دراسة مقارنة لقياس الكفاءة التداولية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ولغة

الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية مقارنة بالمتحدثين الأصليين في إنتاج الطلبات

A Comparative Study Measuring the Pragmatic Competence of the Badini Kurdish EFL and ESL Learners of English in Relation to Native Speakers in Producing Requests

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الملخص

قامت العديد من الدراسات حول الكفاءة التداولية بتحليل اساليب التداول للمجموعات المختلفة. نظرًا لانتشار اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في البلدان غير الناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية، فإن استخدامها غالبًا ما يظل مقتصرًا على وظائف محددة. على الرغم من الكفاءة النحوية، قد لا تكون الطلاقة والكفاءة التداولية تلقائية، حيث غالبًا ما يواجه المتعلمون أخطاء عملية ويواجهون فروقًا اجتماعية وثقافية دقيقة عند مواجهة تعبيرات إنجليزية غير قياسية. تحلل الدراسة الحالية الكفاءة التداولية لناطقي اللغة الكردية البهدينية الذين يتعلمون اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية الذين درسوا في إقليم كردستان العراق وناطقي اللغة الكردية البهدينية الذين يتعلمون اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة ثانية الذين درسوا، في مرحلة ما، في المملكة المتحدة أو غيرها من البلدان الناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية. تبحث الدراسة في كيفية قيام مجموعات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية واللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية بأداء اسلوب الطلب باللغة الإنجليزية، مقارنة بالمتحدثين الأصليين للغة الإنجليزية. شاركت في الدراسة عينة هادفة مقصودة تضم ١٨ متعلمًا ممن يتعلمون الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، و ١٤ ممن يتعلمون الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية، و ١٠ من المتحدثين الأصليين. تم إنشاء مجموعة البيانات باستخدام طريقة البحث الكمي عبر مهمة إكمال الخطاب مع تسعة سيناريوهات لأسلوب الطلب. تم تصنيفها وقياسها وتحليلها

بناءً على التصنيفات التي وضعها بلوم–كولكا واخرين (١٩٨٩). أظهرت نتائج أن مجموعتي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية والناطقين الأصليين للغة الانجليزية المزيد من أوجه التشابه من حيث المباشرة ومعايير الأدب والتعديلات بالمقارنة مع مجموعة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. أظهر البحث أن العوامل الاجتماعية مثل القوة والمسافة الاجتماعية تؤثر على اسلوب الطلب المشاركين.

Abstract

Many studies on pragmatic competence have analyzed the pragmatics of different groups exploring the importance of the language's global reach. Moreover, since English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is prevalent in non-English-speaking countries, its use often remains limited to specific functions. Despite grammatical proficiency, fluency and competence may not be automatic, as learners often encounter pragmatic errors and struggle with sociocultural nuances upon encountering non-standard English expressions. The present study examines how EFL and ESL groups perform the speech act of requests in English, compared to native speakers of English (NSE). A purposive snowball sample comprising 18 Badini Kurdish EFL learners, 14 Badini Kurdish ESL learners, and 10 NSEs participated in the study. The data set was created by collecting utterances of requests in English using a quantitative research method, that is, a discourse-completion task (DCT) with nine scenarios of requests. Their pragmatic features were classified, quantified, and analyzed based on the classifications established by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). The findings of the ESL and NSE groups showed more similarities in terms of directness, politeness standards, and modifications when compared to the EFL group. The research showed that social factors such as power and social distance impact participants' speech act of requests.

Introduction

Effective communication is arguably the primary indicator of success in acquiring a foreign and/or second language (L2). However, many L2 learners experience difficulty using their target language in every conversation, even though they possess a sufficient grasp of linguistic skills and elements such as phonetics, phonology, syntax, and semantics. Language is not just about sounds and grammar; it also mirrors the cultural values of the society where it is spoken. Language and culture are "intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture" (D. Brown, 2000, p. 177). Therefore, a proper use of language requires an understanding of the politeness conventions within the specific speech community (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Koike, 1989, as cited in Altheeby, 2018). The interpretation of utterances is significantly influenced by the context in which they are spoken, including physical and psychological surroundings, interpersonal connections, and other contextual signals. Learners aiming to grasp the action-oriented nature of speech should consider context, as emphasized by Hurford & Heasley (1983), Ochs (1979), and Searle (1979). Therefore, failing to understand the cultural, social, and contextual intricacies linked to a language may hinder learners from achieving pragmatic proficiency (Al-Kahtani, 2005; Krasner, 1999).

Pragmatics focuses on how language is used in communication, going beyond the literal meaning of words to consider the intended meaning based on social norms, conventions, and context. Acquiring the skill to interact correctly with both native speakers (NSE hereafter) and fellow learners is possible for second language learners, this can be performed by excelling cultural, social, and contextual conventions (Mey, 2001; Searle, 1975; Yule, 1996, as cited in Altheeby, 2018). Also, Pragmatics, a discipline of theoretical linguistics that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, brought about a significant transformation in language education. As a consequence of this transformation, the focus switched from accurate grammatical and phonetic structures to accurate utilization of language for communication (Jucker, 2012). In contemporary times, the majority of individuals engage in the pursuit of acquiring proficiency in L2 with the specific goal of becoming skilled in effective communication,

placing particular focus on the ability to modify one's vocabulary and manner of expression to suit certain social and cultural contexts. Pragmatic competence refers to this ability.

The present study focuses on pragmatic competence and examines the pragmatic understanding of Badini Kurdish EFL and ESL learners This study aims to examine and compare the performance of two non-native groups with a control group of British Native speakers of English (NSE) in speech acts of requests and refusals.

Problem of the Study

This study offers clarification and insight into the problem by examining the differences in pragmatic competence between two groups of English language learners, namely, EFL and ESL learners. The present study is important in the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) as it will enhance comprehension of English instruction in the KRI context, as well as the teaching and acquisition of pragmatic aspects in EFL and ESL educational settings, being the first of its kind in this context. The study analyses common pragmatic features of English used by Badini Kurdish participants who are learning English as a foreign language, second language, or native speaker equivalents. Specifically, it focuses on prevalent forms and standards for making requests and refusals in English. This information could be useful for Kurdish researchers, teachers, and English learners in educational settings and for future research endeavors. The study investigates the awareness of sociopragmatic rules among Badini Kurdish EFL and ESL participants to reduce cross-cultural and interlanguage communication issues between Badini Kurdish English language learners and NSE. This thesis tries to accomplish certain predetermined objectives and address particular inquiries, enlisted below:

Research Questions

The current study aims to answer the below research questions:
1. How do Badini Kurdish EFL and ESL learners produce speech acts of requests in comparison to NSEs?
2. Are there any pragmatic differences among the three groups when making requests regarding the formal and informal contexts?

3. Are there any pragmatic differences among the three groups with regard to making requests when interacting with interlocutors of higher, equal, and lower statuses?

Theoretical Background and Related Literature

Due to the extensive use of English as a global means of communication in contemporary times, the world has contracted in size while also becoming more interconnected, open, accessible, and familiar to every individual on the planet. English is often regarded as the global language by a multitude of individuals who speak several languages due to its common attributes. Across the world, people's everyday lives are undergoing significant changes due to the rapid progress in science and technology (Rao, 2019). Additionally, since English has assumed such a major role, several researchers have tried to coin a term by considering the various aspects of the use of English in diverse settings. Among them, McArthur (1987) called it, "World Standard (Spoken) English, whereas David Crystal (2012) introduced the phrase, "English as a global language" and House (1999), Gnutzmann (2000), Seidlhofer (2001) and Jenkins (2009) named it as "English as a Lingua Franca" as cited in (Seidlhofer, 2005). Furthermore, Modiano (1999) and Jenkins (2003) coined another phrase "English as an International Language", and Brutt-Griffler (2002) invented a new word, "World English". Of these, the most used terms are *English as a global language, English as a lingua franca*, and *English as an international language*. While individuals may use varying terminology to articulate a particular notion, the fundamental idea remains consistent: English serves as the primary language for domains such as commerce, governance, academia, and innovation, among many others. Given the need to cater to the linguistic needs of people from various parts of the world, it is justifiable to assert that English deserves a universal or global position in this regard. Moreover, according to Rohmah (2005), the concept of English being a global language was just a theoretical prediction about fifty years ago, and its status continues to be uncertain and without clear definition at now. However, it has become a practical language in the real world because it has been shaped by actual experiences. The significance of it in individuals' lives, whether for educational or occupational endeavors,

is widely experienced worldwide. English is widely used by people across the world as their main, secondary, or even as a foreign language. Indeed, English has undeniably emerged as a universally spoken language.

In their study, Tenzer et al. (2017) discovered that global communication has a significant role in promoting language development. They also observed that the linguistic diversity present in modern multinational companies influences decision-making in management. The worldwide distribution of social experiences offers a framework for comprehending the processes and elements that influence national mindsets. This emphasizes the essential need for doing study on language matters. In order to mitigate the effects of global trends, it is imperative that we promptly start the implementation of intricate strategies and plans. Due to media manipulation driven by national interests, the ideologies of countries are undergoing changes in the current era of globalization. Hence, to effectively tackle the issue of ethnic identity and its interconnectedness with globalization, it is imperative to focus on language, which serves as the primary conduit for cultural manifestation. The concept of "globalization" has been widely reviewed by scholars from a wide range of disciplines, such as education, political science, cultural studies, economics, sociology, and history (Marlina, 2013, as cited in Altheeby, 2018). Global communication research should be concerned about the transformation of society, human-centered (not driven by technological determinism), truly global, human rights focused. More participatory and qualitative communication research will be necessary to monitor and evaluate from the perspective of social relevance (Lie & Servaes, 2015). The relationship between language and cognition is a complex and challenging philosophical conundrum. The complexity of the situation is exacerbated by the inclusion of intricate and conflicting modes of cognition and communication. Given that these events are inherent to the nature of being human, they give rise to both biological and social considerations. Xu (2018) states that a benefit of English's globalization is its widespread use and the increased popularity of other languages as well. The intrinsic conflict between language policy and linguistic expansion is becoming more evident due to globalization. The number of individuals who are proficient in many languages has increased significantly as a result of the accessibility of cross-cultural

communication facilitated by the Internet and other kinds of globalization. Consequently, the significance of being bilingual is increasing (Abutalebi & Weekes, 2014). An individual's distinct identity is crucial, as is the need for others to accept and comprehend them. Legacy language students see a decrease in the representation of their original languages spoken in their parents' or grandparents' countries, while English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in middle-income nations are exposed to the linguistic standards of native speakers (Higgins & Sharma, 2017, as cited in Rao, 2019). To conclude, Kachru (1992) discussed the three circles of English as follows:

A. **The Inner Circle** is made up of the traditional bases of English and its speakers are the ones in charge of providing the norms. These places are where the norms are created and from which they spread to the other circles. Some of the countries that conform the Inner Circle are the USA, the UK, and Canada.

B. **The Outer Circle** represents the places where they speak official non-native varieties of English because of their colonial history. The speakers of these places are the ones who challenge the norms and develop them. They are mainly ESL. Some of the countries that belong to this circle are India, Pakistan, and Egypt.

C. **The Expanding Circle** includes EFL speakers where English is not usually spoken. In this circle, the speakers have to follow the rules established by the Inner Circle and developed or challenged by the Outer one. Some examples of countries that belong to this circle are China, Russia, and Brazil.

Concerning pragmatics, the term was first used in the late 1930s, deriving from the field of linguistic philosophy. Pragmatics, one of the three subfields of "signs" which include syntax and semantics as well, was first introduced by Charles Morris, being influenced by Charles Sanders Peirce's (1905) work on the philosophy of pragmatism (Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983; Mey, 2006; Morris, 1938). Morris (1938) clarified that pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between signs, or linguistic expressions, and those who use them, both individually and collectively as communities. Earlier than the 1960s, pragmatics was regarded as a subfield of language philosophy devoted to issues regarding language usage that could not

be incorporated into linguistics (Leech, 1983, p. 1). According to conventional knowledge, pragmatics consists of five basic domains that are interconnected: speech acts, deixis, presupposition, implicature, and conversational structure (Levinson, 1983, as cited in Altheeby 2018). Pragmatics encompasses a wide range of topics in the literature, including sociological research on ethnic language stereotypes and studies on business meeting etiquette i.e. politeness. The wide range and plentifulness of pragmatic domains and topics provide a challenge in determining their extent (Sperber & Wilson, 2005).

By incorporating pragmatics, Hymes' concept of communicative competence changed the face of L2 education in the late 1960s. In contrast to Noam Chomsky's (1965) concept of "linguistic competence," which defined a speaker's linguistic knowledge only in terms of their capacity to successfully communicate using that knowledge, Hymes introduced the concept of "communicative competence". According to Hymes (1972, p. 283), the term "communicative competence" refers to "the capabilities of a person [....]." Both the ability to use and (tacit) knowledge are necessary for competence. Therefore, knowledge and competence are distinct because of their individual elements and the potential for a systematic relationship that is based on empirical evidence. Hymes's concept of "communicative competence" included linguistic, cultural, and sociolinguistic elements, (see D. Brown, 1994, p. 227). Canale and Swain (1980, pp. 29-30) expanded on Hymes' concept by suggesting that it comprises three distinct skills: the first is grammatical competence, or comprehension of lexical terms, syntax, and semantics; the second is sociolinguistic competence, which refers to the sociocultural norms that influence the use of language; and the third is strategic competence, which includes techniques for both verbal and nonverbal communication. Although Hymes' idea of communicative competence and Canale and Swain's categorization do not explicitly address pragmatic competence, Kasper (2001, p. 503) contended that it is an essential component of Canale and Swain's definition of sociolinguistic competence. This demonstrates that communicative competence is the umbrella term under which pragmatic competence is included (Kasper, 2001; Savignon, 1991). It is regarded implicitly to be a type of sociolinguistic competence by (Canale & Swain, 1980). More concisely, (Canale, 1983) considers it as the rules for the utilization of

language. Pragmatic competence has also been developed and reformulated into a variety of concepts. For instance, "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" Thomas (1983, p. 92), Fraser (2010, p. 15) depicted it as "the capacity to discuss your planned message with every one of its subtleties in any socio-social setting and to decipher the message of your questioner as it was expected". All of the above-mentioned definitions, in addition to those suggested in other parts of the literature, they collectively suggest that pragmatic competence is made up of four main parts; firstly the capacity to utilize and interpret language for the appropriate purposes in the appropriate social settings (Bialystok, 1993; Kasper, 1997), secondly, it is important to possess the ability to comprehend and adhere to the regulations of propriety and courtesy that influence the manner in which discourse actions are delineated and comprehended (Koike, 1989). Thirdly, with the ability to comprehend and proficiently generate accurate viewpoints (Ellis, 1994, p. 719), and finally, have the capacity to comprehend and adhere to the objectives of speakers (Sperber & Wilson, 1986).

The term "sociological interface of pragmatics" is used to describe the field of sociopragmatics, which is its contrasting counterpart. The examination of pragmatic principles and performance involves considering factors such as social distance, authority, rights, and the extent of the imposition between interlocutors (Leech, 1983, p. 10). Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that understanding social distance, realization of power, and impositions in particular events, is more closely related to sociopragmatic competence than understanding and familiarizing oneself with the established standards, anticipated behaviours, and limitations within a community (Thomas, 1983, as cited in Altheeby 2018). Consequently, understanding the social use of language requires an understanding of the distinctions between the concepts of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. This study investigates the pragmalinguistic aspect of pragmatic strategies and the variations in responses to requests and refusals across various populations. Simultaneously, it examines, from a sociopragmatic perspective, whether participants' responses are influenced by contextual characteristics such as physical size and social status.

The term "pragmatic failure" was also coined by Thomas (1983, p. 95) to describe the lack of pragmatic competence, and Barron (2003, pp. 36-60) suggested that students from L2 category frequently experience pragmatic failure for the following reasons:

• Pragmatic overgeneralizations, in which L2 learners occasionally apply pragmatic norms that are only utilized in specific contexts to all contexts.

• Transference from L1, where L2 students may not be familiar with the target pragmatic rules and instead, transfer their L1cultural norms.

• Errors in the classroom or in the textbook, such as when incorrect information is provided or when authentic language usage is not reflected in the textbook.

To further consider elements relevant to the literature background of the current study, it is important to keep a highlight on the Speech Act Theory. According to Blum-Kulka et al., (1989) "SAT is one of the most compelling notions in the study of language use" (p. 1), SAT is a central consideration in pragmatics and a language use theory. Speech Act Theory was developed by Austin in 1962, and it emphasizes the intentions of verbal communication rather than its formal elements. Austin asserts that the fundamental principle behind SAT is that requesting, warning, refusing, or apologizing are all integral components of the minimal functional unit of communication, along with conveying an idea. According to Austin, a "speech act" refers to any utterance that utilizes a performative action in the context of language and communication. For instance, when a speaker utters a specific statement such as, "I warn you," they are not only carrying a warning but also expressing one (an utterance that connotates a performative action). Additionally, Austin (1962) suggested that a speech act is subdivided into three parts: "locution," "illocution," and "perlocution". The speaker's verbatim utterances and all of the grammatical, syntactic, and semantic attributes of those utterances are referred to as "locution". For instance, "It's hot in here!" has taken a face value of being a remark indicating the weather and serves as a warning. The speaker's intended pragmatic meaning of their words, or the planned course of action they aim to take with those words, is referred to as "illocution". For instance, the illocutionary act or power in the past model could convey a solicitation, for example, 'Might you at any point kindly open the window?'. Last but not least, "perlocution"

is the actual impact of the speech act on the listeners; their interpretation or response to it.

Because it is so important to effective communication, the concept of illocution, is at the heart of SAT, and is extensively discussed in the research on pragmatics and ILP. According to Leech (1983, p. 200), the term "illocutionary act" refers to speech acts embedding intentional actions that a speaker aims to do, such as making a commitment i.e. promising, offering advice, or giving a warning. Indirect speech acts involve speakers using specialized vocabulary to convey additional information or suggest non-determined activities. Searle's 1979 approach to SAT broadened Austin's definition of illocutionary acts, arguing that speakers sometimes communicate more than they actually say. Illocutionary force can be represented by linguistic features and can be decreased or expanded in discourse acts using different phonetic structures. For example, requests can be interpreted as promises due to future modal will. Effective use of these verbs requires sufficient pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competences and the ability to adapt the utterance to the situation by varying illocutionary force.

Moreover, Paul Grice, in his Theory of Conversation (1989), elaborates on the fact that communication and meaning focus on the process of listeners moving from what is said to what is implied. It is divided into two main schools: the theory of meaning and the theory of conversational implicature. Grice argues that the cooperative principle determines language usage for efficient and effective communication. Norms, as per his idea of conversational implicature, refer to the comprehensive principles that govern rational and cooperative behavior. He identifies dishonesty, exploiting technicalities, and holding contradictory beliefs as four ways in which someone may fail to adhere to a principle in a discourse. Individuals who secretly disregard a principle may be falsely accused. Failure to meet quality and quantity objectives is a method by which people might circumvent the maxim and the collaboration principle. Ultimately, a speaker may intentionally ignore or fail to adhere to a principle. Thomas (1995) proposes five techniques for disregarding a dictum: flouting, breaching, infringing, opting out, and suspending. One of the five kinds argued for by certain writers, including Grice, is the temporary disregard of a

maxim. Grice and his commentators have made efforts to elucidate these distinctions, but they have been unable to consistently achieve clarity in their linguistic use.

Politeness Theory (PT), on the other hand, was also developed within the context of pragmatic approach to linguistics. PT is when certain strategies are used by people to achieve successful communication. These methods make it possible to create the most conducive setting possible for communication (Brown & Levinson; 1995, 2006a). It seeks to enhance communication by providing specific guidelines to follow. (Brown & Levinson, 1987) developed a theory that utilizes the concept of "face" to represent the two contrasting human needs: positive face and negative face. Politeness may be defined as the ability to use interactive techniques during a discussion in order to establish a connection with the other individual and feel at ease while expressing one's thoughts. According to the authors, individuals tend to refrain from being entirely candid and transparent in their communication with one another. A contrast was established between negative politeness, which included the act of expressing sorrow or offering apologies, and positive politeness, which entailed displaying attention or sympathy. When computing FTAs, they included three cultural variables: social distance, hierarchy, and the level of influence exerted by one party over the other. Moreover, PT has been used in several scientific disciplines, including gender studies, social psychology, and cross-cultural speech act comparisons. However, it encountered difficulties, leading to the development of the Relevance hypothesis. This thesis focuses on the challenges that occur due to the pragmatic method's failure to consider all aspects of civility. It is crucial to have a clear and comprehensive definition of "politeness" that considers how it is expressed, spread, and limited in different cultural settings. Approaches like as critical discourse analysis and relevance theory are facilitating the progress of more research on politeness, while the examination of empirical data is creating promising opportunities for exploration. The objective of PT theory, which is a discrete subject of communication studies, is to enhance one's language and actions. The analysis focuses on the many factors that influence communication, such as language, cultural background, distance, social power, and the definition of the connection.

Related Studies

Some scientists challenged the static comprehension of interference and the applicability of Grice's Maxims (Grice, 1975). Hence, the Relevance theory seeks to tackle the issues associated with the preceding theory (Cenoz & Valencia, 2008; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 1989; Faerch & Kasper, 2001; House, 1989; House & Kasper, 1981; Hutz, 2006; Tanaka, 1988; Yu, 1999). While most of these studies have focused on pragmatic differences that affect how people in different cultures respond to requests, others have looked at how L1 cultures affect how learners from different backgrounds respond to L2 requests. Several of these studies have also focused on challenges related to other cultures, concerning the cross-cultural studies. The researchers have examined the methods used by various groups of ESL students to make requests in relation to each other and/or NSE. In addition, while examining the advancement of practical language skills, interlanguage research has compared groups of learners from the target language community based on several factors such as their degree of competence, field of study, and learning setting. Furthermore, requests have been the subject of cross-sectional and longitudinal interlanguage studies. Cross-sectional studies compared the usage of learners of the target language to that of native speakers, typically from the same population (e.g., Felix & Brasdefer, 2007; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2003; Martnez-Flor, 2009; Martnez-Flor & Usó-Juan 2006, Otcu & Zeyrek, 2008; Rose, 2000; Scarcella, 1979; Trosborg, 1995, as cited in Altheeby, 2018). Longitudinal studies, on the other hand, investigated the production of requests by the same groups over time (Barron, 2000; Ellis, 1992; Schauer, 2009). This section will evaluate the bulk of the research that has been requested via the ILP lately. It will specifically concentrate on studies that investigate cross-cultural and interlanguage features in EFL and ESL settings. Additionally, it will include studies that include students from Arabic-speaking countries.

Numerous EFL studies centered around requests have been conducted in Western cultures and the European context (House & Kasper, 1987; Cenoz & Valencia, 1996; Faerch & Kasper, 1998; Trosborg, 1995, as cited in Altheeby, 2018). In general, these studies have looked at how EFL learners make requests in comparison to NSE.

Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) or Role-Play Tasks (RPTs) were typically used in these kinds of studies to collect data, and the situations were typically taken from the CCSARP (Content, Communicative Strategies, and Apology, Realizations in Pragmatic Interaction Model) or situations that were similar to them. According to the findings of these studies, factors such as the influence of the native culture, level of English proficiency, duration of English learning, age, gender, and exposure to the second language culture are likely to result in variations in the standards of form and patterns of use of requests among second language learners. Direct requests, however, were only used for demands that were not burdensome and were made to those of lower social standing. This implies that skilled English as a Foreign Language learners, who had put in a significant amount of time and effort to acquire English, seldom utilized direct requests in most situations.

Methodology

In this exploratory study, the snowball sampling method has been employed. Patton (2014) stated that snowball sampling is beneficial for qualitative research because it helps identify participants with distinctive viewpoints or experiences that are pertinent to the topic. This specific type has been chosen due to the fact that there were few NSE in the area who expressed their willingness to contribute to this study. The EFL participants were 18, all were advanced Kurdish EFL learners studying at the University of Duhok (UoD hereafter) and the University of Zakho (UoZ hereafter), with a minimum of master's degree. They all learned English in Kurdistan with no experience of studying or living in an English-speaking country. During their academic journey, the participants were admitted within a variety of courses, such as general English, introductory English literature, linguistics, and English-Kurdish translation.

The EFL informants comprised UoD and UoZ lecturers at the Departments of English language in the Colleges of Basic Education and Languages respectively. The participants aged between 22 and 45. The ESL participants, on the other hand, are 14 individuals who are also graduates from UoD and UoZ; those who have pursued a certain phase of their higher education in English-speaking countries, most commonly, the UK. In addition to 10 Native Speakers of English who are currently residing in Duhok city.

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Table (1)

Number of requests and refusals collected

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Discourse Completion Task	Number of requests
EFL	162
ESL	126
NSE	72

The utilized tool for data collection has been the DCT, the nine request scenarios included low- and high-imposition requests, with some requests aimed at people from lower social classes and others at those from equal or higher social classes. During the study phase, the requests were classified according to the taxonomy suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).

Moreover, a pilot study was conducted on 10 EFL participants to ensure the data collected within the study were feasible and appropriate. After taking their written consent, the pilot was administered. Results showed that the tools were feasible and only a few changes were applied to ensure the utmost appropriateness in terms of their adaptation to the culture and the context within the social norms in the area.

In addition, Then the data will be analyzed into the main themes. It will be converted into a binomial system, and Chi-square tests will be administered in order to ensure that statistical significance aspects of the findings will be tackled at the analysis stage of the current study.

Results and discussion

Requests, used in this study included low- and high-imposition requests, with some requests aimed at people from lower social classes and others at those from equal or higher social classes. During the study phase, the requests were classified according to the taxonomy suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), which provides a clear distinction between two primary components of the speech act of requesting: the head act and the adjuncts to the head act. The head act consists of request strategies and internal modifiers, as seen in the below figure (1). External modifiers are the adjuncts of the head act.
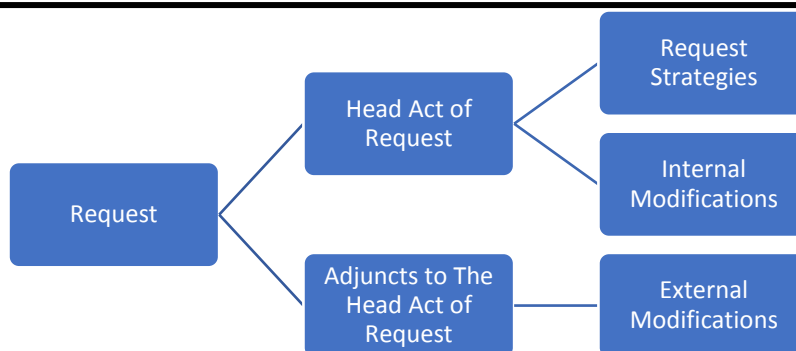
Figure (1)
Composition of Requests

In order to maintain respect and trust, it is advisable to make requests in an indirect manner. This strategy is backed by research, which categorizes requests into three types: direct, traditional indirect, and non-conventionally indirect. These strategies are organized into nine categories, ranging from the most straightforward to the most indirect. The various approaches are consolidated in the below table:

Table (2)
Request strategies

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	Examples
Direct requests	1. Mood derivable 2.Unhedged performative 3. Hedged performative 4. Locution derivable 5. Scope stating	• *Move from here - Open the window – Give me your book please!* • *I'm asking you to explain this for me - I request you step back!* • *I must ask you to fill in this questionnaire – I want to ask you to...* • *You have to enter the class - You'll need to add me to another group!* • *I wish you to do this for me - I really want to reschedule this!*

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	Examples
Conventionally indirect requests	6. Suggestory formula 7. Query preparatory	• *What about changing this group - Why don't you give me the book?* • *Would you mind if we opened the window? -* *Could you lend me this, please?*
Non-conventionally indirect requests	8. Strong hints 9. Mild hints	• *I'm so worried! I couldn't get X book today for my assignment.* • *I can't breathe (open the window)-It is closed! I'll fail this subject (Give me X book)*

According to the collected data from the DCT, the below table shows the types of request strategies utilized by the three groups of participants:

Table (3)
Frequencies of using the different directness levels within the requests

Groups	Type of request	Frequency of use	Percentage per each group	Overall percentage
EFL	Conventionally indirect	46	28%	13%
	Direct	114	70%	32%
	Non-conventionally indirect	2	1%	1%
ESL	Conventionally indirect	77	61%	21%
	Direct	40	32%	11%
	Non-conventionally indirect	9	7%	3%

Groups	Type of request	Frequency of use	Percentage per each group	Overall percentage
NSE	Conventionally indirect	45	63%	13%
	Direct	15	21%	4%
	Non-conventionally indirect	12	17%	3%

Based on the data, it was shown that customarily indirect requests were more prevalent across all three groups compared to direct or non-conventionally indirect requests. This trend is supported by previous studies conducted by Cenoz and Valencia (1996), Economidou-Kogetsidis (2008), House and Kasper (1987), Hutz (2006), Scarcella and Brunack (1979), Taguchi (2012), Tanaka (1988), and Woodfield (2008).

The results suggested that both Badini groups gained a level of practical competence in employing request strategies in English. In this study, the non-native groups (EFL & ESL participants) were observed to utilize direct techniques more frequently than the NSE group, which aligns with findings from earlier studies. A substantial statistical difference was seen between the NSE group and the EFL and ESL groups, as shown by a Chi-square test ($p < 0.01$ for each comparison). Al-Ammar (2000), Alcón-Soler et al. (2005), and Fukushima (1996) argue that non-native groups may not realize that direct request strategies can be inappropriate in certain situations. This is because such strategies can be highly imposing, restrict the freedom of choice of the requestees, and decrease the desired level of politeness in face-to-face interactions.

When making direct requests to higher position interlocutors, there is a higher likelihood of pragmatic failure through breaching the communication rules. The following parts delve into the magnitude of imposition in requests and the social status of the interlocutor. Individuals who are non-natives and have limited language proficiency may choose to use more direct approaches, focusing on efficient communication rather than conforming to the social norms of the target language. Hutz (2006) discovered that ESL candidates had a lower frequency of explicit requests in comparison to EFL applicants, suggesting a higher level of competency in their pragmatic understanding of request techniques. In the current study, the EFL

group used the first three direct techniques (mood derivable, unhedged performative, and hedged performative) in 71% of their requests, but the NSE group utilized them just in 17%. The next two techniques, "scope stating" and "locution derivable," are less detailed yet appropriate for different situations. Non-native English speakers did not often use these approaches to the same extent as the previous three. Conventionally indirect requests accounted for 28% of EFL requests, 61% of ESL requests, and 63% of NSE requests. The groups seldom utilized a suggestive formula from this traditionally indirect group but heavily relied on the query preparatory. When employing a suggestory phrase, like "What about opening the window?", the speaker displays hesitancy and downplays their personal participation in the topic, despite the potential benefits they may get. (Trosborg, 1995, p. 201). Nevertheless, participants seldom use this formula since it is often linked with the act of making suggestions. The majority of data reported in this thesis provides evidence that the question preparation approach is often used by all three groups, but the extent to which it is employed may vary. Regarding the act of making requests, this indicates the importance of the seventh strategy on the scale of straightforwardness. The question preparation technique may be implemented via many sub-strategies, including can, could, will, would, mind, possibility, and thinking. Further details will be provided later on.

Moreover, the final main group of requests which is the non-conventionally indirect, has been utilized the least by EFL participants (1%) out of the 162 requests, while ESL groups used it in (7%) of the total 126 requests. However, it was more popular among the NSE group (17%) compared to the direct group. This unconventional group implies a request through subtle hints, which may be either strongly hinted at, explicitly referring to the requesting act, or more subtly implied. Improper use of non-traditional indirect requests might potentially violate the relation maxim, as outlined in Grice's Cooperative Principle and its associated maxims (1975, 1978, 1989). The NSE group used clues more extensively than the other two groups due to the need for participants to rely on their sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic experience. The suggestion of a shift towards the NSE group arises from the observation that ESL participants made more use

of hints compared to EFL participants. This difference might be influenced by variables such as the learning environment and level of exposure to the target language.

The following table displays the request techniques used by each group in a hierarchical manner, with accompanying percentages indicating the frequency of each strategy's usage.

Table (4)
Frequencies of using different strategies in the DCT

DCT Request strategies	EFL #	EFL %	ESL #	ESL %	NSE #	NSE %
Mood derivable	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Unhedged Performative	5	3%	0	0%	1	1%
Hedged Performative	72	44%	20	16%	4	6%
Locution Derivable	35	22%	17	13%	6	8%
Scope Stating	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Suggestory Formula	9	6%	26	21%	10	14%
Query Preparatory	37	23%	52	41%	37	51%
Strong hints	1	1%	8	6%	6	8%
Mild hints	1	1%	2	2%	8	11%
Total number of requests	162	100%	126	100%	72	100%

Based on the previously established hierarchy of request techniques, various groups used distinct sequences of request strategies. The hedged performative strategy was chosen as the top choice by EFL respondents, while it placed third among ESL respondents and sixth among NSE respondents, suggesting a preference for a more straightforward approach. Although the NSE group did not use mood derivable, the EFL and ESL groups placed it as their third and fifth choices, respectively. However, the sequence in which the ESL group made their judgments resembled that of the NSE group more closely than the EFL group.

In summary, the findings pertaining to the first research question on the request-making strategies used by Badini Kurdish learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL), as well as native speakers of English (NSEs), are as follows.

•Two out of the three groups (ESL and NSE) primarily used conventionally indirect request strategies, particularly the inquiry preparatory strategy, which varied in frequency distribution among the groups. The nonnative groups were able to somewhat replicate certain NSE norms for requesting. Yet, after analyzing the employment of the nine request techniques within groups, additional discrepancies were noted.

•According to the findings, most respondents showed a preference for indirect tactics rather than direct ones when making requests. The EFL students exhibited a higher level of directness, whereas the NSE students tended to be more cautious in their approach. Consequently, those enrolled in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses were found to make the most discourteous queries. The ESL participants exhibited a communication style that was less direct than the EFL participants and more direct than the NSEs, indicating a tendency towards the communication style of the NSE group. In order to determine the most effective request strategies, we conducted a comparative analysis of the responses from the NSE group and the non-native groups.

The results indicated that the ESL group's usage of request strategies was somehow similar to the NSE group's, with some remaining distinctions.

•Based on the two criteria mentioned earlier, it may be inferred that the ESL group demonstrated a higher level of pragmatic competence compared to the EFL group.

Concerning the degree of imposition, the study intentionally included scenarios including requests that ranged from minimally burdensome to highly demanding. Asking for little favors, such as directions or a pen, was common in situations when there was minimal burden on the other person. Rescheduling a critical encounter with a very occupied individual exemplifies a situation of significant imposition. To uphold the dignity of the interlocutors, it was planned to reduce and mitigate the high expectations via the use of indirect methods and specialized modifiers. In the following subsection, we will compare the conclusions of the degree of imposition as determined by the DCT:

Table (5)

Percentages of using different request strategies considering the degree of imposition in DCT

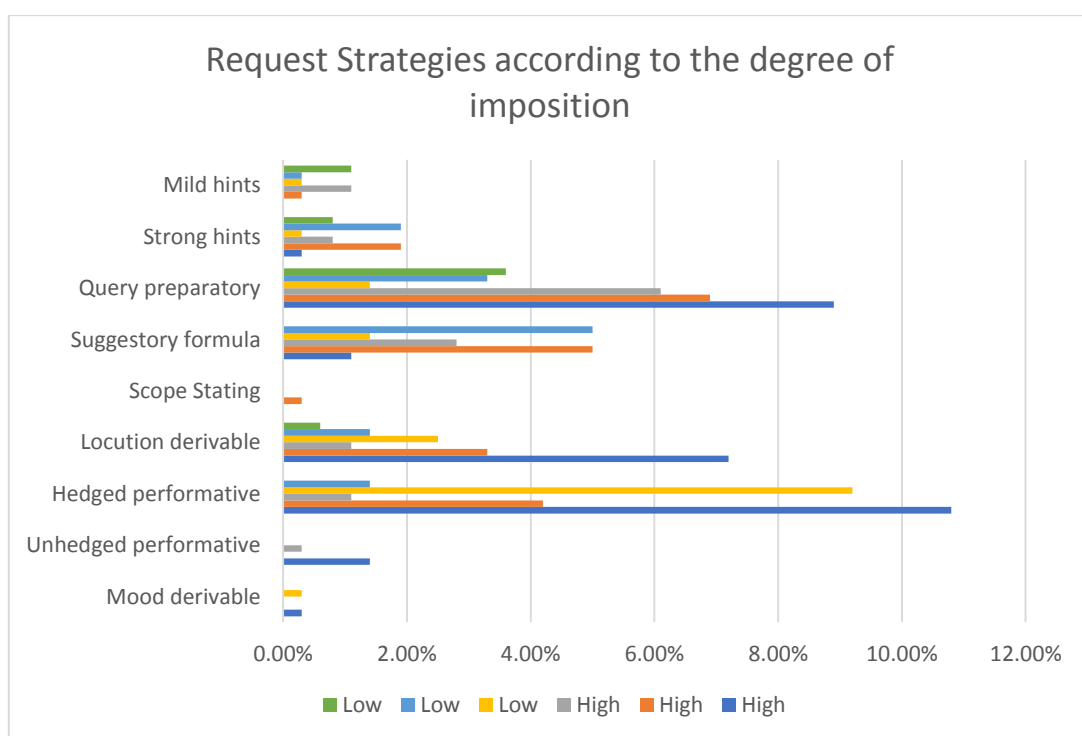| Imposition	group	Mood derivable	Unhedged performative	Hedged performative	Locution derivable	Scope Stating	Suggestory formula	Query preparatory	Strong hints	Mild hints
	EFL	0.3%	1.4%	10.8%	7.2%	0.0%	1.1%	8.9%	0.3%	0.0%
	ESL	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.3%	0.3%	5.0%	6.9%	1.9%	0.3%
	NSE	0.0%	0.3%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	2.8%	6.1%	0.8%	1.1%
Low	EFL	0.3%	0.0%	9.2%	2.5%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	0.3%	0.3%
	ESL	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	0.0%	5.0%	3.3%	1.9%	0.3%
	NSE	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	0.8%	1.1%

Figure (2)

Request Strategies according to the degree of imposition

The results showed that all three groups, particularly the NSE and ESL groups, used more indirect strategies at higher rates in situations with greater imposition. Traditionally, 67% of low-imposition requests made by NSE participants used indirect request

strategies, and 54% of them made indirect requests towards interlocuters when expressing high imposition requests.

When asked about mild, indirect requests, 69% of the ESL group utilized generally indirect requests, whereas, for high imposition requests, 57% used the same method. While 33% of the EFL group employed typically indirect requests when the imposition level was high, just 19% did so when the level was low. The findings indicate that in instances when there is a high level of imposition, the group learning English as a foreign language (EFL) was more assertive in expressing their demands compared to the other two groups, who used more subtle and indirect methods.

To conclude from the current sub-section, concerning the impact of the degree of imposition on participants' request strategies, which was addressed by analyzing the outcomes of the DCT, the key highlights are summarized as shown below:

•The data elicited from the DCT showed that the degree of imposition significantly affected the performances of certain groups. In contrast to the ESL and NSE groups, the DCT participants exhibited lower levels of honesty when making requests for significant impositions. The only groups that exhibited a statistically significant disparity between the high and low contexts were the ESL (English as a Second Language) and NSE (Native Speaker of English) groups.

•The NSE group often made requests with different levels of imposition using indirect language and investigated more options compared to the non-native groups. Based on the data, it is evident that the EFL group used direct tactics to a far greater extent than the ESL group when faced with high imposition needs. Consequently, the ESL group ranked second in terms of their usage of these techniques. The ESL group's demands for low and high imposition were somewhat comparable to native approaches, however they did not fully adhere to native patterns.

Finally, concerning the interlocutor's status, the results on the influence of the interlocutor's status on the participants' request strategies demonstrate variations, as seen in the table and figures provided above. There was a significant decrease in the number of direct requests made to higher-ranking personnel in the NSE and ESL groups, indicating an increased awareness of this factor. However, this decrease was not statistically significant. Regarding requests made to individuals of

lesser status, the NSE group used direct methods in 9% of instances, adopted the same approach with individuals of similar position in 10% of situations, and did not utilize this strategy with those of higher rank.

      Among the requests made, their results have shown that participants used direct strategies when interacting with individuals of equal level, and none of the requests involved direct strategies when interacting with individuals of higher status. Various statuses within the EFL group used distinct DCT request strategies, however there was no statistically significant disparity (p > 0.05). The EFL students also shown a tendency to use fewer imperatives when communicating with individuals of comparable or superior status. The EFL group made explicit requests to individuals of lower status in 27.8% of their requests, those of equal status 28.4% of the time, and individuals of higher status 14% of the time. The table below shows the request strategies utilized by the three groups in relation with the interlocutors' status:

Table (6)
The use of request strategies based on the interlocutor status

Interlocutors' status	Participant group	Mood derivable	Unhedged performative	Hedged performative	Locution derivable	Scope stating	Suggestory formula	Query preparatory	Strong hints	Mild hints
Equal	EFL	0.0%	0.0%	20.4%	8.0%	0.0%	0.6%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	ESL	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	0.8%	13.5%	15.1%	1.6%	0.0%
	NSE	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	1.4%	20.8%	2.8%	0.0%
Higher	EFL	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	6.8%	0.0%	3.7%	14.2%	0.6%	0.6%
	ESL	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	16.7%	10.3%	3.2%	0.8%
	NSE	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	23.6%	1.4%	2.8%
Lower	EFL	1.2%	3.1%	16.7%	6.8%	0.0%	1.2%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	ESL	0.0%	0.0%	15.9%	9.5%	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%	1.6%	0.8%
	NSE	0.0%	1.4%	5.6%	2.8%	0.0%	2.8%	8.3%	2.8%	8.3%

      Moreover, the request techniques used by the three groups of participants were impacted by the status of their conversation partners in various ways, as seen in the table provided above. Participants in the EFL group were more likely to use direct approaches when making requests to interlocutors who were of equal or higher rank. This was in contrast to the NSE and ESL groups, whose findings showed an increase in the use of indirect strategies. The NSE group's results exhibited more clarity compared to those of the ESL group. The lack of statistical significance in the move towards less direct strategies in the DCT scenarios and participants, compared to the DCT results, may be

attributed to the lower sample size (p > 0.05) when examined using Chi-square testing.

To summarize, the research questions focus on the variations in request strategies used by participants based on the interlocutor's status are as follows:

- The DCT data showed a decline in the use of direct strategies by all groups when making requests to interlocutors of higher status, particularly in the NSE and ESL groups.

- Upon comparing the outcomes of the two groups, it was seen that the ESL group exhibited a greater degree of sociopragmatic thoughtfulness in their use of requests that those of the EFL.

- This indicates that they were more aware of the possible repercussions on their social status while making requests, as opposed to the EFL group.

Concerning the use of internal and external modifications, each of the three groups also made significant modifications to their request strategies and the politeness of their requests using a range of internal and external modifiers. Participants used several language tactics such as downtoners, hedges, understaters, politeness markers like "please," attention-grabbing linguistic devices, important explanations, pre-request utterances, prizes, and explanations to enhance the politeness and effectiveness of their requests. The 360 DCT requests in the obtained data were analyzed for internal modifiers; using the coding scheme of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) described in the methodology chapter. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) categorized modifiers into two primary types: internal downgraders and internal upgraders. The former are used to lessen requests, whereas the latter are applied to intensify them.

The data revealed that all three categories heavily depended on internal downgraders and had little use of internal upgraders. The three groups extensively utilized the politeness marker "please" as an internal downgrader, yet they failed to employ other grammatical constructions such as understater, hedge, appealer, subjunctive, tag question, negation, intensifier, time intensifier, explosive, exaggerated utterances, lexical uptoner, and orthographic emphasis. Furthermore, to determine the group that used modifiers the least, we included inquiries that did not contain any request modifiers into our study. In addition, a minority

of individuals from both groups made many internal revisions inside a single request, greatly reducing its impact. We specifically emphasized requests that included many modifiers, despite the fact that they accounted for just 3.5% of all participant responses.

The below table reflects the percentages of using internal modifications employed by the three groups:

Table (7)
The use of internal modifications

Participant Groups	Internal downgraders	Lexical internal downgraders	Syntactic internal downgraders	Internal Upgraders
EFL	215%	146%	70%	7%
ESL	261%	145%	116%	31%
NSE	236%	150%	86%	35%

As reflected in the above table, the three groups displayed consistent pattern in employing internal modifiers in their requests, as seen above. Politeness markers, like "please" were the most commonly used internal downgraders in requests, with EFL participants reflecting the frequency of using them for 215%, which indicates that many respondents have used at least two types of internal modifications in their requests. The ESL group on the other had reflected the frequency of 261% using internal downgraders, which also indicates that each individual has used from 1 to 3 per each request. Finally, the NSE group reflected the frequency of 236% within the frequencies of utilizing internal downgraders, reducing the FTA within their interaction.

Internal upgraders, on the other hand, were less frequently used, with rates of only 7% in the EFL group, 31% in the ESL, and 35% in the NSE, reflecting internal upgraders with their requests. A small portion of requests were made without any modification, accounting for 15% in the EFL group, 7% in the ESL, and 4% in the NSE. The EFL and ESL groups effectively used basic internal modifications in their requests but differed from the NSE group in the frequency rates of these modifiers. The NSE group initially used a higher number of internal modifiers, particularly the polite marker "please", compared to the EFL and ESL groups ($p < 0.05$). This result aligns with findings from various previous studies (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2008; Hassall, 2001; Hutz, 2006; Woodfield, 2008; Woodfield & Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010).

       In summary, the results obtained from the DCT indicate that the groups exhibited variations in their use of internal modifications during the speech act of request.

- The analysis of the DCT data indicated that the NSE group made somewhat more internal changes, namely by using the word "please," compared to the non-native groups.

- Upon comparing the two groups, it was discovered that the ESL group had a higher frequency of using internal modifications, such as the usage of "please," in comparison to the EFL group. Nevertheless, there was no noticeable statistical disparity between the two groups of non-native individuals.

- The results indicated that all three groups, except for the NSE group, used internal modifiers to reduce demands and relieve the distress of the interlocutors.

- Overall, the EFL group of participants reflected less sensitivity towards the degree of imposition, despite the frequent presence of certain words like 'please', it was still significantly different from the data found within the other two groups.

- Both the NSE and ESL groups made more use of internal modifiers in their high imposition demands. The statistical examination of the DCT findings indicated a considerable disparity in the level of imposition between the two groups. Therefore, it may be inferred that the ESL group included internal modifiers in their requests, similar to the native group, in order to reduce the frequency of FTA.

       Adjuncts to the requests, which are also known as external modifications, refer to additional statements that may be used before or after the main request in order to minimize the impact of the request and alter its level of politeness. External modifications are sometimes used both before to and after the primary performance. In this study, we used the external modifiers coding system suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to encode external modifications. They are used in the following manner by the three categories according to the DCT data:

Table (8)

The external modifications used by the overall respondents

Type of external modification	EFL	ESL	NSE
Linguistic devices (alerter)	69%	67%	86%
Pre-request (preparatory)	9%	6%	20%
Head (getting a pre-commitment)	6%	6%	17%
Grounder	40%	65%	78%
Disarmer	1%	8%	10%
Imposition minimizer	10%	27%	34%
Sweeteners	23%	26%	22%
Promise of reward	0%	0%	8%
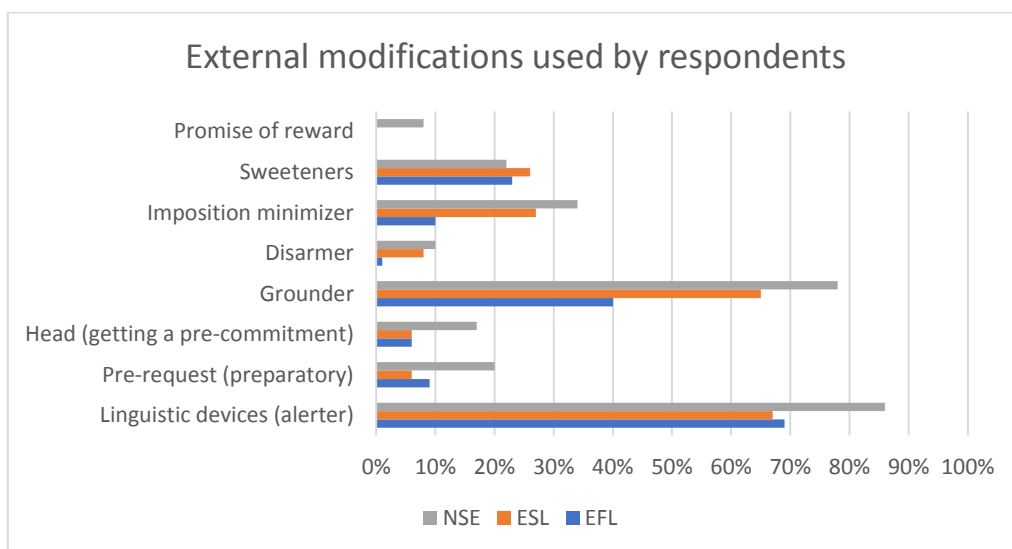
Figure (3)

External modifications used by the respondents

Based on the information provided, it can be concluded that the NSE and ESL groups used external modifiers more frequently compared to the EFL group, as indicated by the DCT results. The usage of external modifiers did not differ significantly ($p < 0.05$) between the NSE and ESL groups, as indicated by the Chi-square tests. In comparison to the native group, the non-native groups, especially those learning English as a foreign language (EFL), demonstrated a higher usage of language strategies, such as employing grounders and external modifiers in a single request.

In addition, the extensive use of external modifications by the EFL group of the present study resembles findings from Cenoz and Valencia's (1996) study, as they found out that the EFL learners heavily relied on external modifications, such as grounders, resultingin the production of longer utterances. This also is supported by the findings of House and Kasper (1987), and the overall results given by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). In their study, Faerch and Kasper (1989) analyzed CCSARP data and discovered that L2 participants in a separate research, which compared Danish EFL learners and NSE, relied more on internal modifiers in requests and used fewer external modifiers. Including the two aforementioned studies, this result contradicted the vast preponderance of prior research. Faerch and Kasper (1989, p. 233) assert that learners often misapply the internal modifier "please" when conveying civility, while employing external and internal modifiers with less frequency. The writers linked the frequent usage of "please" to its simplicity, as it was easy to employ it, both as a way to soften requests, and as a marker of politeness without requiring complex syntax.

The study has also revealed that while engaging with individuals of different social status, the groups' use of external modifiers differed in their approaches to making requests. When making a request for someone who has the same or higher position, individuals were more inclined to make changes or modifications. However, when making a request to someone of lesser status, they were more likely to ask for it without any alterations. In addition, while seeking changes from those of higher authority, all groups used a greater quantity of external modifications compared to those of equal or lower authority. The participants' usage of external modifications was significantly influenced by this element, as shown by statistically significant differences seen in all groups ($p < 0.05$).

The research found that when individuals interacted with others of higher social status, it raised the probability of all groups using external modifiers. The DCT results of the EFL group were the only ones that demonstrated a statistically significant differences.

Conclusion

Pragmatic competence has been a central focus of pragmatic research for several decades, as numerous studies have aimed at exploring pragmatic competence across different linguistic groups, shedding light on the significance of language's global applicability. This particular study delved into the analysis of pragmatic competence among Badini Kurdish EFL learners in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Badini Kurdish ESL learners who have studied in English-speaking environments such as the UK. The study investigated how these EFL and ESL groups performed speech acts, specifically requests and refusals in English, compared to NSE. The study involved 18 Badini Kurdish EFL learners, 14 Badini Kurdish ESL learners, and 10 British and American NSE residing in Duhok. The collection of data involved qualitative research method, i.e. a DCT, focusing on various request and refusal scenarios. Pragmatic features of requests were analyzed based on classifications by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), while refusals were categorized following the Universal Refusal Strategies Taxonomy by Beebe et al. (1990). The study revealed that Badini Kurdish EFL, ESL, and the NSE share numerous request and refusal strategies, however; these methods may be utilized and allocated differently. EFL and ESL learners should understand the pragmatic roles of specific grammatical structures in English to effectively carry out speech acts. The ESL group likely gained this knowledge through interaction with the NSE, as there was no explicit instruction provided.

From the above study, the below can be concluded:

- ESL and NSE groups exhibited more similarities in terms of directness, politeness, and modifications compared to the EFL group.
- There was more directness in the requests made by the participants from the EFL group, using the hedged performatives mostly unlike the ESL and NSE, who relied heavily on using the query preparatory strategies.
- Internal and external modifications reducing the FTA were most apparently used by the NSE and ESL, less apparent within the EFL group.
- The EFL group reflected less contextual awareness and lowered levels of awareness regarding the social distance among different status interlocutors.

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