is sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, or simply linguistic enterprise, depending on how one defines the scope of pragmatics (Kasper & Blum Kulka, 1993).

Since the idea of ILP was introduced into language education, it has received more and more attention in language courses, such as through the notionally-based syllabus (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). Studies have been done to investigate the relationship between language education and interlanguage pragmatic development, for example, whether grammatical development guarantees a corresponding level of pragmatic development (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981). The results of these studies differ, some studies (e.g. Hill, 1997; Roever, 2005; Yamashita, 1996) showed that high language proficiency participants had better performance in test of pragmatics than low language proficiency participants in English as second language context. On the other hand, other studies (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1991, 1993; Omar, 1991; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987) showed disparities

between learners' grammatical development and pragmatic development. They reported that even learners who exhibit high levels of grammatical competence may exhibit a wide range of pragmatic competence when compared with native speakers in conversations and elicited conditions (Bardovi-Harlig & Doernyei, 1998).

However, many researchers have criticized that research on ILP has mostly studied on the comparison of the differences between L2 learners' production of speech acts and those of native speakers, only few studies focused on the development issues of the acquisition of ILP (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Kasper, 1992; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Davies & Tyler, 2005). Furthermore, study in ILP has shown that English second language (ESL) learners' performance of speech acts is often different from that of native speakers because of lack of knowledge in the target language sociocultural rules. Consequently, communication failure may take place; this kind of failure in communication is called pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1984).

To sum up, due to the nature of interlanguage development of L2 learners, it is evident that the learners' native language and native culture could have an influence, positive or negative, on their ILP knowledge and performance (Kasper & Blum Kulka, 1993). Whereas, the bulk of ILP research focuses on non-native speakers' use of pragmatic knowledge in comprehension and production, rather than on development (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

### **2.1.1. The Notion of Pragmatic Transfer**

The notion of 'transfer' was first introduced during the 1940s and 1950s. The amazing effect that L1 had on L2 use led researchers to forward the contrastive analysis hypothesis. In those days, there were two widely held beliefs. First, that the L1 strongly influenced the L2, and second, that the influence of L1 on L2 was negative. In this respect, contrastive

analysts (e.g., Fries, 1945; Lado, 1957) believed that L1 interfered with L2 learning and claimed “those elements that are similar to L2 learners’ native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult” (Lado, 1957, p. 2).

In the 1970s, Chomsky’s claims for a cognitive approach to second language acquisition (SLA) which emphasized the developmental nature of language acquisition led to two different ways to account for the role of the L1 in SLA. In the first one, transfer was treated as one of several processes involved in SLA (e.g., James, 1971; Selinker, 1972). In the other one, the emphasis is on the contribution of universal process of language learning and the similarity between L1 and L2 acquisition (e.g., Flynn & Oneil, 1988; White, 1989). However, either of the two ways of dealing with ‘transfer’ was concerned with learners’ phonological, morphological and syntactical knowledge; their linguistic competence. With the adaptation of communicative competence to L2 learning and teaching, ‘Transfer’ has a much broader scope, including learners’ pragmatic and discourse knowledge.

### **2.1.2. Defining Pragmatic Transfer**

It is hard to reach a comprehensive and sound definition of ‘pragmatic transfer’ because “both component parts of the phrase are problematic as they have been used with different meanings or with similar meanings but under different labels” (Bou, 1998, p. 8). For example, pragmatic transfer had been referred to as sociolinguistic transfer by Wolfson (1989), and it had been referred to as L1 sociocultural competence or cross-linguistic influence by Beebe et al. (1990), and had been referred to as transfer of conversational features or as discourse transfer by Odlin (1989). However, up to now, pragmatic transfer had been maintained in recent studies as it is understood by Kasper (1992) who used this term to refer to the influence that previous pragmatic knowledge has on the use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge.

Pragmatic transfer can be defined as “any use by non-native speakers of speech act relation strategies or linguistic means that is different from L2 native speaker use and similar to L1 native speaker use” (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p. 225). It can also be defined as “the influence of learner pragmatic knowledge of language and culture other than the target language on their comprehension, production, and acquisition of L2 pragmatic information” (Rizk 2003, p. 404). Moreover, Wolfson (1989) referred to pragmatic transfer as ‘sociocultural transfer’, which is regarded to be seen as one of the most vital parts that cause the improper performance in the TL and that happens when EFL learners are using rules from the L1 culture in the foreign language. It has been studied in many separate speech acts in several languages and it has been evident that pragmatic transfer exists in L2 speech performance when EFL learners transfer their L1 norms into their L2 (keshavarz et al., 2006; Byon, 2004).

Beebe (1990) viewed pragmatic transfer as “transfer of L1 sociocultural communicative competence in performing L2 speech acts or any other function of language, where the speaker is trying to achieve a particular function of language” (Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz 1990, p. 56). They refer to it as the transfer of L1 sociocultural competence when performing L2 speech acts or any other language behavior in L2.

As it has been noted before, sociolinguistic transfer is considered as pragmatic transfer (Wolfson, 1989; cited in Bou, 1998), or even transfer or L1 sociocultural competence or cross-linguistic influence is considered as pragmatic transfer (Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz, 1990). However, Zegarac and Pennington (2000) defined it as “ the transfer of pragmatic knowledge in situations of intercultural communication” (p. 02), they mention that pragmatic transfer does not only occur in a second or foreign language situation, but

also it can occur whenever people even speak the same language but have various sociocultural backgrounds.

### **2.1.3. Types of pragmatic transfer**

Under the claim of pragmatic transfer, it is assumed that cross-cultural miscommunication is often caused by the interference of learners' L1 sociocultural norms and conventions with the realization of speech acts in a TL (Takahashi, 1996). A lot of interlanguage pragmatic studies have been conducted to examine what is negatively transferred from L1 to L2 contexts. Some of them investigated L1 transfer in learners' perception as to a certain speech act overall speech style (e. g., Beebe et al., 1990; Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; House, 1988; Olshtain, 1983; Scarcella, 1983) others investigated L1 influences on learners' production of speech acts in L2 (e.g., Beebe et al., 1990; Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Blum Kulka, 1982, 1983; Kasper, 1983; House, 1988...) their studies clearly demonstrated that transfer exists at the pragmatic level, but in different types.

Thomas (1983) made an important distinction between two types of pragmatic transfer: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer. Pragmalinguistic transfer refers to the transfer from L1 of utterances that are syntactically and semantically equivalent but are interpreted differently in two cultures. Sociopragmatic transfer, on the other hand, refers to transfer of knowledge about the social and cultural norms that governs language use in a given speech community. This kind of knowledge includes, for example, how social status or social distance is perceived in a given speech community and how this might affect the way speech acts are realized. Based on the inseparable relationship between language and culture, Kasper (1992) identified two types of pragmatic transfer: sociopragmatic transfer and pragmalinguistic transfer. This dichotomy is not only useful in cross-cultural

pragmatic research and in language learning and teaching, but also provides an adequate framework for the study of pragmatic transfer in interlanguage pragmatics (Bou, 1998).

Sociopragmatic transfer has been found to be operative in learners' perceptions of contextual factors, such as imposition, social status, and social distance (Beebe et al., 1990; Takahashi & Beebe, 1993); learners' assessment about whether a particular linguistic action is socially appropriate (Robinson, 1992), and learners' overall politeness style adopted in contexts (Blum Kulka, 1982; Garcia, 1989; Olshtain & Cohen, 1989). Therefore, Kasper (1992) claimed that both context-external factors and context-internal factors have effects on sociolinguistic transfer and claimed that "sociopragmatic transfer is operative when the social perceptions underlying language learners' interpretation and performance of linguistic action in L2 are influenced by their assessment of subjectively equivalent L1 contexts" (Kasper, 1992, p. 209). In addition, sociopragmatic transfer is the non-native speaker application of L1 pragmatic judgment to L2 on how appropriate a given speech act strategy is according to social status, social distance, and the degree of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

On the other hand, pragmalinguistic transfer has been found to be operative in learners' use of conventional means and forms, affecting the illocutionary force and politeness values of interlanguage utterances (Beebe et al., 1990; Bodman & Eisenstein, 1988; House, 1988; House & Kasper, 1987). Kasper (1992), dealing with illocutionary force and politeness values, provided a definition to pragmatic transfer as "Pragmalinguistic transfer shall designate the process whereby the illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic material in L1 influence learners' perception and production of form-function mappings in L2" (Kasper, 1992, p. 209).

Each type of pragmatic transfer is further divided into two: positive and negative transfer. The former refers to the correspondence between the learners' L1 and the L2 pragmatic principles, while the latter refers to the difference between them. The distinction between positive and negative pragmatic transfer dates back to the language transfer literature (Odlin, 1989). Negative transfer results in errors and creates a divergence between the behavior of native and non-native speakers of a language. Positive transfer, on the other hand, provides facilitating effects on acquisition due to the influence of cross-linguistic similarities.

Furthermore, positive pragmatic transfer occurs when a language learner succeed in achieving his or her intended message as a result of transferring a language; specific convention of usage shared by L1 and L2 (Kasper, 1992). This type of pragmatic transfer refers to the transfer of norms that L1 and L2 share. That is, when L1 and L2 share the same language or culture-specific conventions of usage and use, positive pragmatic transfer occurs. Whereas, negative pragmatic transfer occurs “when a pragmatic feature in the interlanguage is structurally, functionally and distributionally the same as in L1 but different from L2” (Kasper, 1998, p. 194), which results in pragmatic failure proposed by Thomas (1983). This type of pragmatic transfer refers to the inappropriate transfer of native sociolinguistic norms and conventions of speech into the target language. That is, the transfer of norms that are inconsistent across L1 and L2 (Kasper & Blum Kulka, 1993).

## **2.2. Pragmatic transfer and proficiency**

The relation between negative transfer and proficiency is not very clear. According to second language acquisition research, most pragmatic research that has worked on interlanguage has found an opposite relationship between proficiency and negative

transfer. Japanese ESL learners at intermediate level, for example, have shown higher evidence of negative transfer compared to high proficiency learners (Maeshiba, et al., 1996). Besides, the opposite has also been reported, for example, lower proficiency of grammar can hinder pragmatic transfer (Cohen, 1997; cited in Kasper & Rover, 2005), while high grammatical proficiency can cause pragmatic transfer (Blum Kulka, 1982).

Takahashi (1996) recognized a proficiency impact on pragmatic transfer, which was defined as how do learners who are similar perceive and recognize L1 and L2 strategies. It was very difficult to determine the direction of the effect. However, may be because of the connections to pragmatic misunderstanding, a great number of studies have been concerned with negative pragmatic transfer instead of positive. But understanding the learners' aspects of prior pragmatic knowledge that combine with L2 pragmatic practices and transferred, or what elements work against positive transfer, and the way positive patterns change as L2 learning proceeds is also of outmost importance (Kasper & Rover, 2005).

### **2.3. Pragmatic Failure**

The resulting lack of pragmatic competence on the part of non-native speakers can lead to pragmatic failure and, more importantly, to a complete communication breakdown. Thus, pragmatic failure, as Blum-Kulka and Olshtain believed, takes place "...whenever two speakers fail to understand each other's intentions."(1986, p. 94). The term also has been defined by Thomas (1983) as the inability to use the language effectively and to understand what is meant by what is said. Moreover, He Ziran (1988) defined pragmatic failure as the failure to accomplish and achieve the desired communicative effect in communication. He further indicated that pragmatic failures are not the errors in



diction, but are those mistakes failing to fulfill communication because of infelicitous style, incompatible expressions, and improper habit (He Ziran, 1997).

The term pragmatic failure is committed when the speaker uses grammatically correct sentences, but unconsciously violates the interpersonal relationship rules, social conventions, or takes little notice of time, space and addressee (Qian Guanlian, 2002). It has, as Thomas (1983, p. 94) pointed out, occurred on any occasion “on which H (the hearer) perceives the force of S’s (the speaker’s) utterance as other than S intended she or he should perceive it.” Thomas used the following examples to illustrate her definition:

- a. “H perceives the force of S’s utterance stronger or weaker than S intended s/he should perceive it;
- b. H perceives as an order an utterance that S intended s/he should perceive as a request;
- c. H perceives S’s utterance as ambivalent where S intended no ambivalence;
- d. S expects H to be able to infer the force of his/her utterance, but is relying on the system of knowledge or beliefs that S and H do not share” (1983, p. 94).

The language learners are found to make mistakes/errors at discourse level as well as at syntactic level. For instance, in expressing gratitude for dinner, they will say ‘thank you very much for dinner. You will come to our house next week,’ at which the native may feel they were obligated (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993). Such is the example of deviations from a target language in the comprehension and production on the part of the non native speakers of that language which may result in breakdowns or discomfort in cross-cultural communication.

However, although pragmatic failure is a major source of cross-cultural communication breakdown, language teachers and textbook writers have paid little attention to it (Thomas, 1983). According to Thomas, the reasons why cross-cultural pragmatic instruction has been ignored are as follow: “firstly, pragmatic description has not yet reached the level of precision which grammar has attained in describing linguistic competence. Secondly, pragmatics is a delicate area and it is not immediately obvious how it can be taught” (1983, p. 97). Pragmatic failure is thus an area of cross-cultural communication breakdown which has received very little attention from language teachers. Finally, although pragmatic failure is a problematic issue since it tends to cause misunderstanding and even hatred between native speakers and foreign language learners, it is an important source of intercultural communication breakdown.

## **2.4. Categorizing Pragmatic Failure**

Particularly interesting about Thomas’s description of pragmatic failure is the dichotomy between two types of pragmatic failure. Thomas (1983) made this distinction on the basis of the difficulty of analysis and possible remedies in terms of both the responsibility of language teachers and the responses of language learners. She called the two categories of failure ‘pragmalinguistic’ and ‘sociopragmatic’ failure.

### **2.4.1. Pragmalinguistic Failure**

According to Thomas (1983), pragmalinguistic failure occurs when the pragmatic force napped by the speaker onto a given utterance is systematically different from most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language, or when conversational strategies are inappropriately transferred from the speaker’s mother tongue to the target language. In other words, pragmalinguistic failure takes place when the pragmatic force of linguistic structure is different from that normally assigned to it by a native speaker.

In this case, Thomas identified pragmalinguistic transfer as a source of pragmalinguistic failure. She also identified another source of pragmalinguistic failure related to teaching techniques. She used what Kasper (1981) termed ‘teaching induced errors’. Some of these errors, as claimed by Kasper (1981), are attributed to “teaching materials (inappropriate use of modals), others to classroom discourse (lack of marking for modality, complete sentence responses and inappropriate propositional explicitness)” (Thomas, 1983, p.102). Another factor of pragmalinguistic failure is attested by some linguists who warn against the importance given to metalinguistic knowledge (Kasper, 1981). To conclude, this first category of failure has to do with the linguistic failure and is considered rather less troubled to control.

#### **2.4.2. Sociopragmatic Failure**

Sociopragmatic failure, as Thomas (1983) stated, results from different cultural norms and pragmatic principles that govern linguistic behaviors in different cultures. Since speakers with different cultural backgrounds have different understandings of the appropriateness of linguistic behavior, there may be barriers to effective communication. Thomas pointed out that different cultures have different ways of thinking, rules of speaking, social values and place different relative weights on the pragmatic principles, and these cross-culturally different assessments of social parameters have negatively affected language users’ linguistic choices, which finally result in sociopragmatic failure.

Thomas (1983) made use of Goffman’s (1967) notions of ‘free’ and ‘non-free’ goods, as a source of sociopragmatic failure, to explain the size of imposition as perceived in a given culture wherein miscalculation causes sociopragmatic failure. ‘Free goods’ are those which can be used without asking for permission. Everything in one’s home is ‘free’ whilst in a stranger’s house it is not. For example, asking for matches in Britain is ‘nearly free’,

thus, one can make a request without a high degree of politeness even when asking a stranger. But not all cultures perceive such a request in the same way (with the same degree of imposition). Sociopragmatic failure, thus, refers to “the social conditions placed on language in use” (Thomas, 1983, p. 99) that is not easily controlled or changed, and that is more difficult to correct and overcome by the students since this involves making changes in their own beliefs and value system (Thomas, 1983).

To conclude, pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure are crucial to understanding a learner’s language use for two main reasons: first, because when using language, learners show their knowledge of grammar as well as their own belief systems (both about the language and about the world); second, because the only way to interpret a speaker’s intended meaning is to consider it from its linguistic and contextual aspects (Naiditch, 2011).

## **2.5. Invitations as a Speech Act**

Previous research on varied politeness formulas shows that social norms vary from culture to culture. Therefore, what can be seen as a polite behavior in one culture may not be seen socially as an acceptable humanitarian polite behavior. Parallel to the definitions suggested by Holmes (1990) of an apology, an invitation for this study can be defined as a communicative act addressed to B’s face-needs and intended to enhance and strengthen good and healthy relations between A and B (where A is the inviter and B is the invitee). Also the act of inviting can be defined as an attempt to get the addressee to attend or participate in a given event or carry out an action, which is supposed to be beneficial to him/her; the speaker is bound to a potential future action, which involves allowing or facilitating the state of affairs in which the addressee will carry out the action expressed in

the invitation, i.e. if one invites someone to a party, one will then have to allow that person to take part in it.

Searle (1979) defined invitation as a speech act attempted by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. As an illocutionary speech act, invitation entails perlocutionary effect. As a matter of fact, an invitation leads to a cost to the speaker, and a benefit to the addressee. Hancher (1979) claimed that inviting is a “commissive directive speech act”, in that, it not only commits a speaker to some future action, but it also causes the hearer to take a particular action. Inviting as a speech act usually reflects positive politeness. Although, this speech act may be used as a threat to the participants’ self-image or their face wants (Ruiz de Zarobe, 2000).

Orecchioni defined invitation as “an illocutionary act which is supposed to be essentially a face-enhancing act for the addressee.”(1997, p. 14). As the addresser intends to give a chance to the hearer to enjoy or gain something or even do something for his own sake. Le Thi Mai Hong (2009) indicated that invitation is the act of inviting or requesting to participate, be present or take part in something. Invitation is also a speech act that expresses the speaker's friendliness, politeness as well as respect and hospitality toward the hearer. In addition, Wolfson (1989) defined invitations as speech acts that contain reference to time and/ or mention of place or activity, and most important, a request for response.

## **2.6. Characteristics of the Speech Act of Inviting**

In general, invitations are basically assigned either to the directive or commissive category of the illocutionary taxonomy (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979). Searle (1979) assigned the same direction of fit (word to word) to both commissives and directives, noting that classifying speech acts would be simpler if they were really members of the

same category. Searle (1979) established such rigid types of illocutionary categories that are unable to accommodate hybrid illocutions. Hancher (1979) noticed the drawback in Searle's illocutionary taxonomy. He observed that certain speech act types like threats, invitations or offers have been forced into the mould of certain illocutionary categories directive or commissive to which they do not fully belong.

Although, Searle (1979) and Leech (1983) view invitations as directives, these invitations may also be analysed as both offer and request (Hussein, 1984). For example, if someone is invited to a party at a host's house, simultaneously the latter is offering his or her access to all events of which the inviter is sponsor and requesting access to the invitee's company at a future time (Schiffrin, 1981; 1994). In invitations, as in offer, the speaker is the central doer of the action.

## **2.7. The Notion of Face**

The major contribution of the speech act theory is in drawing attention to the different illocutionary forces between direct and indirect speech acts. In his work on the theory, Searle (1976) suggested five illocutionary acts that one can perform in speaking. However, although he spoke on the speaker-hearer relationship, and marked the indirectness of speech act which carries the relationship between the literal meanings of the words, he neglected other variables such as social status, sex, age and cross-cultural differences of certain speech act. Most of these elements, however, were accounted for by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) in their work of politeness theory, the focus of which is the notion of 'face' suggested earlier by Goffman (1967). This notion has been defined in Scollon and Scollon as "the negotiated public image, mutually granted to each other by participants in a communicative event" (1999, p. 45).

For Goffman (1967), a person's face is his image of himself in terms of approved social attributes. For Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), 'face' is a favorable public image consisting of two different kinds of desires or face-wants, the desire to be unimpeded in one's actions, and the desire to be approved of. The former was labeled by those two scholars as 'negative face' and the latter assumes that the hearer shares the speaker's feelings of closeness. Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987) counted that the concept of face itself is universal, though the specific manifestation of face wants may vary across cultures with some acts being more face-threatening in one culture than in other. The distinction made by Brown and Levinson between positive and negative politeness leads to another important distinction, that of positive and negative politeness, they argued that England, for example, can be seen as a negative politeness society when compared with America.

Al khatib (2001) assumed that, like Greece (1989), Arab societies in general are positive politeness societies when compared with England. Foley (2000, p. 275-76) demonstrated that "crucial to Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is a principle of cooperation among interlocutors in the mutual maintenance of face in conversation; ideally speaker performs various types of speech acts more less politely to preserve each other's face."

Invitations can be seen as one means, through which people attempt to win the social approval of each other, by virtue of their nature as politeness phenomenon. Therefore, they address the participant's positive face wants, i.e. they intended to tell the invitee that his/her acceptance of the invitation is desirable and appreciated. By contrast, declining an invitation may put the inviter's positive face at risk and preserve the inviter's own. Brown and Levinson (1987) were quite aware of the importance of solving such a problem when they pose a 'balance principle'; this principle is based on the assumption that participants

have adequate motives for preserving each other's face. So, it is believed that Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) model could be conveyed as far as invitations are concerned.

## **2.8. Studies on Invitations**

Studies on the speech act of inviting can be classified into three broad categories. It is worth mentioning that some studies might fit in two categories. First, those studies that are referred to as intra-lingual as they focus on examining invitations within a single language or culture; for example, invitations in Persian (Izadi, 2012); in Japanese (Clancy, 1990); in Spanish (Ortega, 2010); in American English (Wolfson et al. 1983) and in Greek (Bella, 2009). Second, studies that are referred to as cross-cultural, which examine the realization of the speech act of inviting in two or more languages or cultures; for example, comparing the speech act of inviting in Chinese and Malaysian (Farnia and Wu, 2012); Polish and English (Rakowicz, 2009); English and Vietnamese (Thuy, 2007); Korean and American English (Kwon, 2004) and Spanish and American English (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). Third, studies which focuses on the language learner by examining how learners perform the speech act of inviting and how their performance compares to that of native speakers of L1 and L2. These learner-centered studies are generally referred to as interlanguage pragmatic studies. Some of these studies also investigate characteristics of non-native speakers' speech acts in comparison to native speakers; for example, Bella (2011) and Sattar et al. (2010).

## **Conclusion**

The present chapter dealt with the field of interlanguage pragmatics. It also described the notion of pragmatic transfer including its definitions and types. The notion of pragmatic failure was also discussed and categorized into sociopragmatic and



pragmalinguistic failure. Since the focus of this study was on the speech act of inviting, this chapter provided the characteristics of invitations and some related studies.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

Introduction

3.1. Methods of Data Elicitation on Speech Acts

3.2. Research Instrument

3.2.1. Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

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## Chapter Three: Research Methodology

### Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the research methodology used in the present study. It first sheds light on different methods of data elicitation on speech acts realization. It then describes the instrument used to collect data in this study, a discourse completion task (DCT) followed by its types, advantages, and disadvantages. Next, the situations which constitute the DCT are described followed by data collection procedure.

### 3.1. Methods of Data Elicitation on Speech Acts

The observation of authentic discourse is considered the best way of collecting data on the production of speech acts (Wolfson, 1989). The methods used to collect actual verbal interaction data through observation are of an ethnographic or naturalistic approach and often involve field-notes or tape-recordings. In the authentic observation data collecting method, researchers or their assistants immediately record the natural speech when a certain speech act occurs (Al-Khatib, 2006). This method, in fact, enables the researcher to sample as large a variety of speech situations as possible. It also enables him/her to observe interactions where the speaker and addressee are men and women of all ages and from a range of occupational and educational backgrounds (Shauer, 2009).

Eslami (2005) used this method to study invitations in Persian and American English. The invitations which made up the corpus of their study were gathered in everyday interactions which the researchers observed or in which they participated. Wolfson et al.(1983) used the same method to study invitations in American English. As Wolfson et al.(1983) argued, natural ethnographic data collection method is the only reliable method of collecting data about the way speech acts function in interaction. Observational ethnographic data, according to Houck and Gass (1996, p. 45), “allows for observation of

naturally occurring speech events with precise recording about the social setting, location, and the participants, thereby providing information about the linguistic and social constraints on the use of a given speech acts.”

Although this method can be an ideal data tool, very few studies have employed it in the field of interlanguage pragmatics (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). This can be justified by the fact that some speech acts such as apologies may not occur frequently as to allow the researcher to gather a large sample of data. It can be very time consuming as the situations where speech acts occur may be narrow (Cohen, 1996). Further, when observing natural occurring speech, it is impossible to control different variables such as social distance, relative status, sex and age, and degree of imposition which in turn constraint cross-cultural comparison of speech acts (Cohen, 1996; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984).

When the aim of the research is to obtain dialogues which are as spontaneous and natural as possible, data can be elicited through role plays. In this method, participants might be video-taped in face to face conversations. House and Kasper (1981) followed this method when they studied politeness markers in English and German.

The method of role plays has also some drawbacks. According to Kasper and Dahl (1991), first, it may be difficult for the one who constructs the roles to imagine all social situations in which the intended speech act is expected to appear. Even if he or she is able to do so, it will take an incredible amount of time to write them down and to act them out by the participants. Second, the researcher shall not expect all subjects to be aware of the assumed social setting or to know what one might say in such situations. Third, the data elicited may not be as natural as spontaneous as the data elicited from everyday interactions although participants may not be interested in it. In fact, role-plays can sometimes result in unnatural behaviour on the part of the subjects. They also stated that

the subjects may exaggerate the interaction in order to make a dramatic effect. While open role-plays provide a wider context, they are more difficult to transcribe and code. Finally, from Rintell and Mitchell's (1989) work, data collected with DCT and closed role-play yielded very similar results. Also, no significant differences in results have been found when comparing the two methods of DCT and role-play (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989).

Another method to elicit data for speech act analysis is role enactment. This method is in all ways similar to role plays except that the subjects have to perform roles that are part of their normal life or personality. That is, according to Kasper and Dahl (1991), the subject is not expected to imagine him/herself someone else or to act roles which he/she has never experienced or which he/she may never pass through. On the contrary, the subject is part of his/her environment and part of his/her everyday interactions (Kasper & Dahl, 1991).

The role enactment method was considered to have some advantages, which meant that role plays had to be tailor-made to the participants or, at least, contain problems and characters which were known beforehand to be familiar to those involved (*ibid*). This method would facilitate the process for learners of foreign languages considerably especially if they were unused to performing in this kind of situation. The researcher in this method may not be able to identify all social situations that are familiar to the subjects and even if he/she does, what may look familiar to the researcher may not be familiar to the subject him/herself (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). For example, it may be impossible for a worker who has never talked to the manager to act a role where he/she invites him to a party. In such situations a role enactment will turn to be a role play and will consequently have the same limitations.

Video-tape/cassette recording is another method for data collection in speech act analysis. Video-tape recordings can best be used when the setting of the interaction is limited as, for example, in the studies about classroom interactions between the teacher and the student, or in studies about doctor-patient communications and so on (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). It is worth mentioning that video-tape and cassette recordings may accompany the other methods such as role plays and role enactment. The only limitation that can be thought of for this approach is that if the subjects are aware that they are being observed, this may inhibit their ability to give data which is as natural and spontaneous as everyday interactions (*ibid*). Data for speech act analysis can also be obtained by the use of controlled procedures such as questionnaires and tests. The most popular and widespread method used in speech act studies is the discourse completion task (DCT) that will be discussed later in details.

### **3.2. Research Instrument**

#### **3.2.1. Discourse Completion Task (DCT)**

Among all the linguistic data elicitation methods (interviews, field notes, audio and video recording, role plays, stimulated recall, direct observation), the most suitable way to collect a large sample of data in a relatively short time and in controlled and stable circumstances, as the majority of scholars reckons, is the discourse completion task (DCT). The DCT is the most frequently used instrument for eliciting speech act data in contrastive and interlanguage pragmatics research (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993). Indeed, starting from Blum Kulka (1982), DCT has been extensively used as a way to gather linguistic data in a lot of speech act studies including: Olshtein and Cohen (1983), Kasper (1989), Bergman and Kasper (1993) for apologies; Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) for expressions of gratitude; Bardovi Harlig and Hartford (1991) for refusals; House and Kasper (1987),

Blum Kulka and House (1989), Faerch and Kasper (1989) for requests; and Wolfson et al. (1983) for invitations.

DCT can be defined as a “written questionnaire including a number of brief situational descriptions, followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot for the speech act under study. Subjects are asked to fill in a response that they think fits into the given context” (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p. 221). A typical example would be ‘You missed class and need to borrow a friend’s note. What would you say?’ (Rose, 1992). Another definition of the DCT can be as “a series of short written role-plays based on everyday situations which are designed to elicit a specific speech act by requiring informants to complete a turn of dialogue for each item” (Barron, 2003, p. 83). For example, ‘You bought a new house. To celebrate this happy event, you decide to invite your new neighbours to lunch in your home. What would you say?’ As Schauer and Adolphs (2006, p. 120) put it, “the aim of discourse completion task research is to investigate a linguistic act within highly predefined parameters.” That is to say, the DCT focus can be limited to a very specific context of use.

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

According to the purposes and the theoretical background of the different speech act research projects, at least five types of DCT have been designed up to now: the first type is the classic format (used in Blum Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989). In this type, participants, after a short description of the situation, are asked to fill in a hypothetical dialogue where the rejoinder of the interlocutors is already given. The second type of the DCT is the dialogue construction type, which is very similar to the first type, with the only difference that the dialogue is already initiated by the interlocutor and the rejoinder is not provided.

In the open item verbal response format, which is the third type, participants are left free to respond without any limitation or influence given by a possible answer of an interlocutor. However, they are asked to provide verbal response (they are explicitly asked ‘what would you say?’). In fact, this type is the one this study takes inspiration from, but in the form of written response. The fourth type is the open item free response construction which is very similar to the previous one, the only difference being the fact that in this type participants are left free to indicate if they would give a verbal response, a non-verbal response or if they would not do anything at all. The last type of DCT is the improved open item verbal response that was developed by Billmyer and Varghese (2000), on the base of the open item verbal response.

### **3.2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of DCT**

As mentioned above, DCT was first used by Blum Kulka (1982) to study speech acts. Since then, DCT has been significantly employed as a method of data collection in speech acts study (Beebe & Commings, 1996). Despite its popularity as a means of data collection, several studies have discovered that DCT has some drawbacks which influence its reliability in gathering appropriate data. Therefore, Nurani (2009) illustrated the advantages and disadvantages of using such a method of eliciting data. The manifold benefits that DCT brings are almost intuitively grasped and fully justify its big popularity among researchers. As Nurani (2009) stated, DCT allows the collection of large amount of data in a limited amount of time; it reveals a society’s stereotypical response for a specific situation. Still, it can be administered to a large number of people at the same time, and it can be also applied to many participants coming from different cultural backgrounds.

Similarly, Beebe and Commings (1985), in their study of data elicitation methods, pointed out that the DCT is a highly effective means of gathering a large amount of data



quickly, creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will occur in natural speech. Furthermore, they also claimed that DCT is appropriate in gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance, and in ascertaining the canonical shape of refusals, apologies, partings, etc., in the minds of the speaker of that language. Moreover, because this elicitation technique allows the researcher to control for situation, the researcher can manipulate the variables of interest (e.g., gender, social distance, age).

Notwithstanding its appeal, DCT's reliability in gathering appropriate data has been increasingly questioned and tested through validation studies, and the drawbacks of its use have also gradually been highlighted. Nurani (2009) stated that as far as the truthfulness of responses is concerned, the 'hypothetical nature' of the situation in which a person carries out the speech acts in a DCT may interfere with the authenticity of the response. What is more, the simple description of the situations in a DCT cannot fully represent the complexity of interactions in everyday conversations. Further, what people claim they would say in a particular situation does not necessarily correspond to what they really say in that particular circumstance.

Furthermore, because the DCT elicits written responses, certain kinds of information such as elaborated responses typically found in naturally occurring interactions, prosodic, and nonverbal features of oral interaction cannot be obtained through this data collection method (Cohen, 1996; Hartford & Bardovi Harlig, 1992). Wolfson (1989) also pointed out that short decontextualized written responses may not be comparable to authentic spoken interaction. Beebe and Commings (1985, 1996), likewise, noted that DCT responses do not adequately represent "the actual wording used in real interaction; the range of formulas and strategies used (some, like, avoidance, tend to be left out); the length of response of the number of turns it takes to fulfil the function; the depth of emotion that in turn qualitatively

affects the tone, content and form of linguistic performance; the number of repetitions and elaborations that occur; or the actual rate of occurrence of a speech act, e.g., whether or not someone would naturalistically refuse at all in a given situation” (p. 14).

### 3.3. Description of the DCT

In the present study, the data of the speech act of invitation made by Algerian EFL learners and native speakers of English were elicited through the DCT. The study employs a questionnaire in the form of a written discourse completion task to obtain data on learners’ invitation strategies. The reason why DCT is used to elicit data for this study is because DCT is the most commonly used methods to collect data on speech acts realization in IL research and is considered as a highly effective means of instrumentation (Beebe & Cummings, 1996), in addition to its advantages (see advantages of the DCT in the previous section). DCTs can be ‘closed’ or ‘open-ended’ (Cohen, 1996). Closed DCTs include rejoinders after the subjects' response while open-ended DCTs provide just the space for the subjects’ response without a following rejoinder. The following example serves as an illustration:

It is not the first time that loud rock music is heard from your neighbour's apartment quite late at night.

You pick up the phone and say.....

(Olshtain & Weinback, 1993, p. 121)

In this study, an open-ended DCT is used as it best serves the purpose of the present investigation. This study seeks to examine the semantic formulas used in invitations by Algerian university learners of English as it looks at possible transfer in their responses. Therefore, the DCT is an effective means since the goal of this study is to investigate

learners' strategies when using English. As Kasper (2000, p. 329) argued, when the purpose of the study is to "inform about speakers' pragmalinguistic knowledge of the strategies and linguistic forms by which communicative acts can be implemented; and about their sociopragmatic knowledge of the context factors under which particular strategies and linguistic choices are appropriate." The DCT is a reasonable choice because the reliability in research necessitates a large amount of data.

The DCT used in this study comprises ten situations wherein the participants are asked to perform the speech act of invitation. After the introduction wherein the purpose of the study is stated, there are two parts in the questionnaire. The first part consists of three closed questions to gain general information on the subjects. That is, to know why subjects choose English to major in; if culture influences them while learning this language; and how often they have the opportunity to use English in their interaction with other students outside classroom.

The second part of the questionnaire (DCT) consists of ten situations. Each situation consists of different variables related to the interlocutors' social status (high, equal, and low). Social status is perceived as the social power of the addressee. Four situations involve high status, other four situations involve equal status, and the other two situations involve lower status. Participants are asked to make invitations starting from what has been said in each situation and to fill out the DCT. Therefore, including ten situations in the DCT has enabled the collection of 1260 responses to be analysed in addition to the native speakers' responses.

As far as the situations are concerned, the four situations that involve high status required for the respondents to invite in a polite way as in the first situation (situation one), where one would invite his/her teacher to attend the party that his/her class holds at the end

of the year. In the second situation (situation two), one would invite his/her new neighbours to lunch. In the other situation (situation eight), one would invite his/her mother and grandmother and his/her friend's mother and grandmother as well to attend the party of the mother's day. In the last situation which involve a high status (situation nine), one would invite his/her boss to his/her wedding party.

Furthermore, in the first situation (situation three), within the other four situations that involve equal status, one would invite his/her best friend to attend his/her graduation party. The next situation (situation five) required for the respondent to invite only his/her cousins to his/her birthday party. In the other situation (situation six), one would invite his/her mates in the company he/she is working in to have a dinner celebrating his/her promotion. In the last situation (situation seven), one is a school headmaster and he/she would invite another school's director (Mr Adam) to give the opening speech.

Finally, in one situation (situation four), from the last two situations that involve lower status, one is the minister of culture, he/she regulated a charitable evening and is going to invite a famous singer. In the other situation (situation ten), one is the dean of the department of languages, he/she organized an entertainment trip and would invite only the teachers and the superior students.

### **3.4. DCT Administration**

The DCT was administered to university learners of English in the department of languages at Jijel University. The subjects were three groups from first, second, and third year students. The DCT was administered at different times; it was administered for first year students on a day, for second year students in the day after and for the students of the third year in another day, by the researcher and three other teachers who helped in the process. 150 copies were handed out; 50 copies for each subject group.

For first year students, 25 copies were handed out by their teacher during their grammar session, who was given the necessary directions to instruct the subjects, and the other 25 copies were handed out by another teacher in another class during their TV session, who was also responsible for directing the subjects. The DCT was filled out and collected the same day (Sunday, 10 April). However, from 50 copies, only 43 copies were retrieved (40 were filled out and 3 were unanswered). Concerning second year students, the DCT was administered by their written expression teacher who was aware of the directions of the DCT, which was collected the day after (Monday, 11 April). However, 2 copies were not found among the other copies, thus, only 48 from 50 copies were retrieved (44 were filled out and 4 left unanswered).

The administration of the DCT was different for the last group (third year students) because the subjects were given enough time to complete the DCT. After getting the permission of their teacher of literature, 50 copies were handed out by the researcher who was present to direct the participants, and after 40 minutes the DCT was filled out and collected. Although only 42 copies were retrieved, all of them were filled out. The same DCT was given to English native speakers who participated in this study. The DCT was sent through Facebook and the aim was to provide data in the target language. They are used as a basis on which to judge the learners' responses.

### **3.5. Participants**

As the main aim of the current study is to investigate the pragmatic transfer of EFL learners in the realization of the speech act of invitation, and to examine the different strategies used by those learners in written performance, university learners of English in the department of languages are selected as the target population. All subjects are undergraduate students from three different levels (first, second, and third year). They are

selected randomly in this study (no specific individual criteria are required). The choice of the three levels is motivated by the fact that learners may display pragmatic transfer at different proficiency levels.

The target language baseline data was elicited from eight native speakers of English who took part in this study, three of them were females and five males. The purpose of including native speakers of English in this study was to establish baseline cross-cultural norms in order to investigate any deviations from the target norms with regard to the speech act of invitation.

### **3.6. Analysis Procedure**

To analyse the data that are elicited in this study, through the DCT questionnaire, the taxonomy of Wolfson, et al. (1983) in their studies when investigating the knowledge of how to give, interpret, and respond to invitations is used. This knowledge is particularly significant to non-native EFL learners in the host speech community. A semantic formula, according to Cohen (1996, p. 265), is “a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question.” The total number of semantic formulas which were used for each situation are obtained for each of the three subject groups (first, second, and third year students) and native speakers as well. Thus, the frequency of each formula for each situation are counted. Lists are made relying on the frequencies of each semantic formula. After that, the strategies which are used by both (the three subject groups together and native speakers of English) are checked to find out whether they are similar or different.

Secondly, the different strategies used by both; the three subject groups and native speakers of English are pointed out in order to compare their responses. This comparison will be carried out in order to investigate to what extent transfer occurs. Therefore, the

taxonomy of invitations developed by Wolfson, et al. (1983) is used to analyse and classify the respondents' strategies. Based on Wolfson's, et al. classification, the semantic formulas are coded as containing 'a request for response', 'time reference', 'a mention of the place', and 'a mention of the activity'. The taxonomy employed by Wolfson, et al. (1983) is as follows:

A. Hey Johnny, how are you? I hope you're keeping well. As you know I'm graduating at the end of August and I'm planning to have my graduation party on the 5th of September in the Victor Hotel. Would you like to come?

- a. a request for response (would you like to come)
- b. activity (a graduation party)
- c. place (in the Victor Hotel)
- d. time (on the 5th of September)

B. Hi friend, it is my birthday party. Would you like to come?

- a. a request for response (would you like to come)
- b. activity (birthday party)

In this example, one may not provide the other two components (time and place). This is related to the social distance between the interlocutors and the shared knowledge between them. Such an example would best describe the difference between the three subject groups and native speakers of English in the realization of the speech act of invitation and, therefore, the occurrence of the pragmatic transfer.

C. I am pleased to share with you my happiness

In this example, however, all the components that made up an invitation are absent. That is, although there will be no strategy in a semantic formula, one can comprehend that he/she is invited. This kind of invitations, as Wolfson, et al. (1983) stated, is called

'ambiguous invitations'. They are also called 'leads'. The leads are sometimes followed by the request for response or occur alone as in the following examples:

- D. We're having dinner now; would you like to join us? (followed by a request for response)
- E. I am pleased to share with you my happiness (alone)

After completing this process, data are analysed in terms of the frequency of semantic formulas. First, the total number of the semantic formulas used in each DCT situation across the four research groups is counted and then divided into four strategies 'request for response', 'activity', 'time', and 'place'. After having the total number of all the semantic formulas used by each group, the number is converted into percentages to acquire the frequency of the four strategies by all groups. Second, the occurrence of each semantic formula in each situation is counted across the four groups. For example, the total number of 'request for response' used by all groups in situation one is counted and converted into a percentage. The frequency and content of semantic formulas used in the invitations made by the Algerian learners were collected and the data were then compared to the English baseline data in order to identify the occurrences of pragmatic transfer.

Quantitative studies involve the collection of data from a considerable number of speakers. These data are then analysed statically, and the emerging patterns of findings are interpreted. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, focus on the meticulous description and explanation of a sample of naturally occurring data from a small number of individuals, sometimes only one. These two broad categories aim at explaining a particular aspect of one, or perhaps several, situations of communication. Thus, since the present study seeks to investigate the pragmatic transfer of EFL learners, it must take into account a wide range



of factors like all empirical research investigations of pragmatic transfer based on the analysis of data. Therefore, this study is both quantitative and qualitative.

### **3.7. Limitations of the Study**

- the study is concerned with only one kind of the speech acts which is invitation
- the speech act of invitation is rarely studied because it is occasionally performed
- only first, second, and third year EFL learners are participated in this study
- the present study deals only with the written performance of all the participants through the DCT questionnaire. The oral performance will not be included in the study
- since teachers paid no attention to pragmatic instructions, EFL learners fall in the pragmatic transfer when realizing the speech act of invitation
- participating students from different years of English may provide similar/different results since their English proficiencies differ from each other
- providing ten situations that require for the learners to invite ten people of different social status affects their performance
- the number of native speakers of English participating in this study is relatively small

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter started by a description of the methodology adopted to collect and analyse data in interlanguage pragmatics research. Then, data collection instrument has been described in addition to its types, advantages, and disadvantages. The participants' information in the study has been provided and data analysis procedure was explained. Limitations of the study are also provided at the end of this chapter.

## **Chapter Four: Content Analysis: Results and Discussions**

Introduction

4.1. Content of the Semantic Formulas in Each DCT Situation

4.1.1. Situation One: Inviting a Teacher to a Party

4.1.2. Situation Two: Inviting New Neighbors to Lunch

4.1.3. Situation Three: Inviting the Best Friend to a Graduation Party

4.1.4. Situation Four: Inviting a Famous Singer to a Charitable Evening

4.1.5. Situation Five: Inviting Only Cousins to a Birthday Party

4.1.6. Situation Six: Inviting Mates to Dinner

4.1.7. Situation Seven: Inviting a Headmaster to Give the Opening Speech in a

Conference

4.1.8. Situation Eight: Inviting Mothers and Grandmothers to the Mother's Day

Party

4.1.9. Situation Nine: Inviting a Boss to a Wedding Party

4.1.10. Situation Ten: Inviting Only Teachers and Superior Students to Entertainment

Party.

4.2. Discussion

Conclusion

## Chapter Four: Content Analysis: Results and Discussions

### Introduction

This chapter provides a qualitative analysis of learners' invitations in terms of the content of semantic formulas in each situation. The participants' answers are analyzed following the taxonomy of Wolfson et al. (1983) of making invitations. The learners' responses are compared to those of native speakers with regard to the strategies used to make an invitation. This chapter also focuses on showing evidence of pragmatic transfer of EFL learners.

### 4.1. Content of the Semantic Formulas in Each DCT Situation

A total number of semantic formulas of any kind which are used for each situation or invitation will be obtained for each of the three subject groups. Thus, the researcher will check out each formula for each situation. i.e. the researcher will try to look at the strategies which are used by both Algerian EFL learners and English native speakers to find out whether they are different or similar.

#### 4.1.1. Situation One: Inviting a Teacher to a Party

In this situation, the respondents have to invite their teacher to a party they hold at the end of the year. Thus, the interlocutors are of different social status. With regard to the first strategy (request for response), the respondents employed different formulas meant to convince the invitee to participate or attend this occasion. Some examples are the following:

- a. "Well my dear teacher we are holding a party, would you like to join us, it gonna be a pleasure."

- b. “Good morning sir, we are going to make a party, would you come? It will be an honor for us.”
- c. “Hello Mr X, our class is holding an end of the year party on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July in the ‘Liberty Hall’ from 7pm till around midnight and would like very much if you could come and join us.”

The inviters’ performance of request for response upon making an invitation appears also to have been utilized to a considerable extent. Obviously, this strategy as it seems to be invested by Algerians EFL learners is presented by employing such expressions as in (a) and (b), where the majority of participants used this strategy at the end of the invitation. Whereas, most of native speakers used expressions as in (c). As it is noticed they do not use this strategy at all. In addition, only few learners from the three subject groups do not employ this strategy. Concerning politeness, all participants with the natives are polite and attempt to save the invitees’ face since they are in different social status. In terms of comparison, according to the native speakers’ responses, they do not give much importance to the use of this strategy contrary to Algerian learners, but regarding politeness there is no difference between the native speakers and Algerian EFL learners, all of them attempt to save the interlocutors’ face.

Concerning the second strategy (time reference) most of the three subject groups perform a semantic formula in which this strategy did not appear as in the following example:

“Dear Mr..., with all my respect and pleasure I want to invite you to our small party, me and my friends will be honored if you come.”

All native speakers of English, however, precisely employed this strategy while performing an invitation as in (c) when the inviter said “...on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July...from 7pm

till around midnight...” It is worth mentioning that although some students used this strategy, they did not use it precisely as in the following example:

“Sir, we will have a class party next week, and we will be happy if you come and join us”

What can be noticed is that this strategy is either neglected or unclearly used by the EFL learners; this is due to the influence of their native culture which leads to the occurrence of the pragmatic transfer. On the other hand, all the native speakers employed this strategy. This results in different ways of making an invitation regarding this situation.

Considering the last two strategies (place and activity), their use is not the same among EFL learners and native speakers. The following examples explain that:

- a. “Hi sir, I would like to invite you to enjoy with us the party at the end of this week. Would you please come?”
- b. “We are organizing a party next week in our school would you come please”
- c. “Hello Mr Smith, we are having an end of the year party, It would be awesome if you could come because you mean so much to all of us. The party would be in my house on near to the fifth avenue, from around 7:00pm till mid night”

It noticeable that the appearance of the reference to the activity occurred in all the invitations performed by both native speakers and the Algerian EFL learners, because making an invitation without referring to the activity would be inappropriate. However, concerning the reference to place is not the same. While all the native speakers refer to place in their invitations, only few Algerian EFL learners mention it. This implies that they do not give importance to the place.

#### **4.1.2. Situation Two: Inviting New Neighbors to Lunch**

In this situation, the respondents were asked to write an invitation in which they invite their neighbors to have lunch in their own home celebrating the recent moving to this house. With regard to the first strategy (request for response), the informants produced different semantic formulas to make the invitee participate at this event. Some examples are the following:

- a. “Dear Mr. and Mrs.... I am the new neighbor, I have already bought the house next to yours, and I want to invite you to my house to celebrate with us our moving in the same time we can know each other”.
- b. “I am your new neighbor I want you to be like my family could you come to my home this evening please! To share with us a party”
- c. “Dear neighbors, to celebrate our recent moving into 25, we’d love if you could come around for lunch next Sunday at around 1pm if you are available. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully seeing you then, your sincerely. John and Mary Abraham”.

From the above examples it can be noticed that similar to what has been revealed in the first situation, this strategy was almost disused by the native speakers contrary to the three subject groups. The second strategy (time reference) was exploited by all the native speakers in this situation because time is very important to them, whereas only some students relied on it to make their invitations.

The third strategy (activity) is always used in the highest degree by all the subjects from Algerian EFL learners and English native speakers, because it is the core of any invitation. However, concerning the last strategy (place) most of the participants use it in this

situation similarly to the native speakers. But they were not as precise as native speakers because the latter provided the number of the house (25).

#### **4.1.3. Situation Three:** Inviting the Best Friend to a Graduation Party

In this situation, the participants are asked to write an invitation in which they invite their best friend to the graduation party that they hold. Thus the interlocutors are of the same social status. From their answers it can be noticed that most of them exploited the first strategy (request for response). Some examples of their answers are the following:

- a. “Criminals! Would you come and disturb my graduation party please?”
- b. “Hey you! Don’t forget my graduation party at 20:00 ok! If you don’t come I will kill you”.

The answers of the native speakers were as the following example:

- c. “Hey Johnny, how are you? I hope you’re keeping well. As you know I’m graduating at the end of August and I’m planning to have my graduation party on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September in the Victor hotel and would really love you to be there. If you do have a problem with the date please let me know as soon as possible, because obviously I’d really love you to be there. And I can still possibly change the date for the party if you cannot make it on the fifth. Looking forward to hearing from you soon, take care my friend?”

What is obvious is that the native speakers did not apply this strategy, but what is obvious also is that they are polite even when they are inviting their friends, contrary to the Algerian EFL learners who were impolite with their friends. Their informality was shown in expressions like (criminals) and (I will kill you), which reveals that they are heavily influenced by their native culture. This could be considered as an evidence of pragmatic

transfer. Concerning the second strategy (time reference), only some students referred to time in their invitations, however, all native speakers focused on mentioning time in their invitations as shown in (c). “on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September”.

In reference to the third strategy (place), no one of the three groups subject addressed a reference to place in their invitations, since the invitation was directed to his/her best friend, who is supposed to know the place where the event will take place without a need to a reference, notwithstanding, all native speakers refer to place in their invitations, because of their culture, where in the majority of people make their events in Hotels and restaurants as shown in (c). In the matter of the last strategy which is the reference to activity, it was addressed by all the informants (Algerian EFL learners and native speakers) since it is the most important strategy without which an invitation would be meaningless.

#### **4.1.4. Situation Four: Inviting a Famous Singer to a Charitable Evening**

In this situation the respondents were asked to consider themselves as the minister of culture, and they were asked to invite a famous singer to vitalize the charitable evening they held. Because the interlocutors were in a high social position the responses were meant to be formal invitations. With respect to the first strategy (request for response), more than half of the Algerian EFL learners used this strategy next to some other expressions by which they expressed their gratitude to the invitee, some invitations are the following:

- a. “Good morning Mr. Louis I’m the minister of culture, I would like to invite you to a charitable evening next week if you have time, would you accept my invitation?  
If so, your presence is highly appreciated”
- b. “Dear Lotfi, you are invited to a charitable evening, I wish you will come as I wish you all the best”



- c. “Dear Mr Khaled, I was wondering if you could join us for a charitable evening next week”

It is noticeable that some of the three subject groups’ invitations contain more than the (request for response) strategy, rather, they use extra strategies native speakers didn’t use, such as polite preparatory statement (I was wondering) and good wishing expressions (I wish you all the best), the use of this strategies could be an evidence of pragmatic transfer. Concerning the English native speakers, their rejoinders their invitations were as the following one:

- d. “Dear Mister Wits, the minister of culture will be holding a charity event starting 7pm on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May at the Royal Abbey in aid of the children in need. We would love if you could come along and perform a couple of your songs and poems for around a fifteen minute set as the headline act at 9:00pm as the last of five acts we are hoping to have perform for our good cause that night. I look forward to hearing from you as soon as you can possibly let me know. By the end of May we must send out the invitations and posters, so I would very much appreciate hearing from you by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May”.

On the subject of the second strategy (time reference) few participants applied it in their invitations. Contrary to native speakers who always employed it, they make invitations as in (d). with regard to the last two strategies (place and activity), the interlocutors’ rejoinders represent an obvious difference between the use of this strategies relating to place, most of the Algerian answers did not incorporate this strategy similarly to what has been emerged in the previous situations. However, native speakers’ rejoinders showed that most of them stated the name of the place where the event will take place.

Referring to the activity is clearly found in all the participants' invitations; they all mentioned that the activity is a charitable evening to show the invitee the good reason of the cause to convince him to participate. What can be resulted from this distinction between native speakers and EFL learners concerning this situation is that all the informants politely perform the invitation i.e., they used English formally, the invitation were delivered in formal speech situation, but they lacked some specifications (time and place).

#### **4.1.5. Situation Five: Inviting Only Cousins to a Birthday Party**

In this situation the informants were asked to write an invitation by which they invite their cousins to his/her birthday party. Hence, the interlocutors are of the same social status. Concerning the first strategy (request for response), it was applied by only some EFL learners whereas the majority of them, instead of using this strategy, they used expressions by which they show the invitee their gratitude. Regarding the native speakers' rejoinders, there was only some occurrence of this strategy showed in statements as "it would be great to see you all there". Some of participants' invitations in this situation are as follows:

- a. "Hey guys! Would you like to join my birthday party?"
- b. "Tomorrow is my birthday party you should come!"
- c. "It is my birthday party and I decide to have a very special one only with my lovely cousins, would you come please?"
- d. "Dear cousins, as you may know I'm going to be yet another year older on the twenty-second of the month. I have decided this year that, rather than do the usual everybody together party, I wish to hold three separates ones, one for non-family friends, one for my direct family, and one for all you lovely cousins. So are you all

available to come around to my place on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> starting with dinner around 7pm. It would be great to see you all there. Can you please let me know by the 20<sup>th</sup> if you can make it, so I can have an idea of how much shopping I need to do, thanks in advance.”

Obviously, what can be noticed is that the participants seem to feel free when they invite people of equal status (friends, cousins). So, they use informal expressions which imply that they are influenced by the practices of their native culture, unlike English native speakers. With regard to the second strategy (time reference), the Algerian EFL learners paid no attention to the use of this strategy, however native speakers did. They precise time as in (d), It can be noticed from this example that some native speakers did write some proper invitations to invite their cousins. Considering the last two strategies (place and activity), it was resulted that all the participants gave importance to (activity reference), contrary to (place) which was rarely referred to within the rejoinders of the Algerian EFL learners, however, it was referred to within the invitations of native speakers. This is related to the cultural norms which influenced the answers of the participants, it is worth mentioning that Algerian EFL learners did not refer to place because the invitee already knows that the party would be held at home. This may constitute an evidence of pragmatic transfer.

#### **4.1.6. Situation Six: Inviting Mates to Dinner**

In this situation the informants were asked to write an invitation by which they invite their mates to have dinner celebrating the promotion he/she got in work. With regard to the first strategy (request for response) almost half of the three subject groups employed it, however, native speakers used different expressions as “please reply ASAP” instead of the frequent expression “would you come”. Some examples are the following:

- a. "Would you please come along to celebrate with me my promotion? I will pay you dinner tonight."
- b. "Since I had a promotion, would you please join me at dinner to celebrate this occasion?"
- c. "Dear mates you are invited to dinner tonight, at the restaurant next to the company, I will wait for you there at around 20:00 o'clock."
- d. "Dear colleagues to celebrate my recent promotion within the company, I would like to invite you all to come and celebrate with me next Friday evening in Pinocchio's restaurant next to the Lido Cinema at 7pm. Please reply ASAP so I can give them a rough idea of the numbers attending."

Time reference strategy in this situation with regard to the three subject groups was almost absent, and whenever it appeared it is not stated precisely; if participants refer to the date they did not refer to hour, this may be related to the Algerian culture in which the time of dinner is always known and there would be no need to be referred to. Many English native speakers however, make sure to precise time concerning the date and the hour, as it has been shown in the example (d) above.

with respect to the last two strategies (place and activity reference), most of EFL learners did not focus on referring to place in this situation, however, most of them applied the strategy of referring to place as it has been shown in (c) "Pinocchio's restaurant". What can be resulted from their invitations is that pragmatic transfer occurred in the EFL learners' rejoinders when they ignore using some strategies.

**4.1.7. Situation Seven:** Inviting a Headmaster to Give the Opening Speech in a Conference

The informants in this situation were asked to count themselves as the headmaster of a school, and to write an invitation to another school headmaster asking him to attend a conference in order to give the opening speech. This invitation requires some kind of formality. Following the same stream, most of the participants employed the first strategy (request for response) as in the following examples:

- a. “Mr. Adam, today there is a conference in my school; I would like to invite you to give the opening speech. Would you please accept my invitation and honor us with your presence?”
- b. “I am the headmaster of the school, I want to invite you Mr. Adam to give the opening speech in the conference. Would you come please?”
- c. “Dear colleague Mr. Adam, I would like to invite you to a conference in my school to give the opening speech. Your presence will honor me.”
- d. “Dear Mr. Adam, we will be holding a 2-day conference in our school in the Gymnasium on 18-19 May on the theme of “thinking outside the box”. Since you have been responsible for such wonderful results and transformation of your school since you arrived there two years ago, I would be very honored if you could make a 15-minute or so opening speech to catalyze us and others into such successful ways of thinking. Enclosed is very preliminary timetable of the intended speakers and subjects within the conference. Please feel free to phone me at the school to discuss further. Yours sincerely/best regards, Mr. A. Smith, school director, sunshine colleague.”

In (a) above, it can be noticed that the participant is not considering the addressee's face; because he said "today there is..." there is some kind of imposition here. The invitation is highly face-threatening. However, native speakers tend to invite days before the occasion and ask the addressee for reply. This fact shows the difference in the social norms. That would result in misunderstanding and communication breakdown if EFL learners rely on their native norms when interacting with native speakers.

Concerning the second strategy (time reference), most of Algerian EFL learners ignore using it in their invitations in this situation. However, most of the English native speakers employed it as it has been shown in (d). Regarding the last two strategies (place and activity reference), the informants' rejoinders showed results similar to the previous situations, where most of the EFL learners ignore mentioning the place and some of them refer to activity. English native speakers' invitations showed that natives refer to place and activity all the time whenever they make an invitation, as in the above examples.

#### **4.1.8. Situation Eight:** Situation Eight: Inviting Mothers and Grandmothers to the Mother's Day Party

In this situation the participants were asked to invite their mothers and grandmothers celebrating the mother's day. In the matter of the first strategy (request for response), the Algerian EFL learners' rejoinders showed that most of the participants used request for response while inviting their mothers and grandmothers, however, native speakers used different expressions "looking forward to seeing you..." which EFL learners may not be aware of, so they were repetitive in their request (using the same expression). The following are examples:

- a. "I wanna show you my love for you my lovely mom and grandma, to celebrate your day, would you please have a tee party?"

- b. “Dear mothers, we are all grateful for everything you give to us, and we want to put a smile on your faces through a small tee party. Would you please join us?”
- c. “Dear wonderful mothers and grandmothers, as you know mothers’ day is once again coming up on Saturday. To celebrate and show gratitude to you and all mothers, Catherine and I would love to celebrate it with both our mothers and their mothers at my place with a tee party from 3pm till whenever you fell like it. Looking forward to seeing you all there, with love and respect and gratitude, yours sincerely, Carla.”

Concerning the second strategy (time reference), only some students applied it, however, most of native speakers mentioned it in their invitations as it has been shown in (c). In the subject of the last two strategies (place and activity reference), almost none of the Algerian EFL learners applied a reference to place in their invitations, however, most of native speakers applied it. Similarly to the previous situations, it is obviously shown in this situation that they never overlook using it, contrary to the last strategy (activity) which is used extremely by all the subjects as it has been shown in the above examples “tee party”, because it is provided in the situation.

#### **4.1.9. Situation Nine: Inviting a Boss to a Wedding Party**

In this situation the informants were asked to write an invitation by which they invite their boss to their wedding party, hence the invitations were supposed to be formal due to the social imposition between the interlocutors. With an eye to the first strategy (request for response) within this situation, most of Algerian EFL learners applied it to convince the invitee to attend the event; however, English native speakers used the mitigated want expression “it would be an honor if you and your wife could join us...” instead of using the frequent expression “could you come”. Some of their invitations are as follows:

- a. "Sir, tomorrow is my wedding party, could you please honor it by your presence?"
- b. "This week will be my wedding party which will be held in Enassime hotel. And I want to invite you my boss to share me and my family the celebration. Would you please attend?"
- c. "Dear Mr. Bossy boots, as you know I will be getting married to my fiancé on June the 16<sup>th</sup> at St Luke's at 11:30 am followed by a reception and party at Barnados starting at 1pm. It would be an honor if you and your wife could join us for our special day. Yours sincerely Pat."

What is observable is that the participants were polite when they extend their invitations i.e., they write their invitations formally, this is due to the social distance between the interlocutors. Regarding the second strategy (time reference), similarly to the previous situations, it was employed mostly by the native speakers, however, only few EFL learners employed it, as it has been shown in the above examples, showing a great instance of pragmatic transfer. Concerning the last two strategies (place and activity reference), not all the participants referred to them, suggesting evidence of pragmatic transfer. When most of the EFL learners ignore mentioning place in their invitations, only few native speakers however, exploited it. The strategy (Activity reference) was almost used by all Algerian EFL learners, similarly to native speakers who never neglect making reference to activity.

#### **4.1.10. Situation Ten: Inviting Only Teachers and Superior Students to Entertainment Party**

In this situation the participants were asked to consider themselves as the dean of the department of languages and to invite some teachers and students to an entertainment trip. The invitations of this situation supposed to be formal. In the matter of the first strategy (request for response), most of the participants exploited it in their invitations, but most of



English native speakers use other expressions to refer to request for response. The following are some examples:

- a. "Dear teachers and superior students. Would you like to join an entertainment trip which is held for you?"
- b. "Dear teachers and superior students I would like to invite you to an entertainment trip next Sunday. Be sure to be there at 8:00am."
- c. "Would you give us the honor to invite you to an entertainment trip to appreciate your efforts during the whole year?"
- d. "Dear teachers and best students, on Monday week, the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, we are planning an outing to the Zoo as some light entertainment, relaxing and a fun day before your graduation while reflecting via the animals on the evaluation of languages. There would be 2 coaches outside the school gates at 10am on the Monday to bring us all to the Zoo and back here where we should arrive by 6pm. The cost of the trip is free and will organize a light picnic lunch within the Zoological grounds. Please sign the enclosed form next to your name if you wish to attend this fun day out. Hoping to see you all there."

Concerning the second strategy (time reference), few students employed it, however, all native speakers gave it a great attention as it has been shown in the above examples, showing a great degree of pragmatic transfer. What is obviously shown is that the inviters were polite because of their social position. Regarding the two last strategies (place and activity reference), almost more than half of EFL learners and native speakers mentioned a reference to activity as shown in the above examples, however, only few Algerian EFL learners employed the place of the event in their invitations, by contrast, most of native speakers exploited (place reference) strategy when they extend their invitations.

## **4.2. Discussion**

The analysis of the participants' responses regarding semantic formulas presented an overall comparison between Algerian EFL learners and English native speakers, revealed both similarities and differences in the use of English invitation strategies. Algerian EFL learners used different formulaic expressions and applied different strategies within one situation, while English native speakers are more economical in their choices when applying invitation strategies, i.e. English native speakers used just necessary strategies, however, EFL learners used extra strategies. In addition, except for the request for response and activity, the other two strategies may not be present within the same invitation in the answers of the EFL learners, however in the native speakers' answers only the request for response may not be present directly by the frequent expression "would you come?", but it was presented by other expressions such as "it would be great to see you there" and "looking forward to hearing from you". As far as the invitation extended to friends, Algerian EFL learners tried to lead the invitee to the feeling that he/she should delay his/her preoccupations to attend the event by saying expressions such as "it is my graduation party you should come", contrary to native speakers who tried to change their plans to fit the preoccupations of their friends as in the native speaker invitation concerning the third situation when he said "...if you have any problem with the date please let me know as soon as possible, because obviously I'd really love you to be there, and I can still possibly change the date for the party..."

The above strategies and others were made by EFL learners such as using preparatory statements for example "I was wondering" and mitigated want statements like "I'd be grateful" showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. Another evidence of pragmatic transfer was provided when many Algerian EFL learners neglect using some strategies such as the use of time and place reference strategies which were nearly absent in their invitations in

all the situations. Further, pragmatic transfer was shown through the influence of the Algerian culture in the answers of the EFL participants where they used expressions related to their culture such as “if you don’t come I will kill you” this may reflect the answers of the participants regarding the second question in the questionnaire. As it answered the third research question i.e., there is pragmatic transfer when EFL learners make invitations in English.

This study has shown that insistence in Algerian society is a desirable and expected behavior which usually aims at highlighting in-group solidarity and revealing affiliation, connectedness and hospitality; however, native speakers did not persist or insist on the invitation. Although the majority of students employed the same strategies, they did not follow the same order, for example, English native speakers show their gratitude usually at the beginning of the invitation, whereas , Algerian EFL learners showed their gratitude after the use of the strategies. To sum up, the analysis revealed that the learners’ answers were influenced by their native language and culture. In addition, it was hypothesized by the researcher in this chapter that pragmatic transfer occurred nearly in all the semantic formulas produced by the Algerian EFL learners while performing the speech act of invitation.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter presented the analysis of the learners’ rejoinders in terms of the content of the semantic formulas. It revealed both similarities and differences within the answers of the Algerian EFL learners and English native speakers. Within the scope of this chapter, the occurrence of pragmatic transfer was highlighted with reference to its factors. Finally in this chapter, there was a focus on the discussion of some examples of invitations made by both EFL learners and English native speakers.

## **Chapter Five: Frequency Analysis: Results and Discussion**

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5.3. Discussion

Conclusion

## Chapter Five: Frequency Analysis: Results and Discussion

### Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to present the learners' responses analysis quantitatively in terms of the frequency of the semantic formulas. To start with, it begins by highlighting the frequencies of the answers of the general questions of all English native speakers. Within the scope of this chapter, the frequency of each semantic formula used by all respondents in each DCT situation, are demonstrated. As well as, the chapter accounts for evidence of pragmatic transfer found in the frequency of semantic formulas.

### 5.1. General Information

#### 5.1.1. Question 01: why did you choose to major in English?

Table 01

#### *Learners' Choice to Learn English*

Answers	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Like it	First Year	25	62%
	Second Year	21	47%
	Third Year	29	69%
	Average	/	59%
Want to Study Abroad	First Year	7	17%
	Second Year	5	11%
	Third Year	8	19%
	Average	/	16%
Find it Easy	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	1	2%
	Third Year	0	0%
	Average	/	1%
For Future Carriers	First Year	7	17%
	Second Year	17	38%
	Third Year	5	11%
	Average	/	22%

Table 01 above showed the results of the frequencies of the participants' answers concerning the first question which is about students' motivation for studying English. The remarkable result is that; (59%) of EFL learners said that they like it which is the most frequently answer , however, (22%) of them answered that they choose to major in English because they need it for the future carrier. (16%) of the participants has the desire of studying abroad. The percentage of students who choose to major in English because they found it easy was (1%).

**5.1.2. Question 02:** Does culture influence you while learning English?

Table 02

*The Influence of Culture on Learners*

Answers	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Yes	First Year	16	40%
	Second Year	28	63%
	Third Year	37	88%
	Average	/	64%
No	First Year	24	60%
	Second Year	16	36%
	Third Year	5	12%
	Average	/	36%

Table 02 presented the results of the frequencies of the participants' answers relating to the second question which is about the influence of culture, the results showed (36%) of the EFL learners said that culture does not influence them while learning English. However, (64%) of them said that it influences their learning.



**5.1.3. Question 03:** How often do you have the opportunity to use English in interaction with other students outside classroom?

Table 03

*Using English Outside Classroom*

Answers	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Never	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	2	4%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average	/	4%
Rarely	First Year	6	15%
	Second Year	12	27%
	Third Year	6	14%
	Average	/	19%
Sometimes	First Year	26	65%
	Second Year	25	56%
	Third Year	32	76%
	Average	/	66%
Always	First Year	5	12%
	Second Year	5	11%
	Third Year	3	7%
	Average	/	10%

Table 3 represents the results of the frequencies of informants' answers related to the third question which is about the opportunities students have to use English outside classroom. Their answers were arranged from never, rarely, sometimes to always. While nearly the half of the participants (66%) said they use it sometimes, (19%) of them rarely use it to interact with others. (10%) always use it outside classroom. However, only (4%) never use it.

## 5.2. Frequency of Semantic Formulas in Each Situation

In the use of invitation making strategies, the English native speakers and Algerian EFL learners showed both similarities and differences in making their semantic formulas.

### 5.2.1. Situation One: Inviting a Teacher to a Party

Table 04:

#### *Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation One*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	33	82%
	Second Year	40	90%
	Third Year	29	69%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	80%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	11	27%
	Second Year	8	18%
	Third Year	4	9%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	18%
	Natives	5	62%
Place Reference	First Year	0	0%
	Second Year	2	4%
	Third Year	2	5%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	3%
	Natives	5	62%
Activity Reference	First Year	32	80%
	Second Year	38	86%
	Third Year	28	66%

Average of the Three Levels	/	77%
Natives	8	100%

Table four shows the results of the frequencies of the used strategies in the first situation. The results shows that most Algerian EFL learners used the (request for response) strategy (80%), however, only (12%) of native speakers gave it importance. As shown in table four above, the use of (time reference) strategy was different among the two groups of participants, while (62%) of native speakers applied it, about (18%) of Algerian EFL learners employed it. Evidence of pragmatic transfer was found in the use of (place reference) strategy; while it was used more frequently by native speakers (62%), only about (3%) of EFL learners applied it in their invitations. About (77%) of EFL learners employed the strategy (activity reference), whereas (100%) native speakers use it which suggest a convergence towards the use of this strategy.

**5.2.2. Situation Two: Inviting New Neighbors to Lunch**

Table 05

*Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Two*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	38	95%
	Second Year	41	93%
	Third Year	32	76%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	88%
	Natives	2	25%
Time Reference	First Year	5	12%
	Second Year	9	20%
	Third Year	3	7%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	13%
	Natives	5	62%
Place Reference	First Year	18	45%
	Second Year	15	34%
	Third Year	11	26%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	35%
	Natives	5	62%
Activity Reference	First Year	24	60%
	Second Year	29	66%
	Third Year	25	59%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	62%
	Natives	8	100%

Table five shows the results of the frequencies of the use of each strategy by the participants concerning the second situation. The use of the (request for response) strategy was used more frequently by EFL learners (88%), whereas (25%) only of the native speakers choose to make their invitations using this strategy, showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. Only (13%) of EFL participants choose to extend their invitations employing (time reference) strategy, however, a great number of native speakers exploited it (62%) which make an obvious occurrence of the pragmatic transfer. About (35%) of EFL informants used (reference to place) strategy in this situation, whereas (62%) of native speakers adheres stating it. On the other hand, (62%) EFL learners gave importance to the use of (activity reference) strategy, while (100%) natives used it, which emphasized the pragmatic transfer occurrence.

**5.2.3. Situation Three:** Inviting the Best Friend to a Graduation Party

Table 06

*Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Three*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	34	85%
	Second Year	37	84%
	Third Year	33	78%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	82%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	7	17%
	Second Year	11	25%
	Third Year	6	14%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	19%
	Natives	5	62%
Place Reference	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	1	2%
	Third Year	0	0%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	1%
	Natives	5	62%
Activity Reference	First Year	31	77%
	Second Year	29	66%
	Third Year	27	64%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	69%
	Natives	8	100%

Table six above represents the frequencies of different strategies used among EFL learners and English native speakers, the results revealed a significant difference in the use of the (request for response strategy). That is, the EFL learners (82%) employed this strategy more frequently than did the native speakers (12%). In contrast to the first strategy, the frequencies for the second strategy (time reference) showed that only (19%) of EFL learners use this strategy, whereas, about (62%) of native speakers applied this strategy, which showed explicit pragmatic transfer. It was clearly shown in table six that (place reference) strategy was frequently used (62%) in the invitations written by native speakers, whereas, rarely appeared (1%) in the invitations written by EFL learners. (Activity reference) strategy was used by a great number of participants, (69%) of EFL learners applied it, however, all English native speakers (100%) employed it.

**5.2.4. Situation Four:** Inviting a Famous Singer to a Charitable Evening

Table 07

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Four*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	30	75%
	Second Year	30	68%
	Third Year	27	64%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	69%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	7	15%
	Third Year	3	7%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	10%
	Natives	7	87%
Place Reference	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	1	2%
	Third Year	0	0%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	1%
	Natives	5	62%
Activity Reference	First Year	39	97%
	Second Year	25	56%
	Third Year	27	64%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	72%
	Natives	8	100%



The table seven above, shows differences in the frequency of the strategies used by English native speakers and Algerian EFL learners while making an invitation with regard to the forth situation. The results showed that only (12%) of native speakers gave importance to applying (request for response) strategy in their invitations, however, about (69%) of EFL learners relayed on using this strategy. This is an evidence of pragmatic transfer. From the frequencies on the table seven it can be resulted that time is always left indefinite by most of EFL learners while only (10%) of rejoinders showed time reference strategy. In the other hand, (87%) of native speakers did apply this strategy in this situation. The results in the table revealed a significant difference in the use of (place reference) strategy, while only (1%) EFL learners applied it, (62%) of native speakers employed it, which emphasized the appearance of the pragmatic transfer. Regarding to the (activity reference) strategy, the results did not show much difference between EFL learners (72%) and native speakers (100%) use this strategy.

**5.2.5. Situation Five:** Inviting only Cousins to a Birthday Party

Table 08

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used Situation Five*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	38	95%
	Second Year	32	73%
	Third Year	28	66%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	78%
	Natives	3	38%
Time Reference	First Year	11	27%
	Second Year	9	20%
	Third Year	6	14%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	20%
	Natives	6	75%
Place Reference	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	3	7%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	4%
	Natives	8	100%
Activity Reference	First Year	35	87%
	Second Year	31	70%
	Third Year	28	66%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	74%
	Natives	6	75%

This table shows the frequency of the used strategies of making an invitation among the informants. As it is observable the first strategy (request for response) was not used frequently by the native speakers (38%), however, most of EFL learners (78%) give it a great importance which is an evidence of pragmatic transfer. Concerning the second strategy (time reference), only (20%) of EFL learners employ it in their invitations, whereas (75%) of native speakers apply it. The pragmatic transfer is obviously occurred in the use of the third strategy (place reference), when only (4%) EFL learners use it while all native speakers (100%) give it a great importance. Regarding the last strategy (activity reference), the results shows that it occurs with almost the same frequency, (75%) native speakers applied it as (74%) EFL learners use it which suggests a convergence towards the target norms.

**5.2.6. Situation Six:** Inviting Mates to Dinner

Table 09

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Six*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	23	57%
	Second Year	30	68%
	Third Year	22	52%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	59%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	5	11%
	Third Year	6	14%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	10%
	Natives	5	62%
Place Reference	First Year	2	5%
	Second Year	6	14%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	7%
	Natives	7	87%
Activity Reference	First Year	21	52%
	Second Year	27	61%
	Third Year	23	55%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	56%
	Natives	7	87%

Table nine above represents the results of the frequency of the strategies used in situation six. It can be noticed that the first strategy (request for response) was ignored by most of native speakers (12%), however, more than half (59%) EFL learners employed it in while making an invitation, which is an evidence of pragmatic transfer. Native speakers and EFL learners rejoinders shows differences in the use of the second strategy (time reference), when (62%) native speakers use it, only (10%) EFL learners apply it which provides once again an evidence of pragmatic transfer. This latter is blatantly appeared in the use of the third strategy (place reference) whereby (87%) native speakers give it great importance, only (7%) EFL learners use it. Moreover, the last strategy (activity reference) was used by (87%) of native speakers, as it was used by (56%) of EFL learners.

**5.2.7. Situation Sven:** Inviting a Headmaster to Give the Opening Speech in a Conference

Table 10

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Seven*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	25	62%
	Second Year	27	61%
	Third Year	29	69%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	64%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	5	11%
	Third Year	5	12%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	10%
	Natives	5	62%
Place Reference	First Year	9	22%
	Second Year	10	23%
	Third Year	10	24%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	23%
	Natives	7	87%
Activity Reference	First Year	23	57%
	Second Year	25	57%
	Third Year	29	69%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	61%
	Natives	8	100%

What is presented above in table ten is an over view of results from the groups of participants , showing the frequency of the strategies they used to make their semantic formulas, what can be noticed from this table is that the use of the first strategy (request for response) was completely different among the two groups of informants, (64%) of EFL learners choose to extend invitations using (request for response) strategy, only (12%) of native speakers use this strategy which provides evidence of pragmatic transfer. This latter also is shown through the use of the second strategy (place reference), where (62%) of native speakers apply it, only (10%) of EFL learners relay on using it to write their invitations. Reference to place is also used more frequently by native speakers (87%), while only (23%) of the EFL learners mention it. Reference to activity however, is used by most of the half of EFL learners (61%) whereas all native speakers define it showing evidence of pragmatic transfer.

**5.2.8. Situation Eight:** Inviting Mothers and Grandmothers to the Mother's day Party

Table 11

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Eight*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	25	62%
	Second Year	27	61%
	Third Year	27	64%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	62%
	Natives	1	12%
Time Reference	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	7	16%
	Third Year	5	12%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	11%
	Natives	6	75%
Place Reference	First Year	0	0%
	Second Year	2	5%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	2%
	Natives	6	75%
Activity Reference	First Year	22	55%
	Second Year	20	45%
	Third Year	26	62%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	54%
	Natives	7	87%



Table eleven above shows frequency of the use of strategies by EFL learners and English native speakers, as it demonstrates, (62%) Of EFL learners use the first strategy (request for response), while only (12%) of native speakers give it importance when making their invitations, showing a greater degree of pragmatic transfer. The use of the second strategy (time reference) also suggests an instance of pragmatic transfer, when (75%) of native speakers applied it whereas only (11%) of EFL learners choose to extend their invitations using this strategy. One again the EFL learners displayed the greater degree of pragmatic transfer when they ignore stating their (place reference) strategy, it is used by only (2%), however (57%) Of native speakers give it a great importance. Results from the table shows that (87%) of native speakers refer to the activity in their invitations, whereas almost (54%) of EFL learners use it.

**5.2.9. Situation Nine: Inviting a Boss to a Wedding Party**

Table 12

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Nine*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	27	67%
	Second Year	30	68%
	Third Year	29	69%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	68%
	Natives	3	38%
Time Reference	First Year	7	17%
	Second Year	9	20%
	Third Year	5	12%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	16%
	Natives	7	87%
Place Reference	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	0	0%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	1%
	Natives	4	50%
Activity Reference	First Year	21	52%
	Second Year	27	61%
	Third Year	28	67%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	60%
	Natives	8	100%

Table twelve above shows the frequency of the strategies used by participants related to situation nine. It can be noticed that (86%) of EFL learners applied (request for response) strategy in their invitations, however this strategy used by (38%) of the English native speakers baseline data which provides evidence of pragmatic transfer. Regarding the second strategy (time reference), only (16%) of EFL learners choose to extend their invitations using it, in contrast, native speakers (87%) give a great importance to the use of this strategy. As this table demonstrates, (50%) of native speakers use the strategy of referring to place, while only (1%) from EFL learners focused on using this strategy, showing a greater degree of pragmatic transfer. The last strategy (activity reference) is employed by all native speakers (100%), however, (60%) of EFL learners only choose to extend invitations using this strategy.

**5.2.10. Situation Ten: Inviting only Teachers and Superior Students to Entertainment**

Party

Table 13

*The Frequency of the Strategies Used in Situation Ten*

Strategies	Levels	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Request for Response	First Year	21	52%
	Second Year	20	45%
	Third Year	24	57%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	51%
	Natives	2	25%
Time Reference	First Year	3	7%
	Second Year	1	2%
	Third Year	2	5%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	5%
	Natives	8	100%
Place Reference	First Year	1	2%
	Second Year	0	0%
	Third Year	1	2%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	1%
	Natives	7	87%
Activity Reference	First Year	20	50%
	Second Year	20	45%
	Third Year	23	55%
	Average of the Three Levels	/	50%
	Natives	5	62%

Table thirteen above shows results of the frequency of the used strategies in the informants' rejoinders. As it is observable, the use of the first strategy (request for response) was appeared more frequently among the answers of EFL learners (51%), while prorated by (25%) of native speakers. An evidence of pragmatic transfer was provided when (100%) native speakers refer to time in their invitations, by contrast only (5%) of EFL learners use this strategy. Another evidence of pragmatic transfer was shown through the reference to place which is more frequently used by native speakers (87%), while only (1%) of EFL learners, whereas the use of (activity reference) was reasonably used among the two groups. When (62%) native speakers applied it, (50%) of EFL learners choose to extend their invitations using this strategy, which suggests a convergence towards the use of this strategy.

### **5.3. Discussion**

This study investigated whether pragmatic transfer occurs in the productions of undergraduate EFL learners by analyzing their utterances. Specifically, it addressed the issue of pragmatic transfer in the realization of one speech act namely invitation, in different situations. Comparing undergraduate Algerian EFL learners' use of semantic formulas with those of English native speakers is taken as a reference point to find out whether pragmatic transfer occurs or not.

As a request of the analysis of the semantic formulas given by the learners with regard to the first strategy, it was the most frequently used strategy by Algerian EFL learners within all the situations with an average of (51% to 88%), and the less frequently used strategy by English native speakers (12% to 38%) i.e., while the majority of EFL learners use a request for response strategy in their invitations such as "could you come please", almost none of the EFL learners used it in the same way. Time reference strategy was used contrary to the first strategy, most frequently by native speakers (25% to 100%), and less frequently used by EFL learners (5% to 25%), which provide an evidence of pragmatic transfer and that answer the third question of the study. In addition, place reference strategy also used differently by both groups, it was used with an average of (50% to 100%) by native speakers and (1% to 23%) by EFL learners. Activity reference strategy according to the results from the tables in chapter 5.2, was used in a convergence way. While (62% to 100%) native speakers used it, (50% to 77%) English EFL learners used it in their responses. These findings answer the first research question concerning the invitation strategies adopted by Algerian university students of English.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, the results indicated that pragmatic transfer occurred among learners' answers in terms of the frequency of semantic formulas. It was also revealed that, in most situations, the learners were found to deviate from the target norms represented by native speakers in the choice of semantic formulas used in their invitations. These deviations were either from the misuse of the strategies or from the neglecting of one of these strategies. Finally, the analysis of the frequency of semantic formulas also confirmed the hypothesis with regard to the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in terms of frequency.

### **Implementations and Recommendations**

The results of this study assure the importance of foreign learners' need to learn much more than the grammar of the target language, therefore, it suggests that pragmatics needs to be focused upon in classroom instruction as it does not seem to develop on its own, but in line with grammatical development. Pragmatic transfer frequently appears in the Algerian EFL learners' answers while making invitations. Hence, this study provides three major recommendations for teachers of English foreign language.

It is, first, essential for teachers to make students aware of cultural similarities and differences of making invitations in Algerian culture and the cultures where the target language is spoken. Teacher should distinguish and highlight which forms of invitations are used in informal situations as well as formal ones. Through that, students can get to know clearly the functions of this speech act in order to use it effectively in daily interactions. It drives the students to be more confident when they make and keep the conversations with other people, especially those who come from English speaking countries. This is important because teachers themselves are making every effort to qualify university students for using English for communication. Teachers, secondly, should provide their students any input that is necessary for students to enrich their understandings on the way invitations made both languages as well as to enhance students' language and communicative competence. Last but not least, teachers should also provide their students with as many as communicative opportunities as possible. Teachers should transform the class into a small society, or a neighborhood or an office where students can practice some activities as role play or mapped dialogue. These activities can stimulate students' enthusiasm, creativity in making invitations in English.



## **General Conclusion**

The study attempted to provide a detailed analysis of the speech act of invitation on the basis of Speech Acts Theory which was introduced by Austin (1962) and was later developed by his successor Searle (1969) to understand the way utterances are and should be understood in context. It was concluded from the speakers of the two languages of Arabic and English differ in the way they make invitations. This difference is due to the cultural differences between the two language groups. Furthermore, other cultural aspects come into play while making invitations among Algerian EFL speakers; such as politeness, pragmatic transfer, and pragmatic failure. For example, Algerian speakers use imperatives to express inviting strategies and this is regarded as a politeness strategy to invite others. It is worth mentioning that this study strengthens the idea that regardless of the distinctions made within the concept of pragmatic transfer, lack of the pragmatic awareness of the TL norms is a cause for miscommunication for second/foreign language learners who tend to transfer some of L1 norms into their new language, in a manner quite similar to the transfer of phonemes, morphemes, lexicon, and so on.

The present research work comprises five chapters, the first and the second chapters were devoted to the review of the related literature. The third chapter has been devoted to the methodology deployed in the present research work which a Discourse Completion Task was developed to investigate the occurrence of pragmatic transfer among Algerian university learners of English in the performance of the speech act of invitations, as well as an English baseline data from eight native speakers of English. Whereas the fourth chapter, meticulously dealt with the content analysis and discussion of the obtained results. The last chapter, however, accurately cope the frequency analysis and discussion. All in all, the results disclosed the pragmatic transfer occurrence in learners' invitations; all participants were found to fall back on their native language and culture norms in most of their

responses. This study recommend that further research should be conducted on other speech acts in which cultural differences are recognized, as well as, pragmatic awareness needs to be focused upon in classroom instruction as it does not seem to develop on its own in line with to grammatical development.

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# *Appendix*

## Appendix

### Discourse Completion Task

Dear mates, this questionnaire is part of a research work. Its purpose is to find out what you would naturally say in the situations listed bellow. Your assistance in completing the following items is highly appreciated, you can be confident that this questionnaire is for research purpose only and you will not be identified in any discussion of the data. Thank you very much for your assistance in advance.

#### Part one: General information

1. Why did you choose to major in English?

- a. Like it
- b. Want to study abroad
- c. Find it easy
- d. For future carriers

2. Does culture influence you while learning English?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. How often do you have the opportunity to use English in interaction with other students outside classroom?

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes
- d. Always

## Part two: Discourse Completion Task

As soon as you have read and understood the situations, please write down the first utterance that comes to your mind.

**Situation one:** At the end of the year, your class holds a party. You would like to invite your teacher to join it .what would you say?

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**Situation two:** You bought a new house .To celebrate this happy event you decide to invite your new neighbors to lunch in your home. What would you say?

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**Situation three:** You organize your graduation party. You are going to invite your best friend. What would you say?

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**Situation four:** you are the minister of culture. You regulate a charitable evening, and you are going to invite a famous singer. What would you say?

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**Situation five:** It is your birthday. You organize a party in which you decide to invite only your cousins. What would you say?

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**Situation six:** You have just been promoted in the company you are working in. you think of inviting your mates to have a dinner celebrating this event. What would you say?

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**Situation seven:** You are a school headmaster. There is a conference in your school; you will invite Mr Adam who is another school's director to give the opening speech. What would you say?

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**Situation eight:** On the occasion of the mothers' day you organize a tea party with the help of your friend. You will invite your mother and grandmother. As well as, your friends' mother and grandmother. What would you say?

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**Situation nine:** It is your wedding party. You decide to invite your boss to join the party. What would you say?

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**Situation ten:** You are the dean of the department of languages. You organized an entertainment trip in which you will invite only the teachers and the superior students to join it. What would you say?

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Thank you for your cooperation! ☺



## **Résumé**

Cette étude vise à comment l'interaction de l'Université de Jijel étudiants anglais Discours agit avec le phénomène lorsque celui-ci est attribuée à des invitations de réaction. Trouvez et adresses, ainsi que les différentes stratégies utilisées par les apprenants de langue anglaise à être comparables à ceux utilisés par les anglophones, et il a été l'étude a conclu que le transfert des actes de délibération de la parole qui sont dans le processus d'application. L'étude a été menée sur un échantillon retourné que 126 étudiants sur un Algérien et 8 locuteurs natifs de l'anglais comme ils ont été recueillis par le biais d'un questionnaire à partir duquel d'identifier la réaction des participants et des résultats a montré qu'il a là processus de conversation de transfert et que tout l'échantillon étudié peut avoir retour à la langue maternelle et de la culture dans ses relations avec les cas mentionnés ci-dessus.

## ملخص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى كيفية تفاعل طلبة جامعة جيجل لغة إنجليزية مع ظاهرة أفعال الكلام حينما ينسب هذا الأخير لفعل الدعوات . و يتطرق البحث كذلك إلى مختلف الإستراتيجيات المتبعة من طرف دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية لتتم مقارنتها بتلك المتبعة من طرف متحدثي اللغة الإنجليزية الأصليين و عليه فقد خلصت الدراسة إلى عملية نقل تداولي لأفعال الكلام التي قيد الطلب. تم إجراء دراسة على عينة فردها 126 طالب و طالبة جزائري و 8 متحدثين أصليين للغة الإنجليزية كما تم جمع المعلومات من خلال إستبيان تم من خلاله التعرف على ردة فعل المشاركين و من هذا اظهرت النتائج بأنه تمت هناك عملية نقل الكلام كما أن كل العينة المدروسة قد قامت باللجوء إلى لغتها الأم وثقافتها في تعاملها مع الحالات سابقة الذكر.