INVESTIGATING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS: REQUEST REALIZATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

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INVESTIGATING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS: REQUEST REALIZATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

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Approval of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences

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ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS: REQUEST REALIZATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

Mitrani, Çağla

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This study aims to investigate the use of request strategies by Turkish EFL instructors and their perceptions of social or situational factors with regard to their strategy use. The participants in the study involved 55 Turkish EFL instructors. The data were collected through a Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT), verbal reports and class observations. The analysis of the WDCT indicated that, although Turkish EFL instructors have a high awareness of pragmatics strategies, their use of these strategies in class-room environment is limited. Additionally, the analysis of Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions demonstrated that social distance and social status are two important factors that affect instructors' request strategies.

Keywords: Request Speech Acts, Request Strategies, Pragmatic Competence, Interlanguage Pragmatics, Social Variables

ÖZ

İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRETEN TÜRK OKUTMANLARININ EDİMBİLİMSEL YETKİNLİKLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ: RİCA STRATEJİLERİ VE ALGILARI

Mitrani, Çağla

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Bu çalışma, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten okutmanların rica stratejilerini ve bu startejileri kullanırken göz önüne aldıkları sosyal faktörlere yönelik algılarını incelemeyi hedefliyor. Çalışmaya, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten 55 Türk okutman katıldı. Veri, söylem tamamlama testi, sözlü raporlar ve sınıf gözlemlerinden toplanmıştır. Söylem tamamlama testinin ve sınıf gözlemlerinin analizine göre, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk okutmanlarının edimbilimsel stratejileri yüksek olmasına rağmen, bu stratejileri sınıfta uygulamalarının sınırlı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Ek olarak, sözlü raporların analizi, rica stratejilerini kullanırken, sosyal statü ve sosyal mesafenin okutmanların dikkate aldığı iki önemli etken olduğu gözlemlenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Rica Sözeylemleri, Rica İzlemleri, Aradilde Edimbilimsel İnceleme, Edimbilimsel Yetkinlik, Sosyal Değişkenler

To My Husband

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELT	English Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
CCSARP	Cross-cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern
DCT	Discourse Completion Test
SD	Social Distance
DS	Direct Strategy
CIS	Conventionally Indirect Strategy
NCIS	Non-conventionally Indirect Strategy

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Pragmatic competence is the speakers' ability of using speech act realization strategies in order to speak and behave appropriately and to understand what others are saying and doing. It also includes the ability to use the language to express a wide range of functions and interpret the illocutionary force of utterances in discourse which occurs in sociocultural context. In other words, pragmatics is the study of the relationship between what is said (or in some cases not said) and what is meant. As Lucas (2007) states, linguistic competence by itself is not enough for being competent in communication. Speakers must also be masters of sociopragmatic and sociolinguistic norms in order to appropriately achieve communicative goals. Chomsky (1965) notes that in the first language acquisition, linguistic competence and communicative competence are acquired together because the main aim is to communicate ideas which triggers the development of linguistic competence.

However, when we look at L2 education programs, we can see that most programs start with the objective of giving grammatical and lexical structures necessary to the learners. Most of the exams assess grammatical or lexical structures. Teaching pragmatics is not given enough importance until later in the language learning process where the learner has gained adequate proficiency. Bardovi – Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) suggest that in second language acquisition learners can develop linguistic competence without developing pragmatic competence. Therefore, learners may possess the necessary grammatical or lexical skills to communicate but not the concomitant ability to use these skills. However, if we consider the main reason for learning a second language to be communication, the importance of learning pragmatics strategies is crucial. This also suggests that teaching pragmatics strategies must also be vital for an EFL teacher. The role of pragmatic awareness for language learners has been gaining more significance through current studies, yet according to Karatepe (2001) there is not a systematic or planned teaching of pragmatic issues in

Turkish teacher training programs. According to Washburn (2001), one of the main reasons, is related to lack of adequate materials related to teach pragmatic language. Pragmatic language is usually embedded in other learning contexts and it is not paid enough attention. In order to communicate well in L2, learners need pragmatic competence. Porter (1986) observed that emphasis on pragmatics is not given sufficiently in teacher – student interactions in classrooms. Therefore, input and instruction on pragmatic awareness is needed, and teachers need to be well informed and explicitly instruct their learners rather than teaching implicitly. For this reason, it is vital for EFL teachers to possess pragmatic competence.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Kasper (1997) defines competence as a type of knowledge that is learnt, possessed, used or lost. In the learning process, pragmatics refers to communicative act. Therefore, pragmatic competence is the ability to communicate in a foreign language. According to Thomas (1983), pragmatics competence shows the ability to use that language effectively and also to interpret illocutionary force of utterances used in the sociocultural context. It is an essential part of communicative competence according to Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman's (1990) model of language competence. Bachman (1990), proposes two components of competence: organizational and pragmatic. The organizational competence refers to structural knowledge of linguistics such as grammar. However, pragmatic competence has two parts: illocutionary and sociolinguistic. Illocutionary competence is the knowledge of communication whereas sociolinguistic competence is related with the context. Thus, choosing the suitable acts and strategies can be defined as pragmatic competence. The failure to understand what a speaker means by what is said is defined as *pragmatic failure* by Thomas (1983). He mentions two types of pragmatic failure. The first one is *pragmalinguistic failure* and the second is *sociopragmatic failure*. The first form of failure refers to inappropriate use of linguistic forms. If necessary steps are taken, this failure may be prevented by teaching pragmalinguistic features as part of grammar. However, the second type of failure is observed when the

speaker conducts a socially inappropriate behavior. This involves both a cultural and personal system of belief and hence is more difficult to deal with. According to Thomas (1983) pragmalinguistic failure has two main sources: teaching- induced errors and pragmalinguistic transfer.

Moreover, human communication is not limited to linguistic expressions but consists of the performance of speech acts such as, making statements, inquiring, apologizing, requesting and so on. For example, the statement *I'm hot* can be interpreted as the speaker's physical state, or a request to turn on the air conditioner or a complaint about the weather. There is a distinction between direct speech and indirect speech. In direct speech the speaker means exactly what is said and in indirect speech the speaker means something other than the utterance. Choosing between direct and indirect speech depends on situational variables such as social distance and social power. Social distance refers to the familiarity between the speaker and the hearer whereas; social power refers to the dominance between the speaker and the hearer. In any case, speech acts usually constitute face-threatening situations. Brown and Levinson (1989) define face threatening acts as acts that threaten the speaker's or the hearer's face either positively or negatively. Therefore, speech acts require careful evaluation.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Learning English has become one of the most essential components required for a good education. Although most of the schools and institutions try to prepare a good curriculum including a wide range of appropriate grammatical and lexical structures, they lack including adequate amount of pragmatics instructions in their curriculum. Also, language teaching course books do not provide necessary models for learners according to Boxer and Pickering (1995). The setting, the context or the relationship between speakers and receivers are not sufficiently provided in most course books. As a result, learners become competent in a structural basis but they lack the required pragmatics skills in order to communicate effectively. Not only the learners, but also

teachers of English encounter such problems as they need to be able to use their pragmatics knowledge while teaching. One of the most important reasons is that most of the educational programs in Turkey do not give enough importance to this field. As a result, teachers' pragmatics competencies are not as developed as a native speaker's. When considering teachers as the main source of learning, the importance of having teachers with a high pragmatic awareness becomes a crucial factor in developing learners' pragmatic competence. Teachers need to provide learners with information about the norms and various strategies that can be employed when communicating. In order to raise the learners' awareness of pragmatics, teachers need to be competent in pragmatics. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the Turkish EFL instructors' pragmatic competence.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the request strategies of Turkish EFL instructors in different social situations. Also, the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests are studied. Written discourse completion tests (WDCTs) have been given to foundational prep school EFL instructors and then analyzed qualitatively to investigate these two issues. Also, verbal reports and class observations have been conducted to further investigate request speech acts strategies and the participants' perceptions on request strategies. Suggestions for EFL teacher education programs and ideas for further research are provided at the end.

1.5 Research Questions

The study aims to find out the answers of these following questions:

1. What request strategies are used by Turkish EFL instructors in English?
2. What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is assumed to be significant in several respects. First of all, as knowledge of pragmatics is indispensable for communicating effectively in a second language, it will give insight on how competent teachers of this language are or feel about their knowledge of pragmatics. Classroom discourse has been an area of interest in the field of language teaching and it is evident that teachers play a key role in facilitating classroom interaction. There have been several studies on Turkish EFL learners' pragmatics competencies however, to my knowledge; no research has been carried out to examine Turkish EFL instructors' pragmatic competence. Since, teachers are the key element of how learners acquire pragmatic competence, I believe that it is vital to investigate how competent and aware the teachers are of pragmatics.

Secondly, this study will provide the opportunity to see what certain request speech act strategies Turkish EFL instructors employ in different situations. Moreover, the study will focus on the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests. This study may also provide information about the aspects that must be considered when including teaching pragmatics skills in the curriculum of teacher education programs in Turkey.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Terms

Competence: Chomsky (1965) defines competence as *the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language.* Also, *performance* and *competence* is differentiated as the first is the ability to use the language and the second is the knowledge of the language.

Pragmatics: the study of speaker meaning, of contextual meaning, of how more gets communicated than is said, of the expression of relative distance. Yule (1996:3)

Pragmatic Competence: The speaker's ability to use speech act realization strategies in order to speak and behave appropriately and to understand what others are saying and doing. Eslami (2011)

Speech Act: Functions of the language used for communicating in a language using strategies such as asking questions, making suggestions, greeting etc. are called speech acts. Saed (1997)

Speech Act of Request: The speech act of request is defined as *a directive that embodies and effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, generally for the speaker's goal* Byon (2004)

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter will discuss the history and definition of pragmatics, research studies on pragmatics, speech acts, pragmatic competence of EFL teachers, request speech acts and finally studies on request strategies of Turkish EFL learners.

2.2 History and Definition of Pragmatics

Pragmatics has its roots from functionalists and interactionist approaches to second language acquisition (SLA). It has two functions in SLA: it focuses on linguistic structures and how they are acquired as well as the communicative competence strategies in L2 learning. Kasper (1997) defines interlanguage pragmatics as the study of non-native speakers' pragmatics knowledge acquisition of L2. There are a lot of studies related to interlanguage pragmatics. Most of the recent studies focus on L2 use and development. Some topics studied are about the perception and comprehension of pragmatics, the production of linguistic action, pragmatic success and failure. Pragmatic success requires a non-native speakers' ability to speak and behave appropriately and to understand what others say and mean. It is a central component in communicative and language competence. It is the ability to use the language to express and interpret a wide range of functions.

Pragmatics and its importance in L2 acquisition became more crucial with functionalist and interactionist approaches of SLA. According to Tomlin (1990), functionalist approach supports that communication performed by speakers not only gives important information, but also shapes the nature of linguistic system. The interactionist approach claims that in L2 acquisition, the modified input that learners are exposed to and how speakers interact in conversations with each other is a crucial

element. Therefore, what makes input to be comprehensible is interaction, or negotiation of meaning. The study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of pragmatics is called interlanguage pragmatics. Pragmatic competence is the speakers' ability of using speech act realization strategies in order to speak and behave appropriately and to understand what others are saying and doing. It also includes the ability to use the language to express a wide range of functions and interpret the illocutionary force of utterances in discourse which occurs in sociocultural context.

2.3 Studies on Pragmatics

Kasper (1999) states that recently, there have been a lot of studies about the development of pragmatics awareness and production of speech acts. Several studies show a relation between proficiency level and pragmatic awareness. In her study, Kerekes (1992) found out that when learners' proficiency level increases, their awareness and use of qualifiers become more native-like. Scarcella (1979) compared the speech act strategies, specifically the politeness strategies, elementary and advanced EFL students use with that of native English speakers. For this purpose, she designed three role-play situations and found out that learners of English learn the politeness forms before learning the correct use of them. Trosborg (1987) also applied role- play activities to compare how native English speakers apologize with Danish learners studying English at three different levels. With this study she came to the conclusion that with more proficiency, learners' use of speech acts becomes more native-like. It has been suggested by Austin (1962); Searle (1969, 1975) that speech acts operate by universal pragmatics principles while Green (1975) and Wierzbicka (1985) suggest that they differ in conceptualism and verbalization among different cultures and their languages. Brown & Levinson (1978) and Leech (1983) state that universal principles of cooperation and politeness rule speech acts. However, cultures show drastic differences in their communicational styles which lead to various preferences for speech act behaviors.

Kasper (1999) also mentions other longitudinal interlanguage pragmatics research which does not only focus on speech acts but also on other pragmatic features such as pragmatic routines, discourse markers, pragmatic fluency and

conversational ability. Ellis (1992; 1997) conducted a two year study on the pragmatic development of two elementary ESL learners in a classroom setting. At the beginning of her study, the learners use imperative requests to ask for what they want. For example, if the students want pencils they just say G*ive me* with minimal realizations or social goals. At the next stage of her study, she observed that learners performed their request through using structures or routines that they acquire without analyzing such as *Can I have?* or *Do you have?* and illocutionary force was shown using *Please* or *Maybe*. At the end of her observation, she realized that the learners' use of direct requests lessened while their indirect requests improved which shows that with grammatical development and formulaic speech, pragmatic competence increases. The study also shows that L2 pragmatic development pattern is similar to L1 pragmatic development. There are also studies that focus on L1 pragmatic transfer. Maeshiba (1996) studied two different groups of Japanese learners of English and came to the conclusion that intermediate learners of English used more pragmatic transfer than advanced learners.

There are also studies focusing on the input and opportunities for interaction that learners have for pragmatic learning in classrooms. In order to communicate well in L2, learners need pragmatic competence. Porter (1986) observed that emphasis on pragmatics is not given sufficiently in teacher – student interactions in classrooms. Therefore, input and instruction on pragmatic importance is needed, and teachers need to be well informed and explicitly instruct their learners rather than teaching implicitly.

2.4 Speech Acts

Wide spectrums of disciplines which include philosophical perspectives, linguistic ones, literary critics and cultural anthropologists have studied speech acts. Speech act studies were initiated in the philosophy of language. Austin (1962), Grice (1957), Searle (1969,1975.1979), Searle, Kiefer & Bierwisch (1980) assumed that linguistic expressions aren't the minimal units of communication, but they are the performance of certain kinds of acts which are making statements, asking questions, giving directions, apologizing, thanking and so on. Utterances can be interpreted under appropriate conditions such as asking for or giving advice. The distinctions can

be interpreted by distinguishing between direct speech acts or indirect speech acts. Saaed (1997) claims that the conventionally expected function is known to be direct speech act and the extra actual function is known as indirect speech act. In direct speech acts the speaker means what is meant to say. However, in indirect speech acts, the speaker means something other than or more than what is said. The following utterances are a representative of how an utterance may have both a direct and an indirect quality.

Utterance	**Indirect Act**	**Direct Act**
Would you mind opening the window?	Request	Question
Why don't you study for your exam?	Request	Question
I must ask you to turn off your mobile phone.	Order / Request	Statement
You never clean up after yourself.	Complain	Statement

Searle (1975) makes a connection between types of indirectness with specific language forms via a claim for conventionality. According to this theorist, in order to perform certain acts, certain indirect forms are conventionally used. He believes that producing an indirect speech act is inherited from the first language acquisition nature. He proposes five main types of speech acts:

1. Representatives, which commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition

2. Directives, which are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something

3. Commisives, which commit the speaker to some future course of action

4. Expressives, which express a psychological state

5. Declarations, which affect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and tend to rely on elaborate extra linguistic institutions

Sperber and Wilson (1986) emphasize the role of general pragmatic principles; the principle of relevance which can be described as the process where indirect meanings are encoded and decoded in contexts.

2.5 Pragmatic Competence of EFL Teachers

Knowledge of pragmatics has been seen as an essential component of language teachers' knowledge base. According to a recent survey which was conducted by Vazquez and Sharpless (2009), the majority of master's-level TESOL programs in the U.S.A. have pragmatics in the education curriculum. Nevertheless, in the same survey, it was found that theory was the center of these training courses and practical applications which are called instructional or instructed pragmatics weren't given enough importance.

Bardavi-Harlig(1992), Eslami (2010), Hartford (1997), Ishihara (2010), Karatepe (2001), Kasper (1997), Meier (2003), Rose (1997), Yates & Wigglesworth (2005) claim that an effective teacher of L2 pragmatics is expected to have some qualifications. To begin with, an awareness of pragmatic norms and pragmatic variation is necessary. Another qualification is the ability to provide pragmatic-focused instruction and assessment. Moreover, sensitivity to learners' cultures and subjectivity is expected from teachers. In other words, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of the learners and the educational context can be listed as the qualifications of an effective L2 teacher in terms of pragmatics.

Eslami-Rasekh (2005; 2008) emphasize on improving the pragmatic competence of non-native English-speaker teacher candidates in an EFL context. The tendency of feeling insecure about their English proficiency was argued. Eslami-Rasekh (2005; 2008), Pasternak & Bailey (2004), state that their organizational competence may be more developed than their pragmatic competence. Thomas (1963) focuses on two types of pragmatic failure; "pragmalinguistic failure" and "sociopragmatic failure". Pragmalinguistic failure refers to inappropriate use of linguistic forms whereas sociopragmatic failure occurs when the speaker conducts a

socially inappropriate behavior. This involves both a cultural and personal system of belief and hence is more difficult to deal with. According to Thomas, pragmalinguistic failure has two main sources: teaching-induced errors and pragmalinguistic transfer. Moreover, Karatepe (2001) found out that Turkish teacher trainees showed awareness and appropriate use of certain models in indirect requests and in evaluating the effects contextual factors. However, her findings also suggest that there is not a systematic and planned teaching of pragmatics in their syllabi. Teachers learn these features of pragmatics along the process of their training. According to Ishihara (2005), while teaching in the second language context, teachers face interactional problems.

It is essential to place this attempt within the larger context of language learning approaches and then associate it with pragmatics so as to study strategies that learners may make use of using in their learning and use of speech acts. According to the seminal work by Rubin (1975), since it was believed that learners would learn what they are expected to learn if teachers were able to do a competent job of teaching, the main focus was on the teacher until the 1970s.

Research has displayed that not only tactically choosing and using the pragmalinguistic forms, but also performing the speech acts in the right place at the right time enhances effective speech act performance. Bardovi-Harlig (2003), state that, non-native speakers or language teachers may know all these syntactic structures. However, they may not have adequate pragmalinguistic control over their use. Therefore, it can be challenging for them to support learners in being more systematic in their approaches and utilizing speech acts if they don't feel secure in their pragmatic competence.

For teachers to move pragmatic instruction from implicit to explicit in their classrooms, first there needs to be instructional programs in teacher education. Eslami, (2011) suggests that teachers must have knowledge about different pragmatic issues, appropriate norms and they should be able to combine pragmatic knowledge with pedagogical strategies in order to be able to teach them effectively.

2.6 Request Speech Acts

Requests are one of the most commonly used speech acts in human interaction. Requests are face threatening speech acts which demand the speaker to make an effort to reach a specific goal. Requests are formed to reach specific goals. Blum-Kulka (1985) categorizes these goals as: action (*Could you turn off the radio?),* goods *(Could I borrow your notes?),* information (*Could you explain it further?*) or permission *(May I enter?).* Since it is a face threatening situation for both the speaker and the hearer, the speakers usually formulate their requests indirectly in order to reduce the level of imposition on the hearer's part and get the hearer to comply with the request. In other words, the speaker wants the hearer to comply with the request, therefore needs to choose a suitable form which minimizes the hearer's refusal. The speech act can be made in various forms such as questioning the ability or the willingness of the hearer or indirectly stating the wish of the speaker. However, the notion of politeness is very crucial to reduce the imposition on the hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) explain politeness as the speaker's intention to mitigate face-threatening acts toward the hearer.

For native speakers, the ability to choose the suitable form of speech act comes naturally. However, for foreign language learners their capacity is limited to their linguistic and pragmatic competence and their knowledge of the target language's cultural conventions. Course-books usually offer a very limited range of request forms and not enough contexts to really assess the situation. Also, the choice of directness or indirectness is never mentioned. Thus, the learners are limited to their teacher's awareness of pragmatics when forming their request strategies**.**

The first studies focusing on requests were conducted in the early 1980s by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, Scarcella and Takashi and DuFun. The studies compare how second language learners request in L2 and that of native speakers'. Although some results of the studies contrast each other, the general consensus is that as the proficiency of the language learners increase so does their pragmatic competence. Also, the longer learners are exposed to target community, the better their pragmatic skills develop.

For a Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1989) conducted a study comparing the length of written requests of English native speakers and Hebrew learners. They focus on one aspect of requests in their research study, which is comparing the length of written requests produced by English native and non-native speakers. Depending on the results of this study, it is revealed that as the proficiency increases, non-native speakers' level of verbosity rises. Additionally, when compared to native speakers, L2 learners have been observed to display verbose pragmatic behavior by producing lengthy speech act realizations. Regarding the use of eternal modifications non-native speakers approximate the target language form.

Similar to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986), Takahashi and DuFon (1989) study one aspect of requests. Specifically, they examine the nature of language transfer and its role in second language acquisition. Nine Japanese female young adults, who are grouped depending on their English proficiency levels, participated in the study. The findings reveal that as their proficiency levels increase, Japanese ESL learners tend to proceed from more direct to less direct levels in their directive choice.

In contrast with the other researchers who focus on the actual request utterances of L2 learners, Cohen and Olshtain (1993) do not directly examine the production of speech acts. Differently, they offer a study describing ways in which non-native speakers assess, plan, and execute speech acts in their L2. The participants of the study are 15 advanced learners of English and they are asked to role play along with a native speaker through six speech act situations, which are two apologies, two complaints, and two requests. According to the findings, it is indicated that in executing speech act behavior, respondents manage only a general assessment of the utterances called for in the situation without planning specific vocabulary and grammatical structures. In addition, they use a series of different strategies in searching for language forms, and do not attend much to grammar and pronunciation when planning and performing speech act utterances.

In another study, Trosborg (1995) examines the request strategies of three different groups of Danish learners of English. The results show that as the L2

proficiency increases, learners approximate the target language norm. Yet, when compared with the native speakers, non-native speakers cannot reach native speaker norms regarding the use of downgraders and external modifications.

In a different study, Hill (1997) investigates the pragmatic development of requests of three levels of Japanese university students. So as to collect the request utterances of the participants, a discourse completion test is applied. The findings reveal that Japanese EFL learners tend to use more direct and fewer conventionally indirect strategies than native speakers. The results also indicate that Japanese learners use noticeably fewer hints than native speakers and show no progress in use of this strategy. Correspondingly, Japanese learners use less internal and external modifications than native speakers. Conversely, they show development as their proficiencies increase.

Rose (2000) reports the results of an explanatory cross-sectional study of pragmatic development of requests, apologies, and compliment responses in English, basically to fill the gap between SLA and interlanguage pragmatics. Primary school students in Hong Kong are the participants of her study. Importantly, the data are collected through a cartoon oral production task designed to elicit requests, apologies, and compliment responses. The results reveal that although a number of developmental patterns are revealed, there is little evidence of sensitivity to situational variation or pragmatic transfer from Cantonese. Additionally, the data show little evidence of situational variation for any of the speech acts.

In another study, Hassall (2001, 2003) attempts to investigate how Australian learners of Indonesian accomplish requests in everyday situations compared to Indonesian native speakers. Twenty Australian university students, who are low and high group learners, participate in the study. Each participant is asked to perform 12-13 request situations by interacting with an Indonesian native speaking partner and all the role-plays are audio-recorded. The findings indicate that foreign language learners tend to use *want statements* and *hint statements* less frequently, when compared to the native speakers. The findings also reveal that as their proficiency levels increase, learners avoid transferring pragmatic features from their L1.

Schauer (2004) examines the interlanguage pragmatic development of German learners of English in requests. The data is obtained from 12 German adults studying at a British university for one academic year and an English native speaker control group of 15 students. A Multimedia Elicitation Task (MET) is used to obtain the data and the results show that internal lexical modifiers are acquired prior to syntactic downgraders.

In a different study, Han (2005), attempts to investigate the effect of non-native speakers' familiarity in the target language community on the development of the directness and the use of mitigation in the speech act of requests. As the participants of the study, Korean university students are grouped depending on their length of residence in the USA, namely, short term (less than one year), mid-term (1 to 3 years), and long term (at least 5 years). The results do not designate a strong effect of length of residence on the progress of the request speech acts, directness and mitigation strategies applied. However, regarding the length of residence, non-native speakers increase the use of biclausal formulas and external modifications.

Finally, Tada (2005) examines the improvement of EFL learners' pragmatic perception and production of the speech act of requests, refusals, and apologies. Forty-seven Japanese learners of English participate in the study and the data are collected through video prompts. According to the results of the study, it is found that pragmatic production progresses hand in hand with overall English proficiency, while pragmatic perception is relatively independent of proficiency. Additionally, the results suggest that EFL learners' opportunities to receive input containing English speech acts should be increased and they should be able to practice them in class.

2.7 Studies on Speech Act Realizations of Turkish EFL Learners

The utilization of speech act realization strategies by Turkish learners at various levels of proficiency has been explored in the following studies. These studies can be grouped into the following categories in terms of their focus areas: The effect of L1 on how learners use request strategies for L2 (Mızıkacı, 1991), how Turkish-speakers and Turkish-German bilingual speakers are perceived from a

politeness perspective (Martı, 2006), analyses of how the demands of Turks learning English change over time (Yıldız, 2001; Otçu and Zeyrek, 2008), and the impact of politeness strategies of native Turkish speakers (Tolon, 1997; İrman, 1996; Karatepe, 1998; Karatepe, 2001; Otçu, 2000; Adak, 2003; Madak, 2004; Atay, 2005). All of these studies contain a number of significant observations on the utilization of speech act realization strategies by native speakers of Turkish for L2 learning at different levels of proficiency.

The ways in which Turkish speakers' use of wishes and apologies in their L1 affect the way they comprehend the L2 has been explored by Mizikaci (1991). The initial hypothesis is that as English and Turkish languages come from different language families that had relatively little contact, the speakers of these languages would encounter some difficulties in communicating with each other. The study consists of 22 upper-intermediate university speakers and native English speakers, and data collection was made through a survey given to each of the 22 participants. One conclusion of the study is that native speakers of Turkish utilize different types of pre-adjuncts, head acts, and post-adjuncts in their speech. Use of conventionally indirect strategies is more prevalent among native Turkish speakers. Non-conventionally indirect strategies are utilized more rarely. In addressing socially superior people or in other words in addressing people with more social power, native Turkish speakers use alerters and address terms frequently. Turkish native speakers prefer using pre-adjuncts in comparison to post-adjuncts in their explanations and requests, and the word "*please*" is used mostly when addressing people that are more inferior compared to those that are more superior. On the other hand, reasons are used mostly as adjuncts by Turkish speakers when making requests in English. The English language is suitable for the utilization of conventional indirect level strategies, with preparatory conditions strategy being the more specific strategy. A main conclusion of the study is that certain parallels exist between the ways in which requests are made in Turkish and English languages. Apologetic formations and conventionally indirect strategies are common in both languages and both languages allow the use of pre-adjuncts and preparatory conditions. Differences also exist between the two languages, mostly in the sense that the Turkish language has a broader variety of pre-adjuncts and post-adjuncts, while primarily the word

"*please*" is used as a pre-adjunct in English. Explanations are allowed prior to and after head acts in English and mostly before head acts in Turkish. It can also be said that Turkish-speakers are less direct in their requests than English speakers. *Hedged Performatives* are mostly used when addressing people of superior status in Turkish, while being used mostly for people of inferior status in English. These differences culminate in Turkish speakers' using more pre-adjuncts when speaking English, while the English language accommodates more post-adjuncts.

Tolon (1997) surveyed 243 Turkish speakers by the use of a questionnaire consisting of 14 different situations to explore the sociolinguistic and pragmatic implications of politeness strategies. The survey utilizes seven independent variables: age, gender, income, birthplace, profession, education and power. The key finding is that, the choice of request form is best predicted by one's education and income levels.

Madak (2004), Adak (2003), Yıldız (2001) and İrman (1996) investigate how request strategies differ between Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 and English native speakers while Otçu (2000) investigates how Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 make their requests. These studies have contradicting results but they all reach the same conclusion that making requests in English is difficult for Turkish native speakers learning English as L2.

İrman (1996) explores the level of success of Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 when they use different politeness strategies. Fifty Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 and 13 native English speakers were surveyed by the use of a questionnaire that prompts participants to indicate their politeness strategy of choice in five different social situations, which include interactions with an older / younger person with higher social power, an older / younger person with lower social power and someone at the same age and social power as the participant. İrman (1996) reaches the conclusion that Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 use politeness strategies effectively but the same doesn't apply for their use of direct / indirect politeness strategies.

Otçu (2000) surveys 31 university students by the use of three different role-play exercises to explore how Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 make requests. Otçu gets the native speakers to analyze the requests, excuses and addressing terms and comes to the conclusion that Turkish native speakers learning English as L2 rely significantly on using addressing terms but do not use supporting moves as often. Conventionally indirect request strategies are much more prevalent and another very interesting finding is that the use of the word *please* decreases as the social distance between the two people interacting increase.

Adak (2003) explores the differences in uses of politeness strategies between native speakers and Turkish learners of English by the way of a discourse completion task with 18 situations and a multiple choice test. The participant group of the study includes 100 Turkish university students (intermediate level) and 20 native speakers. The study comes to the conclusion that Turkish learners of English cannot use politeness strategies like native speakers do when they are allowed to choose their own strategy. This changes, if the Turkish learners of English are given a set of politeness choices and are asked to rank these options. In this way Turkish learners of English are able to select the same politeness strategies as native speakers do.

Madak (2004) surveys 100 English learners and 30 native speakers to investigate how gender affects the way speakers make their requests. The study is made by the way of a judgment test. The study reaches the conclusion that cultural differences instead of gender are the main causes of the difference between sexes in the way they make requests. The effect of gender is detected in only some situations.

Yıldız (2001) conducts a cross-sectional study to explore the indirectness strategy selections of Turkish learners of English when making requests. Data is collected by the way of a multiple choice test administered to 25 native speakers, 40 university students at low English proficiency and 40 university students at high English proficiency. The questions are focused around different levels of social distance, power and the size of the request. The study comes to the conclusion that sensitivity to social distance, power and the size of the request do not have a significant impact in changing the format of the requests. The proficiency level of participants does not have an impact on request formats either. Conventionally

indirect strategies are the most preferred strategies of Turkish learners of English. Also, Turkish learners of English generally do not modify the way they make requests according to the different situations they are in.

Otçu and Zeyrek (2008) investigate how adult learners of English make requests in English. Nineteen lower-intermediate, 31 upper-intermediate and 13 native speakers participate in interactive role-playing situations and their responses are analyzed according to the CCSARP coding scheme. One of the key findings of the study is that the sophistication of the request strategies used by English learners increase with the level of proficiency. Lower proficiency speakers tend to rely more on simpler request strategies and higher proficiency speakers utilize a wider variety of request strategies. The study also indicates that differences exist between native speakers and English learners in the use of alerters and syntactic downgraders and that "query preparatory" is the most common head act while the most common external modifiers are grounders.

There are a number of studies that move beyond focusing on Turkish learners of English and native speakers. In doing so, Kal (2004), Karatepe (1998, 2001) and Atay (2005), survey Turkish EFL teachers or teacher trainees. Kal (2004) surveys 190 EFL teacher trainees (a mix of first and third year trainees) by the use of tests and interviews, and explores two main questions. One question is whether the study participants utilize the request strategies they use in Turkish when speaking English as well. On this, Kal (2004) reaches the conclusion that Turkish EFL teachers utilize certain verbs both in Turkish and English request strategies. The other question is whether Turkish EFL teachers utilize the suitable request strategies in different situations. There is less of a conclusive finding for this question, as data reveals evidence for suitable and unsuitable uses of request strategies according to situations.

Similar to Kal (2004), Karatepe (1998, 2001) investigates the proficiency of Turkish EFL teachers in using indirect requests in English by using a questionnaire. Participants try to choose the correct appropriate request and also write their own request forms. The conclusion of the study is that Turkish EFL teachers are able to successfully choose the right request forms but do not do as well when producing their own request forms.

Atay (2005) takes a different approach and implements a *pragmatic consciousness* course lasting five weeks to Turkish trainee EFL teachers. According to Atay (2005), the goal of raising the *pragmatic consciousness* of the teachers is achieved by the use of this course and it would thus be beneficial for both trainee and serving EFL teachers to receive such guidance on increasing the proficiency of their pupils' in using pragmatics. Hence, Atay (2005) suggests that the curricula of EFL teaching programs should be modified to incorporate *pragmatic consciousness* related instruction.

In terms of research focusing on request strategy utilization in languages other than English, Martı (2006) compares how bilingual speakers of Turkish and German and monolingual Turkish speakers perceive the politeness of requests by applying a discourse completion test and a politeness rating questionnaire to 92 monolingual Turkish speakers and 107 Turkish-German bilingual speakers. The study reaches the conclusion that Turkish-German bilingual speakers opt for more indirect strategies while being more willing to make requests while monolingual Turkish speakers opt for direct strategies while being less willing to make certain requests.

The present study will investigate the request strategies that Turkish EFL instructors employ and their perceptions on social factors while making requests. The following sections will discuss the methodology of data collection and analysis as well as the results of the study.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter describes the methodology that was used to investigate the type of request strategies that Turkish EFL instructors prefer and their perceptions in relation to social factors while making requests. The chapter presents the research design, the description of the participants, the setting of the study and the procedures for data collection and analysis. The research questions that were investigated in this study are:

RQ1: What request strategies are used by Turkish EFL instructors in English?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests?

3.2 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to investigate the request strategies that the Turkish instructors employ and their perceptions in relation to social factors while making requests. Thus, qualitative research method has been chosen for the purpose of this study. Qualitative research methods are valuable in providing rich descriptions of a given research problem from the perspectives of the local population involved. This type of research is concerned with understanding human behavior including the way people think or feel. Qualitative research, which includes focus groups, interviews and observations, generate detailed data where there is a subjective element.

Social sciences are mainly dealing with human behavior and interaction. Therefore, there are many intervening variables that need to be taken into consideration when conducting a study. It is beneficial to use qualitative research

method as it enables a better understanding of the research problem. For the purposes of this study, a written discourse completion test was used as the primary data source. Moreover, verbal reports to reveal the idea of how a group or population feels about requests have been gathered. Furthermore, classroom observations were conducted in order to get an overall understanding of instructors' language use in the classroom.

3.3 Participants

The sample consists of a group of Turkish EFL instructors who are currently teaching at a foundational prep school in Turkey. The study has been conducted in English Preparatory Department of a foundational university in the 2015-2016 academic year. The EFL instructors who participated in the study were within the age range of 25 – 55 years with the same nationality (Turkish) but with different levels of teaching experience. Out of 55 participants, 14 had 0-5 years of experience, and out of these 14 participants 10 had an international teaching or living experience in an English speaking country. Twenty three of the participants had a teaching experience of 6-10 years and nine out of 23 had an international experience. Nine of the participants had a teaching experience of 11-15 years and only three of these 9 participants had an international experience. Three of the participants had an experience of 16-20 years and one of these had an international experience. Two of the participants in the study had an experience of teaching EFL for 21-25 years and four of the participants had an experience of 26-30 years. In these last two groups of participants, there were not any participants with an international experience in an English speaking country. They were all teaching main course and skills courses at different levels of the program. The table below shows the distribution of the participants:

Table 1

Distribution of the Participants in terms of Their Years of Experience and International Experience

Years of Experience	**Participants with international experience**	**Participants without international experience**	**TOTAL**
0-5	10	4	14
6-10	9	14	23
11-15	3	6	9
16-20	1	2	3
21-25	0	2	2
26-30	0	4	4
TOTAL	23	32	55

According to the table above the average years of experience of the participants is 10.6 years. It is clear that participants with more teaching experience have less international experience than those with fewer years of teaching experience. The figure below compares the years of teaching experience of the participants with their international experience:

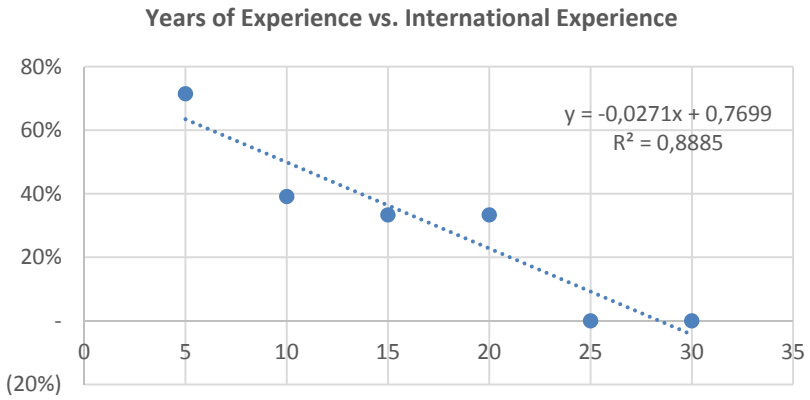

Figure 1. Line graph showing the years of teaching experience vs. international experience in an English speaking country.

According to the figure above, 71% of the participants with a teaching experience of 0-5 years have had an international living or teaching experience in an English speaking country. In participants with a teaching experience of 6-10 years, 39% had international experience. Thirty three percent of the participants who have a teaching experience of 11-15 and 16-20 years had an international experience. None of the participants who have been teaching for more than 20 years had any international living or teaching experience in an English speaking country.

3.4 Setting

The setting of the study is an English Preparatory Department of a foundational university. The English Teaching program is a modular system consisting of five modules. At the beginning of the term, the learners are given a placement test which determines the level they need to start from. The elementary level is A1 and then continues as A2 (pre-intermediate), B1 (intermediate), B2 and C1 (upper intermediate). In order to move on to the next module, the learners need to get a minimum grade of 65 in each module. For the verbal reports and the observation part of the study, instructors who teach at the upper intermediate level were chosen, since the higher level of proficiency of the students could enable the instructors to use various pragmatics strategies in the classroom. The sampling of the written discourse completion test was given to ten EFL instructors to get feedback on the questions. For the main study, 55 instructors participated in the survey. Out of the 55 instructors, 5 of the volunteers agreed to give verbal reports and have their classes observed.

3.5 Procedures

This section presents the data collection instruments employed in this study. A detailed explanation of data collection procedures and information about data analysis procedures is presented.

3.5.1 **Data Collection Tools.** In order to find out the answers of the research questions, three data collection instruments are employed in this study. To answer

the first research question, a questionnaire (written discourse completion test), in which a situation is briefly described and an empty slot is given for the participant to fill in their request is given to the participants. Moreover, in order to get an overall understanding of instructors' language use in the classrooms, observations are carried out with five participants. To answer the second research question, verbal reports are collected from the participants about their perceptions of request speech acts.

3.5.1.1 Written Discourse Completion Test. Discourse completion tests were created by Blum-Kulka in 1989 for the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the CCSARP was a study comparing the length of written requests of English native speakers and Hebrew learners. As the population of the study was high in number, the need for a reliable data collection instrument presented itself. Discourse completion tests allow for large amount of data to be collected quickly. Moreover, it is a valid form of data collection method to understand the strategies and find out speech act markers (requests) that are usually found in the dialogues that occur between the people familiar and unfamiliar with each other. There are three types of discourse completion tests (DCTs); Oral Discourse Completion Tests, Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Tests, and Written Discourse Completion Tests. In written discourse completion tests, a sample situation is designed in a way the participant can understand the situational context features. Therefore, the information given to the participant in the questionnaire includes where the dialogue takes place, to whom the speaker is speaking to and what impositions the situation puts on the speaker. Gülten (2008) agrees that, discourse completion tests provide valuable information about participants' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. Similar to written tests, in multiple-choice discourse completion tests, the participants read a description of a situation but instead of writing their response they choose the best answer for the given situation. The purpose of written and oral discourse completion tests are to understand the strategies and find out speech act markers (requests) that are usually found in the dialogues that occur between the people familiar and unfamiliar with each other. Both of these methods allow for large amount of data to be collected quickly. In oral discourse completion tests, participants listen to the description of a situation and give their response orally. For the purpose of this study,

a written discourse completion test (WDCT) is chosen to examine request strategies of Turkish EFL instructors.

The WDCT in this study consists of eight situations representing socially differentiated circumstances. Each of these situations had characteristics of two situational variables; social distance and social power. Studies show that even infants can realize the social distance and power between two speakers. Social distance or in other words familiarity can affect the linguistic preferences of a person. When the speaker is familiar with the hearer, he/she can use a different pragmatic strategy than when the speaker is not familiar with the hearer. For example, in the current study, the first and the third situations focus on negative social distance, the participants in these situations are considered to have negative social distance because the speaker is talking to someone familiar. In the first situation, the speaker asks his/her roommate to clean up after the mess in the kitchen. In the third question the speaker wants to borrow notes from a classmate. However, in situations two and five the speaker is talking to a stranger, which means there is positive social distance. In situation two, the speaker is talking to a person on the street. In situation five, the speaker is talking to a stranger on the phone. Therefore, the linguistic and pragmatic strategies can be affected by the social distance.

Another situational variable is related to social power. Blum-Kulka et. al. (1985) revealed that request strategies can be affected by the power and dominance of the speakers to the hearers. For example, requests from children to adults or from an employee to the boss are different from requests that a parent makes to a child or a boss makes to an employee. The situations in this discourse completion test were designed to vary in terms of the interlocutors' familiarity and social power. The table below shows the social distance and social power of the situations in this discourse completion test.

Table 2

The representation of Social Distance and Social Power in the WDCT

Request Situations	**Social Distance**	**Social Power**
S1 Kitchen	-SD	equal power
S2 Street	+SD	equal power
S3 Notes	-SD	equal power
S4 Ride	+SD	less power
S5 Information	+SD	less power
S6 Bus	+SD	less power
S7 Extension	-SD	less power
S8 Assignment	-SD	more power

The first situation from the discourse completion test occurs between two room-mates. The speaker asks a room-mate to clean up the mess he/she has created in the kitchen. The social distance in this situation is negative and there is equal social power among the speaker and the hearer.

In the second situation, the interlocutor asks someone who is bothering him/her on the street to stop bothering. In this situation, there is positive social distance since the interlocutor is not familiar with the hearer.

The third situation takes place in a classroom. The interlocutor asks to borrow notes for a lesson that he/she has missed from a classmate. The interlocutor and the hearer are familiar with each other and have equal social power.

The fourth situation occurs between two students who are only acquainted with each other. The interlocutor asks for a ride from a fellow student. Although there is some social distance in this situation, it is different from the third situation as there is little familiarity among the participants.

The fifth situation is similar to the second one in terms of social distance. The interlocutor is asking for information about a job that he/she is planning to apply. The difference between the second and fifth situation is that, in the second situation,

the interlocutor is not pleased with the situation and feels forced to make a request whereas, in the fifth one the interlocutor is interested in the situation and is initiating the conversation.

The sixth situation takes place on a bus. The interlocutor has no ticket and asks permission from the bus driver to request tickets from passengers. There is positive social distance in this situation and the level of imposition is high because if the bus driver refuses to comply with the request, the interlocutor will be left in a difficult position.

In situation seven, the interlocutor who in this case is a student, asks for an extension on a project from his/her professor. Although the social distance is negative, there is a very distinct power difference between the professor and the student. The hearer has more power than the interlocutor.

In the eighth situation, the power relationship is reversed. The interlocutor in this situation is a teacher and asks a student to hand in an assignment earlier than the scheduled date.

All of the situations in this WDCT were adapted from the situations created by Blum-Kulka et. al (1989) for the CCSARP. Minor changes were done in order to keep the situations similar. (see appendix B)

3.5.1.2 Verbal Reports. Using verbal reports to investigate the cognitive process of the participants is a common data elicitation procedure in psychology and cognitive science. Recently, this method has gained popularity in the field of education as well, especially in gathering information of the internal processes employed by adult learners.

There are different methods of eliciting verbal reports. Ericsson and Simmon (1993) have categorized the verbal reports as either introspective or retrospective and metalinguistic or nonmetalinguistic. In the introspective verbal reports, the participants are performing a task while verbalizing their thought process. The advantage of eliciting introspective verbal report is that, the participants'

verbalization process is not constrained by memory, as the task and the thought process happens at the same time. However, Leow (2002) criticizes that introspective verbal reports may affect the participants' internal process and their performance of the task may be different from what they would have been, had they not performed the verbalization process. Retrospective verbal reports are usually gathered after the completion of the task. Although this method has been critiqued for the potential effects of memory constraints, collecting the verbal reports immediately after the WDCTs minimizes the potential negative effects of reconstructive process. Therefore, in this study, the verbal reports were collected directly after the participants finished the discourse completion test.

In metalinguistic verbalization, specific questions to elicit information about the reasoning or the explanation of the thought process of the participant can be asked by the researcher. In nonmetalinguistic verbalizations, the participant focuses on the task and voices his thought without providing an explanation. Cohen (2000) characterizes metalinguistic verbalization as self-observational and nonmetalinguistic verbalization as self-revelational. For the purposes of this study, retrospective metalinguistic verbalization method has been chosen. The interviews consisted of both fixed and data-driven questions based on participants' responses.

The verbal reports in this study were to elicit instructors' perceptions of requesting strategies and their evaluations of their linguistic choices in relation to social factors. Cohen (2004) claims that gathering verbal reports is a useful method in interlanguage pragmatics research as it enables the researcher to get information about the participants perceptions of speech act situations and how these perceptions may influence their utterances. Similarly, in this study, five of the participants were given the discourse completion tests and after completing them, they were interviewed and asked to go over their answers to the questions by sharing their thought process.

The questions that were asked during verbal reports aimed to investigate:

1. The participants' thoughts when making a request and whether it is an easy or a difficult act for them to make. Also, whether they think there is a cultural factor involved when making a request.

2. The participants' thoughts about the WDCTs and whether it was difficult or easy to complete them.

3. The factors that were considered when responding to the WDCTs.

4. The participants' perceptions of the situations in the WDCTs.

5. The participants' perceptions of social distance and how social distance influences their requests.

6. The participants' perceptions on social power.

7. The participants' perception on the relationship between social status and the imposition of the request speech act. (see appendix C)

3.5.1.3 Class Observations. To get an overall understanding of instructors' language use in classrooms, the five instructors who participated in the verbal reports are observed in their classroom. For class observations, participants who were teaching at a higher level were selected. As explained in the previous chapter, numerous studies have shown that intermediate and advanced learners have more developed pragmatics awareness than learners with lower proficiency (Trosborg, 1995; Hill, 1997; Hassall, 2001). The participants for the class observation were chosen among instructors who teach at a higher level so that the proficiency level of the learner was not a constraint on the instructor's preference of pragmatic strategies.

The objectives of the class observations for this study were:

1. to observe the request speech acts that the participants make in a classroom setting.

2. to observe how these requests are received by the students.

3. to observe the request speech acts that the students make from the participants.

3.5.2 **Data Collection Procedures.** In this part, the procedures for the pilot study and the main study are presented.

3.5.2.1 Pilot Study. For the sample study, an informative email was sent to the instructors working at the foundational university where this study takes place. Information about the study was provided in the email and the need for volunteers to take part in the pilot study was presented. The pilot study included the WDCT adapted from Blum-Kulka et. al. (1989). The volunteering participants were directed to an online survey site called *Survey Monkey* and they were given 30 minutes to complete the WDCT online. The participants were asked to read the explanations on the first page of the WDCT, which provided them with information about the questionnaire, how much time they had, how they should do the questionnaire and what was expected of them. The importance of their contribution to the study was reminded and it was requested that the participants be realistic and genuine in answering the questions and after completing the WDCTs, giving feedback about them. The discourse completion test was designed to elicit requests from EFL instructors in particular situations. The main aim of the sample study was to monitor how the WDCT could be administered and determine any possible obstacles that could impede with the main study. One of the main observations of the sample study was that, 3 out of 10 participants found the lexical framing of the situations to be difficult. For example, the word *pester* in one of the situations seemed to be unfamiliar to the participants and thus it was changed to *bother* in the main study. Similarly, the wording of some of the situations in the WDCT was changed accordingly. Another observation was that 30 minutes were more than enough to conduct the survey. Most of the participants finished answering the questions in 10-15 minutes. Therefore, the time allocated for completing the WDCT was limited to 20 minutes in the main study.

3.5.2.2 Main Study. For the main study, permission was asked from the director of the institution. After getting the approval of the director, an e-mail was sent to the

instructors informing them about the study and its purpose. Instructors who were willing to participate in the study were contacted and given the discourse completion test (see appendix A). After finishing the WDCTs participants were asked whether they would like to participate further to the study by agreeing to give verbal reports about their responses and allow the researcher to observe their classes. Five of the participants agreed to give verbal reports and have their classes observed. The purpose of the verbal reports, how it was going to happen and the protection of the data were given to the participants before the interview. The strict confidentiality of the data was emphasized to the participants in order for the participants to answer the questions without hindering their verbalization process. The verbal reports were recorded and then transcribed. It is through verbal self-report data that enables the study to learn about the participants' choices they made in the WDCT and the reason behind these choices. After the verbal reports, time and date of the class observation was scheduled with the participants and conducted accordingly. The observation lasted for one lesson for each participant which is 45 minutes long. The researcher took notes of the participants' requests during the lesson and the students' responses to these requests.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

For the purpose of this study, the first data collection instrument consisted of a written discourse completion test (WDCT). The data gathered from the discourse completion tests was analyzed using the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) coding scheme, which was developed by Blum-Kulka et. al. in 1989. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the starting point of CCSARP was to investigate the variation in two face threatening speech acts: requests and apologies. Although both speech acts affect the participants' face, they differ in the sociopragmatic form. Requests are face-threatening because they can be interpreted to be intrusive from the hearer's perspective as they are pre-event acts and demand a verbal or non-verbal action in return. Therefore, the speaker may be hesitant in making requests in order not to expose the hearer to lose face. The imposition in request speech acts is mainly on the hearer as it is a pre-event speech act, whereas in apologies the speaker is attempting to remedy a violation of a social norm in which

the speaker is responsible. CCSARP's results have established a pattern for both these speech acts in various social constraints in a variety of languages and cultures. According to Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) the goals of the CCSARP are:

> 1. to find out the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of speech acts in different languages which are relative to the same social limitations (cross-cultural variation).
>
> 2. to find out how social variables affect the realization patterns of speech acts in speech communities (sociopragmatic variation)
>
> 3. to find out the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of speech acts between native and nonnative speakers of a language, in relation to the same social limitations (interlanguage variation)

There are three types of request strategies identified in the CCSARP. These identifications are based on their level of directness. Blum-Kulka et. al. (1989) defines these levels as Direct Strategies, Conventionally Indirect and Non-conventionally Indirect.

> 1. Direct Strategy: The speaker utters the request clearly and explicitly. MacKiewicz and Riley (2003) state that this type of request strategy is clear in meaning as the speaker expresses the necessity in a directive way. An example of a directive is, imperatives such as *Open the door*.
>
> 2. Conventionally Indirect Strategy: Utterances such as *Can you open the door?* or *Will you open the door?* or *I would like you to open the door*. are viewed as indirect strategy that indicates the intention of requesting where the speaker is polite in communication. Compared to direct strategies, they are less clear in meaning. The speaker may mean authority where the listener must carry out the action or the possibility where the listener has a choice to carry out the action.
>
> 3. Non-conventionally Indirect Strategy: This is the least clear of all strategies. These strategies alter the meaning or content of the utterance. Since they create pragmatic ambiguity, they have various potential meanings.

Mackrewicz and Riley (2003) state that, indirectness, specifically non-conventional strategy raise the distance which the hearer travels forth the inferential path from what the speaker utters to what he/she means.

The following utterance taken from the CCSARP, is an example of how a request speech act can be identified and analyzed according to Blum-Kulka et. al. (1989).

> *Danny / Could you lend me £100 for a week? / I've run into problems with the rent for my apartment.*

The request speech act above has three components:

1. Alerters: (the address term – *Danny*) These utterances are used to get the hearer's attention. Nominal categories, appellations and semantic variations can be considered as alerters.

2. Head Acts: (*Could you lend me £100 for a week?*) These are the parts of the sequence that might serve to realize the act independently of other elements. The Table 3 below lists the nine strategy types used in CCSARP under three request strategies in terms of directness/indirectness. In this study, requests were analyzed first for the head act which was coded as direct strategies, comprised of strategies 1 to 5; conventionally indirect strategies, comprised of 6 and 7; and non-conventionally indirect strategies, comprised of strategies 8 and 9.

3. External Modifications (Supportive Moves): (*I've run into problems with the rent for my apartment*) Supportive moves are generally used to persuade the hearer to comply with the request. They can come before or after the head act. Blum-Kulka (1989) lists six types of external modifications: Preparator, Getting a Pre-commitment, Grounder, Disarmer, Promise of Reward, and Imposition Minimizer. The data in this study was coded as exemplified and identified strategy types presented in the table below.

Table 3

List of Strategy Types (Blum-Kulka. et. al. 1989: 18)[1]

Strategy Type	Definition	Example
(1) Mood derivable	The grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force. The prototypical form is the imperative.	*Leave me alone.* *Clean up the mess.*
(2) Performatives	Utterances in the illocutionary force are explicitly named by a relevant verb.	*I am asking you to clean up the mess.*
(3) Hedged performatives	Utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions.	*I would like to ask you to give your presentation a week earlier than scheduled*
(4) Obligation statements	Utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act.	*You'll have to move that car*.
(5) Want statements	Utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearercarries out the act.	*I really wish you'd stop bothering me.*
(6) Suggestory formulae	Utterances contain a suggestion to do the something.	*How about cleaning up*?
(7) Query preparatory	Utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions, such as ability, willingness, as conventionalized in any specific language.	*Could you clear up the kitchen, please?* *Would you mind moving your car?*
(8) Strong hints	Utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act.	*You have left the kitchen in a right mess.*
(9) Mild hints	Utterances that make no reference to the request but are interpretable as requests by context.	*Who is on duty today?*

[1] This table is reproduced from Blum-Kulka et. al. (1989)

As for the second research question, the data collected from verbal reports were analyzed qualitatively. Similar answers to the questions were grouped and analyzed. Furthermore, the researcher's notes from the class observations were qualitatively analyzed to further support the first research question.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are the two key elements of a research. Validity refers to how well measuring instruments measure what it is supposed to measure. Reliability refers to consistency of the measuring tools with what is being measured. For the reliability of this study, the first method that was employed was data triangulation. Data triangulation increases the reliability of the data, as it combines several data collection methods to answer the research questions. In order to answer the first research question, two data collection methods have been used; written discourse tasks and observations. In order to answer the second research question, the data was collected through verbal reports. Another aspect that ensured the reliability of the data collection has been to use the CCSARP coding scheme. This coding scheme developed by Blum-Kulka et. al. in 1989, has been employed numerous times for investigating request strategies.

As for the validity, content validity was assured by using the same discourse completion test that was developed by Blum-Kulka et. al.(1989). Minor changes to the situations in the discourse completion test have been made, so that the validity remained intact. Construct validity has been assessed by piloting the study before collecting the data for the main study. The written discourse completion test was first given to an expert in this field and four native speakers of English in order to check its appropriacy and to have the test reviewed and have the opportunity to make the necessary changes before the main study. Next, the test was piloted with volunteers and minor changes have been made before the main study. So as to improve validity, it has been made sure that the goals have been clearly defined and operationalized. Moreover, expectations from participants have been written down and explained to the participants.

3.8 Limitations and Delimitations

As stated before, the main objective of the study is to determine Turkish EFL instructors' pragmatic competence. This study is limited to one type of speech act, making requests because involving more speech acts might have made the study less manageable and might have presented issues regarding reliability and validity.

Also, the main data source for request strategies was limited to a written discourse completion test. The participants have been asked to complete a discourse completion test through making requests in specific situations. However, discourse completion tests have some disadvantages. Ellis (1994) identifies one of these disadvantages as having a limited range of semantic formulas and thus providing less status-preserving strategies. Also, discourse completion tests do not allow the turn taking and negotiation strategies that occur in natural conversations. Furthermore, a larger group of participants would have been helpful in generalizing the results of the study further.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Overview

In this part, the interpretation of the results is presented. This chapter has two parts. In the first section, an account of the data describing the pragmatic competence of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to their requesting strategies is presented. This part aims to answer the first research question. Data collected from the WDCT and class observations is presented. To answer the first research question, the data was grouped in three parts: the use of alerters, head acts and supportive moves. The next part of the results is aimed at answering the second research question: the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests. For this purpose data collected from the verbal reports is presented.

4.2 Findings Related to Request Strategies

This part, aims to present the findings related to answer the first research question: What request strategies are used by Turkish EFL instructors? In order to answer this question, two forms of data have been collected: written discourse completion test (WDCT) and class observations. The findings of the WDCT indicated that the total number of the request strategies employed by 55 participants was 440. Nine situations out of 440 were excluded from the study because there were no response given or the participant had declared that he/she would not request anything in those situations. A total number of 431 requesting situations were coded from the WDCT. Missing responses were coded as incorrect and are shown under the heading “Missing” in the Tables and Figures. The data collected from the WDCT is presented in three sections: the use of alerters, head acts and supportive moves.

4.2.1 The Use of Alerters. As mentioned in the previous chapter, according to Blum-Kulka et.al. (1989), alerters are used as attention getters. Address terms such as nominal terms (*John*), appellations (Title or Title + surname) and semantic variations (such as *honey*) are considered as alerters. The table below shows the use of alerters across the situations in the WDCT.

Table 4

The Use of Alerters across Situations

Alerter Use	**S1**	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**S5**	**S6**	**S7**	**S8**	**TOTAL**
Yes	11	3	15	22	15	11	27	22	126
No	44	48	40	31	40	42	27	33	305
TOTAL	55	51	55	53	55	53	54	55	431

The data revealed that Turkish EFL instructors relatively use less alerters when making requests. In the first situation, the interlocutor asks a room-mate to clean up the mess he/she has created in the kitchen. Eleven participants used an alerter in this situation. The negative social distance may be reason why the participants refrained from using an alerter. The lowest number of alerters was used in situation 2. Only three of the participants used an alerter in this situation. In the second situation, the interlocutor asks someone who is bothering him/her on the street to stop bothering. In this situation, there is positive social distance since the interlocutor is not familiar with the hearer. The third situation takes place in a classroom. The interlocutor asks to borrow notes for a lesson that he/she has missed from a classmate. Fifteen of the participants chose to use an alerter in this situation. The fourth situation occurs between two students who are only acquainted with each other. The interlocutor asks for a ride from a fellow student. Although there is some social distance in this situation, it is different from the third situation as there is little familiarity among the participants. In this situation, 22 of the participants decided to use an alerter. In the fifth situation, the interlocutor is asking for information about a job that he/she is planning to apply. Similar to situations two and four, the interlocutor is not familiar with the hearer and quite similarly the participants refrained from using alerters. Only 15 of the participants used an alerter in this situation. The sixth situation takes

place on a bus. The interlocutor has no ticket and asks permission from the bus driver to request tickets from passengers. In this situation, the interlocutor is a stranger to the hearer. Only 11 participants used an alerter to get the attention of the bus driver before making their requests. In situation seven, the interlocutor who in this case is a student, asks for an extension on a project from his/her professor. Although the social distance is negative there is a very distinct power difference between the professor and the student. The hearer has more power than the interlocutor. This situation presented the most number of participants using alerters. Twenty seven participants used an alerter in this situation. The most common alerters used in this situation were *Sir* or *Madam*. Both of these alerters are a form of showing respect to the hearer because of the power relationship between the hearer and the interlocutor. As the hearer has more power in this situation, the interlocutor aims to get the attention of the hearer by using a respectful address term preceding the request. In the final situation, the interlocutor is a teacher and asks a student to hand in an assignment earlier than the scheduled date. Twenty two of the participants used an alerter is this situation. The most commonly used alerter was endearment terms. Unlike the previous situation, the interlocutor has more power in this situation and the participants preferred to use endearment terms such as *Dear* before making the request. The graph below shows the percentages of the use of alerters across situations:

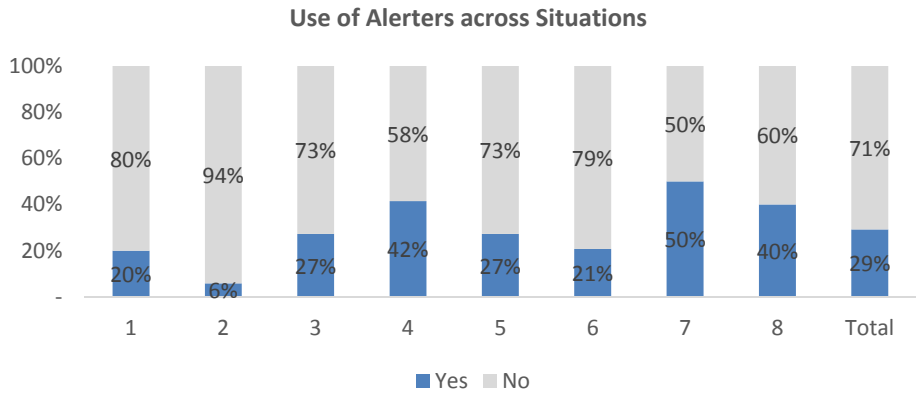

Figure 2. Bar graph showing the percentages of the use of alerters across situations

The data revealed that the participants' use of Alerters in their request was significantly low. In 431 requests only 29% of them started with an alerter. The data

also shows that social distance is not a significant factor in the choice of using alerters. In situations 2, 4, 5 and 6 the interlocutor is not familiar with the hearer, yet this does not encourage the participant to use an alerter to get the hearer's attention. Situation 2, in which the interlocutor is talking to a complete stranger in the street, revealed an especially interesting result in that only 2% of the participants used alerters. The highest percentage of alerters was observed when the participants requested an extension from their professor in situation 7. Half of the participants decided to use an alerter in this situation.

4.2.2 **The Use of Head Acts.** The request utterances are realized by the use of head acts independently from using a supportive move and an alerter. Head acts have two dimensions: strategy type and perspective. As explained in the previous chapter, there are nine different request strategy types. According to the CCSARP coding scheme, these nine request strategy types are grouped under three categories. The three main classification of request strategies are: Direct strategy (DS), conventionally indirect strategy (CIS) and non-conventionally indirect strategy (NCIS). As shown in the table below, the total number of 431 request sequences was coded in the participants' data. Nine situations out of 440 were excluded from the study because there were no response given or the participant had declared that he/she would not request anything in those situations. Missing responses were coded as incorrect and are shown under the heading *Missing* in the Tables and Figures. The results were converted to percentages and shown by rounded-off figures. The overall distribution of request strategies that participants have employed is presented in the following table:

Table 5

Overall Distribution of Request Strategies of Participants

Request Strategy	**Number (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
Direct Strategy	77	18
Conventionally Indirect Strategy	317	72
Non-conventionally Indirect Strategy	37	8
Missing	9	2
TOTAL	440	100

As the table presents, the most commonly used request strategy that participants have employed in all eight request situations was conventionally indirect strategy. The percentage distribution of the strategy types for participants in WDCT was as follows: 18% of the participants used direct strategies, 72% of the participants used conventionally indirect strategies and 8% of the participants used non-conventionally indirect strategies. Two percent of the request situations were coded missing because there was no response to the situations. The results show that in the responses of participants, there was a clear preference for conventional indirectness. The head acts in each request utterance was coded based on nine exclusive request strategy types explained in the previous chapter: *mood derivable, performatives, hedged performatives, obligation statements and want statements* are classified as direct strategies. *Suggestory Formulae* and *query preparatory* are classified as conventionally indirect strategies. *Strong hints* and *mild hints* are classified as non-conventionally indirect strategies. A total number of 431 request strategy types were identified in the data. The table below shows the overall distribution of request strategy types employed by the participants.

Table 6

The Distribution of Request Strategy Types of Participants

Request Strategy Type	**Number (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
Mood derivable	31	7
Performatives	2	0.5
Hedged performatives	6	1
Obligation statements	16	4
Want statements	24	5.5
Suggestory formulae	16	4
Query preparatory	289	68
Strong hints	33	6
Mild hints	4	1
Missing	9	2
TOTAL	440	100

The analysis of the data showed that there was a marked preference for conventional indirectness. Seventy-two percent of the participants employed conventionally indirect strategy using *suggestory formulae* and *query preparatory*. Direct strategies such as *mood derivable* constituted 7% of all coded request strategy type. Two direct request strategies: *Performatives* and *hedged performatives* were rarely used. *Obligation statements* constituted 4% of the data coded and *want statements* constituted 5.5% of the data. Finally, non-conventionally indirect strategies such as *strong hints* constituted 6% and *mild hints* constituted 1% of all coded request strategy types.

Previous studies regarding request strategies are also in line with the findings of this study. *Query preparatory* was found to be the most commonly used request strategy. (Mızıkacı, 1991; Trosborg, 1995; Hill, 1997; Otçu, 2000; Rose, 2000; Yıldız, 2001; Adak, 2003; Han, 2005; Otçu and Zeyrek, 2008; Gülten, 2008). In addition, the *query preparatory* strategy type was analyzed in terms of modals. Participants used the modals *can* (65%), *could* (17%) and *may* (18%). Previous studies also revealed that the modals *can, could* and *may* are the most employed

modal verbs preferred by EFL speakers. Otçu (2000), Otçu and Zeyrek (2008), and Gülten (2008) also revealed that these were the most commonly used modals. The reason for this may be related to the semantic formulas presented in course-books.

With regard to direct strategies, participants mostly preferred *want statements* and *mood derivable*. These are simple structures, mainly imperatives and even beginner EFL learners do not have any problem using them while making requests. However, as these may be considered impolite most of the participants refrained from using them except in situation 2 which will be explained in detail in the following section. Especially in the last situation, in which a teacher asks a student to present an assignment a week before the due date, participants preferred using *want statements*. As *mild hints* are difficult to understand and require complex inference strategies they were employed once by the participants when making requests.

The following table displays the differences of strategy types used in each situation.

Table 7

The Use of Strategy Types across Situations

Request Strategy Type	**S1**	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**S5**	**S6**	**S7**	**S8**	**TOTAL**
Mood derivable	5	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
Performatives	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Hedged performatives	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	3	5
Obligation statements	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	12	16
Want statements	1	1	2	2	10	1	-	6	23
Suggestory formulae	11	-	1	2	-	-	1	1	16
Query preparatory	28	2	51	45	43	50	50	32	301
Strong hints	7	15	1	3	1	1	3	1	32
Mild hints	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
TOTAL	55	51	55	53	55	53	54	55	431

The first situation from the discourse completion test occurs between two room-mates. The speaker asks a room-mate to clean up the mess he/she has created. The social distance in this situation is negative. In other words, the interlocutor is familiar with the hearer. The most employed strategy in this situation was *query preparatory*. *Could you clean up the kitchen please?* and *Can you clean up this mess?* are some of the utterances commonly employed by participants. The second strategy that the participants preferred in this situation was *suggestory formulae*. *How about cleaning up*? or *Let's clean up the kitchen*! are some of the utterances obtained from the data. Both of these strategy types are conventionally indirect strategies.

In the second situation, the interlocutor asks someone who is bothering him/her on the street to stop bothering. In this situation, there is positive social distance since the interlocutor is not familiar with the hearer. Most of the participants decided to use a direct strategy and in specific *mood derivable*. Utterances such as *Leave me alone!* and *Stop bothering me!* are some of the commonly employed requests. An interesting outcome in this situation is revealed to be the use of *strong hints*. Fifteen participants decided to use *strong hints* such as *my husband will not be happy about this situation*.

The third situation takes place in a classroom. The interlocutor asks to borrow notes for a lesson that he/she has missed from a classmate. The interlocutor and the hearer are familiar with each other. Similar to other situations in which there is not a social distance between the interlocutor and the hearer, participants employed *query preparatory* strategy.

The fourth situation occurs between two students who are only acquainted with each other. The interlocutor asks for a ride from a fellow student. Although there is some social distance in this situation, it is different from the third situation as there is little familiarity among the participants. However, similar to the third situation the participants preferred to use *query preparatory* in this situation as well.

The fifth situation is similar to the second one in terms of social distance. The interlocutor is asking for information about a job that he/she is planning to apply.

The difference between the second and fifth situation is that, in the second situation the interlocutor is not pleased with the situation and feels forced to make a request whereas, in the fifth one the interlocutor is interested in the situation and is initiating the conversation. In the second situation participants preferred to employ direct strategy whereas in the fifth situation participants resort to *query preparatory* when making a request.

The sixth situation takes place on a bus. The interlocutor has no ticket and asks permission from the bus driver to request tickets from passengers. There is positive social distance in this situation and the level of imposition is high because if the bus driver refuses to comply with the request, the interlocutor will be left in a difficult position. The participants' choice of *query preparatory* may be an indicator of the imposition in this situation.

In situation seven, the interlocutor who in this case is a student, asks for an extension on a project from his/her professor. Although the social distance is negative, there is a very distinct power difference between the professor and the student. The hearer has more power than the interlocutor. Conventional indirectness was the most employed strategy in this situation.

In the eighth situation, the power relationship is reversed. The interlocutor in this situation is a teacher and asks a student to hand in an assignment earlier than the scheduled date. Similar to situation seven, there is no social distance between the hearer and the interlocutor. However, unlike the previous situation, the use of direct strategy increases in this situation. The reason for this may be the reversed power role of the situations. The most frequent direct utterance was *You need to give your presentation before the due date.*

The results revealed that there was no significant difference between the positive and negative social distance in relation to the participants' request strategies. Most commonly employed strategy was conventional indirectness in both cases. However, the data also revealed that, in situations where there is negative social distance, conventional indirectness was employed less by the participants in their request strategies. This means that, even though there is not a very significant

difference, with familiarity use of conventional indirectness decreases and use of direct strategies increase as it was the case in these situations. Also, familiarity may lead to more use of non-conventional indirectness. As hints require inference, they are used less when there is a higher level of social distance but with familiarity the use of non-conventional indirectness increases.

The head acts were also analyzed according to the request perspectives. There are four types of request perspectives: *speaker oriented, hearer oriented, inclusive* and *impersonal*. If the request is speaker oriented, then the request is defined as speaker dominant. The utterance, *Can I ask for an extension?* is an example of a speaker oriented request. *Can you give me an extension?* is an example of a hearer oriented request. The interlocutor puts the focus on the hearer. The request can also be inclusive or impersonal as well. If there is passivization or natural agents are used the request is considered to be impersonal. *The kitchen needs cleaning* is an example of an impersonal request. The act of combining speaker and hearer dominance is considered to be Inclusive. *Let's clean up the kitchen* is an example of an inclusive request. The data collected from the discourse completion test was coded under these four categories of request perspective. The table below shows the frequency and number of the request perspectives employed in the WDCT.

Table 8

The Number and Frequency of Request Perspectives in WDCT

Request Perspective	**Number (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
Speaker Oriented	143	33
Hearer Oriented	224	53
Inclusive	27	6
Impersonal	37	8
Total	431	100

The data reveals that the most commonly employed request perspective was hearer oriented. Out of 431 requests, 224 of them were hearer oriented, which constituted 53% of the overall data. This was followed by speaker oriented requests.

The least employed request perspective was found out to be inclusive with a frequency of 6%. Finally, 8% of the requests were observed to be impersonal.

4.2.3 **The Use of Supportive Moves.** Requests are usually accompanied with supportive moves to persuade the hearer to comply with the request. As it was mentioned in chapter two, they are utterances that mitigate or in some cases aim to aggravate the impositive force of a request. They can either come before or after the request. Blum-Kulka (1989) lists six types external modifications: *preparator, getting a pre-commitment, grounder, disarmer, promise of reward*, and *imposition minimizer*. Preparators are used before the request to prepare the hearer for the request. For instance, an utterance such as *Are you free tonight?* can be used to check availability before requesting help from the hearer. Getting a pre-commitment such as *Could you do me a favor?* can be used to invoke the hearer's compliance with the request before the hearer is asked what the request is. Grounders can come before or after the request and they are used to provide a reason for the request. An utterance such as *I was sick and missed the class yesterday* can be used before asking a classmate for his or her notes. Disarmers are used when the speaker wants to remove any objections that the hearer might raise when the request is made. Finally, by promising a reward, the speaker offers an incentive to the hearer to comply with the request. The use of supportive moves in the WDCT is presented in the table below.

Table 9

Use of Supportive Moves across Situations

Supportive Moves	**S1**	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**S5**	**S6**	**S7**	**S8**	**TOTAL**
Yes	32	22	40	19	32	34	51	45	275
No	23	29	15	34	23	19	4	9	156
TOTAL	55	51	55	53	55	53	55	54	431

The data shows that the use of supportive moves when making requests is significantly high. Out of 431 request situations, in 275 of them a supportive move was employed by the participants. It is clear that in situations where there is social

distance, the participants used less supportive moves then in situations where the interlocutor is familiar with the hearer. In the first situation, 32 participants used a supportive move when asking their roommate to clean the kitchen. In the second situation, 22 participants used a supportive move when asking someone on the street to leave the interlocutor alone. The most employed supportive move in this situation was using threats as grounders. *I will call the police unless you leave me alone!* is a common example of the supportive move used in this situation. Similar to the previous situation, in situation three the most common supportive move was to use grounders. However, unlike the situation two, in this case the grounder was used to provide the reason of the request. The interlocutor asks to borrow the notes of a lesson from a fellow student and uses utterances such as *I missed the class yesterday* or *I couldn't come to school yesterday* were employed prior to request. Another form of grounder, namely promise, was also employed in this situation. *I will give it back as soon as I photocopy them* was an utterance observed commonly in this situation. Only 19 of the participants decided to use a supportive move in situation four, in which the interlocutor asks for a ride from fellow students. This was the situation where the least number of supportive moves were employed. In situation five, the interlocutor asks to get information about a job and 32 of the participants provided the reason before asking for information. The case was similar in situation six, the interlocutor requests permission from a bus driver to ask for tickets from fellow passengers and just like in the previous situation, the participants offered the reason for their request. Situation seven presented the most use of supportive moves. When asking for an extension from their professor, out of 55 participants, 51 of them used a grounder as a supportive move. Fifty one of the participants provided the reason for their request in this situation. Finally, the last situation also led to the use of supportive move. Forty of the participants employed supportive moves when asking their student to give a presentation before the due date. The figure below shows the percentages of the employed supportive moves across situations.

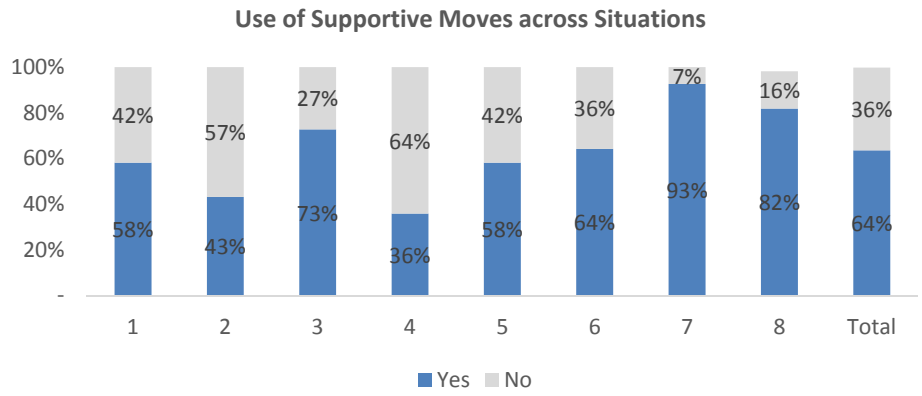

Figure 3. Bar graph showing the percentages of the use of supportive moves across situations

The highest percentage of the use of supportive moves was found in situation 7 (93%), in which the participants requested an extension from their professors. This was followed by situation 8, in which 82% used a supportive move to ask a student to give a presentation a week before the scheduled date. In both situations the participants chose *grounders* as supportive moves. The lowest percentage of the use of supportive moves was found in situation 4. It is clear that the participants did not feel the need to use a supportive move to be very important when asking for a ride from fellow students.

4.2.4 **Class Observations.** In addition to the written discourse completion test, class observations were conducted to investigate the request strategies that the participants employed in their class rooms. The five participants whose classes have been observed teach at higher levels. The reason for observing the lessons of these participants was to get overall information about Turkish EFL instructors' request competence and its application in the class room environment. For class observations participants who were teaching at a higher level were selected since as it was mentioned in chapter two, a number of studies show that intermediate and advanced learners have more developed pragmatics awareness. Therefore, the level of the students would not present a limitation in instructors' use of request strategies. The years of experience of the participants ranged from five to twelve years. Three of the participants had an MA degree in ELT and two had a BA degree in ELT. Two of the

participants out of five had an international experience in an English speaking country.

In their responses to WDCT the participants showed a marked preference for using conventional indirectness. However, the class observations revealed that the participants rely on direct strategies more while making requests in the classroom. Eighty four requests have been gathered from the participants in the class observations. The following table illustrates the distribution of request strategies of participants in the three directness levels:

Table 10

Distribution of Request Strategies in Three Directness Levels of the Participants

Strategy Type	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**
Direct Strategy	12	13	11	7	13
Conventionally Indirect Strategy	4	4	3	6	4
Non-conventionally indirect Strategy	2	-	-	3	2
Total	18	17	14	16	19

As it is illustrated above, the most common strategy used when making a request was direct strategy. In total, 67% of the requests were made using directness. The most common direct strategy was observed to be *mood derivable.* Instructors tended to use imperatives in the classroom while making requests but these imperatives were internally modified by using downgraders. The most common downgrader that was employed was the word *Please*. There are several studies that also support this finding as well. Mizikacı (1991) found out that the word *please* is used mostly when addressing people that are more inferior compared to those that are more superior. In addition in a study, Otçu (2000) revealed that as the social distance between the interlocutor and the hearer increases the use of the downgrader *please* decreases. The following sentences are some of the examples gathered from the class observations: *Please, open to page 6, Now, work in pairs and discuss these questions please, Take out your packs and look at page eight.* The second direct strategy that the teachers tended to employ was *want statement*. For example, *Ok, now I'd like you*

to scan the extracts and match the words with…, I want you to listen again and answer the questions in… The results are not in conflict with the answers received from the WDCT. Situation eight in the WDCT was a situation in which a university teacher asks a student to give a presentation a week before the scheduled date. In this situation most of the teachers employed *want statement* as well. Twenty five percent of the requests were done using conventionally indirect strategy. All of the conventionally indirect requests were *query preparatory*. The use of modals was common while producing the utterances. All the participants used *can* statements in their requests. *Can you explain why…?, Can you please check with your partner…?, Can you read the question to us?* are common examples of requests observed in the classroom.

Out of 84 requests only 7 were non-conventionally indirect requests. These requests consisted of *strong hints* and were made when the teacher requested something from the students that was not directly related to the lesson. For example, *Wow, it's a bit loud here isn't it?* was used when the students started talking among themselves instead of focusing on a reading text. Another example is when the teacher wanted the students to open the window, instead of requesting it directly; she said *it's like a sauna here.* Perhaps due to familiarity with their teacher or because these utterances had been repeated before, the students had no trouble understanding the non-conventionally indirect requests made by their teachers.

During these observations, students' requests from their teachers were also noted. Most of the students used conventionally indirect strategies especially *query preparatory.* Modals and in specific *can* was markedly preferred by the students when making requests. For example, *Teacher, can you repeat please?, Can you write the answer…? , Teacher, can we go? It's break time.* are common examples of students' requests from their instructors. Previous studies also support that EFL learners rely on *query preparatory* strategy. Otçu (2000) and Otçu and Zeyrek (2008) indicated that modals especially *can and could* are the most employed modals by EFL learners. The fact that learners hear this modal from their teachers frequently can be the reason why they rely on this modal. It is used as a *routine formula* when making a request by the learners, regardless of their linguistic competency.

4.3 Findings Related to Perceptions on Requests

After the discourse completion test was gathered from the participants, a follow up interview was conducted with five volunteers in the form of verbal reports to answer the second research question: What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors in relation to social factors while making requests? The data consisted of seven interview questions (see appendix B). The data was recorded and then transcribed. The first question was about participants' general perceptions regarding requests and whether it is a difficult act for them to make. Out of five participants two of them regarded requests to be a difficult speech act. Their reason for finding the act difficult to make was not related to their pragmalinguistic competency but because of the cultural aspects. The participants who had a difficulty revealed that if the person from whom they are making a request is familiar, it is not a challenging act but if there is a social distance and a higher social status, then the act becomes difficult. Three of the participants indicated that making a request is not a difficult act for them.

The second question was related to the discourse completion test they had responded to and what they were thinking about while answering to the situations. Out of five, four of the participants revealed that they were more comfortable when they felt familiar with the requestee. Situations 1, 3 and 8 were said to be easier to respond to but the others required more process as the participants felt that they were at a disadvantage while making a request in those situations. This shows that if there is equal or higher social power and negative social distance, the participants felt more comfortable while making a request.

Third question focused on the factors that the participants considered while responding to the situations in the discourse completion test. All of the participants said that they thought about the situation dynamics or in other words the social power, while responding to the situations. Also, social distance and the type of the request were considered when responding to the situations. This shows that the participants have high pragmatics awareness.

The fourth question was aimed at figuring out which situation was more challenging or which situation was more interesting to the participants. Again, the findings show that situations in which the requestee has a higher social power and in which there is a social distance were more challenging for the participants to respond. This may be due to the face threatening value of the requests in those situations.

Question number five asked if the participants believed the imposition of making a request is related to their relationship with the hearer. All of the participants stated that they strongly agree that the imposition of making a request is related to their relationship with the requestee.

The sixth question asked the participants to differentiate between the two factors that they thought was important while making a request; the social status of the requestee and the familiarity level with the requestee. Two out of three participants declared that social status is more important than familiarity. However, three of the participants felt that familiarity with the requestee was a more important factor in their request strategies.

The last question was aimed at finding out whether the participants thought there was a relationship between the hearer's social status and the degree of imposition. Again, in this question all of the participants said there was a strong relationship between the two. This shows that participants felt social behavior is influenced by the particular situation. Therefore, all situations require complex interaction and negotiation skills according to the participants.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview

The present study investigated the request strategies of Turkish EFL instructors. The study attempts to contribute to the literature with data from Turkish EFL instructors by providing information on what strategies they employ while making a request in English. Also, the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors' in relation to social factors were investigated.

5.2 Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

The data are collected by means of a Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT) which was adapted from the original test created by Blum-Kulka (1989) for Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). The test consisted of eight situations in which the participants were given a situation and were asked to formulize a request speech act. In addition to WDCT, verbal reports were conducted with five of the participants in order to investigate their perceptions related to social factors when producing request speech act. Finally, class-room observations were conducted to observe the request strategies of teachers in the class-room environment.

The data gathered from WDCTs was qualitatively analyzed using the CCSARP coding scheme (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989), which has proven to be an established scheme of analysis. The data gathered from the verbal reports were recorded and transcribed. These transcriptions were qualitatively analyzed by observing the frequency of keywords the participants employed. In class-room observations all the request utterances were noted down and these were analyzed by using CCSARP coding scheme (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989)

The findings are discussed in terms of request strategies of Turkish EFL instructors depending on variables like social distance and social power. The request situations in the data collection tools were made up of two sorts of social distance:

(a) the requester and the requestee are familiar with each other so there is no social distance; (b) the requester and the requestee do not know each other so there is positive social distance. In addition to social distance, social status and power dynamics presented in the situations were taken into consideration. The results were discussed in three levels of directness strategies; *direct strategy*, *conventionally indirect strategy* and *non-conventionally indirect strategy*.

The findings indicated that the participants in the study displayed similarities and differences in terms of frequency of their strategy use, type, content, awareness of social status and social distance. In the WDCT, there was a marked preference for conventional indirectness. This strategy type was followed by direct strategy and the use of non-conventional indirectness was found out to be very limited. A number of studies also support this finding (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Eisenstein and Bodman, 1993; Doğançay-Aktuna and Kamışlı, 1997; Otçu and Zeyrek, 2008, Gülten, 2008). An interesting finding was revealed when the results of the WDCTs were compared with the request utterances observed in the class-room. Although participants markedly employed conventional indirectness while making requests in WDCTs (72%), this percentage was much lower when their requests were observed in a class-room setting. In class-room environment only 25% of the requests employed conventional indirectness. 67% of the requests were made using direct strategies whereas in WDCTs only 18% of the requests were made using direct strategies. This difference may be related to the social distance and the social power of the teachers and the students. However, In WDCT the final situation of the data was that of a teacher and student. The teacher was requesting a student to hand in a presentation a week before the scheduled date. In this case the social distance is negative and there is more social power from the requester's perspective. This situation is the same as the conditions in the class room. In WDCTs 70% of the requests were made using conventional indirectness and 30% of the request were made using direct strategies. When we compare the results of the WDCTS in situation 8 with the request strategies observed in the class-room it is clear that there is a difference between the employed strategies. One possible reason for this difference may be related to time constraints. A typical class is 45 minutes long and the main aim of the teachers is to get the students complete the tasks they need.

Therefore, requests may be made using direct strategies and mainly *mood derivable* in order to save time and reduce teacher talking time. However, this may be investigated further in a future study.

The second aspect of the findings was related to social distance or in other words "familiarity". The findings indicate that social distance has some influence on the participants' request strategies. When there is negative social distance, the use of direct strategies increases. This may be related to the requesters' expectation that with familiarity the chance of complying with the request increases. This was supported by the data gathered from the verbal reports. In the verbal reports the participants expressed that if they are familiar with the requestee and if they have a close personal relationship, they feel more comfortable making a request as they have the confidence that their request has a higher chance of being granted. Reiter, (2000) also stated that familiarity can influence the directness strategy of the request. If the requester is familiar with the requestee than he/she believes that the request will be granted. Therefore, directness of the request strategy may be a confirmation of "closeness".

Among the three request strategies conventional indirectness was the most employed request strategy followed by direct strategy and non-conventional indirectness. Previous studies regarding request strategies are also in line with the findings of this study. *Query preparatory* was found to be the most commonly used request strategy. (Mızıkacı, 1991; Trosborg, 1995; Hill, 1997; Otçu, 2000; Rose, 2000; Yıldız, 2001; Adak, 2003; Han, 2005; Otçu and Zeyrek, 2008; Gülten, 2008). The data analyzed revealed that most of the participants used conventionally indirect strategies especially *query preparatory*. Modals and in specific *Can* was markedly preferred by the students when making requests. *Can you…?* and *Could I…* were most commonly used modals. Previous studies also support that EFL learners rely on *query preparatory* strategy. Otçu (2000) and Otçu and Zeyrek (2008) indicated that modals especially *can and could* are the most employed modals by EFL learners. The fact that learners hear this modal from their teachers frequently can be the reason why they rely on this modal. It is used as a *routine formula* when making a request

by the learners, regardless of their linguistic competency. In all eight request situations, majority of the participants used *query preparatory* strategy type.

The data revealed that the participants' use of *alerters* in their request was significantly low. Only in 29% of the situations an alerter was employed by the participants. However, the use of supportive moves was found to be very high in the participants' request utterances. 64% of the requests were accompanied by a supportive move. The highest percentage of the use of supportive moves was found in situation 7 (93%), in which the participants requested an extension from their professors. This was followed by situation 8, in which 82% used a supportive move to ask a student to give a presentation a week before the scheduled date. In both situations, the participants chose *grounders* as supportive moves.

5.3 Implications and Recommendations

This study is significant to the literature as it presents a preliminary understanding of Turkish EFL instructors' pragmatic competence and specifically their request strategies. Moreover, Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions in relation to social factors while making requests were analyzed. Furthermore, the study may be a source of knowledge for Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Teaching. Also, the study may constitute a source of knowledge for Training Programs of EFL Teachers.

Findings of the study indicate that, although Turkish EFL instructors have a high awareness of pragmatics strategies, their use of these strategies in class-room environment is limited and thus this may be the reason for learners' lack of pragmatic competence. As stated by Kartepe, (2001) Turkish teacher trainees showed awareness and appropriate use of certain models in indirect requests and in evaluating the effects contextual factors. However, her findings also suggest that there is not a systematic and planned teaching of pragmatics in their syllabi. Teachers learn these features of pragmatics along the process of their training. According to Ishihara (2005), while teaching in the second language context, they face interactional problems. For teachers to move pragmatic instruction from implicit to explicit in their classrooms, first there needs to be instructional programs in teacher

education. (Eslami, 2011) suggests that teachers must have knowledge about different pragmatic issues, appropriate norms and they should be able to combine pragmatic knowledge with pedagogical strategies in order to be able to teach them effectively. In order to communicate well in L2, learners need pragmatic competence. Porter (1986) observed that emphasis on pragmatics is not given sufficiently in teacher – student interactions in classrooms. Therefore, input and instruction on pragmatic importance is needed, and teachers need to be well informed and explicitly instruct their learners rather than teaching implicitly.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Information form about the WDCT

Dear Colleague,

Currently, I am pursuing my Master's degree in English Language Teaching program at Bahcesehir University. Additionally, I am now conducting research on pragmatic competence of Turkish EFL university instructors. Therefore, this discourse completion test (DCT) has been prepared to serve as a data collection instrument for my study.

The DCT consists of initial background questions and 8 situations in which a brief description with a blank space for your response is provided for you to write your responds. The questionnaire will not take you more than 20 minutes. Please be informed that your identity will be kept private and confidential, and all information will be used for research purposes only. Finally, participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

Should you have any questions/concerns, you can contact me via email at cagla.mitrani@prep.bahcesehir.edu.tr

Thank you for your kind cooperation.
Çağla Mitrani

APPENDIX B. The written discourse completion test (WDCT)

Age:

Gender:

Years of Experience:

Education: (e.g. BA, MA, PhD, etc.)

Any study abroad or international teaching experience:

Please read the following descriptions of situations below. Then think of an appropriate answer(s) to each and write in the blanks.

1. You are living with a roommate. She/he has left the kitchen in a mess, and you want to ask her/him to clean it up. What would you say to her/him?

2. You are walking down the street and there is a boy bothering you, asking for your phone number and you want to get rid of him. What would you say to him?

3. You are a student and you have missed an important lecture. You want to borrow the lecture notes from a classmate to study for an upcoming exam. What would you say to a fellow student?

4. You are a student and your school has finished for the day. You know that some other students who have cars are living on the same street as you. How would you ask for a ride home?

5. You are looking for a job. You see an advertisement for a job on the paper and you call the company. What would you say to get more information about the job?

6. When you got on the bus, you realize that you have no tickets. How would you ask for permission from the driver to request a ticket from the passengers?

7. You are a student working on a seminar project but you need more time. How would you ask for an extension from your teacher?

8. You are a teacher at a university. One of your students is going to give a presentation. You want him to give his presentation a week before the scheduled date. How would you ask him to move up his presentation to a week before the due date?

I will be conducting interviews with volunteering participants about their responses to the DCT. If you would be willing to contribute to the study further, please write your contact information below.

Thank you for participating in my study

Name:
Phone:
E-mail: **038,4**

APPENDIX C. Interview questions for the verbal reports

1. What do you think about making a request? Is it a difficult act for you to do? Or can you easily make requests from other people? What about our culture and making a request? Is there a cultural factor?
2. How about these DCT situations? What were you thinking while responding to them? Did you have difficulty?
3. What were you thinking while responding to them? What factors did you consider while making your request in each situation?
4. Which one is more interesting/challenging/difficult/fun/common, etc to you?
5. Do you believe the imposition of making a request is related to your relationship with the hearers?
6. When making a request which factor do you think is more important, your familiarity with the hearer or their social status?
7. In your opinion, do you think there is relationship between the hearer's social status and the degree of imposition?

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