The Pragmatic Transfer of Requestive Speech Acts By Arab and Turkish Efl Learners at the Preparatory School

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Öz

Kültürler arası pragmatik aktarım, ikinci veya yabancı bir dilde uygun olmayan sonuçların potansiyel bir nedenidir. Ana dili olmayan dili öğrenen öğrenciler öğrenmekte oldukları dilde konuşurlar ve ilk dilin konuşma kurallarını çalışmakta oldukları dile aktarırlar. Bu çalışma, Arap ve Türk Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce (EFL) öğrencilerinin ilk dillerindeki gerekli stratejileri İngilizce diline çevirip getirmediğini araştırmak için bir çaba göstermektedir. Buamaca ulaşmak için Arapça'dan İngilizceye ve Türkçe'den İngilizce'ye pragmatik aktarımını doğrulamak için bir Söylem Tamamlama Görevi (DCT) ve sözlü mülakat görevi benimsendi. Bu araştırmaya üç grup katıldı; ilk iki grupta Türkiye'de yaşayan Arap EFL öğrencileri, üçüncü grup ise Türk EFL öğrencilerini içeriyordu. Öğrencilerin dilyeterliliği, otuz Arap EFL öğrencisini on beş yüksek yeterliliğe sahip ve on beş düşükyeterliliğe sahip olarak bölmek için bilgisayar tabanlı ve kağıt temelli testler kullanılarak ölçülmüştür. Yazılı DCT'lerin üç değişik versiyonu, bir Arapçaversiyonu, bir İngilizce versiyonu ve bir tane de bir Türkçe versiyonu kullanıldı. Arapça versiyon, İngilizceyi dağıtmadan önce Arap EFL öğrencilerininyüksek ve düşük yeterlilikli iki gruba dağıtıldı ve İngilizce versiyonu, İngilizce versiyonunudağıtmadan önce Türk öğrencilere dağıtıldı. Türk ve Arap EFL öğrencilerinin DCT'lere verdikleri yanıtlardan elde edilen niteliksel veriler ve sözlümülakat bir kritere göre derecelendirildi ve sonuçlar, Türk ve Arap EFL öğrencilerinin cevaplarını temel alarak açıklayıcı olarak analiz etmek için ölçüldü.

Anahtar kelimeler: Konuşma eylemi, Pragmatik aktarım, Dillerarası pragmatikler, Pragmatik başarısızlık, Kültürler arası pragmatikler.

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Hazırlık Okuluna Devam Eden Arap ve Türk Öğrencilerinin Kullandıklari Söz Eylemlerinin Edimsel Aktarımı

Abstract

The present study is an endeavor to reveal whether Arab and Turkish EFL learners transfer their first language requesting strategies into English language. For this purpose, a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), (MCQ), and an oral interview task were adopted to verify pragmatic transfer from Arabic into English and from Turkish into English, if there was any. Three groups were participated in this study, where the first two groups included Arab EFL learners living in Turkey and the third group included Turkish EFL learners. Three versions of written DCTs were used, an Arabic version, an English version, and a Turkish one. The Arabic version was distributed to the two groups of high and low proficiency Arab EFL students prior to distributing the English one and the Turkish version was distributed to the Turkish students prior to distributing the English one. Qualitative data gained from the Turkish and Arab EFL learners' responses to the DCTs and the oral interview were graded, and the results were quantified to analyze them descriptively by using the Turkish and Arab EFL learners' responses as a baseline.

Keywords: Speech act, Pragmatic transfer, Interlanguage pragmatics, Pragmatic failure, Cross cultural pragmatics.

1. Introduction

Different cultures have different perceptions and interpretations of appropriateness; therefore, cross cultural communication has inherent risks of communication failure. Requiring expression is frequent in our everyday life. All around the world, people fulfil his speech act in countless ways, linguistic and nonlinguistic, by employing various types of expressions, phrases and gestures. These requiring formulas are human universals, available in all communities but expressed in different ways, according to culture. When second language learners are engaged in conversations with native speakers, difficulties may arise due to their lack of mastery of the conversational skills and in the production of speech acts.

Consequently, linguists moved from isolated language forms into the actual use in particular social contexts, concentrating on both linguistic

competence and pragmatic competence because the lack of either competence might cause unsuccessful communication (pragmatic failure). Requests as speech acts may occur in all languages, but in different utterances and according to various cultural norms. Researchers have investigated the speech act of request in English (Francis, 1997; Kaneko, 2004; Kim, 1995 & Parent, 2009) and other studies in Spanish (Ruzickova, 2007) and Japanese (Kahraman & Akkus, 2007; Kubota, 1996) and Iranian (Sadeghi & Ganji, 2015; Hashemian, 2008; Rafiei & Allami, 2016; Babaie &Shahrokhi, 2015; Yazdanfar & Bonyadi, 2016; Rajabai, Azizifara & Gowharya, 2015) and Turkish (Küntay, A. Bahtiyar, Sungur &Özdamar ; Kilickaya, 2010 ;Domakani, Hashemian & Mansoori, 2014; Sanal, 2016) and Arabic (S. Al-Momani, 2009; Al- Gahtani & Roever, 2014; Abdul Sattar, Che Lah & Suleiman, 2009; Ali &Pandian, 2016). Therefore, the present study endeavors to address the following research questions: to what extent do Arab EFL learners transfer their requesting strategies from their mother tongue (L1) to English (L2)? To what extent do Turkish EFL learners transfer their requesting strategies from their mother tongue (L1) to English (L2)? Are there any differences between the English request strategies uttered by Arab high and low proficiency learners?

2. Methods

A total of 70 EFL Arab and Turkish learners (30 male and 40 female) with the age range of 19 - 24 participated in the current study. They were studying at the Preparatory school of Istanbul Aydin University in Turkey and they were selected randomly from different classes during the academic year (2017-2018). The participants included three groups. The first two groups included Iraqis, Syrians, Egyptians, Moroccans, Yemenis, Saudis, Tunisians, Sudanese and the third group included Turkish learners. The first group was selected to be the Arab learners with high proficiency; the second group was selected to be the Arab learners with low proficiency, and the third group was selected to be the Turkish participants. Then, researcher gathered data by means of an open-ended questionnaire Discourse Completion task (DCT) and Multiple-Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) developed by Rose (1992). A combination of DCT and MCQ was adopted in this study which included eight situations and for which a blank was provided after each situation where the students could evaluate the situations. The Arab students were given the proficiency test and then the researcher received the list of the participants' scores from the preparatory

school. The English versions were administered to three groups. The first group included 15 high proficiency Arab learners; the second group included 15 low proficiency Arab learners; and the third group included forty Turkish learners. The Arabic versions were handed out to the Arab learners before the English ones and the Turkish versions were handed out to the Turkish learners before the English ones. The written Discourse completion task (WDCTs) varied in situations which limited the level of directness and politeness in the use of speech acts. The situations were as follows:

1. Music: A learner requests another learner, who the first learner does not know, in a nearby room to switch his / her music off.
(Turn the music off I am studying)

2. Photo: A learner requests a man whom she / he does not know, wearing a suit and carrying a briefcase, to take a photo of the learner with his / her friend.
(Could you take a photo for us?)

The second tool which was used in the study was audio recordings and situations were used from the same situations of WDCT which was adopted from Blum-Kulka & Olishtain (1984) to compile learners 'expressions about the request speech act strategies.

Analyzing them, it was proved that most of the participants showed a lack of pragmatic knowledge of the target language. Data were recorded, and the responses were translated by the researcher to be analyzed.

3.Results and Discussion
All the participants showed pragmatic transfer from L1 into English in MCQ. The Arab high proficiency group transferred their knowledge in all situations where they used the same strategies in their mother tongue and target language, whereas the Arab low proficiency group did not show pragmatic transfer. In S1 and S4 they used different strategies between the two languages, but Turkish learners did convey their knowledge in S1, S2, and S8. Thus, the Arab high proficiency and Turkish conveyed their knowledge into the target language less than the Arab high proficiency

Table 1: *Percentages of the Arabic and Turkish MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q1	G1	1	9	5	0
	Percentage	2,94%	50%	31,25%	0%
	G2	1	7	8	0
	Percentage	2,94%	38,9%	50%	0%
	G3	32	2	3	3
	Percentage	94,11%	11,11%	18,75%	100%
	T. N. S.	34	18	16	3
	T. P.	49%	26%	23%	4%

Legend: CD= conventional direct, CID= conventional indirect, NID= non-conventional indirect request strategy, NR= negligence of request, T.N.S= total number of students, and T.P= total percentage.

The second part of the questionnaire showed the most common strategies used by the Arab and Turkish EFL learners and the pragmatic transfer from their L1into L2. Conventionally indirect request strategy was the most common strategy among the three categories, and the other strategies were less utilized as often. However, G1 (50%), G2 (38, 9%), and G3 (11, 11%) whereas their performance with the target language G1 (17, 95%), G2 (17, 95%), and G3 (64, 10%) where all the groups have transferred their pragmatic knowledge from their L1 into L2.

Table 2: *Percentages of the English MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q1	G1	5	7	3	0
	Percentage	26,32%	17,95%	33,33%	0%
	G2	5	7	3	0
	Percentage	26,32%	17,95%	33,33%	0%
	G3	9	25	3	3
	Percentage	47,36%	64,10%	33,33%	100%
	T. N. S.	19	39	9	3
	T. P.	27%	56%	13%	4%

In the non-conventionally indirect request strategy, in addition, all the participants shifted their knowledge from their mother tongue (table, 1) to the target language G1 (31, 25%), G2 (50%), and G3 (18, 75%) whereas the results in the target language (table, 2) showed a clear transfer and all the percentages were the same (33, 33%). For the conventional direct strategy, the Arab and the Turkish have shifted their knowledge from L1 into the target language, G1 (2, 94%), G2 (2, 94%), and G3 (94, 12%) whereas in the target language G1 (26, 32%), G2 (26, 23%), G3 (47, 36%). Therefore, Chi-Square analysis confirmed that there were significant differences in this situation. That means the pragmatic transfer was not clear in G2 and G3, but in G1 the pragmatic transfer emerged obviously in the participants' request data which may due to their lack of cultural awareness and insufficient L2 pragmatic input. Therefore, the hypothesis was not admitted according to the second and third group. The test of Chi-Square has been used to show the significant differences between the mother tongue and the target language as shown in the tables below:

Table 3: *Chi- Square value and Tabulated Chi-Square value of the Arab high level in the Arabic and the English MCQ*

Questions	Groups	Strategies				C-Chi value	T - Chi value	DF	Sg.
		CD	CID	NID	NR				
1	A.G1	1	9	5	0	3,417	5,99	2	0,181
	E.G1	5	7	3	0				
2	A.G1	3	7	5	0	1,333	5,99	2	0,513
	E.G1	1	7	7	0				
4	A.G1	0	9	5	1	1,339	5,99	2	0,512
	E.G1	0	11	13	1				
8	A.G1	0	7	8	0	0	3,84	1	1
	E.G1	0	7	8	0				

Table 4: *Chi- Square value and Tabulated Chi-Square value of the Arab low level in the Arabic and the English MCQ*

Questions	Groups	Strategies				C-Chi value	T - Chi value	DF	Sg.
		CD	CID	NID	NR				
1	A. G2	0	7	8	0	7,273	5,99	2	0,026
	E. G2	5	7	3	0				
2	A. G2	1	10	4	0	2,848	5,99	2	0,241
	E. G2	3	11	1	0				
4	A. G2	0	12	3	0	6,429	5,99	2	0,040
	E. G2	5	9	1	0				
8	A. G2	0	12	3	0	0	3,84	1	1
	E. G2	0	12	3	0				

Table 5: *Chi- Square value and Tabulated Chi-Square value of the Turkish in the Turkish and the English MCQ*

Questions	Groups	Strategies				C-Chi value	T - Chi value	DF	Sg.
		CD	CID	NID	NR				
1	T. G3	32	2	3	3	32,45	7,82	3	0,000
	E. G3	9	25	3	3				
2	T. G3	0	8	31	1	37,393	7,82	3	0,000
	E. G3	2	31	4	3				
4	T. G3	13	22	2	3	0	3,84	3	1
	E. G3	13	22	2	3				
8	T. G3	2	2	35	1	59,882	7,84	3	0,000
	E. G3	5	31	1	3				

Interestingly, in the second situation Turkish participants showed no pragmatic transfer from their mother tongue (table, 6) into the target language (table, 7) in the conventional direct strategy (0%), conventional indirect strategy (32%), and non-conventionally indirect strategy (77, 5%) whereas in the target language the CD (33, 33%), CID (63, 27%), and NID (33, 33%).

Table 6: *Percentages of the Arabic and Turkish MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q2	G1	3	7	5	0
	Percentage	75%	28%	12,5%	0%
	G2	1	10	4	0
	Percentage	25%	40%	10%	0%
	G3	0	8	31	1
	Percentage	0%	32%	77,5%	100%
	T. N. S.	4	25	40	1
	T. P.	6%	36%	57%	1%

Table 7: *Percentages of the English MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q2	G1	1	7	7	0
	Percentage	16,67%	14,29%	58,33%	0%
	G2	3	11	1	0
	Percentage	50%	22,44%	8,33%	0%
	G3	2	31	4	3
	Percentage	33,33%	63,27%	33,33%	100%
	T. N. S.	6	49	12	3
	T. P.	9%	70%	17%	4%

However, the first group showed a salient pragmatic transfer in their direct and indirect request strategies where their request in ID (75%), CID (28%), and NID (12, 5%), but their request in the target language CD (16, 76%), CID (14, 29%), and NID (58, 33%). Curiously, the second group a clear shift of pragmatic transfer in all the categories of request and their indirectness was most common than directness. In CD (25%), CID (40%), and NID (10%) whereas their production in the target language in CD (50%), CID (22, 44%), NID (8, 33%).However, the indirectness still plays an important role in the most situations in this study and Chi-Square analysis confirmed that there were no statistical significant differences in the Arab participants' request, but the Turkish participants revealed a clear statistical significant differences in the second situation.

Table 8: *Percentages of the Arabic and Turkish MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q4	G1	0	9	5	1
	Percentage	0%	20,93%	50%	25%
	G2	0	12	3	0
	Percentage	0%	27,91%	30%	0%
	G3	13	22	2	3
	Percentage	100%	51,16%	20%	25%
	T. N. S.	13	43	10	4
	T. P.	19%	61%	14%	6%

Reaching the fourth situation, it showed a less pragmatic transfer by the second group and conventionally indirect strategy was the most frequent used strategy among all the groups. G1 showed a clear transfer in CID (20, 93%), G2 (27, 91%), and G3 (51, 16) whereas their request in (table, 9) G1 (26, 19%), G2 (21, 43%), and G3 (52, 15%). G2 showed less pragmatic transfer to the English than the other groups and their request in CD (0%), CID (27, 92%), and NID (30%) whereas their performance in the target language (24) CD (27, 58), CID (21, 43%), and NID (16, 67%) which appeared no transfer.

Table 9: *Percentages of the English MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q4	G1	0	11	3	1
	Percentage	0%	26,19%	50%	25%
	G2	5	9	1	0
	Percentage	27,78%	21,43%	16,67%	0%
	G3	13	22	2	3
	Percentage	72,22%	52,38%	33,33%	75%
	T. N. S.	18	42	6	4
	T. P.	26%	60%	8%	6%

For G3 they also showed conveyance of their knowledge to the English CD (100%), CID (51, 16%), and NID (20%) whereas their expression in the target language showed CD (72, 22%), CID (52, 38%), and NID (33, 33%) where they showed a big transfer in this situation. Thus, in the light of findings the first and the third group showed an obvious transfer to the English, but the second group showed an opposite result. Thus, Chi-Square analysis confirmed that pragmatic transfer for the first group and the second group was statistically significant, but for the second group pragmatic transfer was not.

Table 10: Percentages of the Arabic and Turkish MCQ of request strategies for the three groups

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
Q8	G1	0	7	8	0
	Percentage	0%	33,33%	17,39%	0%
	G2	0	12	3	0
	Percentage	0%	57,14%	6,52%	0%
	G3	2	2	35	1
	Percentage	100%	9,53%	76,.9%	100%
	T. N. S.	2	21	46	1
	T. P.	3%	30%	66%	1%

Situation (8) presented that all EFL participants in this study preferred conventional indirect request strategy and they showed a salient convey into the English. In CD just the third group presented a big pragmatic transfer (100%), in the CID they showed also convey (9, 53%), and in NID (76, 9%) whereas their request in the target language showed an evident pragmatic transfer CD (100%), CID (52%), and NID (8, 33). According to the Arab they did not use the CD in this situation whereas the second and the third group preferred indirect more than direct strategy.

Table 11: *Percentages of the English MCQ of request strategies for the three groups*

Questions	Groups	CD	CID	NID	NR
	G1	0	7	8	0
	Percentage	0%	14%	66,67%	0%
	G2	0	12	3	0
	Percentage	0%	24%	25%	0%
Q8	G3	5	31	1	3
	Percentage	100%	52%	8,33%	100%
	T. N. S.	5	50	12	3
	T. P.	7%	72%	17%	4%

They showed presented that all EFL participants in this study preferred conventional indirect request strategy and they showed a salient convey into the English. In CD just the third group presented a big pragmatic transfer (100%), in the CID they showed also convey (9, 53%), and in NID (76, 9%) whereas their request in the target language showed an evident pragmatic transfer CD (100%), CID (52%), and NID (8, 33). According to the Arab they did not use the CD in this situation whereas the second and the third groups preferred indirect strategy more than direct strategy. In this sense, Chi-Square analysis revealed that there were statistically no significant differences.

In this quantitative and qualitative methods approach the results of the requesting speech act by the Arab and Turkish EFL learners showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the learners' mother tongue and the target language. They preferred to use the conventionally indirect strategy such as Q.P strategy in S2 "Could I borrow your notes" which was used very frequently, whereas the conventionally direct strategy and the non-conventionally indirect strategy were the least commonly used strategies because participants utilize these strategies in class and their (text books) did not support them in learning different social contexts, which led them to have a limited knowledge in the target language. Besides, the Arab and the Turkish participants used W.S strategy remarkably in S2, S3, and S5 "I want to take the exam on another day". Q.P strategy was the most common strategy in all groups whereas E.P, H.P, and L.D strategies were not used as much, or participants seldom utilized them, because of their lack of socio pragmatic and pragma-linguistic knowledge.

According to the MCQ, all the participants showed pragmatic transfer from L1 into English in MCQ. The Arab high proficiency group transferred their knowledge in all situations where they used the same strategies in their mother tongue and target language, whereas the Arab low proficiency group did not show pragmatic transfer. In S1 and S4 they used different strategies between the two languages, but Turkish learners did convey their knowledge in S1, S2, and S8. Thus, the Arab high proficiency and Turkish conveyed their knowledge into the target language less than the Arab high proficiency. Therefore, the Arab and Turkish EFL learners conveyed their requesting strategies from their mother tongue (L1) into English because of the lack of pragmatic knowledge in the TL.

To answer the third question, the data showed that the Arab high and low proficiency learners transfer their knowledge into the TL and there was no difference between their responses because they utilized similar strategies in their requests in both languages. The findings showed that both the Arab high and low proficiency groups transferred their knowledge into the target language in WDCT. The Arab low proficiency group did not convey their knowledge in S1 and S4. According to the findings obtained from the MCQ, the Arab low proficiency did not transfer their knowledge in S1, S2, and S8.

4. Conclusion
This current study revealed that there were no subtle differences, and pragmatic transfer was observed. Thus, the most difficult problem for learners found in this present study was pragmatic transfer where they conveyed their socio pragmatic and pragma linguistic knowledge from their L1 into the target language. Another problem found in this study was the overuse of the conventionally indirect strategy where the Arab and Turkish learners used expressions like "Could you" or "Would you mind" and they ignored other strategies because they had insufficient knowledge of the target language and they did not learn varieties of different categories. The findings showed that the Arab and Turkish EFL learners did not utter convenient request in both their written and oral DCT. Moreover, in most of the situations, the participants showed their indirectness in English because of the lack of pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic knowledge in their teaching.

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