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**Investigating Pragmatic Awareness among EFL Learners :**

**The Case of 3rd Year Students at the Department of English,**

**Tlemcen University**

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in

Didactics

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## Declaration of Originality

We hereby certify that the present study is the product of our own efforts and it was not taken from any others' research. We also certify that this work contains no plagiarism except in quotations.

# Dedication

This work is whole-heartedly dedicated to my family, especially my beloved parents for their  support, My little sister ′Amina′ for her help , my grandmother ′Rabia′ for her encouragement , and the little angel , my niece ′Alaa′ whom I love so much .

Special gratitude and thanks to a friend  who always pushed me to finish my studies ″Saliha ″.Thank you for everything

To all those wonderful people who have stood by my side in my very hard moments and never stopped supporting me.

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**Abstract**

The present study seeks first and foremost to show the great importance of developing pragmatic competence to acquire a second language.Nowdays, pragmatic competence has been recognized as an essential constituent of communicative competence . However , there is a total scarcity of pragmatic aspects and their teaching seems to be marginalized compared to other aspects of the target language. Consequently , learners find difficulties in using the language appropriately in different contexts , and breakdowns in communication can not be escaped . Among these breakdowns is the so called pragmatic failure . In our study , we cast light on aspects of pragmatic failure among 3rd year EFL students in Tlemcen University by examining students' productions and perceptions of three different speech acts . To this end, a mixed methods approach was selected to collect data using a questionnaire , a test in the form of DCTs and an interview. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that learners have an average pragmatic competence which still requires more endeavour to develop. Learners proved to fail at different levels as they demonstrated instances of pragmalinguistic failure (especially transfer from their L1) and also sociopragmatic failure. This calls for serious intervention to repair the situation and direct more attention to the pragmatic dimension in the teaching of English in the context under investigation.

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## List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **CC** | Communicative Competence |
| **CCP** | Cross-Cultural Pragmatics |
| **CCSARP** | Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project |
| **CS** | Case Study |
| **DCT** | Discourse Completion Task |
| **EFL** | English as a Foreign Language |
| **ELT** | English Language Teaching |
| **ENSs** | English Native Speakers |
| **FL** | Foreign Language |
| **FTA** | A Face -Threatening Act |
| **H** | Hearer |
| **HA** | Head Act |
| **GC** | Grammatical Competence |
| **IFIDS** | Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices |
| **IL** | Interlanguage |
| **ILP** | Interlanguage Pragmatics |
| **L1** | First Language |
| **L2** | Second Language |
| **LMD** | License-Master-Doctorate |
| **N** | Number |
| **NL** | Native Language |
| **NNS(s)** | Nonnative Speaker(s) |
| **NS(s)** | Native Speaker(s) |
| **P** | Social Power |
| **PA** | Pragmatic Awareness |
| **R** | Level or Rank of Imposition |
| **S** | Speaker |
| **SD** | Social Distance |

| | |
|---|---|
| **SLA** | Second Language Acquisition |
| **TC** | Target Culture |
| **TL** | Target Language |

# General Introduction

**General Introduction**

Language is the basic tool of communication. It is the way through which people can understand each other, share their ideas and thoughts. In fact, learning another language can facilitate human's social life. However, learning a foreign language is not an easy task, because one does not have to learn only the equivalent words in that language, but rather a whole system including appropriate rules of use. With the advent of pragmatics as a discipline in linguistics,the focus has shifted to include language in context. Research has made it evident that what makes second or foreign language learners' competent is not the only mastery of the linguistic rules but also the ability to use language in different communication situations. More than that, and in order to be communicatively competent, foreign language learners (just like native speakers) need not only to know the grammar and text organization of the target language but also its pragmatic aspects. Today, teaching English to foreign learners entails developing their pragmatic competence in order to help them use the language effectively through making them familiar with the appropriate pragmatic rules that govern the appropriate combination of utterances and communication functions.

In spite of the continuing emergence of new teaching methods which aim at preparing learners for real contextual communication, foreign language classes are still in many times conducted under the lexico-grammatical approaches. Indeed, it has been confirmed by many studies that there is a gap between foreign classes and the target language culture. Therefore, the greater the distance between cultures is, the greater is the difference in the realization of pragmatic rules governing interpersonal interaction. In the Algerian context, cultural norms of the target language (hereafter TL) are sometimes alien to the students. This can be illustrated by learners whose proficiency in the TL is high but are incapable of using it appropriately.

Thus, due to its importance, pragmatic competence should receive more considerable attention in the teaching of English as a foreign language in Algeria, equipping Algerian students with pragmatic knowledge is essential to help them

communicate appropriately. To reach this goal, there should be a focus on pragmatic knowledge. The present study, therefore, deals with the importance of raising EFL students' pragmatic awareness, and to focus on some aspects of pragmatic failure that learners demonstrate when performing speech acts .The underlying idea behind our study is to show that lack of pragmatic competence can seriously affect the act of communication and prevent learners to reach good command of the TL. In a nutshell, the study aims at:

- demonstrating the importance of developing EFL learners' pragmatic knowledge;
- giving an account of how pragmatic knowledge can help in performing different speech acts properly to avoid pragmatic failure.
- directing both teachers and students towards a focus on improving learners' pragmatic competence.

In order to achieve the above objectives, this study intends to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are 3$^{rd}$ year EFL students pragmatically competent?
2. Do they exhibit different types of pragmatic failure?
3. What are EFL teachers' perceptions about the teaching of the pragmatic dimension of English language ?

The suggested hypotheses are as follows:

1. 3$^{rd}$ year EFL learners hold a low level of pragmatic awareness.
2. Learners' pragmatic failure is not restricted to one type but it rather extends to all types of failure.
3. EFL teachers seriously consider the pragmatic aspects when teaching different subjects.

So as to answer the research questions and to check the validity of the stated hypotheses, a case study will be conducted in the Department of English at Tlemcen University. Data collection instruments include a questionnaire, a test in the DCT form and an interview. Using a mixed-methods approach is thought of to meet the research standards of validity and reliability.

As for the organization, this dissertation falls into three chapters. The first chapter reviews the related literature. It focuses more on the theoretical aspects of some concept, especially pragmatic competence and pragmatic failure. The second chapter provides the methodology framework guiding the research. It tells about the research design, the informants, data collection tools, and so forth. The third chapter is a space for data analysis, discussion and interpretation. This chapter attempts to answer the research questions and verify the validity of the associated hypotheses. It ends up with suggestion and recommendations.

# Chapter One
# Literature Review

## 1.1. Introduction

Language learning and use do not involve only the knowledge of grammatical rules, vocabulary, and spelling, it extends to cover a wide variety of competences which in the case of successful language use and learning, the development of such competences is unavoidable.

A competent language user must develop the pragmatic competence, which is the principle theme of this research. It is generally refers to the ability to use language effectively in accordance with the context of use. This chapter reviews the related literature of this research; it is divided into two parts. The first part introduces some of the major points and concepts in pragmatics, a theoretical background on pragmatics history and the main historical changes that led to its development along with those that played a significant role in establishing it as a subdiscipline of linguistics. The second part is about pragmatic failure and pragmatic transfer and how they can affect the learner's use of the language.

## 1.2. Pragmatics'Origin and History

Although pragmatics is a relatively new branch of linguistics, research on it can be dated back to ancient Greece and Rome, where the term pragmatics is found in late Latin and pragmaticos in Greek,both meaning of being practical.The modern concept of pragmatics which was first introduced by the philosopher Charles Morris ,in 1938, investigates how language is related to the context of use,deals with the nature of language ,and the ways in which the context contributes to meaning .Moreover, although it is currently a well known field of language studies,it has passed a long history to establish its own identity as an academic field, as it originally drives from a specific branch of philosophy of language (Arif,2013)

During the first half of the twentieth century,philosophy of language was greatly concerned with the meaning of language expressions rather than language use, philosophers such as Russel and early Wittgenstein argued about problems of representation and neglected non-assertive uses of language.However,Austin with his speech act theory changed the course of events,claiming that language is not only

used to describe but rather to perform actions,thus things begun to take other directions.

Later, Wittgenstein of the *philosophical investigation* (1953) took up arms against his former self arguing that language is not only a system of representations, but also a system of devices for engaging in various sorts of social activities. Consequently, a need for further theory which goes beyond the theory of linguistic meaning (semantics) to the theory of language use (pragmatics) was Inevitable (Bach, 2008).

The term pragmatics was coined by the psychologist and philosopher Charles Morris in 1930, the field of pragmatics ; or at least the term pragmatics ; was the result of the meeting of two philosophical schools : American pragmatism and logical positivism ( Slotta ,n.d). Besides philosophy , pragmatics also has its roots in sociology and anthropology.

Morris based his theory on his earlier work editing the writings and lectures of George Herbert Mead , an American philosopher , sociology and anthropology played an important role in the development of pragmatics (Nordquist , 2019 ).Neverthless, it was only in the early 1970s that this field starts gaining more attention. The international pragmatic association ( IPA) was founded in 1985 . The international journal of pragmatics started its publication in 1977 and the journal pragmatics in 1991 (Juker, 2012).

Progress in pragmatics has been slow compared to other subfields of linguistics , but it has managed to establish itself as a subfield of linguistics and of the Gricean distinction between literal and speakers' intended meaning ( Sauerland & Schumacher, 2015 ). Hence, J.L. Austin with his speech act theory , which was later developed by John. R. Searle , and H.P.Grice with his cooperative principle theory and the notion of conversational implicatures inaugurated in the development of pragmatics, both philosophers were interested in the area of pragmatics or the so called ″ beyond saying ″, and opened that words can communicate more than their literal meaning, in addition to the distinction between what is said and what is actually

conveyed or meant to be said in specific linguistic or social context (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2006)

Still, they have not yet reached the point of a unified theory , until Kent Bach and Robert Harnish (Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts ,1979 ) made an important attempt to integrate both Austin-Searle's work , and Grice's work into a unified theory ( Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy , 2006 ).

Thus, The history of pragmatics can be viewed as a conjunction of different moves, starting from epistemology and semiotics (Morris, 1938), philosophy of language (Austin, 1962 ; Searle,1969),to logic (Freg, 1952 ; Russel, 1905 ), as well as linguistics  (Horn,1972 ;Wilson , 1975 ;Kempson, 1975 ; Gazdar, 1979 ) as cited in Moeschler , 2014 ).

## 1.2.1. Some Views and Definitions of Pragmatics

There are many philosophers of language that have a long dated to the field of pragmatics, such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). It was only later that R.Lakoff (1989) and Ross (1972) decided to develop this field. So, there is no exaggeration to say that pragmatics grew and develop first in the territory of philosophy before it become a discipline. According to the philosophical classification made by C.Morris , R.Carnap and C.Peirce, pragmatics is listed next to semantics and syntax.Levinson (1983) wanted to incorporate pragmatics as a separate component, in general linguistic theory.The structuralists seem to share the same view,but the generative grammarians insist on excluding pragmatics.

At the beginning ,Chomsky recognized only one type of competence, namely grammatical competence. But after the development in linguistics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he started to talk about what he calls 'pragmatic competence'. He says what follows:

For purposes of inquiry and exposition, we may proceed to distinguish "*grammatical competence*" from "*pragmatic competence*", restricting the first to the knowledge of form and meaning, and the second to knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use, in conformity with various purposes […] A system of

rules and principles constituting pragmatic competence determines how the tool can effectively be put to use (Chomsky, 1980, p.242)

According to Yule (1996) pragmatics is the study of meaning as it pronounced by the speaker or writer and how the listener or reader understand it. For him, pragmatics has more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves. From his point of view "pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning" (Yule, ibid, p.3)

Widdowson (1996 ,p.61*)* says ″ Semantics is the study of meaning in language, it is concerned with what language means″.This is not the same as what people mean by the language they use, how they actualize its meaning potential as a communicative resource.This is the concern of pragmatics.

To this extent , many scholars' definitions contrast pragmatics with semantics :

Morris (1938) : ″ Semantics deals with the relation of signs to…..objects, which they may ,or do denote. Pragmatics concerns the relation of signs to their interpreters″ (Morris , 1938 ,p.31).

Kempson (1988) :″Semantics provides a complete account of sentence meaning for the language by recursively specifying the truth conditions of the sentence of the language…..pragmatics provides an account of how sentences are used in utterances to convey information in context ″(Kempson, 1988 ,p.139)

Jaszczolt (2002,p. 3) defines pragmatics as ″ the study of how hearers add contextual information to the semantic structure and how they draw inferences from what is said ″ . For him, pragmatics focuses on the speaker and the hearers, whereas semantics focuses on linguistic expressions.

Pragmatics is interested much more on how hearers draw inferences from what is said. However , in semantics people are interested in the relation between linguistic units such as words and sentences , and the world.

Semantics and Pragmatics are also different in their meanings. While semantics deals with the meaning of linguistic units , words and sentences ;

pragmatics is interested in the meaning conveyed , negotiated , and interpreted by the participants in the process of communication .From a pragmatic point of view , meaning always requires world knowledge , contextual information and shared background knowledge and pre-supposition. Words and sentences are often produced with many different interpretations.

Although many *"pragmatic"* books and articles have been written recently, there seems to be no total agreement among pragmatics ″ as to how to do pragmatics , or as to what pragmatics is , or how to define it , or even as to what pragmatics is not″ (Mey,1998 ,p.716)

## 1.2.2. The Scope of Pragmatics.

As stated by Nordquist (2016) the term pragmatics was coined in the 1930s by the philosopher Morris . Pragmatics has developed as a subfield of linguistics in the late 1970s . Its applications cover aspects of meaning other than literal or linguistic meaning . The linguist Yule in his book Pragmatics (1996) affords many definitions to this term among which : *"Pragmatics is concerned with the speaker meaning"* (Yule ,1996 ,p.3). That is, it concerned with what a speaker (or writer) means by his / her utterance, and what the listener  (or reader) interprets in a particular context  ; it has not to do with the literally meaning of words and phrases precisely, but also it takes into account how speakers organize their intended messages in accordance with whom they are talking to , when, where and in which circumstances .As he states : *″pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning ″*(Ibid).

Another sparkling definition can be added here. Generally listeners are able to make an inference and /or can deduce what speakers want to transmit as an idea in order to reach an adequate interpretation ; even if the idea has not been literally said, certainly in a circumstantial situation. Pragmatics then, explores a great deal of what is unsaid being recognized as part of what is communicated. He sums it up in ″ Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated then is said″ (Ibid). This shows that speakers rely on listners to construct and reconstruct the missing upsaid information.

Another view to pragmatics is based on the assumption of how close and distant the listener is (e.g. a friend , a father , or a teacher ) ; speakers can define how much needs to be said during the interaction . In Yule's words ″pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance ″ (Ibid ).

In Stalnaker's words , pragmatic is ″ the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed″ (Stalnaker ,1972,p . 383 )

To wrap it up , the benefit of studying language via pragmatics is that , one can talk about people's intended meanings , their assumptions , their goals and purposes , the choice of a particular linguistic form among other choices, the non-said yet communicated , the role of a distance between people , the kinds of actions they perform when speaking  ( a command, for instance ), the impact of context in the interpretation of the discursive utterances and so on. And pragmatically speaking, it includes a lot of aspects such as speech acts , conventional structure , conversational implicatures , discourse organization , sociolinguistic aspects of language use and so on.

Correspondingly , one may notice that a single demanding and commanding word we may hear most often in the study and practice of pragmatics is *context*, meaning *context of utterances* . Context is a stepping -stone concept for the above disciplines , because without it they simply would not exist.

### 1.2.3. The Context of Pragmatics

Pragmatics has often been defined as the study of meaning in context . Context is an important aspect in interpreting or understanding the meaning of an utterance . Every utterance is living in its context , so its interpretation should be based on the context . The importance of context in language can be seen from the opinion of Levinson who says that ″pragmatics is the study of ability of language users to pain (connect) sentence with the context in which they would be appropriate ″ (Levinson ,1983 ,p.24 ).

Context is a relevant aspect of physical or social setting of an utterance. It is the background knowledge shared by a speaker in understanding their utterance . It

has an important role in determining the language meaning .The roles are limiting the range of context in interpreting and also supporting the intended interpretation.( Levinson 1983,p.26 )

Malinowski states that there are two notions of context , context of situation and that of culture, both have an essential role in the interpretation of meaning . Context of situation is the situation in which the utterance event occurs, the environment of the text. While context of culture is the cultural or historical setting the participant has .In order to understand the meaning of any utterance one should know and understand the cultural background of the language.It can include participant or people who are involved in speech , time , place, social environment, political condition ,etc.(in Halliday &Hasan, 1985,p. 6)

Grice (1975) views context primarily as knowledge ; this is because the language users' knowledge of the 'world' ( including its mental , social and cultural aspects ) guides and helps the use and interpretation of language (p.46 ). Additionally, Leech (1983) characterizes context as ″any background knowledge assumed to be shared by speakers (S) and hearers (H) which contributes to the H's interpretation of what S's means by a given utterance″. (Ibid, p. 49)

There are various opinions about the extent of which the term ″ context ″ should cover , but the experts seem to have an agreement that context is the background of knowledge shared by the speaker ( when he produces the message ) and the hearer (when he interprets the message ).

## 1.3. Pragmatic Competence

Communication is an essential part in our lives ; a competent language user must develop the communicative competence. It can be defined as ″ the ability to use language, or to communicate, in a culturally appropriate manner in order to make meaning and accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interaction ″ ( Tarvin, 2014).

Chomsky (1965) was the first to distinguish between competence and performance in which he refers to *competence* as ( the speaker- hearer's knowledge

of his language ) and *performance* as (the actual use of language in concrete situation) ( p.4) as cited in Tarvin, 2014). Chomsky (1965) believes that ″ a grammar of language supports to be a description of the ideal speaker-hearer's intrinsic competence ″(p.4) as cited in Tarvin, 2014) . However , Hymes (1972) reacted against Chomsky's view of CC asserting that Chomsky has neglected important elements and stated that Chomsky ″omit almost everything of sociocultural significance ″ (p.280),he believes that knowing how to form grammatically correct sentences is insufficient to have communicative competence (as cited in Tarvin, 2014).

According to Hymes, communicative competence include along with knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of language , also knowledge of the rules of speaking ; knowing how to begin and end a conversation , knowing which address forms should be used with different persons…ect, in addition to knowledge of how to produce and respond to different speech acts , such as to apologize , to thank …, and knowledge of the appropriate use of language ( as cited in Alasadi, 2012). Hence , there is a need for a further competence which is pragmatic competence.

Thus,Pragmatic competence is essencial aspect for an effective communication, and the lack of it can result in communication breakdowns, this last may lead to a severe consequences in some cases ( Allami & Naeime, 2011) as cited in Tulgar, 2015 ). Pragmatic competence can be defined as the ability to use language effectivelly and contextually appropriate fashion, and it is a fundamental aspect of more general communicative competence ( Nordquist , 2019) . Thereby, in order to communicate effectively one should develop pragmatic competence. Barron ( 2003) provides a good definition of pragmatic competence , he states that pragmatic competence ″ ….is understood as knowledge of the linguistics resources available in a given language for realizing particular illocutions , knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts and finally knowledge of the appropriate contexual use of the particular language ″ (p.10)**.**Whereas , Thomas ( 1983) defines pragmatic competence in terms of ability , he writes that pragmatic competence is ″ the ability to use language effectivelly in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context ″ (p. 92) as cited in Alasadi , 2012 ,p. 25) . However , the question

is whether or not pragmatic competence should be taught , since in some cases grammatical knowledge proved to be meaningless in the absence of pragmatic knowledge , and can result in awkwardness , embarrassment , rudness , failure of the speaker's messages to get through , all of which result in communication breakdowns ( Loutfi et.al, 2016 ).

According to Bachman's model (1990) ″language competence is subdivided into two components, organizational compétence, and pragmatic competence , he further subdivided pragmatic competence into  sociolinguistic competence , and illocutionary competence ″
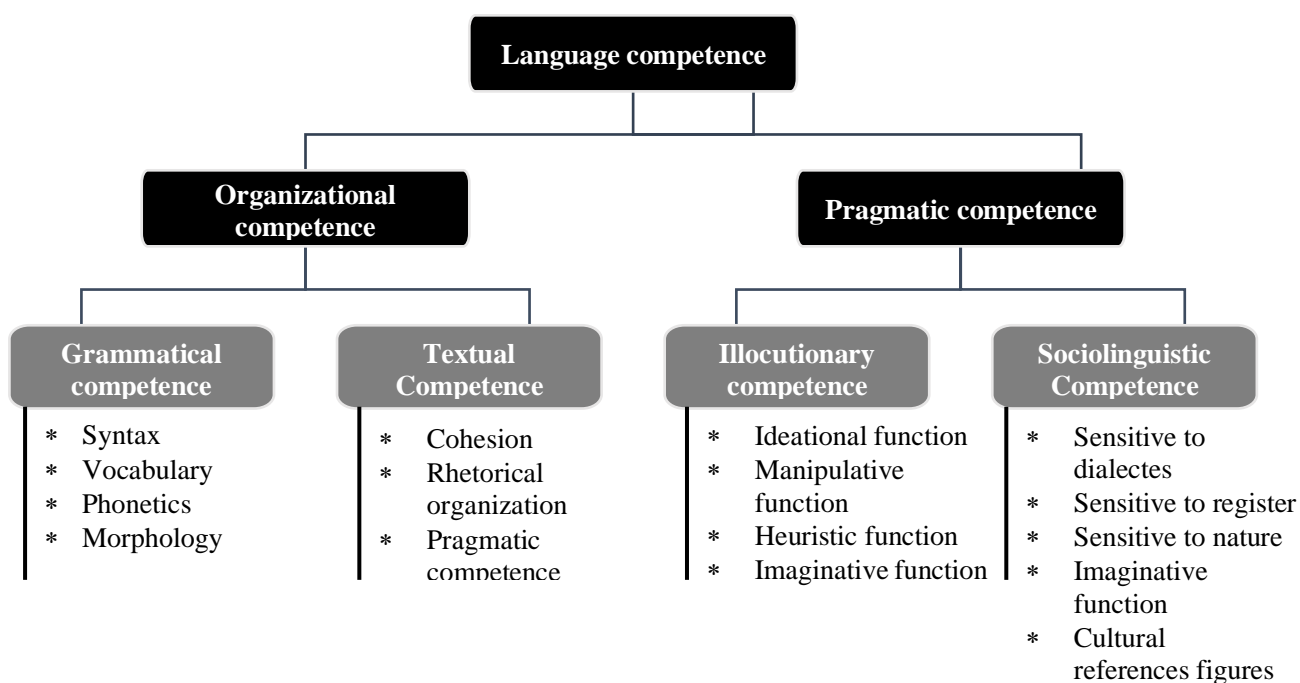


**Figure 1.1 : Bachman's (1990) model of language competence**

Pragmatics includes two aspects , the first one is the examination of *the pragmatic conditions* which determine whether or not a given utterance is acceptable to other users of the language as an act , or the performance of an intended function ; and the second one is the characterization of the conditions that determine which utterances are successful in which situation ( Dijk, p. 190) as cited in Bachman ,1990). What  can concluded from this distinction is that pragmatics is concerned with the *illocutionary force of utterances* , which in turn refers to the relationship between utterances and the acts or functions that speakers or writers intend to perform through

these utterances , thus among what pragmatic competence includes is the illocutionary competence ( Bachman , 1990).

Over and above what have been said , pragmatic competence is made up of two well defined elements ; pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence ( Timpe-Laughlin & Wain &Schmidgall, 2015) . The former type is tightly related to the linguistic realization of a speech act and the later, namely sociopragmatic competence , is associated with the speaker's general awareness of cultural norms as well as the social elements governing an interaction mainly the imposition, relative power , and social distance introduced by Brown and Levinson in 1987 .

## 1.3.1. Pragmalinguistic vs Sociopragmatic Competence

Researchers introduce many studies to investigate the diffrences of foreign language learner's pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. In fact, one of the main purposes of those studies is to investigate how second and foreign  language learner's use the pragmatic rules in a foreign language.

Fraser (1981) claims that ″ Sociopragmatics focuses on socially appropriate language use ; a sociopragmatically competent language user knows the social rules for ″ what you do, when and to whom″  (as cited in Boxer & Cohen , 2004 ,p.284). Kiseleva (1978) states that pragmalinguistics investigates :

(a) the pragmatic properties of speech expressions (i.e. the use of words , constructions , utterances ) as well as units of the language System at various  levels (morphemes , words , word combination , sentences ),(b) The rules and regularities of the pragmatic functioning of language units in speech , And above all (c) in typical extralinguistic situations, (d) with respect to typical social Aims and tasks, (e) with respect to social and physical types of subjects (speakers) And receivers (Kiseleva in Prucha, 1983, p.47)

Meanwhile, Leech ( 1983) went further with his distinction and mentions three areas of pragmatics which he refers to as ′ general pragmatics ′ , concerning "general conditions of the communicative use of language" (p.10), ′ sociopragmatics ′ concerning ″ more specific local conditions on language use ″(p.10), and ′ pragma-

linguistics ′ concerning ″the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions ″(p.11) as cited in Culpeper, 2009). The following diagram presents the relationship between these three areas :
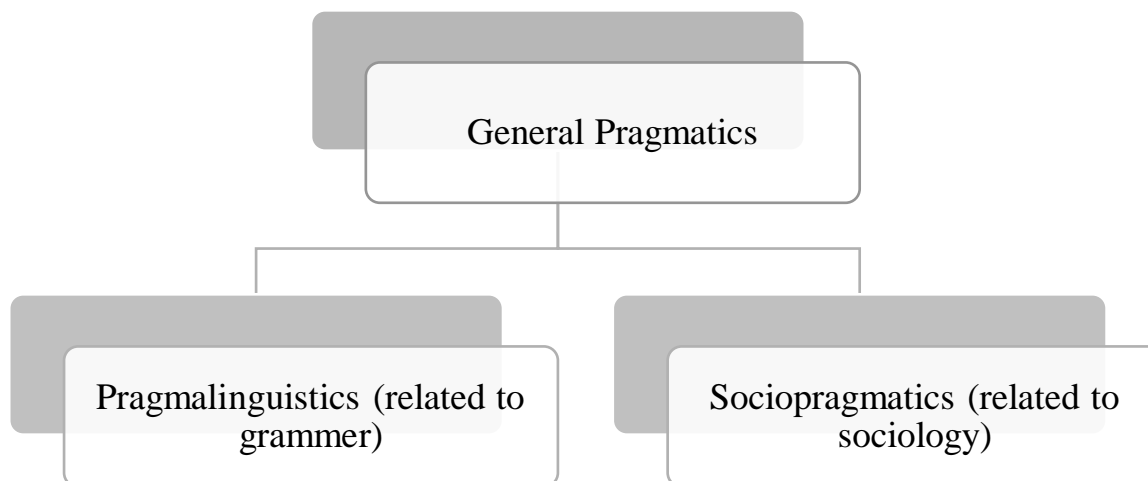


**Figure 1.2 : Leech's illustration of pragmatics' area**

Pertaining to EFL learners , we find that effective communication using the target language is the first concern , and to communicate effectively L2 learners must learn not only linguistic expressions , but also , new cultural attitudes about the use of these expressions , which means besides the linguistic competence , they have also to develop the pragmatic competence since the lack of this competence can hinder the process of communication ( Altasan , 2016).

Hence , the development of sociopragmatic competence and pragmalinguistic competence is unavoidable. Pragmalinguistic competence , on one hand , deals with the tools that are available for the language user to achieve pragmatic knowledge , and sociopragmatics deals with how to achieve this pragmatic knowledge . In other words , pragmalinguistics is simply related to grammar and sociopragmatics is related to sociology and how to use this grammar in society .

### 1.3.2. Studies and Views about using Pragmatic Instruction in Teaching / Learning Foreign Language.

As the field of Pragmatics is considered to be modern and challenging , there are as many supporters as critics . There are some studies which tackled the importance of pragmatic instructions in the field of teaching and learning. Pragmatic knowledge is crucial for EFL learners. When learning English language , learners focus on skills, especially produtive skills, to show their improvement.

According to Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1997) the grammatical improvement does not assure the same improvement on the pragmatic level. Moreover , advanced learners may go wrong to grasp what the writer means and what are his main intentions. In other words, EFL students may have the ability to pass the exam. Yet , they cannot communicate effectively in real life situations.

Blum-Kulta et al (1989) deduced that advanced language students usually have pragmatics errors in their act of communication and on that basis he suggested that EFL learners should be introduced to pragmatic instruction of the target language. One of the aims of classroom instruction is to improve EFL students' pragmatic awareness Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1997). Bachman (1990) stated that pragmatic awareness is regarded a crucial element that helps EFL students to be communicatively competent. Eslami-Rasekh (2005) declared that increasing EFL learners' pragmatics awareness is motivated with the acquisition of information about pragmatics , So Numerous studies have been conducted on pragmatics awareness . In the coming points we will discuss some of them.

Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1998) carried out a study to investigate to what extent L2 students of English were concious about the differences in the students' target language and the production in grammar and pragmatics .The sample consists of different Hungarian EFL students, ESL American students and their teachers. The findings showed that the environment has a major impact on the pragmatic awareness of the learners. EFL and ESL learners differ in their sensitivity to both grammar and pragmatics where ESL learners were more sensitive to pragmatics errors. On the other hand, EFL learners were more sensitive to grammar errors. That is to say , ESL

learners are able to locate pragmatics errors easily because they have access to authentic English settings on a daily basis.

Many studies shed light on the important role of direct instruction to improve pragmatic competence in the classroom. These studies have gained the researchers ' attention in contact to improving pragmatics competence for L2 and EFL learners . Martinez-Flor and Alcon-Soler (2007) investigated the efficiency of both explicit and implicit classroom instruction in raising learners' awareness. Explicit instruction used by the teacher to draw the learners attention to the target forms.

On the contrary, implicit instruction objected to getting learners attention without any explanation and with minimization of interpretation in the communicative context. The findings showed a positive effect on learners' awareness of pragmatics. Explicit and implicit instructions ensured that pragmatic awareness can be improved in certain situations. Moreover, the study indicated that explicit and implicit instructions are advantageous in developing learners' pragmatics awareness in the EFL classroom.

Another study was conducted by Zheng and Huang (2010) investigated pragmatic failures that Chinese students commit. Its main objective was to find out the pragmatic competence and to give suggestions about how to enhance their pragmatic competence. The tools used to collect the data were questionnaires and interviews. The findings of the study showed that pragmatics failure was due to *the negative pragmatic transfer* which has to do with the cultural differences between English and Chinese. As well as, English speakers' tolerance of pragmatics failures that Chinese speakers commit which blocked the intercultural communication . The study suggested that both *Pragmatics knowledge* and *cultural aspects* are needed to be involved in teaching to guarantee successful perception of pragmatics.

Hou (2007) also investigated the pragmatics competence for Chinese English learners by conducting a survey on Pragmatic English Teaching . Questionnaires were used to collect the data.The study indicated that the pragmatic competence is very low in comparison to the linguistic competence because of the the teachers

attention on linguistic competence rather than pragmatic competence. As a result ,
the learners' low level in pragmatic competence is causing pragmatics failure.

To conclude , ″it is no doubt that pragmatic competence is a key element for
language learners to accomplish in enhancing their language competence″ (Bachman
,1990). On this basis , many studies have been conducted to show the importance of
pragmatics competence in communication.

## 1.4. Interlanguage Pragmatics

Interlanguage pragmatic ( ILP) is a subfield of pragmatics and interlanguage
studies. It is a young discipline, that goes back to the late of 1970s and the early
1980s. The term was first defined by Kasper and Dahl (1991) , who stated that
″ interlanguage pragmatics will be defined in narrow sense , referring to non-native
speakers (NNSs) comprehension and production of speech acts , and how their L2
related speech act knowledge is acquired ″ ( as cited in Taguchi, 2017,p.2)

In fact , *interlanguage pragmatics* has been defined by many researchers in
different ways. Neddar (2008) defines interlanguage pragmatics as : ″ The knowledge
of the non-native speaker's use of pragmatically utterances according to the
sociocultural norms of the target language (TL) ″ (as cited in Neddar , 2011, p.4).
That is to say , interlanguage pragmatics refers to a second language learner's
comprehension and use of L2 pragmatic knowledge in different contexts , and by
taking into account the sociocultural norms of that language.

Gabrielle Kasper defines *interlanguage pragmatics* in various ways.For her ,
ILP is ″the investigation of non- native speaker's comprehension and production of
speech acts , and the acquisition of L2-related speech act knowledge is acquired ″
(Kasper and Dahl , 1991,p.215).Also, Kasper and Rose (1999) defines interlanguage
pragmatics as ″ …the study of non-native speaker's use and acquisition of L2
pragmatic knowledge ″ (as cited in Barron, 2001,p.27). In other words , interlanguage
pragmatics is the study of the ways in which non-native speakers acquire ,
comprehend , and use linguistic patterns in a second language.

Thus , *Interlanguage pragmatics* is a branch of second language acquisition (SLA) , it is concerned with testing L2 learners' proficiency , knowledge , use , and evaluation in performing sociocultural functions (Taguchi, 2007) . Hence , it studies how L2 learners acquire , produce, and understand communicative actions. Additionally , ILP draws on pragmatic theories and principles to amplify learners ability to encode and decode meaning in the target language (Eslami&Eslami-Rasikh, 2008 ;Schauer, 2009) as cited in Norouzian & R.Eslami, 2016).

Another crucial issue faced by EFL learners is comprehending the implied meaning of an utterance , as they have to recognize the relationship between what is literally said and the intentions conveyed indirectly by the speaker's utterances , and then making interpretations about the speaker's meaning.Neddar states about that ″ the study of the speaker's intended meaning when he uses language in context , this use can be either at the level of speech or writing ″ . Likewise, Schauer (2009) , indicates that ″ interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is a subfield of both interlanguage studies , which belongs to the domain of second language acquisition research , and pragmatics″ (p.15)

## 1.4.1. Cross-cultural and Interlanguage Pragmatics

The present study is meant to be interlanguage in the first place . It is also , in one portion , cross- cultural comparative and contrast. Starting with cross- cultural pragmatics ( henceforth CCP), it is a major research area in pragmatics , it aims at identifying the preferred patterns for meaning construction by speakers from different cultures through comparing the communicative behaviour of native speakers ( NSs) of one culture with that from another culture ( Yule , 1996,p.87-88). Thus , CCP, sometimes called *contrastive pragmatics*, involves cross – cultural and cross-linguistic comparison of speech act realisation patterns through identifying similarities and differencies between pairs of groups of Boxer states that it is important to make a distinction between CCP and another overlapping research area , which is interlanguage pragmatics . Thus, according to him : ″ ILP [interlanguage pragmatics] focuses on SLA along an interlanguage continuum which has as a target native -speaker competence . In contrast , CCP does not assume a target in so far as

language user's progress toward an idealised norm . Rather , it views cross- cultural communication from a two- way perspective…Thus, with CCP, it is incumbent on all participants in a conversation to ensure that they have clearly negotiated jointly- shared meaning. ″ (Boxer , 2010, p.51)

For Wierzbicka ( 1991 , 2003), interlanguage pragmatics could be considered as a cover term that encompasses the notion of cross- cultural pragmatics , even though they display a few differences of how they approach research .Furthermore , Wierzbicka (1991, p.69) states that the central view of cross- cultural pragmatics is that « […] people speak differently ;these differences […], can be explained and made sense of in terms independently established different cultural values and cultural priorities ″ ( in Kecskes , 2012 , p.602 ). This is in contrast with Kasper and Dahl (1991) who aknowledge that acquisition is the main concern of Interlanguage pragmatics.

## 1.4.2. Objectives of Cross- Cultural Pragmatics

Accordingly , CCP is meant to fulfil the following objectives :

1.      Identifying the differencess in speaking in different societies and language communities .

2.      Identifying how profound and systematic these differences are.

3.      Proving that these differences are a reflection of different cultural values and/ or different hierarchies of values.

4.      Explaining and making sense of the different ways of speaking , different communicative styles by means of independently established different cultural values and cultural priorities. (ibid : 69)

As Kecskes et al. (2005, p. 363) put it , cross- cultural studies target often speech act production in different cultures , communication breakdowns , pragmatic failure and what make a linguistic behaviour (im) polite in a given language . When talking about CCP , another term comes into play , which is *Intercultural pragmatics* (ICP) , the discipline that deals with how language conveys meaning in interaction . So , language of intercultural encounters is its subject (Tannen, 2005,p.1)

For Huang and Kecskes ( 2017) , intercultural pragmatics identifies the changes that result from the contact between different cultures as well as the nature of communicating that takes place between them. However , cross-cultural pragmatics aims at understanding the speakers' choices and behavioural patterns in such situations and comparing the cultures , beliefs and values of both the speaker and the hearer , i.e , displaying the differences and similarities between the two cultures.

## 1.5. Transfer

## 1.5.1. Language Transfer

Language transfer is a very important concept in applied linguistics and second language acquisition (SLA). It has been a central issue in these domains for a long time. Language transfer is also known as L1 interference, linguistic interference, and cross meaning. Indeed, the term 'transfer' is defined as " the interaction of previously acquired linguistic and/or conceptual knowledge with the present learning event to facilitate a new language learning task" (Brown, 2007, p. 117) . Moreover, it is used to refer to "the extent to which knowledge and skills acquired in one situation affect a person's learning or performance in a subsequent situation." (Ormrod, 2014, p. 206). In other words, transfer refers to the impact of the individual's previous knowledge on language learning.

According to the Oxford Dictionary , language transfer is ″the process of using your knowledge of your first language or another language that you know when speaking or writing a language that you are learning.″ In fact, many linguists have defined language transfer. It is defined as ″the first language learning affects the second language learning″ (James, 1980, p. 25). Moreover, it can be defined as "learner's attempts to make use of previous L1 knowledge″ (Ellis, 1997, p. 19). In other words, language transfer is the influence of a person's first language knowledge in the use of another language. Likewise, language transfer is "a psychological process for the language learners who stimulated their mother tongue to use the interlanguages" (Faerech and Kasper, 1987, p. 36). It means that language transfer

takes place, when learners depend on their mother tongues to acquire and use languages. In fact, interference is defined as "the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language" (Dulay et al, 1982). It means that language transfer occurs to a person, when his/her first language impacts his/her understanding of another language. Moreover, Ellis (1986) claims that interference is ″the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2″(p.51). In addition, it is defined as ″errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue″ (Lott, 1983, p. 256). That it is to say, interference is the impact of an individual's mother tongue when dealing with other languages.

Actually, language transfer can appear when EFL learners depend on their mother tongue in order to acquire a second and a foreign language, and this is through comparing the similarities and differences between their mother tongues and the language they deal with. In other words, whenever an individual goes back to his/her mother tongue, in order to understand or to use the foreign language, the issue of language transfer takes place.

## 1.5.2. Types of Language Transfer

Language transfer is an important issue to deal with in learning foreign languages. In fact, the role of mother tongue in learning a second language cannot be denied, since it is involved in the act of learning. Moreover, foreign language learners consciously or unconsciously are influenced by their mother tongues in their learning of foreign language. This influence can appear in two different types of language transfer. These types are: positive transfer and negative transfer.

## 1.5.2.1. Positive Transfer

Positive transfer is also known as 'facilitation'. It takes place when the mother tongue of an individual influences his/ her learning process of a foreign language in a positive way. In other words, positive transfer occurs when the MT helps the learner in learning the foreign language duo to the similarities between L1and L2 or foreign language (FL). In addition, positive transfer occurs, when knowledge of previous

language helps the FL learner to learn about the language that he/ she faces. According to Ringborn (2007) positive transfer could be described as "the application of at least partially correct perceptions or assumptions of cross linguistic similarity. That perceptions only partially correct still have a mainly effect is particularly relevant for comprehension" (p.31). In other words, the similarities between L1 and L2/FL has an important effect on learning L2/FL and this through facilitating the L2/FL process.

Moreover, Wolfram (2007) defines positive transfer as "the incorporation of language features into a non-native language based on the occurrence of similar features in the native language" (as cited in Melis,2002, p.103). That is to say, when L1 and L2/FL share the same features, learners will face less difficulties and help them in their process of learning a foreign language. Furthermore, Liberman and McDonLd (2016) sustain that "when learning in one context improves learning or performance in another context this is called positive transfer". (p.4). It means that positive transfer is all about facilitation, and it takes place when one language helps in the learning process of the other language.

Actually, all the definitions of positive transfer surround the idea, that this kind of transfer takes place when the mother tongue of a foreign language learner has similar features with the target language. In other words, when the first language shares the same rules and patterns with the target language, this will help the learner in learning that language easily.

## 1.5.2.2. Negative Transfer

Language transfer can appear in another kind of transfer. This kind is known as'negative transfer' or 'interference'. According to Meriam Webster Dictionary, negative transfer is "the impeding of learning or performance in a situation by learned responses carried over from another situation. Likewise, Lerberman, et McDoland (2016) claim that" negative transfer occurs when previous learning or experience inhabits interferes with learning performance in a new context" (p.4). Furthermore, Bransford, etal (2000) suggest that "previous experiences or learning can hinder the learning of new concepts." (as cited in McDoland,2012, p.4). In other words, negative

transfer is the obstruction of a new learning or performance, because of the previous learning that an individual has.

Moreover, Rajmanickam (2004) claims that "in learning some new tasks the previously learned material may interfere and hamper the learning of new task. This we call negtaive transfer". In addition, he adds "in learning, generally stimulus is attached to response. But if a new response is attached to the old stimulus then the effect is negative transfer". That is to say, negative transfer occurs when there is a conflict between the previous learning and the new one, which makes the learning process difficult for FL learners.

Thus, negative transfer takes place when there are no similarities between L1 and target language. That is to say, the differences between the rules of an individual's native language and the language he/she is learning make some difficulties in learning that target language, and this lead to the production of errors in that language. However, negative transfer can evolve and split into two types of interferences. These types are called 'retroactive inhabitation' and 'proactive inhabitation'. In this regard, Selinker and Mass (2001 p.68*)* point out:

Retroactive- where learning acts back on previously learned material, causing someone to forget (language loss)- and proactive inhabitation where a series of responses already learned tends to appear in situations where a new set is required. This is more akin to the phenomenon of second language learning because the first language in this framework influences/ inhabits/ modifies the learning of the L2.

In other words, retroactive inhabitation is the effect of the new material learning on the old learning. It takes place when an individual learns a new language, which makes the human mind forget the previous knowledge, even though it is stored in the mind. However, the proactive inhabitation is the opposite of the retroactive inhabitation. It makes an individual forget the knowledge of the new learning, because of the interference from the old leaning.

### 1.5.3. Pragmatic Transfer

Linguists have recognized that L1 acts as ″a major factor in SLA ″ ( Ellis, 1990, p. 297) and along with the development of inquiry on language transfer, evidences of L1 influences in any dimension of L2 learners' interlanguage : pragmatics , discourse , semantics , morphology , even phonetics and phonology .From this perspective , the aspect of pragmatic transfer has become one of the foremost emphases of SLA and ILP researches.

Attempting to provide a sound definition of pragmatic transfer, researchers have faced a couple of difficulties. One is stating *the scope of pragmatics* itself; the other is the different understandings of transfer. For instance, pragmatic transfer is *sociolinguistic transfer* for Wolfson (1989) and *cross-linguistic influence* for Takahashi and Beebe (1993). In consistence with the definitions of pragmatics cited above, pragmatics is to be understood as:

[A] Particular component of language users' general communicative knowledge, viz. knowledge of how verbal acts are understood and performed in accordance with a speaker's intention under contextual and discourse constraints (Faerch and Kasper ,1984p. 214, in Bou Franch , 1998 p.8).

Meanwhile, pragmatic transfer is to be understood as ″ [t]he influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of language and cultures other than L1 in their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information ″ (Kasper ,1992,p.207).That is to say, the integration of L1pragmatic features in L2 was included within the scope of pragmatic transfer , it is regarded as an influence from learner's pragmatic knowledge of the language and culture of their L1 on their production , comprehension , and learning of pragmatic knowledge in the L2 context (Bou-Franch,1998 , 2012 .Kasper & Blum-Kulka,1993) For Bou Franch , Kasper's definition is process-oriented and comprehensive in the sense it allows the study of transfer in learning and communication; it also refers to influence without overt stating of any type of influence. That is, both Kasper (1992) and Ellis (1994) agree on transfer as synonymous to influence.

## 1.5.3.1. Types of Pragmatic Transfer

Types of pragmatic transfer are usually discussed with reference to the often-cited term Pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983). Generally speaking , pragmatic failure is the failure to conform to the pragmatic norms of L2 and behaving according to one's own norm. It falls into two types: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic .

## 1.5.3.1.a. Pragmalinguistic vs Sociopragmatic Transfer

Kasper (1992), following Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983), defines pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer  as follows:

[P]ragmalinguistic transfer shall designate the process whereby the illocutionary force of politeness value assigned to particular linguistic material in L1 influences learners' perception and production of form functionmappings in L2. (Kasper, 1992, p. 209)

Leech (1983) reported that pragmalinguitics is "the study of the more linguistic end of pragmatics" (p.11), i.e., pragmalinguistics is more language centred in terms of interest. By the same token, Thomas argues that pragmalinguistic transfer is the result of:

the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language to another, or the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances which are semantically/syntactically equivalent, but which, because of different 'interpretive bias', tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language (Thomas, 1983 p. 101)

In this respect, Thomas only restricted pragmalinguistic transfer to negative manifestation. Kasper (1992), on the other hand, argued that this restriction should be displayed in order to allow the illocutionary force and politeness to map in the transfer.On the other hand, "sociopragmatic transfer…is operative when the social perceptions underlying the language users' interpretation and performance of linguistic action in L2 are influenced by their assessment of subjectively L1 contexts" (Kasper, 1992,p. 209)

Thus, sociopragmatic failure is due to "the cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour (Thomas, 1983,p. 109). In other words, it is the mis match between L1 and TL in the evaluation of social-distance, of what constitutes an imposition, when the FTA should not be performed, and in evaluating relative power, rights and obligations (ibid: 104). To have an example, Thomas (1983: 105) noticed the difference in the perception of what constitutes *free goods* cross-culturally. Considering Britain and the Soviet Union, at that time, she states that in Britain *matches* are 'nearly free' so requesting them from a stranger does not require a high degree of politeness strategies. In Russia, *cigarettes* are also conceived as 'free.' As a result, requesting them needs a lower degree of politeness, for instance, *Daite sigaretu (give [me] a cigarette).* Accordingly, a Russian requesting a *cigarette* in this way in Britain, is not aware of neither the politeness degree assigned to this form (*grammatical/pragmalinguistic*) nor the miscalculation of the rank of imposition this request in English involves (*sociopragmatic*).

From a pedagogical point of view, the second dimension may be problematic as it requires introducing a set of beliefs and concepts that may be conflicting with those of the learners. Thomas (1983 ,p. 101) clarifies that she:

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

Thomas (1983, p. 91-94) defines pragmatic failure as " the inability to understand what is meant by what is said ...i.e. H perceives the force of S's utterance as other than S intended she or he should perceive it. " It may have the following manifestations:

A. H perceives the force of S's utterance as stronger as or weaker than S intended she/he should perceive it;

B. H perceives as an order an utterance which S intended she/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 which S and H do not share.

Examples 1—4 illustrate A—B respectively.

**1. A:** Do you know who set the fire last night?

**B:** No, it's not me.

**A:** Oh, I don't mean that.

**2. Boss:** Are you free this evening? Will you come to my house to have a chat?

**Mike:** I will come, anyway.

**3. A:** There's a football match tonight. Would you please go with me?

**B:** OK.

**A:** (later) Are you sure you want to go?

**B:** OK, let's not go. I've something to read.

**4. A:** Do you like rugby?

**B:** I am a New Zealander, you know.

**A:** (confused)

In 1, B received A's question as an accusation, while the S intends genuine question i.e. H perceives the utterance as stronger than the S intends. In 2, Mike was not actually free,but perceives his Boss's utterance as an order; so, he complies accordingly i.e. Mike perceives the utterance as an order, while his Boss intended a question. In 3, B perceives A's invitation as ambivalent, so he changes his mind. In 4, A was confused as he could not understand the relation between being a New Zealander and liking rugby. In other words, he does not share the knowledge system with B that rugby means a lot for New Zealanders.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                              Pragmatics                                   │
│                                                                           │
│        Language                                                           │
│                                                                           │
│                                                                           │
│              Pragmalinguistics                              Sociopragmatics │
│                                                                           │
│     Linguistic means of conveying illocutionary            Socially appropriate │
│                                                                           │
│        Linguistic force and politeness values.             Linguistic behaviour │
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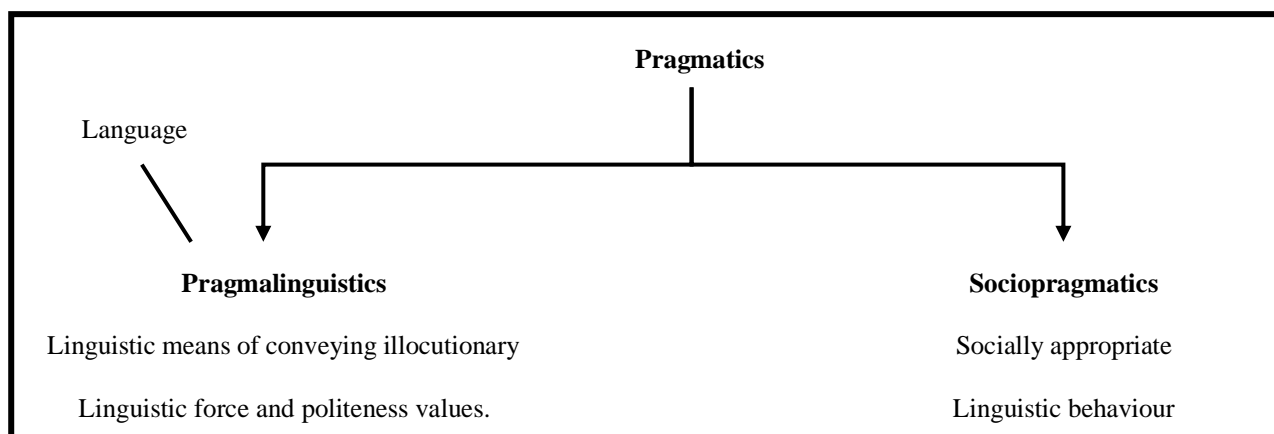
**Figure 1.3 : Pragmatic Transfer Continuum: Language-Culture (Leech; 1983 and Thomas 1983, in Bou Franch, 1998, p. 12)**

Thomas' account on pragmatic failure has been a subject to criticism. One point is the distinction between the two types of failure which may not always be possible. According to Zamborlin (2007), the reason is that this division must not be considered as 'a clear-cut dichotomy' but as a continuum. Moreover, limits between the two dimensions ″appear to be indistinguishable″ (p. 25).

## 1.5.3.1.b. Negative Pragmatic Transfer

The various empirical studies proved the existence of the two main categories of transfer , negative and positive .Positive transfer tends to be the least problematic. On one hand, it does not interfere with the learning of L2 and, on the other, it does not affect the forms in the target language.

 When transfer is considered as cross-linguistic influence , other categories may be considered as well: overuse, underuse, or avoidance of a form or function and interference of L1. Those categories need not be seen as rigid as they can be negative or positive. Furthermore, those categories are to be considered in case of L2influence over L1.

The focus on the negative manifestations of transfer in so many studies suggests its importance as it directly, according to Bou and Garcés, effects the self-representation and the image (face) we transmit to others (Bou Franch ,1998,p10).

Here are some manifestations of negative pragmatic transfer as suggested by various empirical studies (Bou Franch,1998,p.14-17, unless otherwise cited):

Based on their study's findings, Richard and Sukwiwat (1983 ,p.116) suggest that an encounter where a Japanese learner (JE) is supposed to express his gratitude to a NS, in English may run as follows:

NS: Look what I've got for you (maybe a gift)

JE: Oh!, I'm sorry (*thank you* does not sound sincere enough in Japanese)

NS: Why sorry?

In the same vein, a Spanish learner of English (SE), according to Garcés (1995), when accepting an invitation to a party from a NS, may behave in the following way:

NS: will you be coming to my party on Saturday?

SE: Well

NS: Well what?

Another example (Kim, 1996 ,p.16, as cited in Jung 2004: 99) shows how a Korean learner (K) may perform the apologetic act in an encounter with an American (A).

K: Could you please send this package for me?

A: No problem. I have some errands to do myself at the post office today, anyway.

K: *I' m terribly sorry*. I wouldn't ask you this if I wasn't so busy.

In this example, the Korean learner expresses his gratitude using *I' m terribly sorry* as this expression, in his culture, is used when one feels indebted to another. In the American culture, *thank you very much* could be an appropriate alternative (ibid: 100).

As for the transfer from L2 to L1, Bou Franch (ibid: 17) reports that her Spanish students after a stay in England, they use more frequently the routinised

expressions like *Pardon*, *Lo siento* and *Por favor* due to the influence of the use of *sorry* and *please* in English. The use of those expressions in English and Spanish is different in terms of frequency. Accordingly, the Spanish learners in UK are often perceived as ″brusque and impolite″ as they underuse *please* and *sorry*. When the same learners are back home, they are perceived as ″extremely and unnaturally polite″ when overusing the Spanish counter parts .Blum-Kulka and Sheffer comment on this phenomenon:

> Ironically, while pragmatic competence is the most difficult aspect of language to master in learning a second language, it seems also to be, under certain conditions of bilingualism, the easiest to lose in the first language . (Blum-Kulka and Sheffer ,1993,p. 219)

## 1.6. Pragmatic Failure

Pragmatic Failure is often referred to as 'pragmatic error' attached to *faux pas* that results in communication problems. According to *Riley's* (1989) definition, pragmatic errors "are the result of an interactant's imposing the social rules of one culture on his communicative behavior in a situation where the social rules of another culture would be more appropriate" (p. 234). This definition raises two questions which relate to what approach to adopt and who gets the right to declare what is appropriate (ibid). *Riley (*1989) observes that this identification of pragmatic failure remains somehow vague.

Jenney Thomas (1983) uses the term *pragmatic failure* to account for this miscommunication. She argued that pragmatic error could be constructed with reference to prescriptive rules, whereas pragmatic ambivalence does not allow that. To put it differently, the pragmatic force of an expression cannot be labelled as 'incorrect', but rather found deficient in terms of carrying out the speaker's goal (Thomas, 1983, p.94). From this perspective, Thomas states that pragmatic failure is "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said' […] an area of cross – cultural communication breakdown"; 'cross-cultural' here is used to give account of any interaction between two speakers, being native or non-native (ibid, p.91). For *Miller* (1974) communication breakdown occurs because we fail to understand the

intention of the interlocutor and not because of mishearing their words. Lucía Fernández Amaya (2008) states that "pragmatic failure is not noticed in the superficial structure of statements, but it becomes evident when analyzing with the listener what force was s/he trying to express" (p.13).

Pragmatic failure has a strong impact on the flow of any conversation. The interlocutors may be perceived as rude, impolite, overconfident or bossy and maybe observed to be ignorant of the language, or with low linguistic proficiency. Thus ,failure to accommodate and acknowledging the right set of rights and obligations in an interactional instance may result in embarrassment for the speaker and an offence for the other interlocutors.

## 1.6.1. Classification of Pragmatic Failure

The differentiation between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatics made by Leech (1983) prompted Thomas (1983) to define two main forms of ″pragmatic failure″ and it was widely accepted in pragmatics' research practice. Relying on Leech's (1983) concept of pragmalinguistic knowledge, referring it to ″the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions″ (p. 11). Thomas (1983) defines pragmalinguistic failure as:

the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language to another,

or the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances

which are semantically /syntactically equivalent, but which, because of different

'interpretive bias', tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language

(Thomas,1983 ,p. 101)

It happens if the learner cannot express him/herself linguistically in a proper manner. This last, is easy to overcome. At the other end of the scale, sociopragmatics was described by Leech as "the sociological interface of pragmatics" (1983, p. 10). Where the assessments of interlocutors' social distance and social power, rights and obligations, and degree of imposition involved in different linguistic acts have been shown to vary cross-culturally (Takahashi & Beebe, in press; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Bergman & Kasper, in press; Olshtain, 1989; House, 1988).

Therefore, sociopragmatic transfer, then, is operative when the social perceptions underlying language users' interpretation and performance of linguistic action in L2 are influenced by their assessment of subjectively equivalent L1 context. (Kasper, 1992,p. 209). As Olshtain and Cohen put it:

″Speakers may transfer their perceptions about how to perform in given situations from native language behavior in a second language situation .Such transfer could affect whether they would use a given speech act, and if so, how frequently, and how much prestige they afford other participants in the encounter″ (Olshtain and Cohen, 1989, p. 61).

While the disparity between the two words was demonstrated, another term have been emerged, pragmatic universality, "pragmatic knowledge is universally available" as stated by (Kasper,1988 p. 10). It means that "learners have access to the same range of strategies used to implement particular linguistic actions as native speakers have"(Ibid).

Likewise, learners have shown to display a sensibility to some factors such as degree of imposition, the legitimacy of the requisite goal and 'standards of the situation in requesting (House & Kasper, 1987), and severity of the offense, obligation to apologize, and likelihood of apology acceptance in apologizing (House, 1988; Bergman & Kasper, in press).

## 1.6.2. Factors to pragmatic failure

So much can be learned about what induces pragmatic failure, first, pragmatic information in the textbooks and classroom teaching is randomly distributed. Next, the inappropriate cultural transfer of speech acts from L1 to L2 (Thomas, 1983), another reason causing EFL students' pragmatic failure when using language, is the deficient time allotted to the oral expression session (Idri, 2014). Moreover, classes are so crowded that not all students have the opportunity to use language during these oral sessions (Ibid). Furthermore, EFL students have no such opportunity to be exposed to an authentic English environment since they have no contact with native

speakers (Li, 2011). They lack so much of authentic input (Shen, 2013). In fact, he argued:

″One of the necessary conditions for successful language learning is a sufficient exposure, diverse and comprehensible and demanding linguistic and cultural materials of the target language″(p. 134).

Besides, university students do not use English language outside the classroom when communicating with their peers (Ibid, 2014*)*

In addition to the above, occurrences of pragmatic transfer may be influenced by various factors according to Eslami Zohreh (2013) states:

″Occurrences of pragmatic transfer may be influenced by various factors

including learners' perception of language distance between their native

and target language″ (e.g., Takahashi 1996), learning context (e.g., Taka- hashi

and Beebe 1987), instructional effect (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig 2001; Kasper 1982 ,p. 299)

Furthermore, Lo Castro (2003. P, 253) mentions six main factors that constitute real obstacles for SL or FL learners in their enterprise of either comprehending or producing pragmatic knowledge. These six major factors of pragmatic failure are: Pragmatic transfer, stages in interlanguage, lack of adequate exposure to pragmatic norms, Inadequate or uniformed teaching,loyalty to the first language, culture as a result (cultural discrepancy), and motivation .

Unsurprisingly, in the context of learning English as a foreign language, almost all EFL teachers are non-native speakers need to be well qualified to teach the conceptual elements of TL. In fact, there is no appropriate or in-service nor pre-service training provided to the teacher in his/her journey.

## 1.6.3. Examples of pragmatic failure

One example can illustrate pragmalinguistic failure have been mentioned by Thomas 1982 (p.101-102) by Russian speakers of English include the use of "of course":

Native speaker of English: Is it a good restaurant?

Russian speaker of English: Of course.

In this illustration, it is absolutely acceptable for Russians to say that, however for English "of course" means "How stupid" in this context, it implies that speaker is ignorant and stupid to ask like this question therefore the respondent is impolite and is trying to disrespect and insult the other participant.

One example can illustrate socio-pragmatic failure have been mentioned by Reynolds 1995 (p.5).In a conversation occurs between a Chinese passenger (P) and a native English taxi driver (D):

P: Excuse me; I wonder if you could take me to the airport.

D: Oh...! Well...! (Feels at loss!)

Here the passenger's feeling is a mess, where he is in a position of disadvantage of not being native speaker, he felt like he is unfriendly, unnatural and not funny. In this situation native English speakers only use "Airport, please".

Another example, Thomas (1983,p.105) presents "taboos" as an example of sociopragmatic failure. The following conversation shows an example of a taboo where Sara, a native English speaker has just arrived in Korea, her host country. Laura, a Korean, is helping Sara unpack her clothes (Montgomery and Tinsley-Kim, 2001,p. 75):

Laura: What nice things you have!

Sara: Thank you. It took me a long time to pack!

Laura: But your clothes are so tiny. You are too thin! How much do you weigh?

Sara: Uh, well ... I'm not sure.

Laura: Not sure! You're about 52 or 54 kilos, aren't you?

Sara: Uhm well....

Laura: My scale is right in the bathroom there. Let's weigh you now.

Sara: Uhm thank you, really, that's OK.

According to Eun-Sook (2006, p.7), in the western culture it is a taboo to ask about age, weight and so on. Here a taboo can cause sociopragmatics failure.

## 1.7. Conclusion

This chapter attempted to shed light on the main concepts within pragmatics, a prolific and recent field of linguistic investigations. Basic concepts were reviewed, including pragmatic competence, interlanguage, cross-cultural pragmatics, and so forth. Pragmatic failure, which is of significance to this study, was also introduced.

# Chapter Two
# Research Methodology and Design

## 2.1. Introduction

This chapter is solely devoted to the methodology of this enquiry. It is meant to provide a description of research design , sampling techniques (informants) , and procedures that have been followed in this research paper , in addition to a description of how data is collected and the various tools used . The discussion will centre on the merits and shortcomings of each method. Thanks to the designed tools , researchers can access the learners socio- cultural abilities which allow them to plan and perform speech acts. Socio- cultural ability refers to the learners' competence to select the speech act strategies that are appropriate in accordance with the culture (s) involved in the interaction , age , gender , social class etc (Cohen , 1998 . p. 383)

## 2.2. Research Design

The main purpose of this research is to know if third year EFL students expose significant pragmatic competence , thus , particular design , methods , a compelling sampling plan and tools were selected to help achieving the objectives of the research .

A research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted, it constitutes the blueprint for the collection , measurement and the analysis of data . (Kothary . 2004)

Since the current study is dealing with the idea of investigating and exploring problems and difficulties faced by EFL students to achieve the communicative intent ( compared to the informative intent ) , the type of case study ( CS in short ) that is employed is exploratory to study the phenomenon , to explore this problem and to provide a broad understanding of it .

This study adopts a mixed research method to collect the required data , this translates that both quantitative and qualitative tools are used . The aim behind using a mixed- method is its effectiveness and its ability to offer a better understanding of the research problem than either type by itself ( Cresswel, 2009) . Moreover , it would normally allow the research to neutralise, to a certain extent, weaknesses and bias that may arise from using a single method. For Sandelwski (2003) , a mixed method

research is based on three factors : (1) gain a general understanding of the phenomenon , (2) to cross check the findings, and (3) to max out the audiences' cooperation ( in Dorney, 2007). In short , the mixed methods approach ensures more credibility and the validity of the findings . As for data collection , they were collected simultaneously adopting a convergence parallel design , i.e , the data were analysed separetely and compared.

## 2.3. Research Setting and Sampling

The present research took place at the English language deparetment in the University of Tlemcen. It lasted throughout the second semester of the academic year 2021 – 2022 untill september . It was conducted via online platform such as Gmail , Facebook groups , and Messenger .

A very important process in a research is the choice of the appropriate sample, since it determines the value of the collected data and the success of the study . DeVaus (2002, p. 69) defines the population as a 'set of units that the sample is meant to represent ' , a sample is then a portion of the whole population .A good sample should respect the following criteria : (a) homogeneity (members with similar characteristic) "the population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristics" (Cresswell.2012,p .142 ) ; (b) representiveness (represents the target population) , and (c) generalizability ( possibility to generalize the findings on the larger group) "population is all of individuals to whom the facts which being go twill be generalized" (Hadi, 1983)

The target population in this research are third year EFL licence students and EFL teachers at English department of Tlemcen University, they are male and female , belong to the same age group (19 -21 years old ) , such students prepare to obtain their licence degree by the end of the year ( LMD system ) , most of them have been studied English language for more than 10 years, all in between university , middle and secondary education levels.During their three years of study at the university , they are exposed to a variety of subjects to foster their linguistic and communicative abilities .

In determining the sample , the researchers employ either probability or non-probability sampling approaches ( Cresswell, 2012 ) . In this research , the probability sampling with random sampling techniques was employed. This kind of sampling gives the participants equal chances for being chosen for the study , improve the accuracy and representiveness of the results by reducing sampling bias, thus, it avoids the high risk of sampling bias which limits the generalizability of findings that may be considered as threat to external validity .On a large scale , this research builds on the representative sampling paradigm.

Regarding the number of participants, the questionnaire covered a sample of 140 students , the response rate was low, only 41 students fill in the questionnaire . For the test , the return rate was the same , 41 students took part in it. . All the participants kindly required to get access to web links , shared on Facebook students' group to answer the questionnaire / test .

Moreover , six (6) teachers , in the same department , were chosen to answer the interview. This kind of sampling is used to gain detailed knowledge about pragmatic competence instructions and Language proficiency and its effect on developing students socio-cultural abilities to enable them to function appropriately in real – life communication.

## 2.4. Research Instruments

An instrument is a tool for measuring , observing , or documenting data (Cresswell, 2012) . There are three research instruments in this enquiry, a questionnaire , a test (DCT) and an interview. The aim behind the use of a DCT test along with a questionnaire and an interview (triangulation method ) is to offer the opportunity for a thorough understanding of the research topic from multiple data sources, and also invites validation of one source of data by another. Comparing the interview transcripts to the questionnaire and DCT results increase the validity and ensure the reliability of the research, in addition prevents any biased findings. In any interlanguage methodology, as Chen 1996 and Beebe 1995 elaborate  a single data collection instrument is not sufficient and may result in prejudiced findings.

## 2.4.1. The Questionnaire

To inspect EFL third year students' awareness of pragmatic knowledge and pragmatic instructions in their learning process of L2 at the department of English language and literature in the University of Tlemcen , a structured questionnaire was designed to attain the study objectives. Items included in the questionnaire were extracted from different resources collected to reach the research objectives. This last, is characterised as being ″ extremely versatile and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processible″ (Dörnyei, 2007). But , it is worth mentioning that every research tool comes with a list of advantages and disadvantages . Pros of the questionnaire observes that it allows the research to collect a large amount of data in a short time and with a cheap price tag . Cons of the questionnaire argue that the simplicity of the questions make them superficial and make it hard to tackle the problem deeply ;no chance to double check the answers with the informants, in addition to other limitations like the issue of self-deception and social desirability bias .

As for the layout of the questionnaire used in this study , it was opted for a mixed questionnaire with closed-ended and open- ended questions ( see Appendix A).  Multiple choice questions surfaced on the general layout ; this is to help the informants choose what best reflects their opinions / attitude.

The questionnaire is used to collect general information about the students, it consists of a set of self- assessment questions regarding producing and comprehending English , and a set of attitudinal questions ( interests , opinions and practices) when it comes to certain activities. It is devided into four sections :

*The First Section* : ( Items from 1to 4) is devoted to obtain data about students' background and language achievement : why they choose to major in English, how they evaluate their language proficiency in English . While , Q3 and Q4 target their most difficult aspect to acquire in the process of language learning and how they deal with these difficulties .

*The Second Section* : ( Items from 5 to7) gathered information about whether the students are aware or not about the influence of their mother tongue in their

learning process of L2 and if they consider it as a facilitator while they learn a foreign language.

*The Third Section* : ( Items 8 to 12) aimed to know whether students get involved in real English speaking context via communication with natives , while Q9 and Q10 collected information about how aware students are about socio-cultural functions of language. Q11 and Q12 seek to know the students' frequency of being able to understand the surface level of an utterance and not being able to receive the intended meaning i.e , their ability to receive the exact intended speaker intention in a given contextual situation and how do they overcome such obstacles.

Lastly , *the Fourth Section* ( Items 13 to 18) , which is designed to investigate whether third year students accept the fact that pragmatic studies are a crucial part in language learning , and to measure students' attitude towards teachers' practices and how often classes fulfill their needs.

Concerning the data gathered , it will be summarized and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, The results will be presented in the form of tables and graphs .

## 2.4.2. The Test

The test is a research instrument for data collection. It is a set of questions supplied to interlocutors with time limits. These questions can be written ( written examination ) or oral ( oral examination ).

For this investigation a DCTs Test ( Discourse Completion Task ) was chosen. The choice of this instrument could be justified by the fact that to contrue an idea about the students' language abilities vis-a-vis social - cultural dimentions. Moreover, these tasks can provide information about learners' competence in controlled set of situations.

The usefulness of this method lies in the fact that it is time saving , allows gathering large amount of data (Beebe and Cumming, 1996) . It allows the researcher to focus on specific speech act realisations and to manipulate the social and the situational variables like P , SD , and R etc (Cohen , 1998 . p 390) . Thus , it makes

it easy to statistically compare responses from native and non-native speakers ( Blum-Kulka and Olshtain , 1984).Kasper (2000) shows that DCTs are useful if the objectives entail knowing about people's beliefs or values with respect to culture ( ibid :14) .

However , these advantages should not hide certain shortcomings . The problem with DCTs , and the written elicitation tools in general , is the authenticity of data .That is , they cannot capture the non- verbal features of face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, responding in writing as if speaking may inhibit respondents from producing long responses as they often do in interactions ( Cohen . 1996 , p 25 ) . On the whole , DCTs provide data that reflect ″what people think they would say ″ than ″ what people actually do say ″ in a given speech setting ( Golato . 2005 , p. 14 ) . Given the fact that in this study we focus on social variables ( P and SD ) and situational ones ( mainly R and I) , the DCT appears to be the most suitable data collection tool as it achieves the study's objectives.

As for the test used in this study , it was devided into two types : 1) Written DCTs and 2) Multiple -choice DCTs . In each task , the students were required to read a situational prompt and answer the questions . For the first type , students had to write what they think . For the second type, thay were instructed to choose one of the responses already supplied in the written document.

As far as the layout is concerned , the test was divided into two parts . Part A consists of 9 situations ( See Table 2.4) ; It was put together to test the students' pragmatic awareness and eventually allow to get an idea about their pragmatic competence. Part B , on the other hand , comprises 9 situations and supplies information about the informants' general pragmatic knowledge ( See Table 2.5).

Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed contextual variables that could be examined in this kind of studies. Thus, those variables, social distance – level of imposition – Power, were taken into consideration except one which is sex (Ogiermann, 2018). This work was not designed to investigate this variable. Therefore, sex randomly changes across all situations.

The three factors (see Fig 2.1) that affect the choice of the strategy of interaction are:

*Social distance (SD)* refers to the level of interaction between subjects and the relationship between them. The higher the formal the language is. (D) is divided into three types: distant among strangers, medium between acquaintances, and low when interacting with friends.

*Social power (P)* is the level of influence exerted by one person on the other. It is of three types: equal (S=H) friends, high (S>H) in a case of a boss with employees, or low (S<H).

*Level or rank of imposition (R)* refers to difficulty of situation. It mainly depends upon the degree of the request the higher the big the request is.
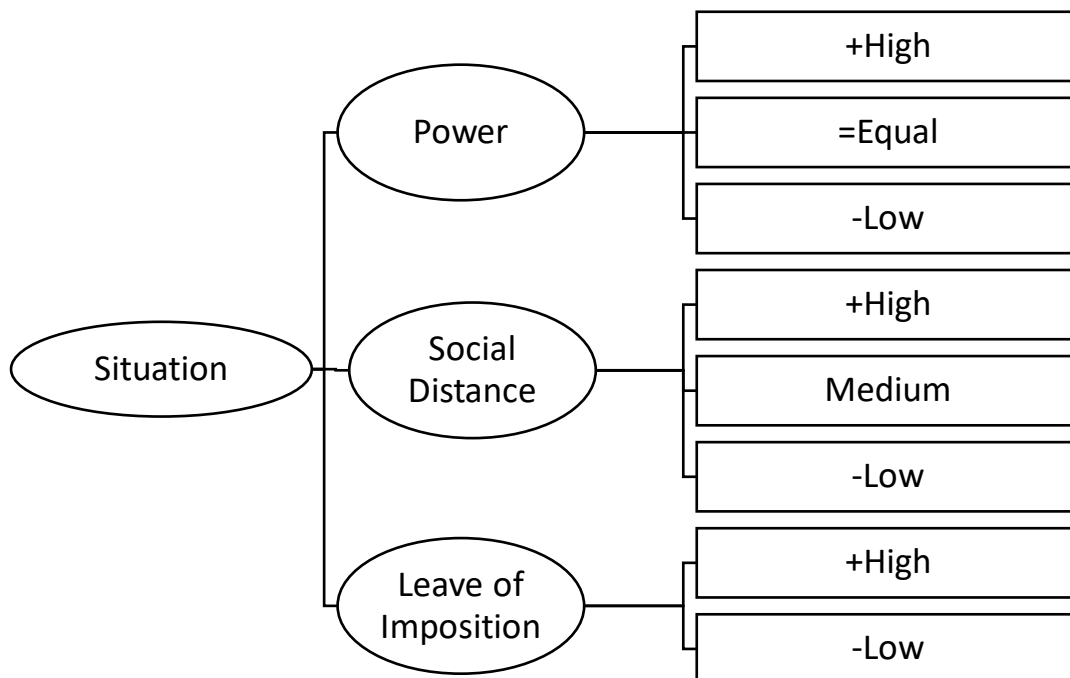


**Figure 2.1 : The Contextual Variables in Each Situation ( in Brown and Levinson, 1987)**

## 2.4.2.1. Description of the Situations

DCT has been used in this study since , as already mentioned , this instrument serves our objectives. The situations used in this study ( see Appendix A and B ) have been validated as appropriate for generating adequate requests , apologies and refusals.

In 1976, Searle develops the concept of Austin on illocutionary acts by proposing five main types of speech acts : representatives , directives, commissives, expressives and declarations . The act of request represents the category of ' directives' , the act of apology represents the category of 'expressives' , and the act of refusal represents the category of ' commissives' .

- **Requests :**

The speech act of requests belongs to the classification of directives, which is according to Searle (1979) ″to get the hearer to do something″ (as cited in Capon and Mey, 2015, p . 836 ) .In fact the importance and the daily use of the request act , has attracted the attention of many researchers in pragmatic studies. For Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper ( 1989), ″requests are pre-event acts, they express the speaker's expectation of the hearer with regards to perspective action, verbal or non verbel″ ( p.11) . That is , the speech act of request is a pre- event act, because the desired result takes place after the request is performed .

Furthermore , Juan and Martinez ( 2010) state that ″For an appropriate requestive behaviour , learners need to possess considerable pragmatic expertise in order to be able to perform requests successfully and avoid the effect of them being perceived as rude , offensive, or demanding″ (p.237) . That is to say , for a successful communication people should use requests in appropriate ways and this is by possessing specific pragmatic expertise. Moreover , by possessing pragmatic expertise, Juan and Martinez ( 2010 ) mean ″ they need to know not only pragmalinguistic knowledge ( i.e the particular linguistic resources for formulating a request ) but also sociopragmatic knowledge ( i.e which contextual and social variables determine the appropriateness of pragmalinguistic choice )″ (p. 237). That is to say , it is important to know not only how sentences are formulated , but to know how to use it according to the right social contexts , in order to avoid conflicts in communication.

In addition , Later , House and Kasper ( House & Kasper, 1981 ; Kasper , 1981) modified their original taxonomy for requests and they formed with Blum-

Kulka and Olshtain 's research (Blum- Kulka 1982 , 1987 ; Blum – Kulka & Olshtain , 1984) the basis of the classification sheme , which was used in the ' Cross- Cultural Speech Act Realization Project ' ( 1989b , henceforth CCSARP), and this lead Blum- Kulka , House and Kasper to categorize system of request strategies , which has been frequently used in ILP request research ( Schauer , 2009 ) . This system of request strategies is illustrated with examples in the following table ( as cited in Schauer, 2009 , p.26) :

**Table 2.1 :** Request Strategies (in Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 278-80)

| Mood derivable | Clean up that mess |
|---|---|
| Performative | I am asking you to clean up that mess |
| Hedged Performative | I would like to ask you to clean up that mess |
| Obligation Statement | You' ll have to clean up that mess |
| Want Statement | I really wish you 'd clean up that mess |
| Suggestory Formula | How about cleaning up ? |
| Query Preparatory | Could you clean up the kitchen, please ? |
| Strong Hint | You have left the kitchen in a right mess |
| Mild Hint | I wanted to cook tonight |

In fact , the above table shows that the act of request is formulated according to nine different strategies , which are grouped in three categories. The first category of request strategies is called ' direct request ' in the CCSARP's scheme . It consists of the mood derivable , performative , hedge performative , obligation statement , and want statement . Whereas ,the second category is called ″conventionally indirect requests″ . It consists of the suggestory formula and query preparatory . The last category is known as ″ non conventionally indirect requests″, where the strong hint , and mid hint strategy are classified in . ( Schauer, 2009 ).

- **Apologies :**

The apologising act , in Searle's classification , a sub category of the expressives ( 1976) , for the reason that they express a psychological state ; a person who apologises for doing A expresses regret for having done A ( Sreale 1979, p 4) .

The apology act takes place only if S believes that some act A has been performed prior to the time of speaking and has resulted in an infraction which affected another person who is now deserving an apology

In fact , the speech act of apology has attracted many researchers in the field of ILP .According to Hepbum and Wiggins ( 2007) « an act that seeks forgiveness and redemption for what is unreasonable, unjustified of defenceless ' ( p.90) . Moreover , Fraser ( 1981) and Olshtain ( 1989) consider the act of apology as « Face saving for Hearer / Recipient and face threatening for Speaker / Writer, because through apologies the Speaker / Writer acknowledges and expresses regret for a fault or offence to the Hearer / Recipient ( as cited in Shen et al , 2015, p . 207 ).In other words , the speaker faces the risk of having a face threating when apologies are not accepted, yet, the hearer's face is saved by receiving an expression of regret from the hearer.

Furthermore, Olshtain and Cohen (1983) provide different strategies for the act of apology . These strategies are illustrated in the following  table ( as cited in Ellis, 1994, p.176) :

**Table 2.2 :** Olshtain and Cohen (1981) Strategies

| Strategy | Example |
|---|---|
| • An expression of apology<br>a-Expression of regret<br>b- An offer of apology<br>c- A request for forgiveness | Iam sorry.<br>I apologize .<br>Excuse me . |
| • An explanation or account of the situation | The bus was late . |
| • An acknowledgement of responsibility<br>• Accepting the blame<br>• Expressing self – deficiency<br>• Recognizing the other person as deserving apology<br>• Expressing lack of intent | It's my fault.<br>I wasn't thinking.<br>You are right.<br>I didn't mean to |
| • An offer of repair | I'll pay for the broken vase |

| • A promise of forbearance | It won 't happen again . |
|---|---|

As it is mentioned in the above table , Olshtain and Cohen provide five main categories of apologies , where the apologizer feels the need to apologize. Moreover, each of these categories has different sub- categories.

- **Refusals :**

As it is mentioned before , the speech act of refusals takes place within the commissive category of Searle's classification of speech acts . In fact , Chen et al ( 1995) claim that a refusal is the act within the speaker « denies to engage in an action proposed by the interlocuter » ( as cited in Gass & Houck, 1999 ,p.2 ). It is a post – event , it can be direct or indirect act but it does show case of a good level of pragmatic competence if done correctly . In addition, Brown and Levinson ( 1987) claims :

The speech act of refusal is a face- threaten act because of its non- compliant nature.In Refusal of directive (e.g, requests , suggestion ), the  speaker averts a threat to her negative Face , while a refusal to a commissive (e.g., offer , invitation ) involves the speaker declining Support of her positive place. ( as cited in Arnàndiz et al , 2013, p.101)

That is to say, the act of refusa lis considered as act that threatening the face , because its nature as a reaction of unwillingnesss to comply.

Furthermore, Beebe and et al ( 1990) developed a Taxonomy of refusals that offers three direct strategies of refusals and eleven indirect strategies of refusals. These strategies are illustrated in the following table ( as cited in Planques, 2011, p. 73) :

**Table 2.3 :** Beebe and et al (1990 ) Classification of refusals

| Direct Strategies | Performative | I refuse |
|---|---|---|
| | Non – Performative | No |
| | Negative willingless ability | I cannot ,I won't , Idon't think so |
| Indirect Strategies | Statement of regret | I am sorry |
| | Wish | I wish Icould help you |
| | Excuse , reason or explanation | My children will be home that night . I have a headache . |
| | Statement of alternative | I'd rather / I'd prefer |
| | Set condition for future / past acceptance. | If you had asked me earlier, I would have .. |
| | Promise of future acceptance | I' ll do it next time. I promise I will Next time I will |
| | Statement of principle | I never do business with friends . |
| | Statement of philisophy Attempt to dissuade the interlocutor Acceptance that functions as a refusal. Avoidance : • Non-verbal : silence , hesitation, doing nothing, physical departure . • Verbal : topic switch , joke, repetition of part of the request. • Postponement • Hedge | One can be too careful. I want be any fun tonight a.Unspecific or indefinite reply. b. Lack of enthusiasm Monday ? I' ll think about it Gee , I don't know .I'm not sure . |

So , the table above illustrates the different strategies of refusal , as introduced by Beebe ( 1990) . It is noticeable that this act consists of many indirect strategies. These different indirect strategies make the refusal act a complex one among the other speech act , thus , this it may lead to misunderstanding.

The situations in this test , as already mentioned , have been designed to test the effect of three variables for each speech act : P ( Power or dominance ) , SD ( Social Distance ) , R ( Rank of imposition ) . The test consists of a total of 18 speech acts : 6 directives , 6 expressives and 6 commissives acts based on Searle's categorization , it is divided equally into two parts A and B . (See Tables 2.4 and Table 2.5 )

**Table 2.4 :** DCT Part A

| DISCOURSE COMPLETION | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Speech Act | Situations | Brief Description | Variables | | |
| | | | P (S/H) | SD | R / I |
| | 1 | Asking a university professor to lend a book | low | Medium | low |
| | 2 | Asking a salesclerk to take out a present for a closer look. | High | Distant | low |
| | 3 | Asking a classmate to lend a dictionary | Equal | Close | low |
| | 4 | Apologising to a university professor for forgetting a book . | low | Medium | low |
| | 5 | Apologising to young sister for not helping in homework. | Equal | Close | low |
| | 6 | Apologising for bags falling from a rack on a passenger.. | Equal | Distant | High |
| | 7 | Declining an invitation to go to a boss's house warming party | low | Medium | low |
| | 8 | Declining a shop assistant suggestion to buy an expensive pair of shoes | High | Distant | low |
| | 9 | Declining a close friend's suggestion to ralax | Equal | Close | low |

## 2.4.2.1.a. Description of Part A

Table 2.4 represents items used in part A ( written DCT ) of the test ( See Appendix B). The items varied in terms of their socio-pragmatic features to diversity the context . Power ( P) changes from high to equal to low , the social distance ( SD) from close to medium to distant , and rank of imposition ( R) was slow except for one situation where itw as high . The instruction was to fill in the blank space after the situational prompt mentioned.

Situation 1 : is a request ,   (P)=  L , (SD) = M , (R) = L

Situation 2 : is a request,    (P) =  H  , (SD ) = D, (R) = L

Situation 3:  is a request,   (P) = E,   (SD) = C, (R) = L

Situation 4: is an apology,  (P) = L, (SD) = M, (R) =  L

Situation 5: is an apology,  (P) = E, (SD) = D, (R) = H

Situation 6: is an apology,  (P) =  E  , (SD) = D, (R) = L

Situation 7: is a refusal,     (P) =  L, (SD) = M, (R) = L

Situation 9: is a refusal,     (P) = H, (SD) = D, (R) = L

Situation 9: is a refusal,     (P) = E , (SD ) = C, (R) = L

**Table 2.5 :** DCT Part B

| Multiple Choices | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Speech Act | Situation | Brief Description | Variables | | |
| | | | P (S/H) | SD | R / I |
| Requests | 1 | Asking help for a workmate about computer use. | Equal | Close | Low |
| | 2 | Askinf a strange to help in carrying bags . | Equal | Distant | High |
| | 3 | Asking a stranger about the time . | Equal | Distant | Low |
| Apologies | 4 | Apologising to a close friend for forgetting a get- together. | Equal | Close | Low |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | Apologising for stepping on a lady's foot . | Equal | Distant | Low |
| | 6 | Apologising for dialling a wrong number . | Equal | Distant | Low |
| Refusals | 7 | Declining a boss's suggestion to leave a faulty motorcycle in the office. | low | Medium | High |
| | 8 | Declining a staff's suggestion to use a different operating system to avoid computer virus . | Equal | Close | Low |
| | 9 | Declining a close friend's invitation to go to the beach | Equal | Close | Low |

## 2.4.2.1.b. Description of Part B

Table 2.5 represents items used in part B ( Multiple – choice DCT ) of the test (See Appendix B). Power was equal ,except for one situation where it was low. The social distance from close to distant , except for one situation where itw as medium , and the level of imposition varied from low to high . The instruction was to tick where appropriate.

Situation1: is a request ,   (P) = E, (SD) = C, (R) = L

Situation 2: is a request,   (P) = E, (SD) = D, (R) = H

Situation 3: is a request,   (P) = E, (SD) = D, (R) = L

Situation 4: is an apology, (P) = E, (SD) = C, (R) = H

Situation 5: is a apology,  (P) = E, (SD) = D, (R) = L

Situation 6: is an apology, (P) = E, (SD) =D , (R) = L

Situation 7: is a refusal  ,  (P) = L, (SD) = M, (R) = L

Situation 8: is a refusal,    (P) = E, (SD) = C, (R) = L

Situation 9: is a refusal,    (P) = E, (SD) = C, (R) = L

Nevertheless , these variables may not be perceived the same way by allinformants and any situation that show such scenario will be highlighted.

## 2.4.2.2. Procedures of Analysis for the 1st Part of the Test

The speech acts were encoded and analysed following various schemes :

**Table 2.6 :** Coding and Analyses Schemes in Part A

| Speech Act | Coding and Analyses Schemes |
|---|---|
| Requests | The CCSARP Coding Manual put forward by Blum-Kulka et al ( 1989) |
| Apologies | |
| Refusals | The The semantics formulas introduced by Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) |

## 2.4.2.2.a. Request

Blum-Kulka et al (1989, p.273) divided requests into three main components : Alert, Head Act , and the Supportive Moves.

- – *Alert* : 'an element whose function is to alert the hearer's attention to the ensuring speech act '.It occures at the beginning of the statement . It can be a title , the H's first name or nickname or any expression of attention – getting like *hey* , *excuse me*  etc . The ultimate function of the alert is to introduce the head act .

- – *Head Act [HA]* : is the most important component of the requestive act , since it contains the propositional content, and it is defined as « the minimal unit which can realise a request , it is the core of the request sequence ' . An S can realise a request by the HA only , but due to certain contextual considerations supportive moves may be needed .

- – *Supportive Moves [SMs]* : elements whose function is to alter the impact the request has , they are two types, mitigating and aggravating SMs. As their names suggest , the first are used to reduce the harm of the negative effect of a face threatening act , and the second , by contrast , are used to increase the effectiveness of the request with less attention paid to the face threatening nature of the act .

A concrete example from this study's TL data would be :

Excuse me [Alert ], do you think it would be possible for me

To borrow that book which is on your desk [HA] ? It is one that would be

Very useful to me for my research [SM]

Blum-kulka et al (1989, p. 276) argue the segments previously mentioned can occur in the following structure :

- HA on its own. In this case it is considered as a minimal unit

- HA + SMs is referred to as a post-posed

- SMs + HA is mentioned as a pre-posed

Blum-kulka and Olshtain ( 1984) suggest coding conventions to cope with the different HAs and SMs strategies used either by NSs or NNSs ( non- native speakers) of the language investigated.For HAs , nine strategies were identified . They are represented in ( Table 2.7) from the most to the least explicit , along with examples for illustration . These nine categories represent three levels of

directness ( Blum-kulka and Olshtain , 1984, p. 201 )

**Table 2.7 :** Nine Request HA Strategies (according to Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 278-80)

| HAs | Definitions | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Mood derivable | The grammatical mood of the locution conventionallydetermines its illocutionary force as a *request* . | *Leave me alone.*<br>*Clean up the kitchen* |
| Explicit performative | The illocutionary intent is explicitly named by the S by using a relevant illocutionary verb. | *I am asking you to move your car.* |
| Hedged performative | The illocutionary verb denoting the requestive intent is modified, e.g., by modal verbs or verbs express ingintention. | *I must/have to ask you to clean the kitchen right now.* |
| Locution derivable | The illocutionary intent is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution. | *Madam you'll have to/should/must/ought to move your car.* |
| Want statement | The utterance expresses the S's desire that the event denoted in the proposition come about. | *I'_d like to borrow your notes for a little while.* |
| Suggestory formula | The illocutionary intent is phrased as a suggestion by means of a framing routine formula . | *How about cleaning up the*<br>*kitchen?* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Query preparatory | The utterance contains preparatory condition for the feasibility of the *request*, typically one of ability, willingness, or possibility, as conventionalised in a given language. Very often, the S questions rather than states the presence of the chosen preparatory condition | *Can I borrow your notes? Could you possibly get your assignment done this week? I was wondering if you would give me a lift.* |
| Strong hint | The locutionary intent is not immediately derivable from the locution; however, the locution refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary and/or propositional act. | *Will you be going home now? (Intent: getting a lift home).* |
| Mild hint | The locution contains no elements which are of immediate relevance to the intended illocution or proposition, thus putting increased demand for context analysis and knowledge activation on the interlocutor. | *You have been busy here, haven't you?* |

The CCSARP proposed a universally- applicable taxonomy for categorising request strategies. The taxonomy is as follows :

1.*Direct or bold on record requests* : realised via explicit linguistic devices. This category includes the first five strategies listed in (Table 2.7).

2. *Structural* or *conventional indirect requests*: realised via linguistic devices that refer to the contextual preconditions required for its performance, as is the convention in a particular language. This category includes *suggestory formula* and *query preparatory*.

3. *Pragmatic* or *non-conventional indirect requests*: These types are realised via linguistic devices that are needed for the performance of the act or by resorting to contextual cues. This level is realised by hints.

Requests

Direct (Imposition)                    Indirect

Conventional                                         Non-Conventional

Conventional          Language              Pragmalinguistic
Conventions          Conventions             Conventions           Contextual Principle

Conventions of Form          Conventions of
Means
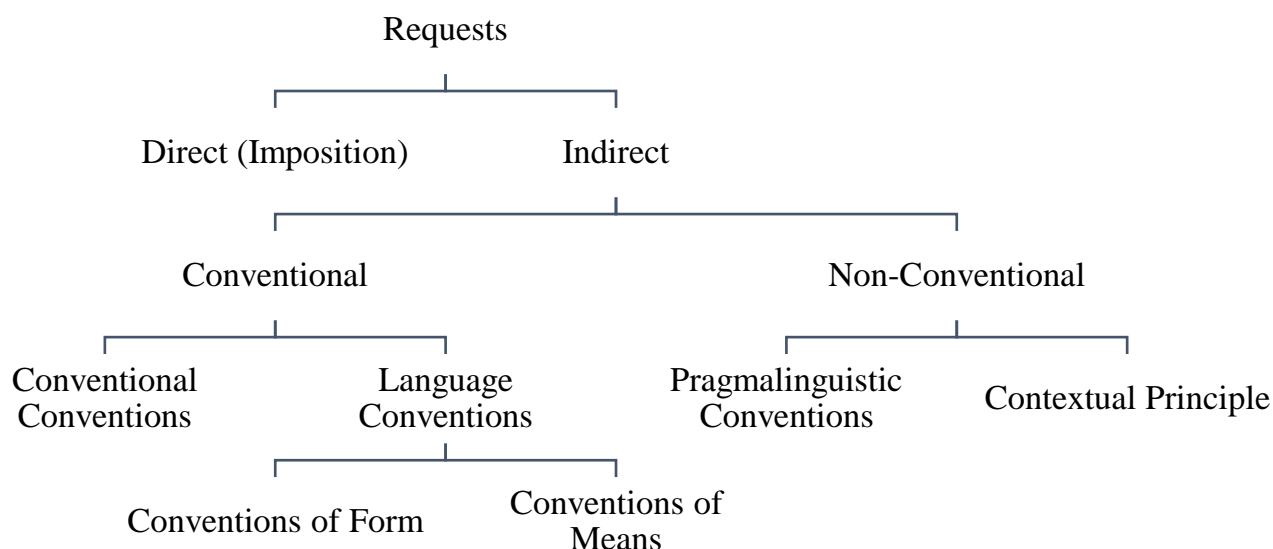
**Figure 2.2 : Directness Levels in Requests ( Blum-Kulka et al. 1989 ,p. 45)**

## 2.4.2.2.b. Apology

Blum-kulka et al . (1989) elicited from the different investigated languages almost universal formulae . The Apologetic formula can be divided into three classes :

1)- *Alert* : is identical to that used in requests realisation , like Sweetie , I am so sorry .

2)- *IFID* : illocutionary force indicating device like : I'm sorry , I apologise .

3)-*Intensification* : it can be IFID – internal like adverbials ( so , terribly , truly etc…), emotional expressions ( Oh no / Oh my gosh / Oops , etc .) or external ( like concern for the H , have you been waiting long ? ) ( ibid , 1989 ) . The speaker can use a combination of the above – mentioned expressions.

Apart from IFIDs , many strategies can also be used :

-Taking on responsibility : it can be in the form of :

a- Explicit self- blame : It is my fault

b- Lack of intent : I didn't mean to

c- Expression of self – deficiency : I completely forgot .

d- Expression of embarrassment : I feel terrible about this

-Explanation or account : the apologiser may opt for expressing reasons and the circumstances of his violation trying to get H to accept his apology . It can be :

- Explicit : I was in rush this morning and forgot your book at home .

- Implicit : I had to take care of something .

-An offer of repair : Sorry , I'll pay for the broken vase.

-A Promise of forbearance : It won't happen again .

-Tactical moves namely labelled as distracting from the offence such as: humor, appeaser, etc

The following example demonstrates how strategies can be combined :

Professor…..( Alert), I'm so sorry I didn't get this back when I said I would ( IFID ) . It won't happen again ( promise of forbearance )

### 2.4.2.2.c. Refusals

To classify the use of refusal strategies ,the present study adopted the taxonomy of refusal proposed by Beebe et al . (1990) . Refusal responses consisted of semantic formulae , the main utterances to perform refusals and adjuncts to refusals.

•direct refusal strategy consists of either :

A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse.")

B. Non performative could be displayed in the form of a "No" or show a negative willingness to act for example "I can't" "I don't" Indirect refusal strategy consists of :

A. Statement of regret (e.g., "I'm sorry. . ."; "I feel terrible. . .")

B. Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help you. . .")

C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; "I have a headache. [2])

D. Statement of alternative (e.g., I'd prefer. . .", "Why don't you ask someone else?")

E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have… [2])

F. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., "I'll do it next time"; "I promise I'll. .or "Next time I'll. . ." — using" will" of promise or "promise")

G. Statement of principle (e.g., "I never do business with friends.")

H. Statement of philosophy (e.g., "One can't be too careful

I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor could be in the form of request for help And empathy  May let interlocutor of the book "Don't worry about it";   self defence « I'm doing all I canDo [2], in addition to other forms .

J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal

K. Avoidance could be nonverbal (silence, hesitation…) or verbal change  of topic, jokes

- Adjuncts

A. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement ("That's a good idea."I'd love to. . .")

B. Statement of empathy (e.g., "I realize you are in a difficult situation.")

C. Pause fillers (e.g., "uhh"; "well"; "oh"; "uhm")

D. Gratitude/Appreciation

## 2.4.3. The Interview

In this study , to inspect EFL teachers' perception and practices of pragmatic competence in their EFL classrooms at the department of English language and literature in the university of Tlemcen , a semi- structured interview was designed , conducted via online platforms. Denscombe ( 2010) considers interviews as the most flexible data collection method as they permit adjustments to the lines of enquiry during the process of interviewing.

The interview contains nine (9) items revolved around the following themes :

The first set of questions are devoted to scrutinize the importance of pragmatic competence in learning L2 and pragmatic training for teachers. The second part is dedicated to investigate teachers' perception / awareness of the learners' socio cultural abilities while learning a second language

And avoiding pragmatic failure. Whereas , the third set of questions is deliberated to the practice of different types of speech acts in the EFL context and problems faced. These questions are presented as follow :

At first , teachers were asked whether they have received a formal training to teach pragmatic contents , and if they really focus mostly on linguistic competence rather than other competences as pragmatic competence. Then they were asked to give their opinion about what would make an EFL student proficient and if there is any possible correlation between pragmatic competence and language proficiency . Moreover ,the teachers were asked to give their opinion about to what extent they believe third year students of English are equipped with the competence of analysing language used by natives in their conversations.

Last but not least , EFL teachers at the university of Tlemcen were asked four more questions which are dedicated to the practice of speech acts. Among the questions whether they make sure to acculturate the language materials used in their classrooms and how. Also , the different techniques and strategies they use to teach their students some communicative aspects. Each section of the interview will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by using descriptive statistics , i.e,

percentage and numbers . The results will be presented in the form of tables and graphs.

## 2.4.4. Administration of the Research Instruments

Both the questionnaire and the discourse completion test were helpful in terms of speed , cost and ease of reaching the target group . Besides , anonymity improved the quality of responses. They were submitted to third year students in the department of English language and literature at the University of Tlemcen with a population of 140 . This was to eliminate batch and age variation . The sample was chosen randomly and virtually submitted via link using both Gmail , and Facebook groups. The sample consists of fourty (40) students who have been studing pragmatic aspects over the two past years.

## 2.5. Conclusion

This chapter was a composite of three subsections namely : the research design of the present study , the sample taking part in this study , research instruments and the procedures for analysis adopted for this research . Thus, the second chapter will be devoted to analyse statistical and thematic data obtained from students' answers of the questionnaire , the DCT, in addition to the teachers' interview to provide answers for the research questions and come up with a conclusion regarding the students' performance.

# Chapter Three
# Data Analysis, Results, and Discussion

## 3.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical side of this study , whereby we analyse the data obtained from the students' questionnaire , the DCT , in addition to the teachers' interview. Then , it provides an interpretation and discussion for these results , where we answer the research questions and check the hypotheses of the study. Four research questions were investigated using the three research tools ; they are classified in the following manner :

**Table 3.1 :** Investigation Process

| Research Questions | Research instruments |
|---|---|
| 1. To what extent are 3rd year EFL students pragmatically competent ? | Questionnaire / Test |
| 2. Do they exhibit any kind of pragmatic failure ? | Test |
| 3. What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the use of pragmatic instruction in teaching foreign languages ? | Teachers' Interview |

Hence , a detailed description of the findings is displayed below with the aim of finding answers for the research questions.

## 3.2. The questionnaire

## 3.2.1. Section one

The main aim of this section is to obtain data about third year EFL learners' choices and language achievements concerning the study matter. Items 1and 2 are set to know the reasons that motivated those students to choose English language as a field of study in their higher education , as well as the informants' perception of their current levels in English language interms of the four skills.

Tables Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 below display the data collected from those two items :

**Q1 :** Why did you choose to major in English ?

**Table 3.2 :** Students' purpose for choosing English as a Major

| It was your only choice | You need it for a job | Get access to international communication | It is a global language . | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 10 | 7 | 16 | 41 |

From Table (Table 3.2) shown above , we can notice that 16 of the students (N=16 out of 41) have chosen the last answer .So , what motivates the students to learn English language is its high international/ global status. Their least favourite choice is getting access to international communication (N=7).Still, the rest proclaimed that the need for a job and that English was their only choice is solemnly the reason behind their interest in English as a language.

**Q2 :** How would you evaluate your present level of English ?
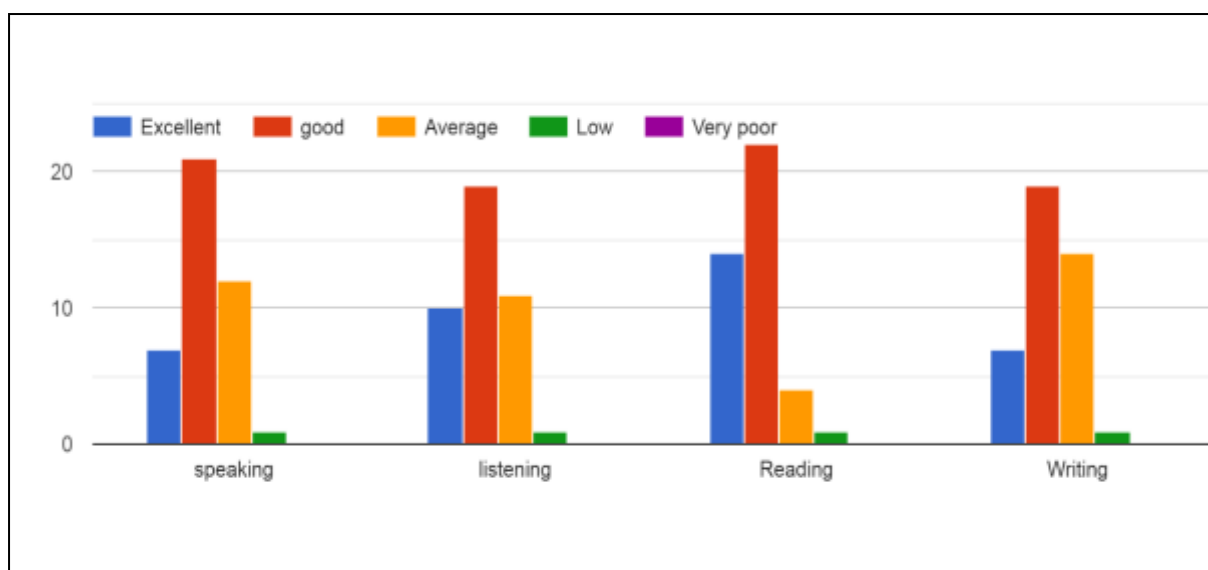


**Figure 3.1 : The students' self- evaluation of proficiency in the four skills of English**

**Table 3.3 :** The students' self- evaluation of proficiency in the four skills of English

| Proficiency / Skill | Excellent | Good | Average | Low | Very poor | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listening | 10 | 19 | 11 | 01 | 00 | 41 |
| Speaking | 07 | 21 | 12 | 01 | 00 | 41 |
| Reading | 14 | 22 | 04 | 01 | 00 | 41 |
| Writing | 07 | 19 | 14 | 01 | 00 | 41 |

Figure 2.1 and Table 3.3 : The students' self- evaluation of proficiency in the four skills of English expose the students' perception of their levels in the four skills of English .The informants go in two directions ' good ' and ' average '. The majority of them overly expressed that they have a good level in the four skills, (N= 19 in the listening skill) , (N= 21 in the speaking skill ) , ( N= 22 in the reading skill ) and ( N= 19 in the writing skill) , and a quite good proportion of them announced that they have an average level in three skills, listening , speaking and writing . Whereas, some of them believe that they have an excellent level in the reading skill (N= 14 in the reading skill) , as well as a minority that affirms a level of low in the four skills.

Questionnaire items 3 and 4 target learners' most difficult aspects of English language to acquire   during the process of learning it as a foreign language , and to check the students' ability to understand the English language , besides investigating how these students deal with the difficulties , that face them understanding this target language. The results are displayed in Table 3.4

**Q3 :**  According to your experience ,which aspect of English  learning has been so far the most difficult to acquire ?

**Table 3.4 :** Students' Most Difficult Aspect to Acquire in the Process of Learning a Foreign Language

| Language Learning Aspects | Number of Students | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | 8 | 19 % |
| Grammatical structure | 10 | 24 % |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Verbal Communication | 14 | 34% |
| Pronunciation | 4 | 9 % |
| Spelling and Composition | 5 | 12 % |

From Table 3.4 as shown above , it is noted that fourteen (14) students with the rate of (34%) face a problem when it comes to verbal communication , whereas ten (10) of them with an average of (24%) tend to struggle with grammatical structure of sentences , in addition to that , eight ( 8) students representing a percentage of (19%) have a problem with vocabulary and five ( 5 ) of them with a rate of (12%) have difficulties with the spelling and composition of words , only four (4) students with a rate of ( 9,8%) struggle with pronunciation in the EFL classroom.

In foreign language classroom , learners are not acquainted to produce the language orally ; in fact , they are only exposed to explicit learning focusing on the use of language rules. Due to this fact, students might find themselves struggle to utter a sentence. This might explain why third year students struggle to both produce and interprete contextulised utterances in L2 .

**Q4 :** What do you do when you face difficulties in understanding English ?
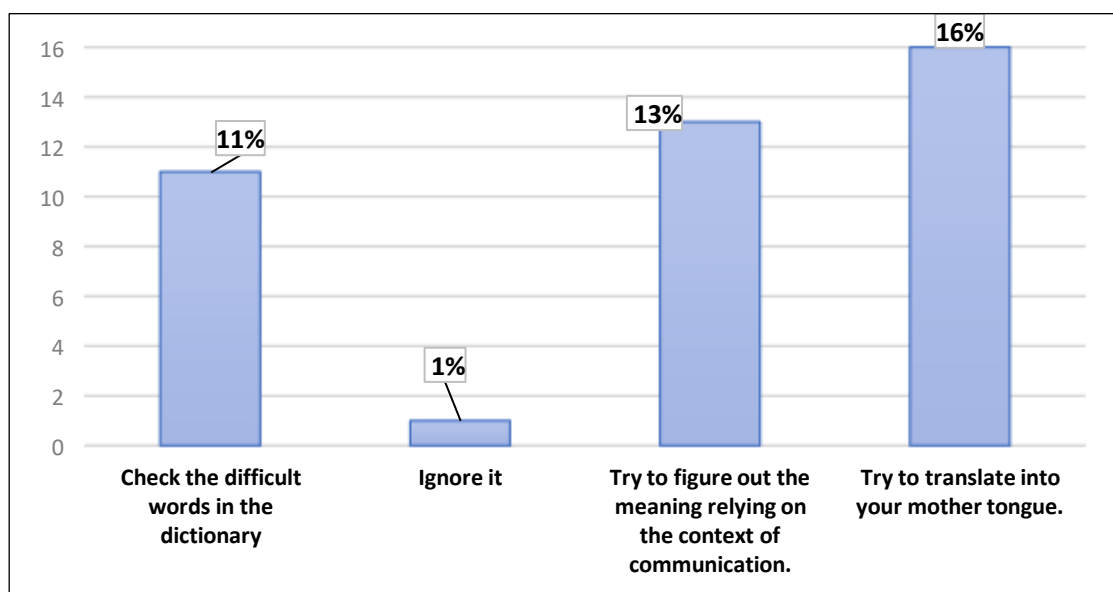


**Figure 3.2 : How students deal with Difficulties to understand English Language ?**

Figure 3.2 : How students deal with Difficulties to understand English Language ?represents how students face and deal with the difficulties in understanding the English language . The answers were mainly centered on two main solutions , going back to their mother tongue and depending on it to understand the English language with a rate of (16% ) , and relying on the context of communication to figure out the meaning ( 13% ) , besides that ( 11%) of them state that they refer to the dictionary to check the difficult words . Only (1%) of them affirm that they ignore that difficulties .

### 3.2.2. Section Two

It includes Items 5 to 7 , falls along the line of whether the students are aware or not about the influence of the mother tongue (L1) on their language learning and use , and if they consider it as a facilitator or they think that it can be an obsticle in their learning process of a foreign language.

**Q 5 :** Do you feel more comfortable when the teacher explains the lesson by using only, the English language or When he uses both English and Arabic ?

This question aims to investigate the students' ability to understand the English language inside the Classroom. The results are in the following pie chart .



By using only, the E...
48,8%

When the teacher u...
51,2%
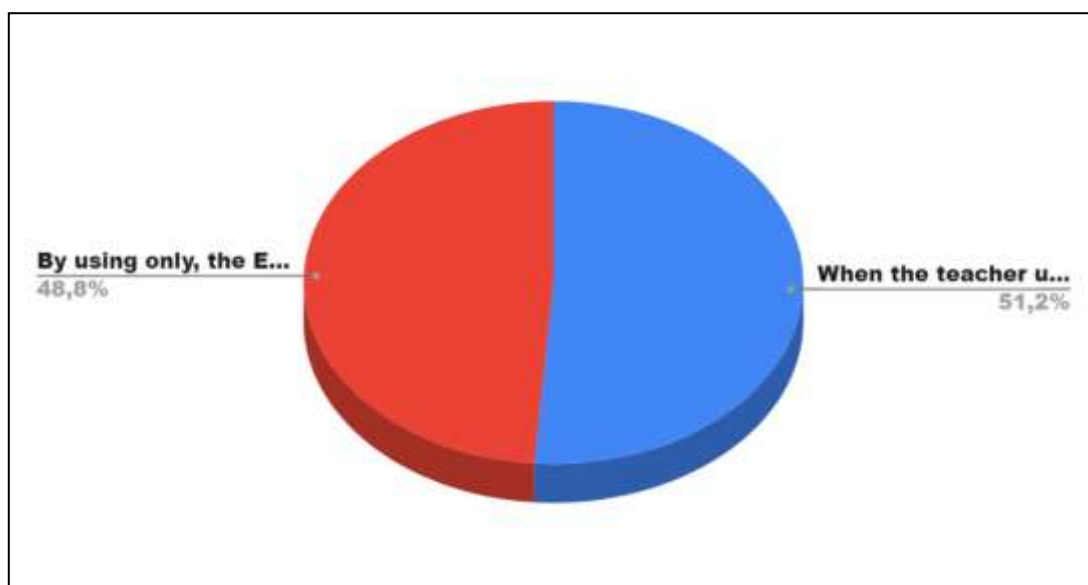
**Figure 3.3 : Students' ability to understand English language inside the classroom**

The data show that (51%) of the students go back to their mother tongue and depend on it to understand the English language , whereas (48%) of them feel more comfortable when the teacher explains the lesson , by using English language only.

This confirms the existence of the influence of the mother tongue on learning a foreign language . For that reason learners should be aware about this influence , in order to avoid producing errors in the target language and have a successful communication .

**Q6 & Q7**

**Q6 :** Do you think that the first language can influence the use of the target language ?

**Q7 :** In your opinion, can the mother tongue be an obstacle in learning foreign languages ?

**Table 3.5 :** The Influence of the Mother Tongue on the Use of the Target Language

| The influence of L1 on the use of L2 | Percentge | L1 as an obsticle in learning L2 | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Greatly | 10% | | 4 % |
| To some extent | 30% | | 27 % |
| Not at all | 1% | | 4 % |

Both Q6 and Q7 responses have been integrated and illustrated in Table ( 3.5) above and showed that most students with a rate of (30% ) think that to some extent, the mother tongue really influence the use of the target language and can be an obsticale in learning a foreign language.Thus , we can say that the students , who are aware about the influence of their mother tongue find that it makes their learning difficult. In fact, from this answer we can say that these students think in English, since most of them are aware about this influence , and this lead them to see their mother tongue as an obsticle in learning a foreign language , although most of them

answered in the previous question that they go back to their mother tongue  to understand English language.

## 3.2.3. Section Three

It includes Items 8 to 12 .

**Q8** : was utilized to know whether , students get involved in real English speaking context with natives to examine whether , they get the chance to practice their language outside the classroom, in a total exposure natural setting.

**Table 3.6 :** The Frequency of Interaction with Natives

| Total | Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|-------|--------|------------|-----------|--------|-------|
| 41    | 3      | 7          | 10        | 5      | 16    |

Table 3.6 : The Frequency of Interaction with Natives displays the frequency of interaction with foreigners in English , it shows that a good proportion (N=16) opted for the never option .Ten (N=10) of the students adopted the sometimes option , however , very few ( N=3) selected the always option , and the rest (N=7) went for the frequently choice and five (N=5) for the rarely one.

From the responses to item 8 , it is clear that students unfortunately , don't have even a medium level of interest for the native like language use experience which forms a fundamental aspect to develop a good level of output and input for the language , though the current situation and the accessibility of the internet and social media apps offer them good opportunities to get a constant interconnection with native speakers.

**Q9 and Q10** : investigate learners' beliefs on the importance of learning about the target language's Cultural context and why is it important according to them.

**Q9 :** Is it important to know about the target language culture in learning a Foreign Language ?
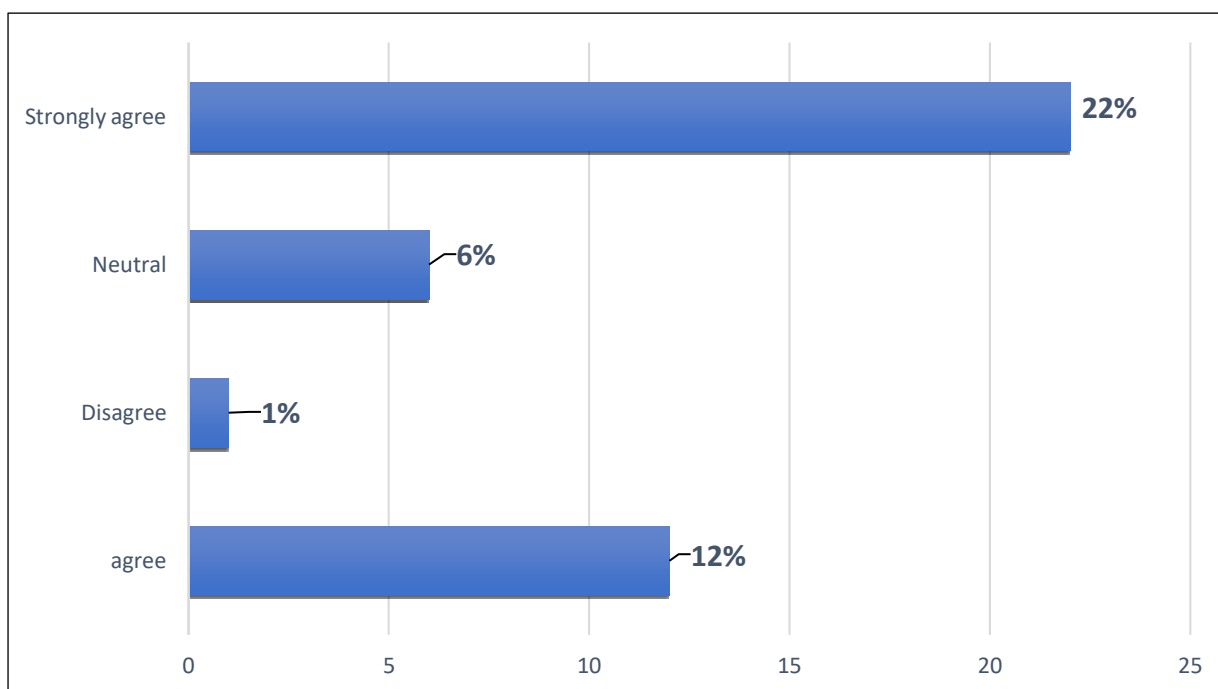
**Figure 3.4 : Learners' beliefs on the importance of learning about the target language's cultural context**

The previous graph indicates that most of the students show a strong agreement [ strong agreement (22%), agreement (12%)] and are highly aware of the importance of learning about the target language's cultural context ,when learning a foreign language. While (6%) show the complete opposite and give an impression of low level of awareness.

**Q10** : Why is it important to know about the target language culture in learning a Foreign Language ?

**Q10** : was an open- ended question , it was implemented to give space for students to express themselves regarding the reasons for   the importance of the L2 cultural context. Most of the students highlighted this importance when learning a foreign language for many reasons , but the answers were centered on two main reasons ,the first one is  decoding the meaning of words , expressions , idioms and proverbs that can only make sense in that target language context , so that it may increase comprehension , one interesting answer of those responses was : ' The one who doesn't know the culture of one language can't decode its meaning. '. The second reason is about their ability to interact with native English speakers , claiming

70

that the lack of culture in context , results in wrong choice of diction and formality , which led to misunderstanding and confusion. In addition to other responses, like that, some of the students suggest that real situations and context with integrating more cultural aspects of L2 are highly needed in oral and written expression classes , so learning about context will boost their speaking and writing skills .

To conclude **,** items 9 and 10 show that participants are trying to develop their understanding of English and its cultural related aspects.

**Q11 and Q12** seek to know the students' ability to understand the surface level of an utterance and not being able to receive the intended meaning .i.e. their ability to receive the exact intended speaker's intention in a given contextual situation , and in case they face this problem , how do they overcome such obsticles ?.

As below , the responses are demonstrated in terms of percentages and illustrated in a pie chart for more feasibility .

**Q11 :** Does it happen that you understand meaning of words but you fail to understand the speaker's intention when engaging in an English -based communication ?
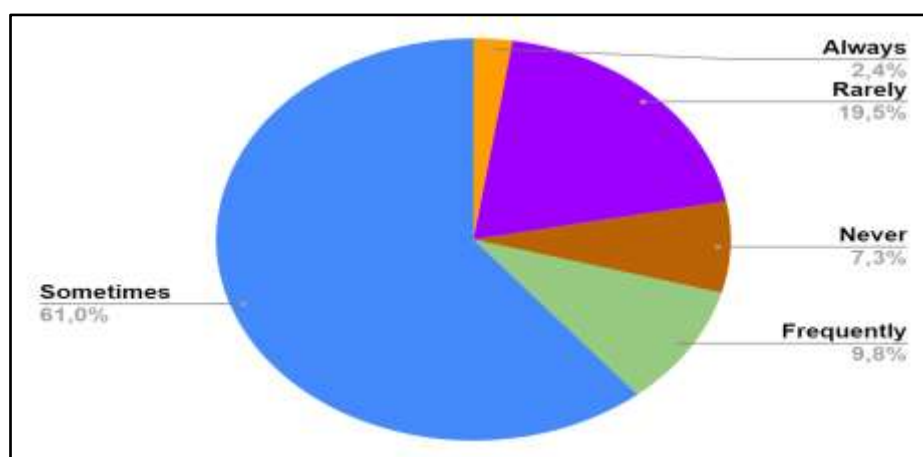


**Figure 3.5 : Students' Frequency to understand Foreigners' Intentions**

We notice from the collected data of this question which is illustrated in figure 3.7 above , that most students ( N=25) with a rate of ( 61%) 'sometimes 'can understand the meanings of words but fail to understand the speakers' intention when they use English for communication , and only few of them (N=8) with an average of

(19%) 'rarely ' understand the speakers' intention , while (N= 4) students representing (9% ) said that they are ' frequently ' able to do .

It might be deduced as following : Over years EFL learners were opted to only develop their linguistic competence , ignoring and leaping the pragmatic one , which is the basic to be successful communicators with an ability to comprehend not only the surface level of an utterance but the conversionally implied meaning, Besides the lack of exposure to L2 .

**Q12 :** In case you face problems with understanding  the intended (true) meaning in

**Q12** in this section , was also an open-ended question , it was utilized to investigate how learners overcome some obsticles , while interacting with natives in English as 'Failure to express their intentions' and ' Failure to understand their intentions'.i.e the foreigners' intentions. Most of the learners' responses were centered on two main solutions, asking for further explanation from the addressee to clarify or restate his point in an alternative way ,even by using non- verbal communication as gestures , facial expressions…What was interesting is that most of the informants declared that they make efforts to translate words , statements to their mother tongue to make sense of them , and this prove the great  influence of L1 on learning L2 negatively.Others suggest to read and practice more the language.

### 3.2.4. Section Four

It includes Items 13 to 18 . This section examined the students' perceptions and awareness about the role of cultural and  pragmatic knowledge and instruction in learning a foreign language.

 **Q13 :** Does pragmatic competence essencial for a successful language use ?
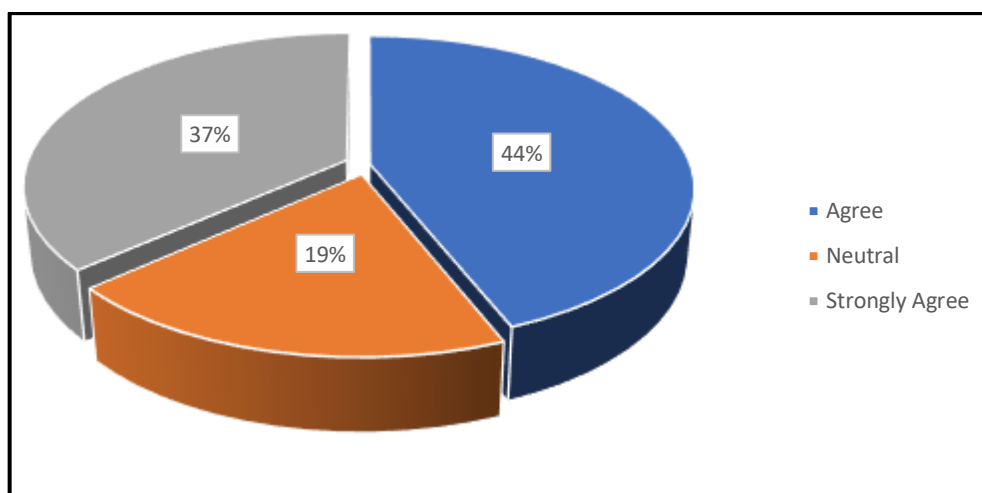
**Figure 3.6 : Students' Perception on Pragmatic Competence**

The graph depicts that (37%) of the informants show a strong agreement and (44%) show an agreement ; they are aware of the fact that pragmatic competence is a crucial aspect for a successful language use and highly important in EFL classes.

**Q14** : Do EFL learners face difficulties in developing pragmatic competence due to the lack of exposure to L2 and the lack of interaction with other speakers ?
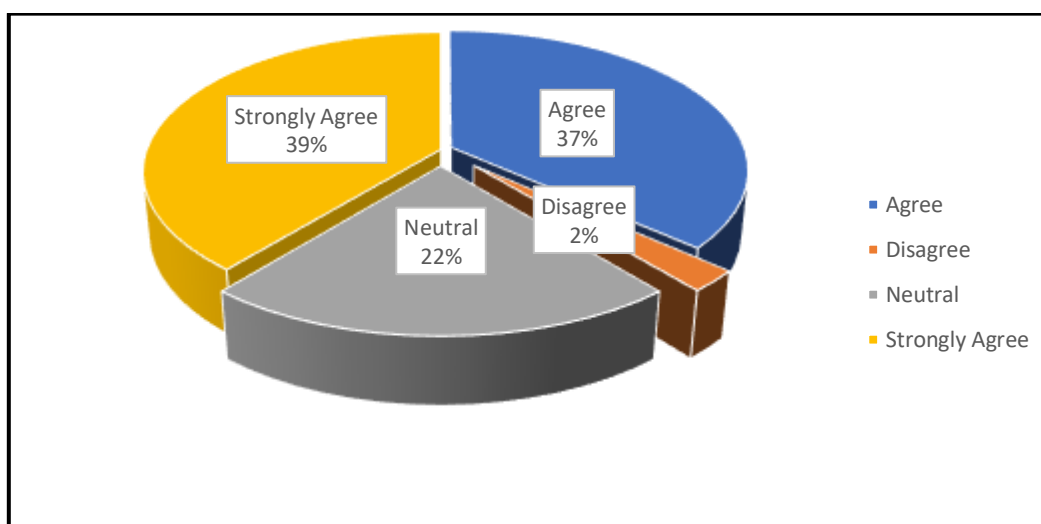


**Figure 3.7 : Students' Responses On the Difficulties They Face Due to the Lack of Exposure to L2**

Observing the statistics shown in the graph above , enabled the researcher to understand that there is a general correspondence of agreement concerning the difficulties EFL learners face in developing pragmatic competence due to the lack of

exposure to L2, and the lack of interaction with other speakers .(2%) disagree, in addition to (22%) remained neutral , where those who agree represent (37%) with (39%) who strongly agreed on the statement.

**Q15 :** When processing pragmatic meaning we do not consider only the linguistic information, Such as vocabulary and syntax , but also the contexual information, such as the role status of interlocutors ?
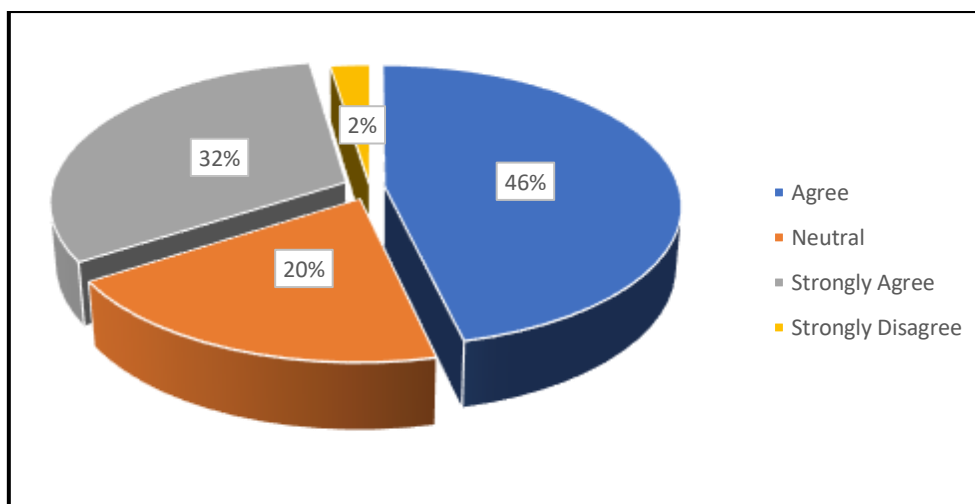


**Figure 3.8 : Students' beliefs about the necessity of Considering contextual**

The results as illustrated above showed that (46%) of the sample agreed with the idea that when processing pragmatic meaning we do not consider the linguistic information only , such as vocabulary and syntax , but also the contextual information , such as the role and status of interlocutors .(32%) strongly agreed on this statement , while (20%) remined neutral and an average of (2%) disagree with the idea completely and give an impression of a low level of awareness.

**Q16 :** How often does your teacher instruct you to analyze language used by natives in their Conversations ?

**Table 3.7 :** The Frequency of analyzing Language used by natives

| Frequency | Very often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number | 2 | 7 | 14 | 14 | 00 | 41 |
| Percentage | 5% | 17% | 34% | 34% | 0% | 100% |
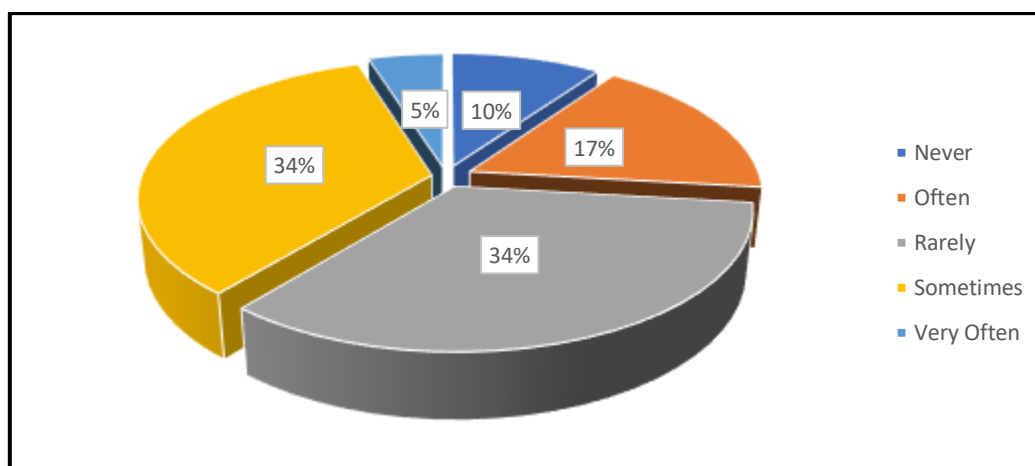
**Figure 3.9 : The Teachers' Frequency of Delivering Instructions To analyse Authentic Materials**

It could be seen in Q16 responses , concerning the frequency of teachers' delivering instructions To analyse authentic materials , Students with a rate of (34%) confirmed that they 'rarely' do .However , the same number of students (34%) said that they 'sometimes' receive such instructions from their teachers , and (17%) of the students said they do it 'often' .

This item shows a medium agreement on receiving classroom instructions to analyze authentic materials which help to elevate the students' level of perception of the target language.

**Q17 :** How often do you receive exercises that require you to choose the appropriate Response for different situations ?

**Table 3.8 :** Students Responses to Q17

| Frequency | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Total |
|-----------|------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
| Number | 1 | 4 | 14 | 17 | 5 | 41 |
| Percentage | 2% | 10% | 34% | 42% | 12% | 100% |
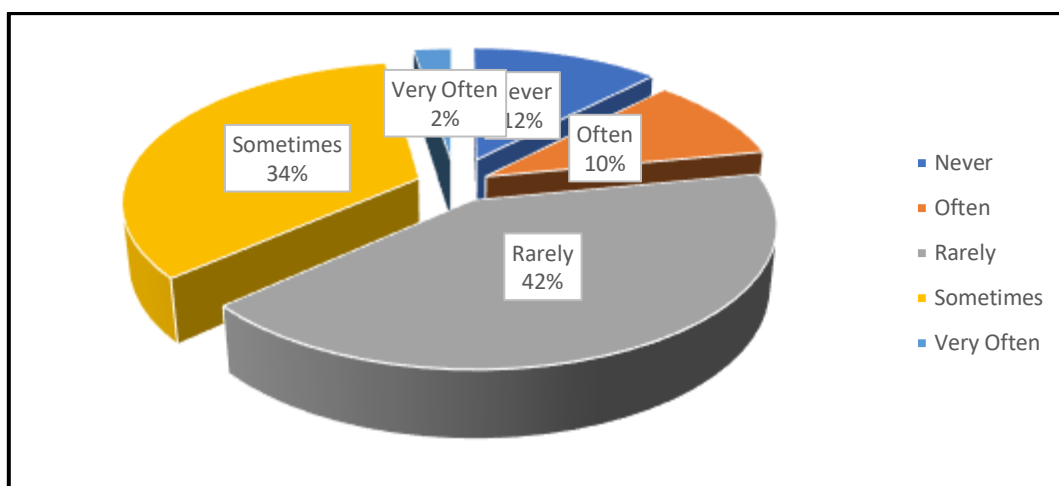
**Figure 3.10 : Teachers' Frequency of Acculturating the language materials**

When students were asked if their teachers provide them with different situations to introduce them to any cultural references in the class, their answers were ; (42%) of them said 'rarely' ,( 12%) of them said 'never' , while (34%) of them said that they 'sometimes' receive discourse task completion and (10%) of them responded by ' often' , very few of them (2%) choose the option 'very often ' .

**Q18 :** How often does your teacher arrange activities in which you compare speech acts in your native language with speech acts in L2 ?

**Table 3.9 :** Students Responses to Q18

| Frequency | Very often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Total |
|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
| Number | 1 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 14 | 41 |
| Percentage | 3% | 17% | 22% | 24% | 34% | 100% |
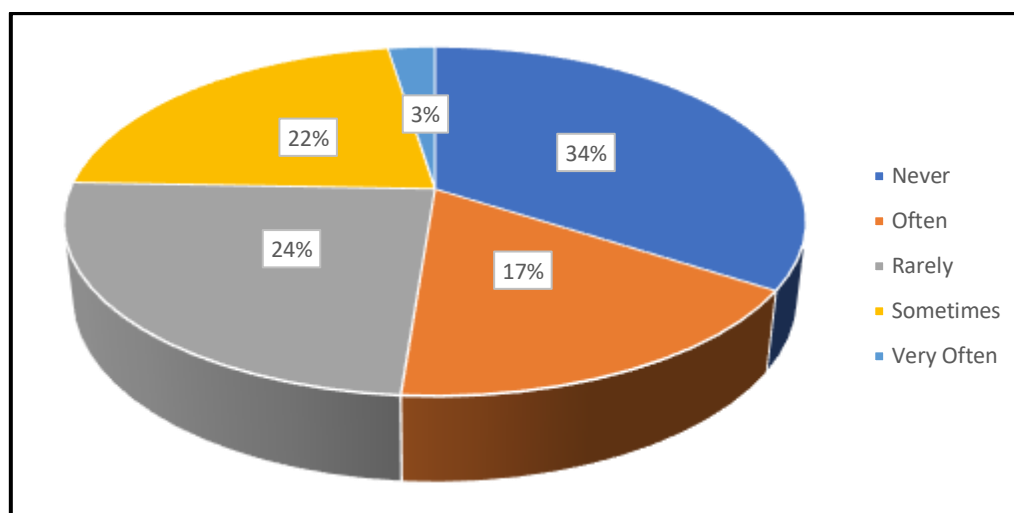
**Figure 3.11 : Teachers' Frequency of arranging Activities to Compare Speech Acts**

According to the table and the graph results , the majority of the students affirm [ never (34%) , rarely (24%) ] that teachers do not arrange activities in which they compare speech acts in their L1( local culture ) with speech acts in L2 (the target culture ). While (22%) of the informants said that 'sometimes' teachers do , (17%) stated that  they 'often' receive some activities , and only (3%) choose the 'very often ' option.

We might deduce that the majority of the students are unaware to a degree about the differences between the target speech acts and the local ones . Obviously , this demonstrate that the majority of the students don't hold a degree of comprehending and producing native- like conversations.

## 3.3. The Test

## 3.3.1. Part A

## 3.3.1.1. Requests

In this section, we are going to consider the first speech act under investigation (request). Each situation is going to be analysed individually, then the three situations will be considered all together so as to uncover the overall propensities of the requestive behaviour among the students. We will focus on the strategies which guide us to the sociocultural norms governing their use in social contexts. Meanwhile, the

wording of each strategy allows us to access the linguistic materials employed. Three aspects are going to be covered. These are HAs, modal verbs and request perspective.

### 3.3.1.1.a. Item 1

*Asking a university professor to lend you a book.*This situation is coded as [(P)= L, (SD)=M, (R)=L ]. Table 3.11 shows how requests have been structured by the students.

**Table 3.10 :** The Structures of Requests in Situation 1

| R .S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| HA only | 16 | 39% |
| HA +SMs | 12 | 29% |
| SMs + HA | 13 | 32% |
| Total | 41 | 100% |

The table provides the structures opted for the most when constructing the request .

The informants were divided into two groups , one group seem to favour pronouncing the request first i.e using HA only ( the minimal unit) and the post - posed option HA+SMs (68%) , whereas  The other group  (32%)  of them opted for the SMs +HA option which known as pre -posed. The majority of the students opted for the query preparatory as a strategy for structuring the minimal unit of request ( HA) , and conventionally indirect requests that express ability , willingness or permission . This tendency towards conventionally indirect requests , and specifically , query preparatory is typical in English requests , and it is widely reported in the literature ( Blum-Kulka et al ,1989, p.208 )

**Table 3.11 :** Modals in Situation 1

| R.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Can | 13 | 32 % |
| Could | 10 | 24 % |
| Would | 12 | 29 % |
| May | 2 | 5 % |
| Opting out | 4 | 10 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

Table 3.11 represents the modality selected by the informants in their production of the request form. English modal verbs represent degree of formality and politeness (will/would, can/could and may/might) . English past form of modals (might/could/would) are more polite than their present counterparts ones ( may/can/will) , and some modals are more polite than others : could is slightly less polite than would , though they both produce a polite request .Unlike English modals, Arabic ones have no past forms. This is why conditional verbal modals are often employed like *law takdir/if you can or min fadhlik/if you do me a favour* .

The data collected shows that a good proportion of the informants (N= 13) selected the modal 'can' ( can you borrow me .. , can you lend me….) which is considered as a less polite manner to ask for a favour from someone that has power more than that of the speaker. The second choice of the informants was ' would' ( N= 12 ) as the most appropriate way to ask a professor for help. 'could' is also chosen by ( N= 10) students and it is acceptable in a formal setting. Only two (N= 2) students used the modal 'may' , and four ( N= 4) of them decided not to use modals , they used statements as 'is it possible…' 'if it is possible..' = hal yumkin an / hal bil imkan and this could be , a literal translation from L1 .

It might be noticed that ; learners seem to favour can and could to produce their request forms  , this can be explained in the light of cross- linguistic influence as L1 often employs the ones of ability , besides that Algerian secondary school textbooks tend to over-represent modals like can and could, structures like HA only ,

the marker please , such faulty presentation can lead learners to underlearn or overlearn a given linguistic item.

**Table 3.12 :** Alerters in Situation 1

| R.S 1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Term of address | 15 | 37% |
| Attention getter | 9 | 22% |
| Alerters | 24 | 58% |

As Table 3.12 displays , the informants used Alerts , mostly the term of addresse, as an opner to their requests : Sir (9) , Madam (6) , in addition to attention getters like : Excuse me (4) , please (3) , Hello (2).

Some informants used the word ' please' before or after the addressee term as an Alter (Attention getter ) which signals a transfer from L1 repertoire ; please Sir / Sir please = min fadlikaya ? ustadh, whereas 'please' used as part of the structure of requests is specific to English . Some of them use 'please ' twice in one request ,as in this example from data collected : please Sir , would you please borrow me this book, it is a very important one that will help me in my research ? . The function of the first 'please' (alert) , is transferred from L1, The second is TL proper . The reason why this politeness marker is used with such high frequency , is the fact that it is , probably , over learned .

In the learners' performance , we spotted many grammatical and spelling mistakes , punctuations, capitalisation of initial letters, and abbreviations used on social media plat forms.

Another important aspect of the requestive act is the so called request perspective. the students did not focus on using only one but rather their choices were divided across the hearer dominance and the speaker dominance type of perspective. By the same taken , some learners supplied long answers in their production of requests, and others misunderstood the situation or what they were supposed to do ,

thus, they described how they would verbally act instead of performing the request act.

### 3.3.1.1.b. Item 2

*Asking a salesclerk to take out a present for closer look*  , is a situation coded as [(P) = H, ( SD)= D, ( R) = L]. Table 3. 14 shows the request structures used .

**Table 3.13 :** The structures of request in Situation 2

| R. S2 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| HA Only | 23 | 56 % |
| HA + SMs | 7 | 17 % |
| SMs + HA | 8 | 19 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

Statistics from the above table indicates that the structure for the request selected by the participants is similar to the answers for the first item , with the dominance use of HA only for directly pronouncing the request . Only (17 %) opted for the post- posed option ( HA+ SMs) and (19%) of them chose the pre- posed one ( SMs + HA) . Furthermore , the strategy adopted for the HA is mostly in the form of Query Preparatory ( e.g. Can l have a closer look ../ Could you show me…).

**Table 3.14 :** Modals in Situation 2

| R.S2 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Can | 23 | 56 % |
| Could | 10 | 24 % |
| Would | 4 | 10 % |
| May | 2 | 5 % |
| Opting out | 2 | 5 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

Turning to modality , Table 3.14 conveys that the modals 'can' and 'could' have

been employed most by learners , as a result of a change in the level of imposition ( R) and social distance ( SD) .Learners also used 'may ' and 'would ' , they opted for the forms they learnt well to use and because L1 does not differenciate between models and this is why , they made use of various types of modals.

**Table 3.15 :** The Alerters in Situation 2

| R.S 2 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Term of address | 2 | 5 % |
| Attention getter | 8 | 19 % |
| Alerters | 10 | 24 % |

Attention getters are the dominant strategy in this request , since learners learnt that the hearer is a salesclerk in a shop, thus, nearly all of them dropped the use of address terms except for two students (5 %)  who utilized 'Sir' to refer to the shop assistant . For the Attention getters (19 %) of the students used a variety of forms : *Hello… , Hi… ,Excuse me…, please…*The use of please as an opener , and a way to get the attention of the hearer , show a kind of transfer from L1 knowledge ( pragmalinguistic transfer ) , also the use of 'sorry' = *law samaht / if you allow me* rather than Excuse me . This may also be attributed to lack of proficiency. Furthermore, two students did not use the form of request but instead , they opted for an order which shows a low understanding level ,( e.g.Come and have a look ), (low level of pragmatic competence) .

Regarding the perspective of request used, learners again appear to strike a balance between the two main perspective ; S- perspective and H-perspective with a relative preference of the H oriented requests. Obviously , these statistics suggest that learners have transferred this tendency from L1 to the TL . That is , they have marked their requests by a degree of involvement and spontaneity inspired by the L1 culture's norms. Last but not least , mistakes in spelling , punctuation , and sentence structures were a major problem with their answers.

### 3.3.1.1.c. Item 3

*Asking a classmate for lending a dictionary* is a situation coded as follows :
[(P)= E,( SD)= C, ( R)= L]. The requesitive act has been shaped as indicated in Table
3.17 .

**Table 3.16 :** The structures of requests in Situation 3

| R. S3 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| HA Only | 28 | 68 % |
| HA + SMs | 05 | 12% |
| SMs + HA | 05 | 12 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

Noticeably, the HA only structure has been more frequent than in the previous
situation . This can best be explained by the close relationship between interlocutors.
Only (12%) chose HA+SMs , and the same thing for SMs+ HA option (12%).

Query preparatories have been opted for as the first choice for structuring HA
( e.g. Can you borrow me.. , Could you give me…) . It has been expected that direct
forms dominate , since among close interlocutors the indirect forms are as the ones
which are rather uncommon and as a signal of transfer from L1 e.g. a3irni… ?
a3tini… ? But , infact only 3 students used bare imperatives ' Give it to me / Give me
your dictionary for a while ? due to the fact that classmates may be , in certain
contexts , perceived as a relationship of camaraderie. In English , such requests can
be perceived as very rude.

**Table 3.17 :** Modals in Situation 3

| R.S3 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Can | 20 | 49 % |
| Could | 9 | 22% |
| Would | 3 | 7% |
| May | 4 | 10% |

| Opting out | 5 | 12% |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 41 | 100% |

Obviously , the less polite modal 'can' has been used by the majority of the students. They seem to overuse 'can ' and 'could' and less frequently employ ' would ' and 'may'. A reason behind that is again the fact that learners are using forms they have learnt well or the ones inspired by L1 , since L1 does not differenciate pragmatically between modal items.

**Table 3.18 :** The Alerters in Situation 3

| **R.S 3** | **N** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Term of address | 00 | 0 % |
| Attention getter | 05 | 12 % |
| Alerters | 05 | 12% |

Since learners learn that the hearer is a classmate, all of them dropped the use of address terms. For the attention getters , only (12%) of the students used them , the majority of them expressed their requests directly using HA only structure. attention getters have been used in different forms : Hello.. ? Hey…, please has been used once as an opner ' please , let me check this…', which shows a kind of transfer from L1 knowledge.

Request perspective is an aspect which is so tied to HA strategies and modality,  in this item , learners are  in favour of H- oriented requests ; the ones that demonstrate solidarity and spontaneity driven by the local collectivistic culture , as well as the close relation between Sand H . Comparing this to ( SITU 2) , the increase in H- perspective has been evidenced . On the other hand , in English, S- perspective is always favoured. That is emphasising the H's autonomy i.e. freedom of action and freedom from imposition  ( Brown and Levinson , 1987) . Sociopragmatic transfer is clearly evidenced in learners' production.

Deviations have been noticed in the employment of certain modals , which reflect a limited linguistic proficiency (e.g. *May you borrow me your dictionary… ? If you could please give me your dictionary ?.*

### 3.3.1.2. Summary of the Findings [Requests]

### 3.3.1.2.a. The Overall Use of Request Strategies.

After dealing with each scenario independently , presently , we make an attempt to capture the requestive phenomenon on its totality by considering the overall propensities. As can be seen from the previous analyses , learners have been inclined to using simple requests realised by HA only pattern to pronounce the request first rather than using elaborate ones ( HA+SM+HA) .

The employment of HA only and HA+SMs strategies was aligned with the extensive use of *'please'* in final position , this politeness marker has been used also as an opner by the students as a signal of transfer from L1 repertoire.

As for HA strategies , query preparatories have been extensively used by the students, it has been understood as overgeneralisation than a sign of pragmatic competence. Direct requests are the least preffered by the participants , learners used a few of them in (SITU 2) and (SITU3) , although in L1 they are a sign of involvement , spontaneity and connecteness . In English they are a sign of impoliteness.

The overall use of modality by learners , indicates that learners have overused transparent modals ( can , could , and would ) . The ones that have been overlearned . Thus , the recurrence of these modals could be an influence of learners' L1, and the scarcity of mind modals and the modal '*may* ' use of them evidence lack of pragmalinguistic competence.

Turning to perspective , Apparently , there is a balance in the employment of the H- and S- perspective in the data obtained. It indicates that learners assign equal importance to reference to the H as the doer of the action and the reference to themselves. However , the dominance of H- perspective in ( SITU3) has been demonstrated that learners transferred this tendency from L1 to the TL as a sign of

solidarity and spontaneity driven by the local collectivistic culture , as well as the close relation between S and H.

## 3.3.1.2.b. Pragmalinguistic Transfer [Research Question 2]

Transfer in learners' production has been evidenced in HA strategies , modality and perspective.

Transfer of direct requests (imperatives) from L1 has been evidenced , specifically , in (SITU3) when there is a close relationship between interlocutors. Learners are unaware of the pragmatic value directs forms acquire in TL ; they are perceived inconsiderate and rude. However , learners have successfully opted in most cases for query preparatories . Yet , this is not necessarily a sign of pragmatic competence, since this strategy is often realised by transparent linguistic structures ( modals).

Regarding modality, learners have extensively employed the ones of ability ( can and could ) and willingness ( would) . The overuse of such modals can be considered as by- product textbooks. Also it might be an outcome of L1 influence.

Moving to the request perspective , it is the aspect that has the least immunity to pragmatic transfer . learners have been inclined to using H- oriented requests in the three situations disregarding the situational variations, despite the fact that , they have employed extensively query preparatories, the orientation has followed that of L1.This reflects unawareness of what function perspective plays in minimising coerciveness in the host culture.

Transfer is evidenced also in the employment of *'please'* in initial position in the company of a term of address , or by itself as an attention- getter . Given the fact that this marker hardly ever fullfils this function in the TL, this has been understood as L1 influence , because in Arabic equivalents of please ( mainly *minfaghlik* ) can be employed for attention cues.

Regarding frequency , learners have been frequently used attention- getters with varied degrees . Here , too , transfer is at play as L1 relies heavily on alerts.

### 3.3.1.2.c. Sociopragmatic Transfer [Research Question 2]

Concerning sociopragmatic transfer , it has been apparently evidenced in ( SITU2) *( requesting a stranger to help in carrying bags)*. Under the influence of the mother culture , all the learners perform the request failing to note that requesting services from a stranger is considered in TL an invasion of one's territory and autonomy of action and, thus , it is illegitimate to request. Also, using direct requests , the excessive use of H- oriented requests , go to show that learners evaluate contexts in TL by means of social perceptions from L1 .

With regard to the P variable, learners' performance can be summarised in these notes ; learners have opted for indirect requests with high status interlocutor, with low status and equal status sones. A few direct ones have been used  in low and equal status contexts.

As for attention getters , they have been employed across all the scenarios with varied degrees, mostly in 'scenario1'(softeners and honorifics with high- status interlocutor) ; (softeners with low status and equal-status interlocutors). 'Please 'has been employed in all contexts.

As far as the R factor is concerned , learners have not seen an offence in performing the request in high- R context . Anumber of direct requests have been employed in high-R and low- R contexts ( following L1 amount , as well as type).

The above remarks suggest that, to a certain degree, learners' performance remains constant whether interacting with close or stranger adressee . This pertains to the Arabic Islamic culture that fosters cooperation even if they are not acquintances , so , it is plausible to say that learners to some extent assign a medium value to P- variable, SD variable , and R variable in the TL contexts, based on L1 conventions and sensibilities.

### 3.3.1.3. Apologies

This section deals with the analysis of apologies performed by 41 students in response to three social situations. Illocutionary force indicating devices (*IFIDs*), explanation or account (*Explanation*), taking on responsibility (*Responsibility*),

concern for the hearer (*Concern*), offer of repair (*Repair*) and a promise of forbearance (*Forbearance*) are the speech act sets of the apology. As for the terms *intensifiers* and *intensification*, they are reserved for the items employed for intensifying *IFIDs* (*IFID*-internal) like in *I'm so sorry* or other strategies (*IFID*external) like in *please can I bring the book next time?* (Repair strategy). As we have done with requests, analysing apologies will be at two levels: the selection of the strategies in accordance with the situational variables: P, SD and I (sociopragmatic) and the linguistic items used in phrasing these strategies (pragmalinguistic).

### 3.3.1.3.a. Item 1

*Apologizing to a university professor for forgetting a book* . This situation is coded as : [(P)= L, ( SD) = M, (R) = L ]. Table 3.20 represents the expressions of apologies used by the informants .

**Table 3.19 :** Expressions of Apology in Situation 4

| A.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Alert | 5 | 12 % |
| IFIDs | 27 | 66 % |
| Explanation | 19 | 46% |
| Responsibility | 2 | 5% |
| Concern | 1 | 2 % |
| Repair | 15 | 36 % |
| Forbearance | 00 | 0 % |

As it is obvious from Table 3.19 above , (66 %) of the informants stated their apologies explicitly by using *IFIDs* ( l'm sorry / I'm terribly sorry …) , It occured at the beginning of their statements . Apart from IFIDs , other strategies have been used as the *repair* strategy (36 %) ; it felt like a promice to bring the book as soon as possible more sense to them than an apology would do . Additionally , (46%) of the informants opted for the *Explanation* strategy to express reasons and circumstances

of their violation , trying to get the H accept their apologies. This strategy serves as an excuse for committing an offence ( Trosberg .1987 , cited in AL- Zumor, 2011, p. 27 ) . *Responsibility* strategy might not be useful in this situation (5%) . *Concern* and *Forbearance* strategies have been hardly ever used by the informants.

As for the combination of strategies , the combination like IFID + Repair and IFID + Repair + IFID have been sometimes used by the informants . We have also come across some cases where some students opted for more than one IFID ( *e.g. l'm really sorry……please forgive me* ).

We should further note that in some cases respondents have provided description of what they would say than actually saying it , one informant stated ' *l would not have the courage to meet the professor , and if l would not have the courage to talk to him'*.

**Table 3.20:** IFIDs in Situation 4

| A.S1 | N | % |
|------|-----|------|
| I'm sorry | 21 | 51 % |
| I apologise | 15 | 36% |
| I beg your parden | 01 | 2% |
| Accept my appologies | 01 | 2 % |
| Forgive me | 02 | 5% |
| Excuse me | 01 | 2 % |

Table 3.20 summarises the sub- types of IFIDs employed by the students. The standard expression of regret ' I'm sorry' has been regarded apt across the students (51 %) , with varied degrees , and this does not mean they are incompetent or competent users of the language because this item is over learnt and signal no real level of proficiency . Besides that , 'An offer of apology ' figures in 15 responses ' I apologise = a3tathir ' , this is a formal expression of apology that is used in standard Arabic , written and spoken. The use of 'Excuse me' and 'forgive me' may show a case of transfer from French language '*excusez -moi and pardon* '

**Table 3.21:** Intensifications in Situation 4

| A.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| So | 5 | 12 % |
| Really | 8 | 19 % |
| Terribly | 3 | 7 % |
| Very | 1 | 2 % |
| Please | 7 | 17 % |
| Sincere | 5 | 12 % |
| Extremly | 1 | 2 % |
| (+1) IFID | 10 | 24 % |
| Swearing | 3 | 7 % |
| Genuinely | 00 | 0% |

It is apparent that, learners oftentimes , run the risk of being less sincere . So as to augment sincerity in English apologies , they make use of intensification.

Table 3.21 above shows that students have used +1 IFID as a means of intensification ; such a tendency is a typical Arabic characteristic . Others did use intensifiers like So ( 5) , really ( 8) , terribly ( 3) and Swearing (3) to show the intensity of their acts . In Arabic , swearing is highly valued as it indicates that one is not telling lies. Notably , 'please' has been used as intensifier by seven students. *(e.g. Please , accept my apologies / Please , Can I bring the book next time ? .*

### 3.3.1.3.b. Item 2

*Apologizin to young sister for not helping in homework* . This situation is coded as [(P)= E , (SD)= C, ( R )= L ]. Table 3.23 portrays the apologies structures opted for by the students.

**Table 3.22 :** Expressions of Apology in Situation 5

| A.S2 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Alert | 5 | 12 % |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IFIDs | 17 | 41% |
| Explanation | 12 | 29% |
| Responsibility | 4 | 10 % |
| Concern | 2 | 5 % |
| Repair | 9 | 22 % |
| Forbearance | 00 | 0 % |

Compared to (SITU 4), we have noticed a decrease in IFIDs, ( N= 17) of the informants used IFIDs , the explicit apology expression , and this is due to the intensity of this situation as oppose to the previous one. Besides that , there are fewer instances where by apology is intensified by two IFIDs , and an increase in cases where apology has been realised by no IFID . Also, there is a fall in Repairs and a use of Explanations ; respondents stand to provide , mainly, implicit accounts ( inability to afford time and being busy ) . The use of Explanations and the decrease in Repairs can be explained by the fact that in the previous situation , speakers, in front of their professor , seem to focus more on the infraction itself and how to repair it , while, in this on the circumstances of the offense than on the offense itself.

The remaining strategies have been used almost equally, only (N=4 ) of the students took responsibility , and have used explicit self- blame *( I know that I promised you ..),*and self- deficiency *( I completely forgot )* . *Concern* has been used only by (N=2) students , and *forbearance* is absent from the learners' data .

Other strategies have been used , which do not seem to fit the pre- set taxonomy , as they are not directly related to the apologizing act itself ( e.g. May be Mom and Dad can help you today / I know that l promise you darling doing your homework , but I do not have enough time) .

As in the previous situation , IFIDs are perceived or followed by terms of address ; in such situation , as the interacting with little sister , learners have used : Sweety / Sweetheart / Darling / (hey)my sister .

**Table 3.23 :** IFIDs in Situation 5

| A.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| sorry | 14 | 34 % |
| Forgive me | 10 | 24% |
| I'm sorry | 5 | 12% |
| I beg your parden | 00 | 0% |
| Accept my appologies | 00 | 0% |
| I apologise | 01 | 2% |
| Others | 02 | 5% |

Table 3.23 illustrates that most of the informants who commited tha act of apologizing opted for the option *Sorry = Smahli (* Dialectal Algerian Arabic ) . Only ( N= 5) students have used ' l'm sorry' to express regret *( anaa aasif ? assifa)* as this formulaic expression of regret can be used across a wide range of settings. '*Forgive me'* is also used by ( N=10 ) students , it is the equivalent of ( Samhinni / asamhiili addressed to a female apologee) in Arabic and has been as frequent as expressions of regret , we attribute this to the fact that this IFID is widely used in the low variety ( Algerian Arabic ; *Samhiini or ? asmhiili* ) , given the fact that the situation is informal ( unlike situation 4) , and this signals the use of L1 in producing TL .

**Table 3.20 :** Intensifications in Situation 5

| A.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| So | 3 | 7 % |
| Very | 0 | 0 % |
| Really | 1 | 2 % |
| Terribly | 1 | 2 % |
| Please | 2 | 5 % |
| Deeply | 0 | 0 % |
| (+1) IFID | 0 | 0 % |
| Swearing | 1 | 2 % |

Table 3.23 clearly shows that , in comparison with (SITU4) , less intensity has been offered .This is to be related to the shift in ( P)- balance , and since they believe that the situation does not call for sincerity . 'please' has been used two times by the learners , probably under the influence of L1.

### 3.3.1.3.c. Item 3

*Apologizing for having your bag fallen from a rack on a passenger .*This situation is coded as : [(P)= E , (SD) = D, (R) = H ]. Table 3.24 indicates the apologizing strategies opted for by the learners .

**Table 3.21 :** Expressions of Apology in Situation 6

| A.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Alert | 8 | 20 % |
| IFIDs | 21 | 51 % |
| Explanation | 2 | 5 % |
| Responsibility | 17 | 41 % |
| Concern | 5 | 12 % |
| Repair | 00 | 0 % |
| Forbearance | 1 | 2 % |

From Table 3. 24 , it is apparent that IFIDs strategy , is the most employed across the students. We would attribute the high presentation of this strategy in the data to the severity of the situation , and the relationship between S and H *( stranger )*, besides, the employment of two or more IFIDs per one formula of apology. For *the responsibility* strategy (41 %) , has mostly opted for *lack of intent* (e.g. I didn't pay attention , I didn't mean that ; it fell without my attention .) , *Self -deficiency* (e.g. I didn't expect this to happen , If l knew , l would put it…) and *denial of responsibly* (e.g. lt wasn't my fault ; believe me my brother ; bags have fallen by themselves.) .

Another frequently used strategy is *Concern* (12%) (e.g. Are you ok/ alright ? Are you hurt ? I hope you are well. Learners, due to the lack of linguistic means , have used *'fine'* instead of Ok / right instead of alright . Though pragmatic intent is

not affected , the use of the latter choices sounds native- like . Explanations have been
haredly offered , since excuses in such situations may not be perceived.

**Table 3.22 :** IFIDs in Situation 6

| A.S 3 | N | % |
|-------|---|---|
| I'm sorry | 20 | 49% |
| Forgive me | 2 | 5% |
| I apologise | 11 | 27% |
| My apologies | 5 | 12% |
| My bad | 3 | 7% |
| Excuse me | 1 | 2% |
| Others | 2 | 5% |

Starting with the most frequent strategy , IFIDs , Table 3.25 shows that
learners tend to strike a balance between expressing regret , requesting for forgiveness
or an offer of apology 'l apologise' .As compared with( SITU5) , learners seem to
heavily use the transparant over learnt form *'l'm sorry'*. They have also opted for
'Forgive me' , perhaps, under the the influence of L1(e.g. Forgive me for what
happened ; Forgive me please.) . Learners have also employed the two formal IFIDs
'*l apologise*' and ' *My apologies'* , but not necessarily in a native-like manner. Only
three students used the slang '*my bad'* as an informal indirect way of apologizing
aknowledging that S/ he did something bad .

**Table 3.23 :** Intensifications in Situation 6

| A.S3 | N | % |
|------|---|---|
| So | 9 | 22% |
| Very | 0 | 0% |
| Really | 4 | 10% |
| Terribly | 1 | 2 % |
| Please | 2 | 5% |
| (+1) IFID | 5 | 12% |

| Emotional | 8 | 19% |
|-----------|----|-----|
| Swearing | 00 | 0 % |

By way of summary, Table 3.26 represents the sub- types of intensification employed .Predictably ; the type of infraction makes it necessary to use intensifiers. The lexical softnes 'please' and +1 IFID have been used , in addition to the repetitive use of IFIDs. The preponderance of adverbial sis remarkable ( So , really , terribly , ordered by frequency ) besides emotional expressions ( oh, oh no , oh dear ) . As for *please*  , it is usually collocates with forgive me *(e.g. Forgive me please / Please forgive me* .) . A number of address terms have been used as 'Sir' / 'Madam' since the interlocutor is a stranger.

### 3.3.1.4. Summary of the Findings [ Apologies]

### 3.3.1.4.a. Overall Use of Apology Strategies.

Starting with the overall use of apology strategies , IFIDs are the most used strategy among the students . They have sometimes opted for more than one. This tendency in learners' performance has been attributed to the transfer of this strategy.

The *Explanation* strategy has been relatively higher in the data obtained ; learners tend to explain a lot when they apologise , which only occurs occasionally in TL. This partially supports the claim that this semantic formula is L1-typical. Therfore , the results show clear evidence of pragmatic failure.

Turning to the *Responsibility* strategy , it has been relatively low in the obtained data. But , it has been used in (SITU6) due to the severity of the situation , and the relationship between S and H ( stranger) .

The *Repair* strategy has been commonly used by the learners in ( SITU1) only, whereas , in other situations it has been underused. The influence of L1 on TL is clearly manifested in the *Repair* strategy when learners have underused it. The *Concern* and the *Forbearance* strategies have been the least used.

Having considered the overall use of apology strategies, we currently shed light on type.

To summarise the sub- type of IFIDs employed by the students, obviously, learners tend to use varied IFIDs ,striking a balance among expressing regret ( l'm sorry , l apologise) . Though , learners have extensively used (l'm / l am ) sorry to express regret , this has not been regarded as a sign of pragmatic competence, as this IFID has been judged transparent. Moreover , the use of *excuse me* and *pardon me* by the learners , has been attributed to the deficiency in pragmalinguistic competence i.e confusion between *sorry* and *excuse me* as well as a transfer from French. It has been also apparent that learners tend to invest in the IFIDs they know , whether formal or informal , than to accomodate them.

IFIDs have been usually more intensified than any other strategy. Learners have overused them as they have employed both L1- proper intensifiers ( +1 IFID and please, swearing) and TL- proper ones ( adverbials) . So they have favoured accessible ones ( so , really , and very ) and the marker please . They have also opted for +1IFID, swearing and believe me under the influence of L1 .

## 3.3.1.4.b. Pragmalinguistic Transfer [Research Question 2.]

At the level of IFIDs , learners have  sometimes used more than one IFID in their apologies or the repetitive use of certain IFIDs. Furthermore , the distribution of excuse me , forgive me might be considered L1-driven. Under the influence of L1, most probably , Algerian learners have heavily supplied terms of address , before or after IFIDs. This has been related to the fact that terms of address are part and parcel of the communicative system in L1, and they help in appeasing the offended person and , in case he/ she is a distant , they contribute to bringing about a rapprochement.

Another related aspect to IFID sis intensification . L1 has affected TL intensifiers in two main ways. First , learners have used L1- proper intensifiers, namely +1IFID, swearing , please as an opener ( e.g. please , accept my apologies.) Neverthless , we should not miss to affirm that learners have, in many cases , used some of TL intensifiers appropriately as ( so , really , and terribly) .

### 3.3.1.4.c. Sociopragmatic Transfer  [Research Question 2.]

We can detect the sociopragmatic transfer through investigating the distribution of strategies employed by the students across the scenarios . We will overlook IFIDs , because they have been recurrently employed as the best choices by the learners whatever the situation is.

As for the P- variable , learners have been influenced by L1 regarding the empoyment of *Explanation* ; they have opted for more explanations in low- status context (SITU5) than equal status context ( SITU 6) . The *Repair* strategy has been more frequently offered in high status context ( SITU4) , and the Responsibility strategy has been more frequently used in equal- status context (SITU6) .

As for the intensification , more intensifiers have been recorded in high-status context than in equal and low -status ones. It seems to increase in accordance with the interlocutors's status, once again in agreement with L1 norms.

Thus , learners' performance has been in line with L1norms in the employment of Explanation , Repair and Intensification.

As regards to SD- variable , in this pair ( SITU 5, 6) ( close , distant ), Explanation has decreased in apologising to a stranger ( SITU6) , and Responsibility has been increased in apologising to a distant interlocutor , while the Concern strategy has hardly ever been offered to  close and  strange interlocutors. For intensification , it has increased in apologising to a stranger .

All in all , the distribution of these strategies seems to follow L1 distribution more than TL .

As far as the last factor , R- variable is concerned , In the pair ( ( SITU 5, 6) , we have noted a decrease in the Explanation strategy and more Responsibility one in high -R context (SITU6) Additionally , we have noted a relative decrease in Repair strategy and an increase in intensifiers in high -R context.

In these two scenarios, the perception of the R- variable has been , to a large extent , identical in L1 and TL, except for the fact that L& seems to favour Responsibility and TL seems to favour Concern

### 3.3.1.5. Refusals

This section explores the wording of semantic formulae and adjuncts of refusals performed by 41 foreign language learners which have been understudied. The analysis of refusal strategies concerns the use of statements of Regret , Reasons and Explanation , Promice of Future acceptance , Dissuation….

The DCT of this section involved three social situations, each of which represented one of three different status levels ( lower , equal , and higher status) , three different social distance ( close , familiar , and distant ) and three initiating acts of refusals ( invitation , suggestion , and offer ).

### 3.3.1.5.a. Item1

*Refusing an invitation to go to a boss's house warming party. This* situation is coded as [(P)= L, (SD)= M , (R) = L ] . Table 3.28 portrays the type of refusal strategy chosen by the informants .

**Table 3.24 :** Refusal Strategies in Situation 7

| Refusals.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Direct | 2 <br> Non performative | 5 % |
| Indirect | 35 | 85 % |
| None | 4 | 10 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

According to Table 3.27, the majority opted for the indirect refusal strategy , since it is the easy way out and help to save the face for both the hearer and the speaker  , besides that the situation requires  ( dealing with higher status people) .( 10%) of them stated that they would go to the house warming after finishing other arrangements. In addition to the statements of refusal , they make use of adjuncts, specifically the gratitude and appreciation type , and the statements of positive opinions/ feelings (e.g. l'd love to…)

**Table 3.25 :** Types of Indirect Strategies in Situation 7

| Indirect types | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Statement of regret | 15 | 36% |
| Wish | 2 | 5% |
| Excuse, reason, explanation | 24 | 58% |
| Statement of alternative | 00 | 0% |
| Set condition for future or past acceptance | 00 | 0% |
| Promise of future acceptance | 5 | 12% |
| Statement of principle | 00 | 0% |
| Statement of philosophy | 00 | 0% |
| Attempt to dissuade interlocutor | 00 | 0% |
| acceptance that functions as arefusal | 00 | 0% |
| Avoidance | 00 | 0% |

Table 3.28 represents the types of the indirect strategies picked by the informants. (58%) opted for the *Excuse and Reason* statements , which is common in the Algerian Arabic way of apologizing ; others explicitly express their *Regret* by saying *' l'm sorry ' 'Sorry Sir ' ' l'm really sorry'* . (5%) of them mentioned their wishes to be able to go to the party, then they refused because of other comitements.( 12%) of them promise to accept the invitation in the future ( e.g. l promise you to come next time / another time may be….) and this is also common in the Arabic Algerian way of refusing an invitation.

**Table 3.26 :** Types of Adjuncts in Situation 7

| Adjuncts. S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Statements of positive opinion / Feeling or agreements. | 13 | 32 % |
| Statement of Empathy | 00 | 0 % |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Pause Fillers. | 00 | 0 % |
| Gratitude / Appreciation | 5 | 12 % |
| Total | 18 | 44 % |

Table 3.29 shows the types of adjuncts used by the informants , they mainly used to express positive opinions and feelings toward the interlocutor (e.g. l would love to / It's a pleasure for me / l would be so happy….) . Besides the gratitude and appreciation ones (12 %) . Others preferred to give reasons and excuses to refuse the invitation.

### 3.3.1.5.b. Item2

*Refusing a shop assistant suggestion to buy an expensive pair of shoes.* This situation is coded as [(P)= H , (SD) = D, ( R) = L]. Table 3.32 displays the types of refusals used . 7 informants used considerable number of direct strategies  to refuse the suggestion , by saying 'No' 'No, l can't' that was not followed by an excuse or anything . For the rest , 30 of them chose the indirect strategy for refusal and 4 of them accepted the suggestion to buy that pair of shoes despite the fact that the task requires them to refuse it.

**Table 3.27 :** Refusal Strategies in Situation 8

| Refusals.S1 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Direct | 7 / Performative Non performative | 17% |
| Indirect | 30 | 73% |
| None | 4 | 10% |
| Total | 41 | 100% |

Table 3.31 represents the types of indirect strategies opted for.

**Table 3.28 :** Types of Indirect Strategies in Situation 8

| Indirect types | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Statement of regret | 5 | 12% |
| Wish | 3 | 7 % |
| Excuse, reason, explanation | 15 | 36 % |
| Statement of alternative | 2 | 5% |
| Set condition for future or past acceptance | 0 | 0% |
| Promise of future acceptance | 3 | 7% |
| Statement of principle | 0 | 0% |
| Statement of philosophy | 0 | 0 % |
| Attempt to dissuade interlocutor | 0 | 0% |
| acceptance that functions as a refusal | 0 | 0% |
| Avoidance | 2 | 5% |

As it is shown  above in Table3.31 , (36 %) of the informants opted for *the excuse and reason* type after expressing regret , 15 of them stated that they don't have enough money to buy or the shoes was so expensive . Those who showed their *regret* first , they used mostly the standard formulae ' *l'm sorry'*. This strategy which is first regrets were expressed , then reasons given shows the Algerian native speech community norms of refusing . Others explicitly mentioned their *wishes* to buy the shoes and refused only becouse of its higher price. Additionally , some of the informants used statements of *Alternative* to change the discussion by asking for the price of another shoes or an other kind. 3 of them promise the interlocutor for future acceptance and 2of them avoid him/ her by saying 'l'm just having a look '.

**Table 3.29 :** Types of Adjuncts in Situation 8

| Adjuncts. S2 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Statements of positive opinion / Feeling or agreements. | 2 | 5% |
| Statement of Empathy | 0 | 0% |

| Pause Fillers. | 0 | 0% |
|---|---|---|
| Gratitude / Appreciation | 5 | 12% |
| Total | 7 | 17% |

Learners in this situation (SITU8) didn't use much Adjuncts , since the interlocutor was a stranger for them and the level of imposition was low. 5 of them used the gratitude and appreciation type as a kind of avoidance (e.g. Thank you , l can't / So kind of you but…) , and 2 of tham used some positive and care interlocutor's feelings ' l would like to , but….' .

### 3.3.1.5.c. Item 3

*Refusing a close friend's offer to relax* . This situation is coded as [ (P)= E , (SD)= C , R= L ] ; Table 3. 35 below represents the types of refusals used. Five informants (N=5) performed direct refusal acts 'Nope' , 'No' , 'No, l can't' that were not followed by an excuse or anything . For the rest 32 of them chose the indirect strategy for refusals , and 4 others accepted that offer**.**

**Table 3.30 :** Refusal Strategies in Situation 9

| Refusals.S3 | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Direct | 5 / Non performative | 12 % |
| Indirect | 32 | 78 % |
| None | 4 | 10 % |
| Total | 41 | 100 % |

Table 3.36 displays the type of indirect strategies opted for. Some used more than one strategy to produce refusals.

**Table 3.31 :** Types of Indirect Strategies in Situation 9

| Indirect types | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Statement of regret | 8 | 19% |
| Wish | 0 | 0% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Excuse, reason, explanation | 13 | 32% |
| Statement of alternative | 4 | 10% |
| Set condition for future or past acceptance | 0 | 0% |
| Promise of future acceptance | 4 | 10% |
| Statement of principle | 5 | 12% |
| Statement of philosophy | 0 | 0% |
| Attempt to dissuade interlocutor | 2 | 5% |
| acceptance that functions as a refusal | 0 | 0% |
| Avoidance | 0 | 0% |

Providing excuses and reasons for their refusals were also the dominant option in (SITU9) among the users with 13 uses . They stated that they have to study more , instead of relaxing right now , and they were not planning to accept this offer . Others showed their regret first ( N=8) for not being able to relax right now. The use of considerable reasons after expressing regrets when refusing this offer to mitigate the damage caused to the positive face of the speaker and to keep the relationship going. Additionally, some used statements of principle (N= 5), stating that thay should study more to get good results , and others used statements of Alternative( N= 4) to change the discussion and to propose doing something they both enjoy.

**Table 3.32 :** Types of Adjuncts in Situation 9

| **Adjuncts. S3** | **N** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Statements of positive opinion / Feeling or agreements. | 3 | 7% |
| Statement of Empathy | 0 | 0% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Pause Fillers. | 2 | 5% |
| Gratitude / Appreciation | 15 | 36% |
| Total | 20 | 49% |

Table 3.35 displays the types of Adjuncts used by the informants. They mainly used the gratitude and appreciation type (36%) (e.g. I appreciate your offer / That's very thoughtful of you..) . Others used some care interlocutors' feelings (e.g. It's so kind of you / That's a good idea …) , and only two of them used some pause fillers as 'well', 'oh'.

### 3.3.1.6. Summary of the Findings [Refusals]

### 3.3.1.6.a. Overall Use of Refusal Strategies.

A refusal is a face -threatening act that tends to disrupt harmony in relationship. It causes damage to both the face of the speaker and the hearer . Therfore , a lot of strategies are used to mitigate the effect of a refusal and save the relationship.

Starting with the overall use of refusal strategies, Indirect strategies are the most frequently used by the students in the three scenarios ( invitation, suggestion , and offer) with the three different status levels ( higher , equal and low) .

For the type of indirect strategies, ( Excuse , Reason , Explanation) strategy has the highest number of choices and it was preferred over the eliciting speech acts, specifically in (SITU1) *refusing a boss ' invitation* ( higher status context) . It is certain that in Arabic culture , it is inappropriate and disrespectful to refuse an invitation without presenting any excuse , it is accepted as a very rude behaviour .

The second most preferred indirect strategy is the ( Statement of Regret ) , it was used for every eliciting speech act . The regret strategy was mostly associated with reason. First regrets were expressed ,then reasons given. Although, this strategy have been used for all the items , itw as less used in (SITU8) ( *suggestion from a low interlocutor* ) .Thus , it might be inferred that there is a difference in the usage of this strategy according to the status of the interlocutor . For (SITU9) , more ' care for

interlocutor's feeling' statements were used ( *refusing an offer from an equal interlocutor* ).

Adjuncts are the second most preferred refusal strategies , and tha participants used mainly two adjuncts for every eliciting speech act. They used (Statement of Positive Opinion ) much more in (SITU7) ( *refusing an invitation from a higher interlocutor* ) . The second was (Statement of Gratitude / Appreciation ) and this adjunct preferred for an offer from an equal interlocutor ; Noticebly , less adjuncts were used in (SITU8) to refuse a suggestion from a low interlocutor.

Direct refusal strategies are the least preferred strategies by the participants . Learners used considerable number of direct strategies while refusing a close friend's offer of equal status ,and also a suggestion of a shop assistant ( stranger) of low status. This situation might have been caused by the reality that in Arabic culture , it is easier to say direct 'No' to your peers , friends and so on , yeti t is not so easy when it comes with higher interlocutor.

### 3.3.1.6.b. Pragmalinguistic Transfer [Research Question 2.]

The analysis above showed that the subjects transferred some of their L1 speech habits into L2. They are described under three categories :

*Length of semantic formulas* .

Learners gave long answers and this mitigated the force of a refusal , resulting in failure. This is in tune with Arabic culture where even simple greetings are an elaborate affair e.g. *Thank you for your invitation but l'm sorry l can't come .l have got a lot of work to accomplish and thank you again* .

*Content of semantic formulas.*

When refusing the boss ' invitation , learners used very non- specific reasons like ,l've something to do tomorrow , l've got another place to …etc . In TL, in such cases NS would give specific reasons.

*Order of the Semantic formulas.*

Learners sometimes used the native language order of the semantic formulas in Arabic . First they used 'care for the interlocutors feeling ' strategy followed by reasons , then willingness followed by promise or an adjunct to enhance positive feelings making it inappropriate in the English context. However , they at the most expressed regrets followed by reasons as in TL. But , overgeneralization of the semantic formulas was also observed.

### 3.3.1.6.c. Sociopragmatic Transfer [Research Question 2.]

The role of the status on refusals was obesrved in the learners' performance. For the higher status, learners used mostly indirect strategies ,  more caution and care for the interlocutor's feelings to show positive politeness like using compliments etc , before giving reasons to refuse requests . In the TL , reasons are given primarly or they expressed regrets and later gave explanations.

Concerning the equal status , learners used considerable direct strategies when refusing a friend's offer , but when using the indirect strategy they used more 'care for interlocutor's feelings'. In the TL , they expressed regret and then gave reasons for refusing such offers.

For the lower status, learners also used direct strategies when refusing suggestion in a low status context. They used 'care for interlocutor' feelings' and then gave reasons.

### 3.3.2. Part B

### 3.3.2.1. Requests

### 3.3.2.1.a. Item 1

**Table 3.33 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 1

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | 5 | 15 | 8 | 13 |

Table 3.36 represents the answers to multiple choice questions for the first situation, *Asking help for a workmate about computer use*. 13 members choose option *d*, which is the right one , *Do you mind helping me fixing these tables, please ?*, it is a formal and professional expression to use with colleagues and in a work environment . Additionally , 15 members decided to choose option *b,Can you help me fixing some tables , please ?* It is also can be used and considered as a right option , since in this situation the interlocutors are equal and the imposition is low . Thus, A sizeable number of informants asserted a good level of pragmatic competence whereas the rest exposed a low level of competence .

### 3.3.2.1.b. Item 2

**Table 3.34 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 2

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 6 | 27 | 5 | 2 |

Table 3.37 above sketched the responses for the second situation, *Asking a strange to help in carrying bags* .The bulk majority (N= 27) picked answer *b*, the more formal and appropriate way to do so, thus ,most of the students did not commit pragmatic failure, and they show a good level of awareness. Whereas the rest (N= 13) failed to select the right option and  exhibit a case of pragmatic failure in using request expressions.

### 3.3.2.1.c. Item 3

**Table 3.35 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 3

| Total | a | b | c |
|-------|---|---|---|
| 39 | 8 | 14 | 17 |

Table 3.38 displays the subjects' answers for the third situation, *Asking a stranger about the time* .Most of the informants were turn between two options , *b and c, b* is the most appropriate option *Excuse me, have you got the time , please ?* ,

However , option *c* is also right as a simple request given the fact that the request is directed to a passer- by about a free service( information ), this tendency can be attributed more to the context itself than to pragmatic considerations.

### 3.3.2.2. Apologies

### 3.3.2.2.a. Item 1

**Table 3.36 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 4

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|----|
| 41 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 12 |

Table 3.39 represents the answers for the fourth situation, *Apologising to a close friend for forgetting a get- together.*12 students chose the response *d* , the most appropriate answer , *l'm so sorry my friend , l've forgotten about our meeting* ; it expresses a sincere apology followed by a reason and explanation statement . 11 of them opted for the response *b, Oh my godness, l'm so sorry . I totally forgot the get- together* which can be used , since it indicates that learners recognized the severity of offense , besides that it is an emotional expression used to express surprise and it is a native- like . The rest of the informants show a case of pragmatic failure.

### 3.3.2.2.b. Item 2

**Table 3.37 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 5

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|----|---|---|---|
| 41 | 30 | 5 | 1 | 5 |

Table 3.40 sketched the answers to the fifth situation, *Apologising for stepping on a lady's foot* . The majority choose answer *a* , l'm so sorry , l hope you're not hurt ( N= 30). The larger group asserted a good level of pragmatic competence whereas the rest exposed a low level of competence.

**3.3.2.2.c. Item 3**

**Table 3.38 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 6

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 5 | 12 | 2 | 21 |

Table 3.41 displays the answers to the sixth situation, *Apologising for dialling a wrong number.* Learners have opted for the most formal frorm *d, I apologise ,l have dialed the wrong number* , and since it is a native- like and  the interactants are not face-to-face and are not likely to meet later, , it seems as the appropriate answer.

**3.3.2.3. Refusals**

**3.3.2.3.a. Item 1**

**Table 3.39 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 7

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 2 | 26 | 3 | 9 |

Table 3.42 demonstrates the responses to the seventh situations, *Refusing a boss's suggestion to leave a faulty motorcycle in the office.* A sizeable number of informants choose the answer *b, No , but thank you for asking* ,and it was not the appropriate response. Only, 9 could get the correct response *d, Thank you Sir , but you don't need to worry* . The correct answer shows some politeness  in dealing with people of  higher status. Thus, a larger group exposed a low level of  pragmatic competence.

**3.3.2.3.b. Item 2**

**Table 3.40 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 8

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | 0 | 12 | 27 | 2 |

Table 3.43 above shows the responses to the eighth situation , *Refusing a staff's suggestion to use a different operating system to avoid computer virus* . A large group  of informants choose the answer *c,No, l can handle it,* which is not the correct one . Option *b* is the right one *No, thank you for being interested*  , since it shows some 'care for interlocutor's feelings'.

### 3.3.2.3.c. Item 3

**Table 3.41 :** Responses to MDCT Situation 9

| Total | a | b | c | d |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 40 | 26 | 9 | 0 | 5 |

Table 3.44 above sketched the responses for  the ninth situation , *refusing a friend invitation to the beach* . The majority choose answer *a, I would love too, but I can't,I'm busy on Friday* . It is the right answer, to assure the hearer that there is a willingness from the part of the speaker but due to exceptional circumstances the meeting cannot take place .9 students choose option *b , Another time may be* ,  a transferred expression from L1 speech habits into L2, used in case of refusing an invitation , This implies that 14 of the informants exhibit a case of pragmatic failure in using refusal expressions.

### 3.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Interview.

The teachers' interview was designed and distributed in reason to inspect and gather information about teachers' perceptions of the use of pragmatic instruction and practice to improve EFL learners' communicative competence.

The interview contains nine items and it was submitted to six English language teachers at the University of Tlemcen . Five teachers answered it , while one of them didn't do.  Thematic data obtained from the interview are summarized as following :

**Q1 :** Have you received a formal training to teach pragmatic content ?
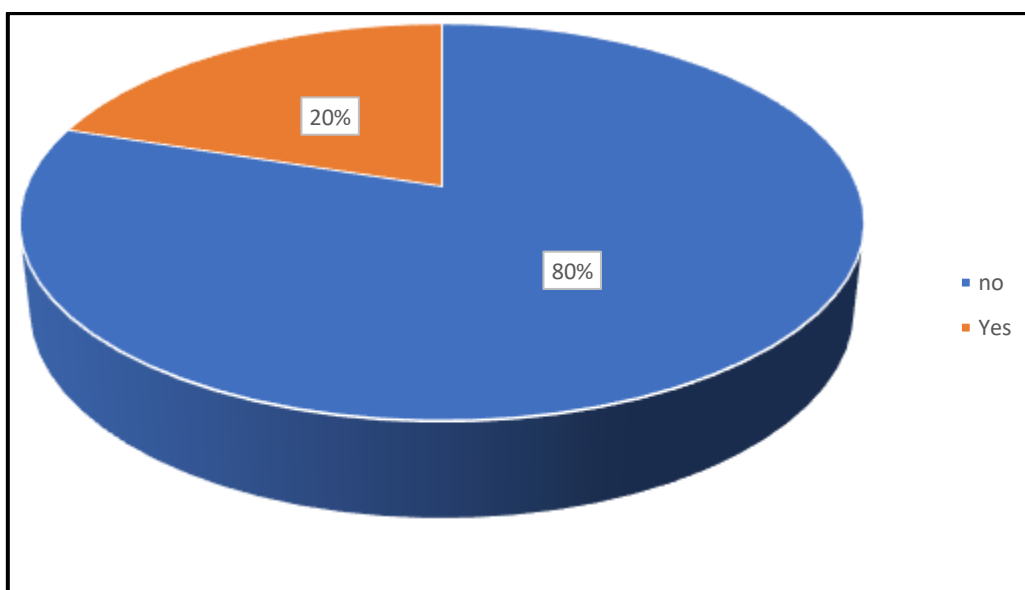
**Figure 3.12 : Teacher's Receiving Formal Training in Pragmatic Contents**

**Table 3.42 :** Teacher's Receiving Formal Training to Teach Pragmatic Contents

|  | **Yes** | **No** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Frequency** | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| **Percentage%** | 20% | 80% | 100 % |

They were then asked whether they have received a formal training to teach pragmatic content, only one of them who represents an average of (20%) took a training in teaching pragmatic content . Whereas , the remaining eighty percent (80%) of the sample has no training in the mentioned above.

**Q2 :**Is it true that teachers focus most of the time on linguistic competence more than Other competencies, including pragmatic competence ?
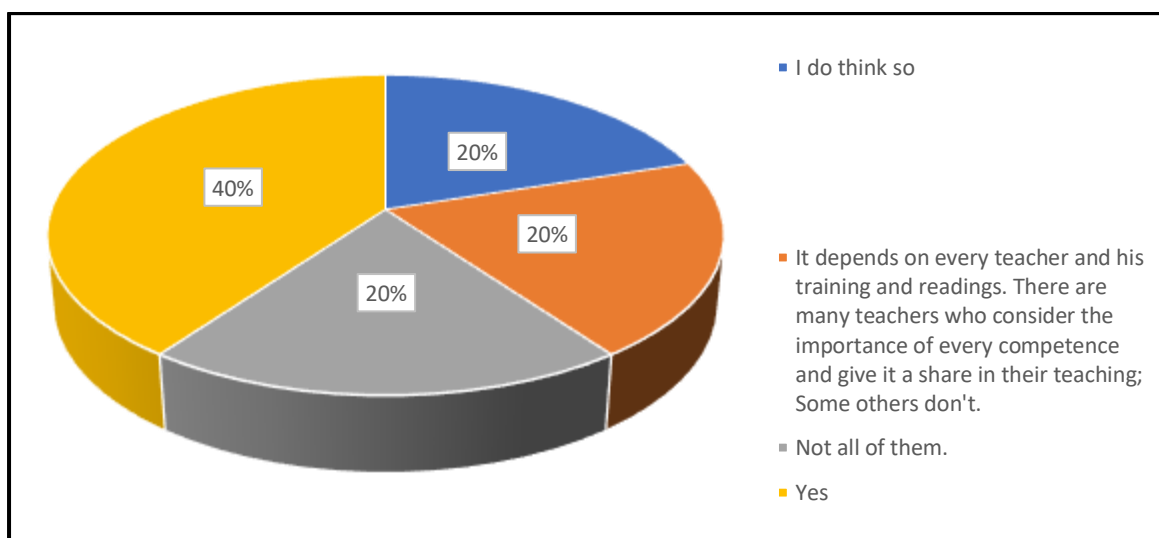
**Figure 3.13 : Teachers' Focus on Linguistic Competence Vs Pragmatic Competence**

As the graph shows above , most of the participants (60%) believe that teachers really focus most of the time on teaching learners linguistic competence ( grammar , vocabulary..) more than other competences , including pragmatic competence ,and only a few of them would be interested in teaching pragmatic content.This could be because of the lack of training on how to teach pragmatics. One of the teachers illustrated that , there are many teachers who consider the importance of every competence and give it a share in their teaching so, it depends on every teacher and his training.

**Q3 :** In your opinion , is there a strong correlation between pragmatic competence and language Proficiency ?

In order to gather data about teachers' opinions on the studied matter in this research , they were asked if there is any correlation between pragmatic competence and language proficiency . The following Table 3.39 shows the teachers ' answers :

**Table 3.43 :** Teachers' Opinions on the Relationship between Language Proficiency
and Pragmatic Competence

|            | Yes  | No  | Total |
|------------|------|-----|-------|
| **Frequency** | 5    | 0   | 5     |
| **Percentage** | 100% | 0%  | 100%  |

All the teachers (100%) agreed on the same answer whih is 'Yes ' certainly there is a great correlation between pragmatic competence and language proficiency.

**Q4 :** Do you often arrange learning opportunities in a way that learners get to know and develop their pragmatic competence ?
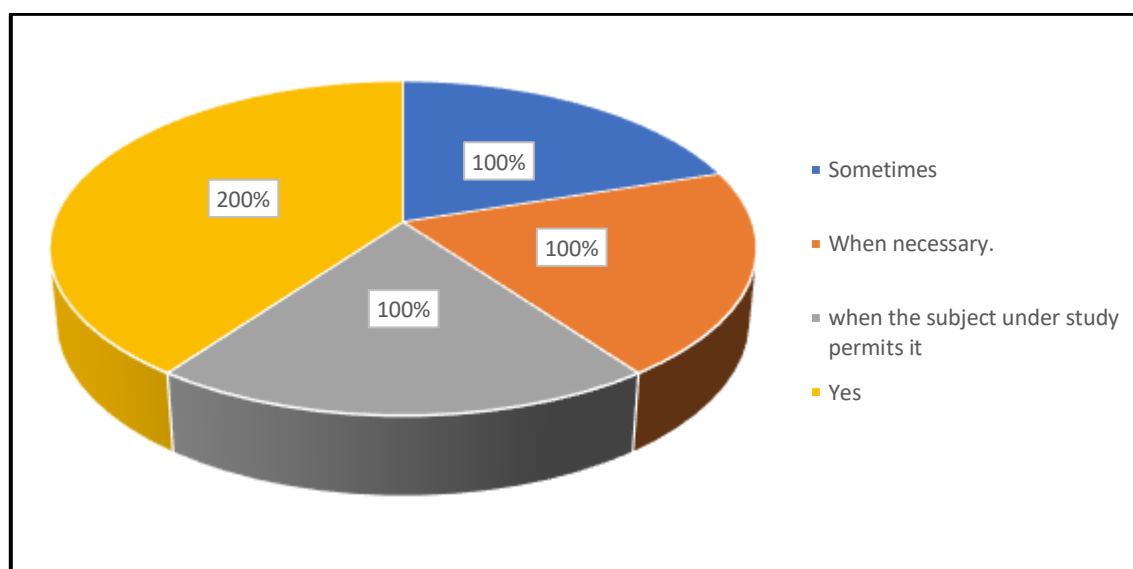


**Figure 3.14 : Teachers ' responses on practising pragmatics ' activities in the Class**

The graph above indicates that teachers generally are interested in teaching general pragmatic information to their students and to develop their pragmatic competence . Two teachers answered by 'Yes' ,and only one of them said that he 'Sometimes' associates his learners with pragmatic instructions. The remaining ones (N=2) stated that they do when it is necessary and when the subject under study permits it .

**Q5 :** In your opinion , to what extent do you think 3rd year students of English are yet equipped with the competence of analyzing language used by natives in their conversations ?

Teachers were asked to give their opinion on to what extent do they think third year students of English are well aquipped with the competence of analysing authentic materials in their conversations. The following table represents the data obtained :

**Table 3.44 :** Teachers' Responses to Q5

| | |
|---|---|
| **Teacher 1** | 'I don't think they are ' |
| **Teacher 2** | 'acceptable level ' |
| **Teacher 3** | '2 out of 5 ' |
| **Teacher 4** | 'Just few of them. ' |
| **Teacher 5** | 'Very weak training ' |

Table 3.47 indicates that the teachers' answers were in the same scope. That only few learners have with acceptable level , the ability to analyse language used by natives in their conversations . Due to the lack of exposure to authentic language material that is used frequently in real- life situations , besides the lack of interaction with native speakers.

**Q6 :** When delivering a given language material, do you make sure to acculturate it ? And how ?

The following Table 3.48 holds data obtained after asking teachers whether they make sure to acculturate the language materials they deliver and how they do it . Three teachers out of the five participants answered with 'Yes', however the way they do it differs. The remaining ones ( N= 2) answered directly the second part of the question 'How' .

**Table 3.45 :** Acculturating the Language Materials Used in The Classroom

| |
|---|
| **Teacher 1** 'Yes, by incorporating the values , beliefs, language, customs, and mannerisms of The new material , in addition to behaviors that affect health such as dietry Habits, activity levels and substance use.' |
| **Teacher 2**     ' When it touches students beliefs and moral values. I do ' |
| **Teacher 3**     ' Yes , of course' |
| **Teacher 4**     ' Yes, l give concrete examples' |
| **Teacher 5**     ' l compare it to our native culture to be able to compare it' |

Viewer of Table 3.48 can notice that , most of the participants do acculturate the language materials they use which means 60 percent of the overall sample . Participant 1 and participant 2 believe that , it is very important to include the values , beliefs, customs and behaviours of the new material esp when it touches students beliefs and moral values. Participant 3 response was somehow general as he did not explain how to integrate the pragmatic context , and he just answered by saying 'yes , of course' . Participant 4 answer was short as he referred to giving concrete examples and participant 5 stated that he would arrange activities in which learners compare between the local culture and the target language culture.

**Q7 :** Does Cross- Cultural awareness raising a parcel of the EFL curriculum in Tlemcen University ? If yes then. What are the reasons that disable third year students to seriously preempt pragmatic failure in your opinion ?

Teachers then were asked whether cross-cultural awareness raising is a parcel of the EFL curriculum at Tlemcen university, four out of five participants remained neutral and didn't answer this question . Only one participant answered directly the second part of the question which was about the reasons that disabled 3rd year students to preempt pragmatic failure ? His answer was a detailed one as he mentioned many reasons behind pragmatic failure and some recomendations to avoid it. The main reason behind pragmatic failure according to Teacher 1is the differences

between the first language and the target language . Thus , he recomended the involvement of teaching pragmatic content in some modules as oral expression (through watching films and analyzing how speech acts are performed in natural situations with a comparison to the first language), Literature (through analyzing poems, metaphors, idioms, expressions, etc. to show cross-cultural differences between the first and the target language). Table 3.42  represents the teachers' answers :

**Table 3.46 :** Teachers' response on cross cultural activities

| |
|---|
| **Teacher 1**          '.differences between the first language and the target language teaching pragmatic competence  Should be involved in some modules such as ; Oral Expression (through watching films and analysing  how speech acts are performed in natural situations with a comparison to the first Language, Literature (through analyzing poems, metaphors, idioms, expressions, etc. to show  cross-cultural differences between the first and the target language), |
| **Teacher 2**      'couldn't get what you mean' |
| **Teacher 3**      'Yes. I see that most of students are nowadays are reluctant, don't read and don't try to develop their knowledge.  ' |
| **Teacher 4**      'Reconsider the structure of this question.' |
| **Teacher 5**      ' teachers themselves need training , before teaching their students, and timing Is not enough even fr linguistic training' |

**Q8 :** How often do you provide your learners with L2 strategies for representing different types of speech acts ?

**Table 3.47 :** The Frequency of  strategies used by EFL teachers to raise students' pragmatic awareness.

| | **Often** | **Very often** | **Sometimes** | **Others** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Frequency** | 00 | 03 | 01 | 01 |
| **Percentage** | 0% | 60% | 20% | 20% |

It could be seen in question number 8 responses , concerning the frequency of teachers' delivering L2 strategies in which learners compare speech acts in their L1 with speech acts in L2 , that most of the sample (60%)'very often ' or 'most of the time' associate their learners with such kind of activities esp in the module of writing . While one of the participants with a rate of (20%) stated that he does it 'sometimes' and it depends on the module he teaches it , an other teacher said that he does whenever the opportunity permits it.

**Q9 :** How do you instruct your students in speech acts as ( apologies , requests , refusals ….) to assist them develop their pragmatic competence ?

The last question , which is the ninth in the Teachers' Inteview , sets its focus on the instructions  teachers use to teach their students how to perform speech acts accurately as requests , apologies and refusals to be competent communicators. The following table shows the teachers' answers :

**Table 3.48 :** Strategies and Techniques to Teach Speech Acts

| | |
|---|---|
| **Teacher 1** | 'Yes '. |
| **Teacher 2** | 'presenting the different forms used by native speakers ' |
| **Teacher 3** | 'This is for COE teachers. ' |
| **Teacher 4** | 'Through dialogue and analysis or interpretation' |
| **Teacher 5** | 'Expose them to language materials designed fr that purpose ' |

Table 3.51 illustrates the diverse strategies and techniques teachers use to teach their learners how to perform speech acts correctly regarding the target language 's cultural context **.** It is clearly shown that every teacher uses different techniques and strategies which are summarized as following : One of the participants propose presenting the differant forms of speech acts used by native speakers so as

to learners become familiar with them , other suggest exposing learners to language materials designed for that purpose, and participant 4 said 'through dialogue and analysis or interpretation' .

## 3.5. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire and the Teachers' Interview Results

This section sets for a recapitulation of the main findings obtained from the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview . They will be discussed in relation to the research questions, and the discussion will include responding to two questions .

The first research question is ″To what extent are 3rd year EFL students pragmatically competent?″

This question has been measured by examing two criteria : The students' perceptions about pragmatic aspects in the questionnaire , and the correct evaluation of the utterances in the DCT .

Firstly, according to data analysis presented previously , most of the informants highlight the importance of learning about the TL's cultural context when learning a second language , claiming that the lack of cultural and pragmatic context of L2 results in facing many difficulties, they struggle to overcome , as ' failure to express their attentions' and ' failure to understand native speakers' attentions' , which led to misunderstanding , confusion , and sometimes wrong choice of diction and formality. However , students believe that their teachers rarely provide them with any cultural references in the class. Technically , they believe they do not have enough exposure when having oral or written expression classes . Hence , students assure the highly importance and need of L2 exposure to better learning and using the language.

Secondly , and based upon learners' interpretation and production of speech acts in the Discourse Completion Test , learners to some extent seem to possess some considerable pragmatic expertise as they assign a medium value to the social variables (P , SD, and R) which determine the appropriateness of their utterances.

All in all , it could be inferred that the sample chosen of third year EFL students at the deparetment of English in the University of Tlemcen have an average level of pragmatic competence since they are to some extent aware about the role of cultural differences and pragmatic instruction in their language learning and use . Thus, the first hypothesis postulated at the beginning of the study have been rejected.

Moving to the results obtained from the teachers' interview which shed light on teachers' perceptions about the importance of pragmatic instruction in teaching a foreign language . By putting emphasis on cultural references and pragmatic instruction ,the findings demonstrate that ; EFL teachers highly believe about the importance and the necessity of pragmatic instruction in teaching a foreign language to accomplish an effective communication and language proficiency . (80%) of them set their focus on teaching pragmatic content in their classes , and most of them (60%) make sure to acculturate the language materials by giving concrete examples or by comparing them to our native culture .

Moreover , most of the teachers indicate that they often provide learners with strategies in dealing with authentic speech acts, as an important operative technique to raise learners' pragmatic competence . However, students declare that they do not know how to use Language in context , and they believe their teachers should introduce them to more exposure to the second language to be able to contextualize the language and consequently , use it appropriately.

All in all , according to the teachers' answers , it could be inferred that EFL teachers , have good perceptions on the importance of pragmatic instruction in teaching a second language , and they highly recommend it practices within their EFL classroom , despite the fact that most of them have not been exposed to pragmatic training earlier. For this reason , they are able to manage to acculturate the language used in the classroom using several techniques that involve implementing contexual authentic language.

Genarally , the research found out that teachers at the deparetment of English in the University of Tlemcen are aware of the importance of Pragmatics' instruction and its role in teaching a foreign language . Hence , they are trying to include

pragmatic culture when teaching . On the other hand , students are to some extrent aware about the importance of  Pragmatic competence . Yet , they believe their teachers should introduce them to more exposure to the second language to be better users of the language.

## 3.6. Summary of the Findings

The  research questions that this work attempted to answer them , were mentioned at the onset of this research .To what extent are EFL 3rd year students pragmatically competent ? . Do they exhibit any kind of pragmatic failure ? .And What are EFL teachers' perceptions about the teaching of the pragmatic aspects of language in the English department ?

Regarding the first question , a questionnaire was used to collect general information about the subjects and their awareness of cultural differences and the $2^{nd}$ part of the test , part B, to identify their level of pragmatic competence. On the other hand , the 1st part of the test , part A, was designed to shed light on whether or not they demonstrate any kind of pragmatic failure, e.i , it answers the second question of this study. From the analysis of the data , it was evident that they do manifest both pragmatic transfer and pragmatic failure. For the last question , a Teachers' Interview was designed to inspect EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of pragmatic competence in their EFL classrooms.

The questionnaire highlighted the fact that students are in fact exposed to the target culture in a more or less regular manner and they receive constructive criticism from teachers regarding the use of English in real life situations.

As for the $2^{nd}$ part of the test , it provides the students with scenarios followed up by multiple choice responses and they got to choose one answer from the list. Therefore, their responses reflected fairly a developed level of pragmatic competence because they showed a good average of correct answers along all the questions proposed to them.

Concerning, the 1st part of the test, it was established to scrutinize their level of production. It was palpable that they have problems with the structures of every

speech act, sentences structure, waffling, and sentences that make no sense whatsoever, as well as discourse errors that signal their use of translation as a mean to produce their answers. Additionally, a number of spelling mistakes were identified *borow (borrow) ser (sir),* abbreviations following the social media patterns of communication, along with that they do not know how to diffrentiate between certain verbs like borrow and lend and show a case of limited inventory of vocabulary.

As for, the aspect that reflects their level of pragmatic competence.We note the presence of both pragmatic transfer and pragmatic failure. Transfer from their L1 was apparent in their production of apologies, they used more than one IFID; their excessive use of terms of address; overuse of intensification like *please*, swearing, also the transfer from French *excuse moi (excuse me)* to mean (*Iapologize*). Besides, their use of intensification increased with the status of the hearer, in addition to repetition they both signal transfer from L1. They did use *I am sorry* in a good way but this was over learnt and does not really reflect a real competence. Their use of modals is mechanical; it reflects what they learnt.

Pragmalinguistic failure was apparent in their requests , like in the employment of the word ' *please*' in initial position in the company of a term of address , or by itself as an attention getter . It was apparent also in refusals when they refuse an invitation without giving a specific reason. Sociopragmatic failure was observable in the instances where they ask a stranger for a service , the use of more than one IFID in their apologies, Thanking God , and swearing were used differently even with friends . Also they take on  responsibility only in distance and high-imposition encounters . Furthermore , the subjects opted for using the direct strategy of refusals which stems from the culture of their  L1 .

With all that been said, they did use some of the speech acts properly, their offense taking is similar to TL. Also, they did not opt for explanation when the status of the hearer was low which is a sign of good level of competence. Overall, they reflect an acceptable(medium) level of pragmatic competence. Thus, the first hypothesis was rejected ,whereas the second one was confirmed  since all types of pragmatic failure were identified. Furthermore, it can be concluded that when

subjects are asked to think on their own, they tend to struggle and waffle a lot, whereas when they are provided with a list of answers, they tend to know which one is wrong and which one is right.

Based on the findings of this study, it is revealed that third year EFL students' Level of pragmatic competence requires improvement. A moderate level of pragmatic competence makes students disposed to pragmatic failure in communication, especially in the target language context. It has been shown that developing the students' ability to comprehend and produce language appropriately in different social contexts is vital for an effective communication in English.

## 3.7. Pedagogical Implications

This section attempts to shed light on some contributions related to instructing learners in pragmatics , in general , and in speech acts in particular.

Among the likely ways to present learners with pragmatic input is through textbooks. The teaching / learning material should supply appropriate input which is boosted by adequate pragmatic and metapragmatic information. It is necessary that textbooks provide the EFL learners with authentic speech act data , since FL learners lack opportunities of interacting with NSs which allows practicing the language as it is used in communication. To this end, role-plays and written DCTs can be very helpful to investigate speech acts through conversation analysis.

In our case , it is strongly recommended that the EFL material directed to Algerian learners, regarding the speech acts of request , apology and refusal should emphasise the following points :

1. Levels of directness in requests and the linguistic forms which realise them along with the attitudes they convey.
2. Modal elements are important as they have a pragmatic consequence, and less focus should be on the ones of ability (*can* and *could*) and willingness (*would*) that learners seem to overlearn.
3. *Mind modals* (*would*/*do you mind*) are used as an appropriate way to open a request.

4. How the requestee"s attention can be drawn, especially in informal settings, and showing that the discourse marker *please* is not always an apt choice.

5. Discourse markers should not be over represented to avoid overgeneralisation in IL production, such as in the case with *please* that should appear in a proximity with *downtoners* (e.g. *possibly*, *kindly*, *terribly*) so that the EFL learner would have a chance to make pragmatic choice rather than returning to memory.

6. Equal importance should be given to the issue of perspective and a balanced presentation of the main perspectives (i.e. H-oriented and S-oriented) should be reached along with the *joint* and *impersonal* ones. Learner"s awareness of how the choice of request perspective is pragmatic-driven should be raised.

7. The presentation of apologies formed by means of a context-appropriate single *IFID*.

8. The host of functions *IFIDs* can serve in different contexts; whether offered for real apologies (offenses) in the case of *I'm sorry* or for formulaic ones (attention cues) in the case of *excuse me/pardon me*. Also, how politeness can be marked through formality (*sorry* vs. *accept my apologies*).

9. Learners should learn how appropriate intensifiers can be well-positioned in the apology semantic formulae (*IFID*-internal).

10. How often ENSs are likely to take on responsibility in power-asymmetric, distance and high-imposition encounters is very important.

11. How often ENSs are likely to offer *Explanations* (excuses) and *Concern* in apologising to strangers and in high-infraction contexts should be learnt.

12. There should be emphasis on the impact of situational variables like power, social distance, age, gender, imposition, offense etc. on the pragmatic choice.

The above-listed points cover both linguistic elements and sociopragmatic factors. The teaching of the sociopragmatic dimension of speech acts to EFL learners is reminiscent of the statement of Thomas (1983) that it could be cultural sensitive as it entails implementing a new ,system of beliefs.

However, The appropriate input does not by itself foster pragmatic development. The relevant pragmatic and metapragmatic information that accompany it also contributes to pragmatic development and awareness.

This kind of information raises awareness about the functions of linguistic items, the impact of sociocultural variables and the cross-cultural/linguistic differences. By pragmatic/metapragmatic information we mean "any information related to culture, context, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and/or register" (Vellenga, 2004 ,p, 5). The following is a sample of the metapragmatic information gained from the current study which might be presented in the teaching/learning materials:

1. It is recommended that speech acts are presented in conjunction with adequate information, given the participants, their relationship (close, distant, colleagues, friends etc.), relative status (power symmetric/asymmetric), the setting (service encounter, academic place, street etc.) the purpose of the interaction (transmission of information or maintaining social relationship), the mood (serious or humorous).

2. EFL learners should be made aware that these variables affect the requestive , apologetic  and refusal acts at the level of linguistic materials and semantic formula .

3. In English, direct requests are hardly ever used, because they are interpreted as orders and, thus, in +P and +SD encounters, they are perceived as rude. In contrast, there is no taboo against using them in Arabic.

4. Modal verbs in English should be handled with care as they indicate politeness and register. The past forms are more polite and more formal than the present counterparts.

5. ENSs oftentimes avoid the reference to the H as the bearer of the action as a way to mitigate coerciveness in requests

6. English *IFIDs* should be chosen with care as they can be used for both real apologies and formulaic ones. *Excuse me* and *pardon me* are rather used

for getting people"s attention; for instance, to open the way to get past; meanwhile *I'm sorry* is used for real apologies.

7. Since *sorry* can be used in a wide range of contexts, sometimes, for certain offenses or in power-asymmetric situations, it might not be perceived as inadequate/insincere. For this reason, NSs inject intensifiers (*IFID-internal*) to convey sincerity.

8. Due to immunity of one"s self in the Anglo-Saxon culture, ENSs find it face-threatening to take on responsibility in power-asymmetric, distance and high imposition encounters. Instead, they are likely to express their concern about the victim or offer him some sort

## 3.8. Conclusion

This chapters summarized the results of the raw information collected and attempted to answer the research questions provided at the beginning of this research. The idea was to provide an understanding of the pragmatic competence of the student. At the end, it was deduced that the subjects have considerably an average level of pragmatic competence. It is worth noting that this research is not enough to draw a conclusion or provide generalization thus further research are needed to improve the quality of education concerning the pragmatic aspect of language and this is only a starting point to a much bigger scope of investigation .

# General Conclusion

**General Conclusion**

The ability to have a native-like proficiency is virtually the goal of many, if not all, EFL learners. Thus, one of the major concerns of this research work was to measure the extent to which some communicative aspects are developed. In other words, focus was on the appropriate use of English by advanced EFL learners (3rd year). The study targeted learners' pragmatic competence. Besides considering the level of pragmatic knowledge, the research aimed to circle the main areas/types of pragmatic failure. Of course, investigating EFL teachers integration of the pragmatic dimension in their classes was also a priority.

Consequently, three research methods were opted for to fulfill the desired objectives. Data to assess students' ability to perform speech acts were gathered using a test in the form of a DCT. Also, a structured questionnaire was administered to students. Teachers were approached through the interview.

The work was divided into three chapters. The first one aimed at sketching a concise overview of the related literature. The picture encapsulated the core concepts of pragmatic competence and pragmatic failure. The second chapter condensed a brief overview of the methodological framework enveloping this research. The last chapter was a space to lay down, analyse and discuss the findings.

As for the results, the first hypothesis claiming that 3rd year EFL students have a low level of pragmatic awareness was rejected. In fact, students exposed a relatively developed pragmatic competence and an average level of awareness about the importance of pragmatic knowledge. Of course, it goes without saying that the pragmatic knowledge differs from one learner to another just like control of other aspects of the language (speaking, vocabulary, etc). Considering the second hypothesis, the findings validated its claim revealing that EFL learners expose different types of pragmatic failure. It was proved that pragmalinguistic failure, sociopragmatic failure and pragmatic transfer are omnipresent in the learners' linguistic behaviour. Pragmalinguistic failure is the result of several reasons, among which is what Thomas (1983) calls transfer and teaching induced errors. Transfer relates to semantic and syntactic equivalent structures and speech act strategies

transfer directly adopted from L1; here learners assume that they have the same force in both languages. As for sociopramatic failure, it took place because of the size of imposition in addition to the different assessment of relative power and social distance that varies across culturally. Concerning the third hypothesis, EFL teachers proved that they seriously consider the pragmatic dimension of language. Thus , the third hypothesis was confirmed .

Concordant with the findings of the research, we recommend that the teaching material should be enriched with authentic data and adequate metapragmatic information. It is recommended also that interactive activities should be designed to provide learners with an opportunity to practise different speech acts. Further investigations need to consider what follows :

- Extensive evaluative studies concerning the literature and the textbook provided for EFL learners.
- Comparative study between speech acts produced by native speakers and those by Algerian EFL learners to be able to spot the flaws when communicating.
- The role of visual aids and role play in raising the awareness of EFL learners.
- Authentic environment with more exposure to the target language and foreign teachers to stimulate the learners' interest.
- Teaching techniques to make students aware about the cultural specific rules, and that they display a different pragmatic system from the mother tongue.

It goes without mentioning that this work is by no mean final. The limitations that were encountered while conducting this research related basically to reluctance of students to participate in the study. Many of them were not cooperative, refusing to answer the questionnaire and/or to complete the test. Therefore, the work still needs further development which can surmount the limitations and delimitations. Better methods could have been employed. More informants could also be recruited.

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# Appendices

**Appendix 01:** Students' Questionnaire

**Appendix 02:** Discourse Completion Test

**Appendix 03:** Teachers' Interview

## Appendix A

## Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students ,

   We will greatly appreciate if you could take time to fill in the questionnaire . By answering the following questions, you will help me to improve the content of my dissertation . Your answers will be used only for research purposes. When required , tick where appropriate (sometimes more than one choice is allowed)

**Question 1 :** Why did you choose to major in English ?

   ☐  It was your only choice.

   ☐  You need it  for a job .

   ☐  Get access to international communication.

   ☐  It is a global language which opens the doors to a variety of domains.

**Question 2 :** How would you evaluate your present level of English ?

| Skills | Excellent | Good | Average | Low | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listening | | | | | |
| Speaking | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | | |
| Writing | | | | | |

**Question 3 :** According to your experience ,which aspect of English  learning has been so  Far the most difficult to acquire ?

   ☐  Vocabulary.

   ☐  Grammatical structure

   ☐  Verbal Communication.

   ☐  Pronunciation .

   ☐  Spelling and composition .

**Question 4 :** What do you do when you face difficulties in understanding English ?

☐ Ignore it

☐ Check the difficult words in the dictionary

☐ Try to translate into your mother tongue.

☐ Try to figure out the meaning relying on the context of communication.

**Question 5 :** Do you feel more comfortable when the teacher explains the lesson :

☐ By using only, the English language .

☐ When the teacher uses both English and Arabic and even French .

**Question 6 :** Do you think that the first language can influence the use of the target language ?

☐ Greatly      ☐ to some extent      ☐ not at all

**Question 7 :** In your opinion, can the mother tongue be an obstacle in learning foreign languages ?

☐ Greatly      ☐ to some extent      ☐ not at all

**Question 8 :** Have you ever been involved in an English native speaking context ?

☐ Always      ☐ frequently      ☐ sometimes      ☐ rarely      ☐ never

**Question 9** : Is it important to know about the target language culture in learning a Foreign language ?

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ agree   ☐ neutral   ☐ disagree   ☐ strongly disagree

**Question 10:** Why is it important to know about the target language culture in learning a Foreign language according to you ?

………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

**Question 11 :** Does it happen that you understand meaning of words but you fail to understand the speaker's intention when engaging in an English -based communication ?

☐ Always      ☐ frequently ☐ sometimes ☐ rarely ☐ never

**Question 12 :** In case you face problems with understanding  the intended (true) meaning in English,how do you overcome such obstacles?

…………………………………………………138…………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………...

**Question 13:** Does pragmatic competence essential for a successful language use ?

☐ Strongly Agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Question 14:** Do EFL learners face difficulties in developing pragmatic competence due to the lack of exposure to L2 and the lack of interaction with other speakers ?

☐ Strongly Agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Question 15:** When processing pragmatic meaning we do not consider only the linguistic information,such as vocabulary and syntax,but also the contexual information ,such as the role and status of interlocutors?

☐ Strongly Agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**Question 16:** How often does your teacher instruct you to analyze language used by natives in their conversations?

☐ Very Often    Often    Sometimes    Rarely    Never

**Question 17:** How often do you receive exercises that require you to choose the appropriate response for different situations ?

☐ Very Often    Often    Sometimes    Rarely    Never

**Question 18:** How often does your teacher arrange activities in which you compare speech acts in your native language with speech acts in the native language ?

☐ Very Often    Often    Sometimes    Rarely    Never

## Appendix B

### Discourse Completion Test

Dear students,

We will greatly appreciate if you could answer this test.Please review your answer choices carefully before you submit your final answer.

### Section A :

A- **Read the situations below and provide your answer in the ' you say ' section.**

**Situation 1** :

You are talking to one of your *distinguished professors* about your academic problems.While talking, you notice a book on your professor's desk, which is relevant to the research you are doing.You want to borrow it for some time.What would you say ?                                                                          You say :………………………………………………………………………………

**Situation 2** :

You are shopping for your friend's birthday and you see something in a display case .You want to look at it more closely . A *salesclerk* comes over to you.You ask him to take it out to have a closer look. What would you say ?

You say :……………………………………………………………………………………….

**Situation 3** :

In your class , you are reading a passage and the teacher wants you to find the meaning of a newly introduced word.But you realise that you forgot your dictionary . Your *classmate,* who is sitting next to you, has one. You want to borrow his/ her dictionary for a moment. What would you say ?

You                                                                                      say : …………………………………………………………………………………………….

**Situation 4** :

You borrow a book from your *university teacher* and you promise you will give it back on a particular day. When it is the day to give it back, you remember that you let it home and it is too late to go back home. How would you apologise to your teacher ?

You                                                                         say :

……………………………………………………………………………………………
…..

### Situation 5 :

You promise your *young sister* to help her doing her homework , but you cannot afford any time. When she comes back from school and finds out , she is really annoyed. What would you say to her ?

You
say :……………………………………………………………………………………
………..

### Situation 6 :

You are a passenger in a bus. You misplace your bag on the rack. Your bag suddenly falls on one *of the passengers* and hits *him / her* .What would you say to apologise ?

You
say :……………………………………………………………………………………
………..

### Situation 7 :

You are about to leave your office. On the way to parking lot, your *boss* stops you and invites you to go to his house warming party. As you cannot go, you decline his invitation.

You
say :……………………………………………………………………………………
…………

### Situation 8 :

You went to the shop to buy a pair of shoes.You found two pairs that you liked and they fit you perfectly.You took a glimpse at the price tag and you were shocked of how expensive they were.*The shop assistant* approached you and asked if you would like to take them.

You
say :……………………………………………………………………………………
………..

### Situation 9 :

You have worked too hard at your study . Your *close friend* knows this and he suggests you do something to make your mind relax a bit. However , you refuse his suggestion.

You                                                                               say :
……………………………………………………………………………………
….

## Section B :

### B- Read the situations below and tick where appropriate .

#### Situation 1 :

You are working in one of the companies sharing the office with a *workmate* with whom you have been working for years. Your workmate is keen on using computers.You are facing a problemin fixing some tables in your computer, so you ask him to come and help you.

You :

a) Can you help me fix some tables,please ?.

b) Hey…can you help me for a minute ? These tables are making me insane.Are you busy ?

c) I'm in trouble ,come and help me to fix these tables in my computer.
d) Do you mind helping me fixing these tables ?

#### Situation 2 :

You are carrying several bags full of groceries in your way to the car park where you left your car. *A stranger ( your age )* passes by.What would you say to request from that person to carry some of the bags with you ?

You :

a) Please my brother,hold these groceries with me to the car park.
b) Excuse me ,Would you help me carry a few of these bags ?My car is parcked just a few feet away.

c) Hey brother,could you help me to carry these bags ?

d) Please do me a favour.Help me with these bags.

**Situation 3 :**

You are on your way to college and you are a bit late.You realise that you left your watch at home ( your mobile clock is unset).*A person( your age)* wearing a watch passes by.You ask him/ her about the time.

You :

a) Please , what's the time now ?

b) Excuse me, have you got the time?

c) What time is it,please ?

**Situation 4 :**

You forget a get-together with *a close friend* .You call him to apologise.This is already the second time you have forgotten such a meeting.Your friend asks over the phone : 'what happened to you' ?

You say :

a) please ,Forgive me.The circumstances didin't permit.

b) Oh my godness, I am so sorry .I totally forgot the get-together .

c) Sorry my friend , I didn't mean to .

d) I'm so sorry my friend.I 've forgotten about our meeting .

**Situation 5 :**

You are in a line waiting to get a movie ticket and you *inadvertently step on a lady's foot*.What would you say to her ?

You say :

a)I am so sorry , l hope you are not hurt.

b)My bad , I didn't notice you were behind me.

c)Oops !I apologize, was that your foot ? Forgive me, please

**Situation 6 :**

You want to call a friend of yours, but you *dial the wrong number*. The answer replies ' I'm not X ;What would you say to apologise ?

You say :

a) Forgive me . I've made a mistake.

b) Oops ! Sorry, I'm sorry for my disturbance .

c) Sorry . I was mistaken when I dialed the number. .

d) I'm sorry.I just tried to call my friend.

### Situation 7 :

It's Tuesday afternoon.You are leaving your office.You are in the parking lot.You have tried to start your motorbike many times,but it does not work.*Your boss* is in the parking lot too.He is parking his car opposite your motorbike.He approaches you and offers to help.However you decline his help.

You say :

a) Do not bother yourself

b) Oh, that's very kind .

c) No,but thank you for asking.

d) Thank you Sir ,but you don't need to worry.

### Situation 8 :

You are a manager of an online advertising business.Recently your laptop has been infected by computer viruses.You have tried some new anti viruses, but they are not quite effective.*One of your staff* suggests you apply a different operating system to avoid the virus.However you decline his suggestion .

You say :

a) Thank you , but no .

b) No , but thank you for your help .

c) Thanks, I can handle it .

d) I feel it is my duty not to .

### Situation 9 :

It is Friday afternoon .You meet *your close friend* in the front of the library.He says that he is going to the beach next Sunday and invites you to join him, but you cannot go.

You say :

a) I would love too, but I can't,I'm busy on Friday.

b) Another time , may be

c) I feel obliged not to accept your offer.

d) I feel it is my duty not to.

## Appendix C

## Teachers' Interview

**Dear Teachers.**

You are kindly invited to answer the following questions, which investigate the importance of Pragmatic instruction on developing EFL learners'awareness about the pragmatic dimension of language. Thank you for your collaboration.

**Question 1 :**

Have you received a formal training to teach pragmatic content ?

**Question 2 :**

Is it true that teachers focus most of the time on linguistic competence more than other competences, including pragmatic competence ?

**Question 3 :**

In your opinion, is there a strong correlation between pragmatic competence and language proficiency ?

**Question 4 :**

Do you often arrange learning opportunities in a way that learners get to know and develop their pragmatic competence ?

**Question 5 :**

In your opinion, to what extent do you think third year students of English are yet equipped with the competence of analyzing language used by natives in their converstions ?

**Question 6 :**

When delivering a given language material, do you make sure to acculturate it ? And how ?

**Question 7 :**

Does Cross- Cultural awareness raising a parcel of the EFL curriculum in Tlemcen University ? If yes then. What are the reasons that disable third year students to seriously preempt pragmatic failure in your opinion ?

**Question 8 :**

How often do you provide your learners with L2 strategies for representing different types of speech acts ?

**Question 9 :**

How do you instruct your students in speech acts as ( apologies , requests , refusals ….) to assist them develop their pragmatic competence ?

## Résumé

Cette étude vise à aborder le rôle de la conscience délibérative dans la réalisation de la demande , excuses et rejet. Actuellement, l'efficacité délibérative est reconnue comme une composante essentielle de l'efficacité de la communication, mais les aspects pratiques de l'éducation sont totalement limités, ce qui les marginalise par rapport aux autres aspects de la langue cible. Les personnes apprenantes ont de la difficulté à utiliser un langage approprié dans un contexte différent et à utiliser des mots différents.

L'étude vise également à examiner et à aborder les réalisations et les perceptions des étudiants des méthodes d'application de la demande ,excuses et le rejet de la conscience délibérative des étudiants et les moyens linguistiques utilisés pour réaliser divers discours. Le manque de conscience délibérative affecte aussi sérieusement son rendement. Le but de cette étude est d'accroître la conscience délibérative des étudiants pour les aider à surmonter les problèmes de communication et d'échange.

Nous supposons donc que si les étudiants sont pleinement conscients de la conscience délibérative, ils seront en mesure de faire plusieurs discours de manière appropriée. Dans un effort pour augmenter la conscience délibérative des étudiants, nous avons conçu DCTT, qui est destiné à exécuter le discours et qui était destiné aux étudiants. Les résultats de DCT ont confirmé notre hypothèse de recherche. Les résultats ont révélé que la majorité des étudiants se sont heurtés au problème de l'exécution de tels discours sur la base des critères de la langue maternelle, car leur conscience délibérative ne pouvait pas livrer adéquatement les discours.

# الملخص

تسعى هذه الدراسة لمعالجة دور الوعي التداولي في تحقيق أسلوب الطلب: الإعتذار والرفض، ففي الوقت الحاضر تم الاعتراف بالكفاءة التداولية بوصفها مكونا أساسيا للكفاءة التواصلية، غير أن هناك ندرة تامة في الجوانب العملية للتعليم مما جعلها مهمشة مقارنة بالجوانب الأخرى للغة المستهدفة. حيث يجد المتعلمون صعوبات في استخدام اللغة بشكل مناسب في سياق مختلف وباستعمال ألفاظ مختلفة.

كما تسعى هذه الدراسة لفحص ومعالجة إنجازات الطلاب وتصوراتهم في أساليب الطلب: الاعتذار والرفض الوعي التداولي للطلاب والوسائل اللغوية المستخدمة لتحقيق مختلف الخطابات. كما يؤثر الافتقار إلى الوعي التداولي بشكل خطير على أدائها. والهدف من هذه الدراسة زيادة وعي الطلاب التداولي لمساعدتهم على التغلب على مشاكل الاتصال وتبادل الآراء.

وبالتالي نحن نفترض إذا كان الطلاب على دراية عملية تامة بالوعي التداولي فسيكونون قادرين على أداء عدة خطابات بشكل مناسب. وفي محاولة لرفع الوعي التداولي لطلاب قمنا بتصميم DCTونقصد بها مهمة إنجاز الخطاب والتي تم توجيهها إلى الطلاب. حيث أكدت النتائج التي أسفرت عنها DCT فرضية البحث لدينا. وكشفت النتائج أن أغلبية الطلاب وقعوا في مشكلة تأدية هذه الخطابات بناء على معايير اللغة الأم حيث أن الوعي التداولي لديهم لا يمكنهم من أداء الخطابات بالشكل المناسب.