



“Could you help me with these bags brother? My shoulders are falling.”

Transfer in interlanguage requests performed by Algerian EFL learners

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**Abstract**

The present study attempts to investigate pragmatic transfer in interlanguage requests performed by Algerian EFL learners. The data of the study was gathered by means of a three-item Discourse Completion Task. The task was administered to two controlling groups of native speakers: Arabic and English and two learner groups at two proficiency levels: low and high. The responses were coded and then analysed by counting the frequency of request strategies and exploring their wording at levels of head acts, request perspective and modification. The findings showed that the performance in Arabic and English exhibited two types of differing politeness systems: positive-face-based and negative-face-based respectively. In learners’ production, both types of pragmatic transfer were evident. The pragmalinguistic type was operative in the employment of linguistic structures inspired by the mother language and word by word translation. The sociopragmatic type was extant in the employment of the request strategies and the perception of the situational variables that were in line with the learners’ mother language. In addition to transfer, interlanguage production was affected by lack of pragmatic knowledge, interlanguage-specific features, and language constraints. The factor of language proficiency did not give marked advantage to the high-proficient learners over the low-proficient. The paper also sheds some light on practical implications for intercultural communication and speech acts’ pedagogy.

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**1. Introduction**

Though speech acts are a universal phenomenon, their realizations differ across languages and cultures (Gass and Neu, 1996). This cross-cultural variation can be a source of communication breakdowns when members of different cultures come in contact (Wierzbicka, 1991). As defined by Trosborg, (1995,p. 187), “a request is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker [S] (requester) conveys to the hearer [H] (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker.” Request are typical examples of face-threatening-acts (FTAs) i.e. threatening the public self-image of both the requester and the recipient (Brown & Levinson, 1987). They can be divided into core request or head act (HA) and supporting move (SM) or modification (internal and external):

*I forgot my wallet at home and I need some money to make photocopies [external]. Do you think [internal] that you could lend me 30 cents? [HA].*

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Interlanguage pragmatic (ILP) studies suggest that learners of English might have access to the same request strategies as native speakers (NSs), but still experience difficulty in controlling the linguistic structures and cultural assumptions (e.g. Jung, 2004; Tagushi, 2006; Al-Ali & Alawneh, 2010), under the influence of their first language (L1), often. Despite the fact that ILP flourished decades ago, in Algeria, due to the dearth of published studies, this field is, seemingly, still in infancy. This has been an encouraging reason to conduct the present study in order to contribute to our knowledge about the ILP behavior of the Algerian learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) with a special attention paid to pragmatic transfer. The study, in this respect, aims at addressing the following questions:

1. Are pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfers extant in EFL learners' production?
2. If any, what other features that characterize ILP of Algerian EFL learners?
3. Does language proficiency help in better the pragmatic performance in EFL?

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Pragmatic Transfer and Proficiency

Pragmatic transfer is to be understood as the impact of pragmatic input from L1 or other languages known to the learner other than the target language (TL) in his attempt to comprehend, perform, and learn a pragmatic input in TL (Kasper, 1992, p. 207). Pragmatic transfer is categorized into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic. The pragmalinguistic type is at play when the politeness value of a linguistic structure in L1 impacts the production and comprehension of the form-function mapping in TL. The sociopragmatic type is at play when the social perceptions guiding interpretation and production in L1 influence the evaluation of contexts in TL (Kasper, 1992, p. 209). These types of transfer lead, respectively, to pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983).

To evidence pragmatic transfer, Ellis (1994) emphasized gathering of three types of data. These are illocutionary force from L1, TL, and IL. According to her, “[o]nly in this way it is possible to determine to what extent learner performance differs from native-speaker performance and whether the differences are traceable to transfer from the L1.” (p. 162). As for the interpretation of the three datasets, similarity in response statistics in L1, IL, and TL evidences positive transfer; and similar response statistics in L1 and IL with different response statistics between L1 and TL and between IL and TL evidences negative transfer (Takahashi 2000, p. 109).

Many factors can affect pragmatic transfer. In the present study, we attempt to measure the effect of three situational variables: power (P), social distance (SD), and the ranking of imposition (R) besides language proficiency (LP). P refers to “the vertical disparity between the participants in a hierarchical structure.” Like between a boss of a company and an employer (Scollon & Scollon 2001, p. 52). SD is “the degree of familiarity and solidarity they [S and H] share (Brown & Levinson 1987, p. 74). As for R, certain considerations contribute in heightening or lowering the degree of imposition in a given culture like the expenditure of goods and/or services by the H.

Regarding LP, findings in the ILP literature have not been conclusive as whether it correlates positively or negatively with transfer. Takahashi and Beebe (1987) hypothesized that the proficient learners are likely to transfer L1's pragmatic style to IL, because they have acquired the linguistic means. This was arisen out of their investigation of IL refusals of Japanese ESL learners which indicated that the higher proficient learners maintained a typically Japanese formal tone. Adversely, Maeshiba, Yoshinaga and Kasper (1996) suggested that the low-proficient Japanese ESL learners are more likely to lay back on their L1 in performing the apologizing act. In a similar vein, Robinson (1992) stated that learners at low-proficiency level were prone to pragmatic transfer of the Japanese style; meanwhile, the

high-proficient showed an ability to approximate the American refusals. Sabaté and Curell i Gotor's (2007) findings suggested that the low-proficient Catalan learners exhibited more sociopragmatic transfer, while the advanced and the intermediate ones exhibited more pragmalinguistic transfer, in English-L2 apologies.

## 2.2. Politeness and Face

The seminal work of Brown and Levinson (1987) was built on the notion of *face*. For them, *face* is “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (1987, p. 61). It consists in two related aspects: *negative face* and *positive face*. *Negative face* reflects the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, right to nondistracted i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition. *Positive face* reflects the positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’ (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. The first aspect is the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpinged by others. The second is the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others. (p. 62). From this distinction, *negative* and *positive politeness* can be distinguished. *Positive politeness* seeks to satisfy the negative face needs, while *positive politeness* seeks to satisfy the positive face needs (p. 70). Thus, negative politeness is more polite than positive politeness (p. 60). Brown and Levinson named Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), the “acts which run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or S [speaker] (1987, p. 70). The speaker may find himself in a dilemma whether to seek to communicate efficiently or to maintain his own *face*. In order to manage this conflict of interests, there are certain strategies which they called ‘superstrategies’ that mitigate the adverse effect of FTAs. These are *bold on record* (e.g. using direct requests), *positive politeness* (e.g. exaggerating sympathy with H), *negative politeness* (e.g. using conventionally indirect requests), *off record* (e.g. giving hints), and *not performing the FTA*. In a similar vein, Scollon and Scollon (2001) emphasized the fact that “there is no faceless communication” (p. 48). They categorized face and politeness into *involvement face/politeness* and *independence face/politeness* which for them are displayed simultaneously in communication. These two types of politeness are parallel to Brown and Levinson *positive* and *negative politeness*.

## 2.3. Studies on the Speech Act of Request

Numerous studies have dealt with English IL requests as performed by learners from different linguistic backgrounds. However, relatively few studies paid specific attention to transfer in IL requests and only referred to transfer in interpreting the findings.

Tagushi (2006) investigated the requestive performance of Japanese learners of English in role plays as regards appropriateness and linguistic expressions. The findings suggested that the high-proficient had better control of linguistic items than the low-proficient. As for hints, they increased considerably in accordance with the difficulty of the scenarios in both learner groups. This, for the author, signified ‘sociocultural sensitivity’ of situational factors. The author supported the claim that proficiency fosters better quality of speech act production. Woodfield and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010) investigated the requestive act modification in the performance of advanced ESL learners; most of them were Greek. The learners seemed to overuse zero-marking (absence of internal mitigators) due to the difficulty in using these modifiers. Additionally, the authors related the underuse of *consultative devices* to L1 influence as Greek is a culture that values solidarity, informality, and in-group relations. *Grounders* were the most used external mitigator as they are acquired early and do not require idiomatic forms. It was also reported that IL-users overused *preparators* and *imposition minimizers*, but underused *apology*. The overuse is an indicator of a lack of confidence which stems from lack of LP and the underuse is an L1-driven, since Greek is a positive-politeness culture that encourages spontaneity and involvement,

unlike the British one. IL-users opted for S-perspective due to the preponderance of certain HA strategies, namely *query preparatories*.

So far as the studies that examined IL requests of learners from Arabic-L1 background, Alfattah and Ravindranath (2009) gave special attention to the politeness strategies in IL requests performed by Yemeni EFL learners. Learners favored *query preparatory* realized oftentimes by the modals *can* and *could* along with *mood derivables* and *want statements*. The overuse of *can* and *could* was seen as an outcome of L1-influence, because Arabic does not pragmatically differentiate between the present and past forms of modal verbs. The employment of direct forms, with or without softeners, was interpreted as a transfer from L1 too, given solidarity and closeness between interlocutors. Moreover, this was related to the fact that Arabic employs formulae that resemble *please* and *excuse me* in conjunction with bare imperatives (e.g. *Allah yerrda aleik/May God be pleased with you*) which are usable to any kind of addressee. In their study of mitigating devices in English requests performed by Jordanian learners, Al-Ali and Alawneh (2010) indicated that three main factors influenced IL performance: language ability, L2 pragmatic knowledge and L1 transfer. For pragmatic transfer, it was evidenced at the pragmalinguistic level in over-initiating the request by expressions like *excuse me* (from Arabic *afwan*) and *hello* (from Arabic *marhaba*). Jordanians also transferred certain cultural assumptions in expressions of *gratitude*, *well-wishing*, *obligation* etc. which are typical to the Arab culture.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Instrument

The corpus of the study was gathered using a Discourse Completion Task/Test (DCT). The DCT contains descriptions of real-like scenarios and space for informants to respond by means of a would-be appropriate request. We prepared English and Arabic versions respective to three situations (SITUs). The author designed a three-item DCT, because he aims to measure the effect of only three variables: P, SD, and R by means of SITU 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

SITU 1: *Asking a university professor to lend a book.* [S<H; SD=close; R=Low]

SITU 2: *Asking a stranger to help in carrying bags of groceries.* [S=H; SD=Distant; R=High]

SITU 3: *Asking a classmate to lend a sum of money.* [S=H; SD=Close; R=High]

The DCT is widely used in ILP studies. The usefulness of this method lies in the fact that it is time saving and allows gathering large amounts of data (Beebe & Cumming, 1996). It also permits the focus on specific speech act realizations and to manipulate the social and the situational variables (Cohen 1998, p. 390). Thus, it makes it easy to statistically compare responses from native and non-native speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). Nonetheless, this tool cannot capture the prosodic and the non-verbal features of face-to-face interactions while respondents are free from time pressure, unlike real encounters. Furthermore, responding in writing as if speaking may inhibit respondents from producing long responses (Cohen 1996, p. 25). The debate on the merits of the DCT in speech act data collection is seemingly still an ongoing issue among those who are for (e.g. Cohen 2005; Cohen 2006) and those who have reservations about it (Golato, 2005; Garcés-Canejos, 2006).

#### 3.2. Participants

The sample informants of this study totals 116. It comprised four groups. The first group consisted of 32 informants of Algerian native speakers of Arabic (henceforth ANSs); they are students at the Department of Letters and Arabic Language (University of Constantine I). These informants provide the L1 baseline data i.e. Arabic. The second group consists of 20 informants of native speakers of

English, Americans and British (henceforth ENSs). They were all educated, but came from different walks of life (officials, graduate and post-graduate students, and teachers). This group provides the TL baseline data. The third group consists of 36 EFL learners; they are first year students at the Department of Letters and English Language (University of Constantine I). This group provides the IL baseline data and represents the low-proficiency level (freshmen). These learners have been studying English, on average, for 7 years. The fourth group consists of 28 EFL learners; they are Master I students at the same department. This group too provides IL baseline data and represents the high-proficiency level (seniors). These learners have been studying English, on average, for 11 years.

It is worth mentioning that none of the EFL learners participating in the present study has ever been in an English speaking country. Three of the groups enjoy a degree of homogeneity in terms of age: ANSs, freshmen and seniors groups. This was revealed by the calculation of the age  $M$  (mean/average) and  $SD$  (standard deviation): 22.84/2.57, 18.25/3.04, and 23.89/4.02, respectively. The remaining group (i.e. ENSs) comparatively lacks age homogeneity: 28.95/13.91. Furthermore, females outnumbered males in all the groups: ANSs (28/4), ENSs (17/3), freshmen (30/6), and seniors (23/5). This was totally by mere chance; gender is not a variable in this study. However, this needs not be understood as it has no influence in such studies.

### 3.3. The Coding Manual

#### 3.3.1. HA/Core Request

For coding the core requests, we adapted the model developed by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989, pp. 278-280) as displayed in in Tab. 1. It is noteworthy that we confine ourselves to merely the categories that were attested in our data.

**Table 1:** HA strategies

Type	Sub-Type	Definition	Example
Direct	Mood derivable	The grammatical mood of the locution conventionally determines its illocutionary force as a <i>request</i> .	<i>Leave me alone.</i> <i>Clean up the kitchen.</i>
Conventionally Indirect	Want statement	The utterance expresses the requester's desire that the event denoted in the proposition come about.	<i>I'd like to borrow your notes for a little while.</i>
	Query Preparatory	The utterance contains preparatory condition of ability, willingness, or possibility, as conventionalized in a given language. Very often, the requester questions rather than states.	<i>Could I borrow your notes?</i> <i>I was wondering if you would give me a lift.</i>
Hints	Strong	The locutionary intent is not immediately derivable from the locution; however, the locution refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary act.	<i>Will you be going home now?</i> (intent: getting a lift home)

#### 3.3.2. Request Perspective

H-oriented: *would you help me carry a few of these bags?*

S-oriented: *may I borrow your book?*

Impersonal: *would it be possible to borrow it for a while?*

According to Blum-Kulka (1991, p. 266):

[T]he choice of request perspective is another source of variation for manipulating the request's degree of coercive force. Choice of perspective is one of the ways in which the native speaker signals his or her estimate of the degree of coerciveness required situationally.

In this respect, avoiding the reference to the H as the bearer of the action, like in the employment of S-perspective, can minimize the degree of imposition (Blum-Kulka & Levenston 1987, p. 158). Except from some studies, request perspective is not often tackled in request research (Woodfield & Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010). Accordingly, this aspect has acquired the status of the neglected area in request research. We would claim that the present study is unique in dealing with perspective in Arabic requests and also the transfer of it in IL performance.

### 3.3.3. Modification

The Taxonomy we employ here was inspired by various works, namely, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Alcón, Safont, and Martínez-Flor (2005), and Schauer (2007). Illustrations belong to our English responses (TL and IL).

**Table 2:** Internal Modifiers

Type	Definition	Example
Openers	Elements by means of which the S seeks to involve the H and bids for his/her cooperation	<i>Would you mind lending me little change to make copies?</i>
Understaters	<i>Diminutives</i> or <i>minimizers</i> that serve in softening the imposition	<i>Would you mind if I borrow this book for a while?</i>
Downtoners	Modifiers used for the modulation of the impact of the requestive act on the H?	<i>Could you possibly loan me enough moolah?</i>
Intensifiers	Used to aggravate the impact of the request	<i>Would you mind terribly if I borrowed this book?</i>
Hesitators	Type of fillers used when the S is uncertain of the impact of his request	<i>So...maybe...I thought... you could lend me a book of yours.</i>
Attention-getters	Used for to alert the requestee before directing the request	<i>Hey Kim; excuse me; hello ...</i>

**Table 3:** External Modifiers

Type	Definition	Example
Preparators	Used to prepare the addressee for the issuing of the request	<i>Can you do me a favour?</i>
Grounders	The requester gives reasons, explanations, or justifications for his/her request	<i>It would help me in my research</i>
Disarmers	Signal awareness of the potential offense and aims at the removal of objection	<i>I should not say that</i>
Promise of reward	Offering the H something in return for the potential fulfillment of the request	<i>I'll be your best friend...I'll even pay you back</i>
<i>Please</i>	Used to reduce the imposition inherent in the requestive act	<i>Could you please help me in my research?</i>
Imposition Minimizers	Used for reducing the imposition placed on the H that is inherently associated with requests	<i>I will take a good care of it and return it as soon as possible</i>
Sweeteners	Compliments, flattery, or exaggerated appreciation of the H's abilities	<i>sir, you are a professional professor</i>
Apology	The S apologizes for minimizing the cost to the H	<i>sorry for the trouble</i>

Closings	-Appreciators: employed at the end to reinforce the request	<i>I would appreciate being allowed to use this resource</i>
	-Considerators: show consideration to the H's situation	<i>Would that be okay?</i>
	-Thanking expressions	<i>Thank you so much</i>
Small talk	Used at the beginning to create a positive atmosphere	<i>thank you for taking time to talk to me</i>

### 3.4. Procedures

The author prepared first the English version of the DTC. Then he translated it into Arabic. We tried to keep the source version as functionally equivalent to the target one as possible. The two versions' compatibility was further checked by a translation studies teacher (from the Department of Letters and English Language, University of Constantine I) before forwarding them to the informants. The English version was written in two styles: British and American so as to suit the ENSs of both varieties. Variables of the study in the English version were highlighted using *italics* to draw the informants' attention to them and written in bold in the Arabic version. For all informants, the author gave enough time to perform the task. As regards the task submitted on printed copies, they were all printed on one-sided format and written with clear font size. The informants were asked to write as much or as little as they want. The author coded and analysed each response individually. As for the Arabic responses, they will be reported by means of transliteration and/or word-by-word translation into English, besides the English functional equivalent might be provided when necessary. Among the problems we encountered in the coding and analysis, two ones are worth citing. The first is seeking the appropriate literal translation as well as the English equivalent of certain words and expressions in Arabic which have a pragmatic consequence. As regards this point, the author asked the assistance of one of the teacher in the Department of Letters and English Language (University of Constantine I). The second is that we found one semantic formula may fit more than one category. For instance, sometimes there was not a clear-cut distinction between *disarmers* and *imposition minimizers*. In such cases, the author referred to previous publications in the field of ILP among the ones cited here as well as others.

## 4. Results

It is noteworthy that we are going to report a detailed results and discussions of one sample situation (SITU 1) and, for the two others, we suffice with the main conclusions. Given the fact that the four language groups include unequal sample sizes, the researcher relied on the *M*, not the raw frequencies, so as to know what score is typical to the group as a whole.

**Table 4:** HA Strategies in SITU 1

	ANSs		ENSs		Freshmen		Seniors	
	%(N)	<i>M</i>	%(N)	<i>M</i>	%(N)	<i>M</i>	%(N)	<i>M</i>
Mood Derivable	9.38(3)	.09	0.00(0)	.00	.00(0)	.00	3.57(1)	.04
Want Statement	6.25(2)	.06	5.26(1)	.05	2.78(1)	.03	.00(0)	.00
Query	78.13(25)	.75	78.95(15)	.79	97.22(35)	.97	89.29(25)	.86
Preparatory								
Strong Hint	6.25(2)	.06	5.26(1)	.05	.00(0)	.00	3.57(1)	.04
Opting Out	.00(0)	.00	10.53(2)	.11	.00(0)	.00	10.71 (2)	.07
Total	100(31)	1.00	100(19)	1.00	100(36)	1.00	100(28)	1.00

Apparently, the four groups seem to favor *query preparatories* or, say, conventionally indirect requests. Statistically speaking, there was not a significant difference between the controlling groups. As for IL-users, they overused *query preparatories* in comparison with ANSs and ENSs. This accords

with the finding of previous studies (e.g. Faerch & Kasper, 1989) indicating that learners employ this strategy more than any other. Regarding the direct HA strategies, ANSs employed *mood derivables* (bare imperatives) in few cases. *Opting out* strategy (i.e. not doing the FTA) was used by ENSs and seniors only. The employment of this choice denotes that the performance of the request was deemed socially inappropriate. *Want statements* were attested in few cases in L1, TL and IL (freshmen). In Arabic, *want statements* are commonplace (Abdulwahid, 2003). Regarding the strong hints, participants only referred partially to the object requested (e.g. asking the professor about the title of the book). It is worth mentioning that hints in Arabic are disfavored (Alfattah & Ravindranath, 2009) as, we assume, they suggest that the interlocutor is not that approachable.

Having dealt with frequency, we consider the wording of the above strategies. Regarding *query preparatories*, the four groups mostly employed modals to realize them. In L1, we came across, e.g., *halyumkinunii ?isti3aarat = can I borrow; halyumkinuka ?an tu3iirani= can you lend me*. ENSs employed these modals: *would, may* and *could*, ordered in terms of frequency, besides the so-called *mind modal* which we discuss in internal modification under *openers*. IL-users employed mostly *can, could, would, and may*. *Can* was only employed by learners. This choice is consistent with the findings of Alfattah and Ravindranath (2009) in Yemeni learners IL requests and Abdul Sattar et al. (2009) in Iraqi ones. The modal *may* evidences linguistic constraints in freshmen's performance (*may you give me your book?*). Bare imperatives were attested in L1 (e.g. *?i3Tiini 3unwaan hathaa ?alkitaab/give me the title of this book*) and IL (e.g. *if you don't mind borrow [lend] me this book*).

Another important aspect of the requestive act is request perspective. As can be seen from Tab. 5, ENSs, in comparison with ANSs, avoided the reference to the H as the bearer of the action as a typical way to minimize coerciveness. Like L1, IL-users opted for H-oriented requests

**Table 5:** Request Perspective in SITU 1

	ANSs		ENSs		Freshmen		Seniors	
	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M
H-Oriented	46.88(15)	.47	11.11(2)	.11	61.11(22)	.61	88.00(22)	.88
S-Oriented	50.00(16)	.50	83.33(15)	.83	38.89(14)	.39	8.00(2)	.08
Impersonal	3.13(1)	.03	5.56(1)	.06	.00(0)	.00	4.00(1)	.04
Total	100(23)	1.00	100(18)	1.00	100(36)	1.00	100(26)	1.00

Turning to S-perspective, ENSs were more prone to using it. As for freshmen, it could be maintained that their performance was much in line with L1 than TL. As compared to freshmen, seniors employed fewer S-oriented requests and overused the H-oriented ones. It is worth to note that ENSs extensively employed the verb *to borrow* with S-perspective (e.g. *I would love to borrow, may I borrow*), but learners failed to assign it to the right perspective due to proficiency. They employed *to borrow* in lieu of *to lend* (e.g., freshmen: *can you borrow me..., would you please borrow it to me..., may I ask you to borrow...*; seniors: *please borrow me this book..., if you don't mind borrow me this book...*). In comparison with freshmen, seniors had more control on these two performative verbs. As for the third category, only few instances of impersonal perspective were recorded.

The above requests were modified internally by means of the strategies displayed in Tab. 6. *Attention-getters* were extensively used across the four groups. There was significant difference between the controlling groups. The amount of *attention-getters* in IL request was fairly in line with TL and the influence of L1 will best be captured in the wording of this strategy. There was a statistically significant difference in the employment of *openers* in L1 and TL. Freshmen employed very few *openers* and seniors showed awareness of their importance, though their wording in both groups was not definitely

a native-like. ENSs utilized more *understaters* than ANSs. IL-users overused this category. Bardovi-Harlig (1999, pp. 690-691) states that the use of *understaters* requires enough syntax for placing them properly in a sentence; it is evidenced that learners have this potential. Intensifiers were only utilized by ENSs (e.g. *would you mind terribly if I borrowed this book?*). The absence of certain categories in our data could be an effect of the instrument as the DTC does not capture certain aspects of spoken language, namely, fillers (e.g. *hesitators*). Woodfield and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010), likewise, interpreted the absence of *cajolers* in their data as an instrument-effect (p. 97).

**Table 6:** Internal Modification in SITU 1

	ANSs		ENSs		Freshmen		Seniors	
	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M
Openers	3.13(1)	.03	29.41(5)	.29	7.14(2)	.07	17.24(5)	.17
Understatement	6.25(2)	.06	17.65(3)	.18	28.57(8)	.29	31.03(9)	.31
Intensifiers	.00(0)	.00	11.76(2)	.12	0.00(0)	.00	.00(0)	.00
Hesitators	.00(0)	.00	.00(0)	.00	3.57(1)	.04	.00(0)	.00
Attention-getters	90.63(29)	.91	41.18(7)	.41	59.26(16)	.59	51.72(15)	.52
Total	100(32)	1.00	100(17)	1.00	100(28)	1.00	100(25)	1.00

In terms of content, we coded as an *attention-getter* in L1 any occurrence of a term of address by itself or in company of the politeness marker *minfadhlik* (literally, *it will be very generous of you/if you can do it as a favor*) in initial position, which is the pragmatic counterpart of the marker *please*. ANSs were prone to mostly using the honorific term *?ustaath/teacher* in conjunction of the lexical softener *minfadhlik* (e.g., *minfadhlik ?ustaath/?ustaathii= please (my) teacher*), in addition to others like *3afwan/forgiveness=excuse me* and *ba3da ?ithnik/after your permission=excuse me*. It is worthy of note that the use of the *possessive mode* is a typical way in Arabic to soften the impact of one's words on the H. As for ENSs, they used ones that signal distance: *professor (Waters)*, *excuse me (Dr...)*, and *sir*. In learners' production, pragmalinguistic transfer is operative in the use of *please* with address terms and the possessive mode (e.g., freshmen: *please professor; sir please*; seniors: *my professor please; please teacher*). Furthermore, there are cases where *please* was used twice in one utterance (e.g., freshmen: *professor please, this book on the table is on my research. Please, would you borrow ...*; seniors: *I beg your pardon sir please, can you lend me this book...that will help me in my research please*). We would argue that the first *please* was employed for attention cues under the influence of L1 while the second is a TL-proper. As far as *openers* are concerned, ANSs employed *hallasamaht/do you allow=would you mind*. ENSs employed *mind modals (would/do you mind)*. On the whole, IL-users did not use native-like *openers* (freshmen: *I was wondering if I can; if you would like*; seniors: *would you mind; I will be very grateful if..., if you don't mind, I should be grateful*). *Understaters* were employed by ANSs (e.g. *qaliilal/for little time*), ENSs (e.g. *for a while*), freshmen (e.g. *for some time, for the weekend and for few days*), and seniors (e.g. *for some time; for just few days; for a little time*). *Some time and a little time* are, perhaps, a translation from L1.

As for the external mitigators, they modify the illocutionary force indirectly i.e. they have no impact on the request itself (Faerch & Kasper, 1984, as cited in Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984, p. 204). By way of summary, Tab. 7 shows types of SMs encountered in our data. Freshmen employed more SMs than any other group ( $M=$  ANSs/ENSs: 0.23/0.20 vs. freshmen/seniors: 0.35/0.022).

**Table 7:** External Modification in SITU 1

	ANSs		ENSs		Freshmen		Seniors	
	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M	%(N)	M
Preparators	.00(0)	.00	6.90(2)	.07	5.33(3)	.06	12.90(4)	.13
Grounders	60.61(20)	.61	31.03(9)	.31	33.33(17)	.33	38.71(12)	.39
Disarmers	0.00(0)	.00	0.00(0)	.00	0.00(0)	.00	3.23(1)	.03
Please	15.15(5)	.15	10.34(3)	.10	45.10(23)	.45	25.81(8)	.26
Minimizers	6.06(2)	.06	31.03(9)	.31	.00(0)	.00	3.13(1)	.03
Sweeteners	.00(0)	.00	.00(0)	.00	1.96(1)	.02	.00(0)	.00
Apology	.00(0)	.00	.00(0)	.00	1.96(1)	.02	.00(0)	.00
Closings	11.76(6)	.18	13.73(4)	.14	3.92(2)	.04	16.13(5)	.16
Small Talk	.00(0)	.00	6.90(2)	.07	7.84(4)	.08	.00(0)	.00
Total	100(33)	1.00	100 (29)	1.00	100(51)	1.00	100(32)	1.00

As expected, *grounders* are the most used mitigators across the four groups. They are constituent strategy in request modification (Trosborg, 1995; Martinez-Flor, 2007; Woodfield & Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010; Al-Ali & Alawneh, 2010). ANSs opted for more *grounders* than ENSs. The IL data showed that learners control the amount of *grounders* respective to TL. *Please* was also used across the four groups with varied frequencies. In the Arabic data, the following items were coded as equivalents of *please: minfadhlik* and *raja?an/?arjuuka* (literally, *I hope from you*). The overuse of this politeness marker in the learners' data is widely noticed in ILP; studies mentioned above, but Woodfield and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010), all reported this trend. *Closings* were used across the four groups. Both cultures seem to acknowledge the interlocutors efforts to comply with the request. As for *imposition minimizers*, ENSs were, apparently, more prone to using them than ANSs. Seniors opted for as few *imposition minimizers* as in L1. Few *preparators* were employed in TL and IL. One instance of *disarmer* was employed by seniors and one instance of *sweetener* and *apology* by freshmen.

Turning to content, *grounders* were identical across the language groups (requesting the book because it is helpful in research). We relate this mainly to the phrasing of the DCT which contains justification for the request. So far as *closings* are concerned, ANSs used *considirators* (e.g. *lawsamaht=if you allow*), *supplications* (e.g. *baaraka lahu fiik= may God bless you*), *thanking expression* (e.g. *shukran=thank you*), and *thanking with supplication* (e.g. *shukran jaziilan wa baaraka lahu fiik=Thank you very much and may God bless you*). ENSs used *considirators* (e.g. *would that be okay?*), *thanking* (e.g. *thank you again*), and an *appreciator* (e.g. *I would appreciate being allowed to use this resource*). From freshmen data, we have a *considirator* (e.g. *if it does not embarrass you*) and an *appreciator* (e.g. *it will be very kind of you*). From seniors' data, we have *appreciators* (e.g. *it will be very nice if you allow me to borrow it from you*) and a *considirator* (e.g. *if you don't need it*). It seems that learners maintained discourse patterns of L1 i.e. the conditional form. For minimizing the imposition, participants ensured giving the book back as soon as possible and taking a good care of it. Seniors used one *disarmer* (*I should not say that*).

## 5. Discussion

At the level of core requests, in SITU 1, the tendency towards conventionally indirect requests is typical in English requests, and is widely reported in the literature (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Fukushima, 1996; Cenoz & Valencia, 1996; Wierzbicka, 1991). In this respect, it can be said that the

Arabic and the Anglo-American cultures seem to perceive P-variable in the same way. It means that requesting something from a person of such authority requires a lesser degree of imposition and the most tentative form possible. As for this point, Márquez Reiter (2000, p. 173) stated that the conventionally indirect level balances “clarity and non-coerciveness” so as the utterance has “the correct interpretation and the right impact, thus leading to success.” IL-users tend to overuse this category, as, we suggest, they found it accessible since it is realized by modal items which were overlearned before, namely, *can*, *could*, and *would*. From a pragmatic point of view, modal verbs in Arabic differ from English. All modals are pragmatically equivalent in Arabic and do not have past forms, meanwhile in English they have a pragmatic consequence; they are indicators of politeness and register (Al-Aqra’ 2001, p.7-8). Presumably, modals of ability in IL can be a result of cross-linguistic influence, because in Arabic the modals employed often question the H’s ability. There is also another claim. The overuse of these two modals might be an outcome of textbooks. In a previous study, the author showed that Algerian secondary school textbooks tend to over-represent modals like *can* and *could* (Dendenne, 2013). This may hold true, at least, for freshmen. The use of direct forms realised by *bare imperatives* was presented in L1 and IL. In Arabic there is no taboo against using them as they are not a sign of impoliteness as in English, but rather a sign of spontaneity and connectedness.

Though both controlling groups extensively employed modal verbs, Arab speakers employed them, in almost half of the requests, with reference to the H as the doer of the action. In Arabic, encounters are often characterized by solidarity so there is no offense in emphasizing the role of the H achieved by means of the H-perspective. ENSs avoided the reference to the H through the preponderance of the S-perspective. IL-users seem unaware of what role perspective plays in minimizing the face-threat in TL. This is justified by the overrepresentation of the H-perspective under the L1 influence, most probably. So, here negative pragmatic transfer is operative. As compared to freshmen, seniors appeared to favor the H-oriented requests. To account for this, we would say that seniors tend to play it safe via employing the forms they feel confident about (e.g. *can you*, *could you*, *would you*), unlike freshmen who strived for approximating the native-use, despite the linguistic barriers (e.g. *may you lend me your book*).

At the level of internal modification, we relate the extensive use of *attention-getters* in Arabic to the fact that terms of address and lexical softeners are part and parcel of the politeness system in Arabic and they are among the typical ways to minimize the adverse effect of communicative acts. We noted a frequent use of *openers* in English requests. *Openers* or *consultative devices* are speech routines in the TL which are considered more polite and considerate (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Trosborg, 1994) as far as the H authority is concerned. For Woodfield and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010, pp. 96-97), in English these linguistic forms are negative politeness devices whose role is to minimize impositions and imply distance between interactants. In this respect, the absence of *mind modals* in learners’ production may cause it to sound brusque for ENSs. We would argue that the scarcity of *openers* in Arabic may be explained by the presence of *attention-getters* which may replace them in softening the coercive force of the request. Concerning *understaters*, several studies reported that learners often overuse *understaters*, in addition to the politeness marker *please* (e.g. Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Al-Ali & Alawneh, 2010; Woodfield & Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010). In order to communicate efficiently, requests in English require the employment of intensifiers; a feature which was only traced in TL.

Turning to external mitigating devices, the oversuppliance of SMs by freshmen could be a sign of verbosity and violation of the quantity maxim from the ENSs’ point of view. Verbosity is a common tendency in IL production (e.g. Al-Ali & Alawneh, 2010, in requests of Jordanian IL-users; Jung, 2004, in apologies of Korean IL-users). Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) explained this trend by the fact that learners are “uncertain of the effectiveness of their communicative interaction (p. 177).” The predominance of grounders in phrasing the requestive act is commonplace. For Faerch and Kasper (1989, p. 239) “the Grounder stands out as the single most frequent external modifier.” Regarding the

higher use of this mitigator in Arabic requests, we would relate this to cultural traits. According to Al-Ali and Alawneh (2010), from a cultural point of view, a university professor in the Arabic society is one who has gained much academic knowledge and, hence, he/she occupies a high position in the social and academic hierarchy. We assume that ANSs were inclined to providing *grounders* so as to convince him/her of the importance of the object requested which causes them to perform the FTA. Learners seem to control the use of grounders in frequency as well as type. The reason is that *grounders* are acquired quite early and they do not need idiomatic (native-like) forms to build them; all they need are simple clauses (Woodfield & Economidou-Kogetsidis 2010, p.99). Additionally, they are syntactically less demanding and pragmalinguistically less complex (Hassall 2001, p. 274). We would further argue that the comparative easiness in using this mitigating device might be the fact that it could be easily transferred from L1. The marker *Please* and its equivalents in Arabic were less frequently used in the controlling groups, because they are freely usable with any interlocutor in both languages; so using them when interacting with a professor might not be an apt choice. To account for the overuse of this mark in IL requests, Faerch and Kasper (1989) explain this by the nature of this marker which can be utilized both as an illocutionary force signal and a transparent mitigator which adds a directive force to the request. Another reason, according to them, is that the other alternatives like *downtoners* (*perhaps, possibly, kindly* etc.) are not as accessible as they require a pragmalinguistic competence. Ellis (1997) stated that it is the syntactically uncomplex intensifier ‘par excellence’. As mentioned earlier, Algerian EFL learners sub-consciously used *please* twice in one request, at the beginning and in medial or final position. Additionally, the use of this politeness marker with such high frequency, especially by freshmen, is, probably, due to the fact that it was over-learned. Salazar Campillo (2007) stated that external modifications “almost exclusively center on the use of *please* in final and medial position within the request (p.219)” in ELT textbooks. Similarly, the author has already cited his own paper which suggests the overuse of this marker in Algerian ELT secondary school textbooks (Dendenne, 2013). The over-suppliance of one strategy has come to be called the *waffle* phenomenon (Edmondson & House, 1991); learners resort to extensive use of a given strategy in compensation for the lack of pragmatic routines. ENSs were prone to using *imposition minimizers*, a strategy that is typical in negative politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) or independence politeness system (Scollon & Scollon, 2001). At the level of closing moves, It is obvious enough that disparity between the two cultures lies in religious-bound expressions employed in Arabic (e.g. *may God bless you*) that emphasize the notions of generosity and cooperation which are highly valued in the Arabic and Islamic societies. Similarly, Muslims usually refer to God’s will when they talk about future events (promise of reward) as, in the Islamic traditions, it is believed that nothing happens unless God wills (e.g. *I’ll give it back as soon as possible if God wills*). The employment of this Qur’anic verse is not only done on a normative base, but it also serves a pragmatic function, which is minimizing the adverse effect of one’s actions on the interlocutor (Nazzal, 2005).

### 5.1 Measuring the Perception of the Situational Variables

Presently, we need to measure how the three situational variables under question (P, SD, and R) were perceived across the four language groups.

In the first scenario, at the core request, both L1 and TL opted for conventionally indirectness. L1 tend to strike a balance between the two main perspectives, H- and S-perspective, meanwhile TL favored the latter. Concerning modification, internal modification appeared to be balanced. That is, L1 showed consideration to the interlocutor status by means of honorific terms of address in conjunction with softeners, while TL used *openers*, as a sign of distance, besides *understaters*, to soften the request. Regarding external mitigators, ANSs were prone to justifying the request unlike the ENSs who strived

for imposition mitigation. On the whole, the pragmatic behavior of L1 and TL in the present scenario stands to reflect two politeness systems. In the former, the requester seeks to maintain the interpersonal relationship with the addressee. In the latter, he/she attempts to mitigate the face-threat. Nonetheless, both cultures seem to give a *high value* to the P-variable by means of strategies of pragmatic weight respective to the politeness patterns that apply in each culture. As for IL-users, actually, their requests have tendencies from both L1 and TL, besides IL-specific ones and, hence, we cannot say they are either approximating one of the languages or totally differing from them. In freshmen's performance, we assume that the employment of *query preparatories*, *understaters*, and the politeness marker *please* is due to the comparative easiness of these strategies and thus meant as an avoidance tactic. The scarcity in *openers* (mainly *mind modals*) is to be understood as lack of pragmatic competence. The use of *attention-getters* (frequency and type) and the absence of *imposition minimizers* appear to be L1-driven. Meanwhile, S-perspective and *grounders* align with TL. Seniors tend to play it safe using mostly the strategies they find accessible. These are *query preparatories*, H-perspective, *understaters*, and the marker *please*. The utilization of *attention-getters* and *imposition minimizers* is, presumably, L1-driven. Meanwhile, they approximated the TL use regarding *openers* and *grounders*. We suggest that this hybrid IL behavior displays learners' efforts to cope with the difficulty of the situation and, thus, evidences sensitivity to the P-asymmetric relationship in the present scenario like in the controlling groups. Yet, neither positive nor negative transfer could be claimed in weighing this variable.

In SITU 2, the four groups' performance is summarized as follows: ANSs hardly ever felt an offense in performing the FTA. Additionally, they employed bare imperatives and H-perspective. They sought to minimize the SD by means of kinship terms (*my brother/sister*) that are metaphorically extended to address non-acquaintances (strangers) to seek social rapprochement (Maalej, 2010). As for external mitigation, it was centered on lexical softeners. TL tends to employ strategies of more weight from a pragmatic standpoint. The majority of the respondents opted for not performing the FTA (e.g. *I normally wouldn't ask for help from a stranger in this situation; I would never do this. Ever; I would not ask the stranger for help*), besides indirect requests, *openers*, *understatements*, *grounders*, *imposition minimizers* and *apologies*. The juxtaposition of these tactics would suggest that TL seems to give *higher* value to the SD. As for IL performance, disregarding the strategies which do not appear to follow pragmatic variation (*query preparatories*, *grounders* and *please*), it was much in line with L1. Learners did not feel an offense in performing the act, referring to the H as the doer of the action, heavily relying on terms of address, and under-employing independence strategies. In consequence, we could claim that negative sociopragmatic transfer was at play. It goes without saying that the R was weighed high (costly service) and it could also affect the performance.

In SITU 3, Arab speakers tend to overplay direct forms, H-perspective, *attention-getters* (kinship terms, in-group markers, and lexical softeners), and *grounders*, on the one hand. On the other hand, they were not inclined to using *promise of reward*, besides they used none of the independence strategies (*imposition minimizers* and *apology*). Quite the opposite, Anglo-Americans favored conventionally indirect requests, S-perspective, *consultative devices*, *understatements* and *downtoners*. For external mitigators, they signaled their independence from the requestee using independence strategies. In this respect, it is reasonable to claim that TL stands out to give *higher* value to the R-variable. Regarding IL-users, their performance is a great deal in line with that of L1, because they employed direct requests, H-perspective, and *attention-getters*. Additionally, the *promise of reward* along with the absence of *imposition minimizers* and *apology* sounds to be L1-driven. To this end, it could be claimed that negative sociopragmatic transfer was operative in the perception of the favor requested.

Having reported the results of the study and discussed them, we presently come to answer the study's research questions.

## 5.2 Answering the Research Questions

On the whole, Arabic and English requests reflect two types of politeness system. In the former, requesters seek to gain the requestee's approval (positive) and, in the latter, they strive to minimize the face-threat (negative). So far as IL production is concerned, both types of transfer were evidenced in learners' production: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic. Added to that, IL requests were influenced by lack of pragmatic competence, IL-specific features and language constraints.

### 5.2.1 Wording of Strategies [Research Question 1]

Pragmalinguistic transfer was evidenced in the employment of linguistic items inspired by L1 in order to achieve an illocutionary force in TL. In core requests, learners employed bare imperatives, unaware of the politeness value of these items. Similarly, the ability modals (*can* and *could*) could be an influence of L1 because, in Arabic, requesters often question the interlocutor's ability. H-perspective seems to have the least immunity to pragmatic transfer. Though learners frequently employ *query preparatories* like ENSs, perspective follows L1 orientation. As compared to ENSs, learners overused *attention-getters* approximating L1 amount. As for type, they tend to employ the softener *please* in conjunction with terms of address following the distribution of the equivalent markers in Arabic (e.g. *minfadhlik*). Also, they transferred kinship terms, (*my*) *brother/sister*, to address strangers. Word for word translation from L1 was evident in *attention getters* (*brother/sister*), *openers* (*I will be very grateful*, SITU 1), *grounders* (*my shoulders are falling*, SITU 2), *closings* (*if it does not embarrass you; if you don't need it; if you want*, SITU 1), and separate words and expressions (e.g. *meters, dinars, some time, little time*).

### 5.2.2 Request Strategies [Research Question 1]

The use of strategies indicates the sociopragmatic preconceptions underlying learners' performance. Here too, L1 guidelines were clear. The use of bare imperatives can also be considered sociopragmatic, given the fact that learners transferred a higher degree of imposition. In a similar vein, reference to the H as the doer of the action signifies an unawareness of the requestee's autonomy of action based on the L1 sensibilities that people are publically available to each other. For internal modification, *attention-getters* were heavily relied on by learners following L1 guidelines. Therefore, learners transferred L1's politeness norm that aims at establishing a common ground with the addressee. Also, the amount of *understaters* was in line with L1 frequency, in SITU 2 and 3. At the external level, the amount of *grounders*, *promise of reward*, *imposition minimizers*, and *apologies* appeared, to such an extent, L1-driven. These strategies, except from *grounders*, were much noticeable in TL data since they are typical traits of *independence politeness* cultures. Learners did not feel an offense in requesting a stranger for help (SITU 2) under the influence of L1. So, they assumed that, cooperation even among distant people is a norm in TL. As for perceptions of the situational variables, IL-users, like the controlling groups, appeared to give higher value to the P variable. However, for SD, and R variables, their perception much aligned with L1.

### 5.2.3 Other Features [Research Question 2]

In addition to transfer, learners' production was impacted by lack of pragmatic competence. The underuse of *openers* (namely *mind modals*) or their non-native-like use evidenced lack of pragmatic knowledge. Also, the inability to understate was evidenced in SITU 2 and 3. Similarly, the absence of *downtoners* was understood as a lack of pragmatic competence. For compensating the lack of pragmatic knowledge, learners resorted to IL-specific strategies like *waffling* i.e. the over-suppliance of strategies

they know most. These are *query preparatories*, modals (*can, could, and would*), H-perspective, *understaters* (in SITU 1), and the politeness marker *please*. As they care about explicitness, learners, especially freshmen, produced long-winded requests due to overplaying external mitigators. Linguistic barriers were an outstanding feature in IL-requests. Though they may not affect the pragmatic intent, such errors do affect the linguistic appropriacy of the speech act (Tagushi, 2006). To illustrate this point, learners misused the verb *to borrow*, the modal *may*, and they were not able to vary performative verbs in each scenario. For instance, in SITU 3, learners kept using the verbs *to give, to lend, and to borrow*; meanwhile ENSs, additionally, used *to loan, be able to, to have, and to spot*.

#### 5.2.4 LP and Pragmatic Transfer [Research Question 3]

Actually, LP did not give a marked advantage to seniors over freshmen. The performance of the two groups was a good deal identical across the three scenarios. That is to say, both of them laid back on their L1 at the pragmalinguistic and the sociopragmatic levels. In both groups, transfer was centered on the same strategies: HAs, request perspective and modification (internal and external). Moreover, factors other than transfer listed above were extant in the production of both groups, with varied degrees. This last proviso, on the whole, indicates that LP did not encourage the exhibition of more pragmatic transfer at both levels. Despite the similarity in performance, we uncovered some idiosyncrasies as well. Seniors approximated TL in the employment of *openers*, in SITU 1 and 3, *opting out* strategy, in SITU 1. Also, they were, relatively, less affected by verbosity, translation from L1, and grammatical errors. We noted that seniors tend to *play it safe* via the use of linguistic items they know most and, thus, they gave the impression that they are rather tactful. Meanwhile, freshmen strived to use as many strategies as possible, though unsure about them. In two out of three scenarios, freshmen opted for excessive use of external mitigating devices. This ended them up with long-winded requests. In addition, freshmen outperformed seniors regarding the use of H-perspective in SITU 1, in terms of frequency, but they did not seem to have complete command on the items realizing this strategy (namely, the modal *may*).

## 6. Conclusions

The present paper sheds light on practical implications vis-à-vis intercultural communication and EFL pedagogy. IL behaviour deviated from the target norms in important ways regarding all the chunks of the requestive utterance. This could violate the target community's social rules of appropriateness and, thus, leading to pragmatic failure. For the core request, maintaining higher levels of directness using bare imperatives might sound rude for NSs. Similarly, the over-emphasis of the role of the H in performing the act through the heavy reliance on H-oriented requests heightens the directive force. Lack of internal modification due to underusing *consultative devices* (especially by freshmen) or the use of inappropriate ones as well as the absence of *downtoners* may sound impolite mainly in P-asymmetric encounters. Furthermore, mitigating the requestive force by only *grounders* in the absence of strategies indicating consideration to the interlocutor's autonomy (namely *imposition minimizers* and *apologies*) might be perceived in TL as a lack of respect. The oversuppliance of the politeness marker *please*, which was deemed inapt by ENSs in such tactful encounters, is not an inadequate modification and, thus, puts the success of the request at stake. Also, the oversuppliance of external modifiers (by freshmen) is regarded as violation of the quantity maxim and, hence, redundant. IL-users seem unaware that not doing the FTA is a constituent choice in politeness in English requests. So, asking *help from a stranger*, for instance, can be perceived as invasion of one's territory and, thus, signifies rudeness.

In pedagogy, developing pragmatic competence in foreign language context may be hard to achieve because, as compared to the second language one, it lacks chances of the full interaction with NSs (Kasper & Schmidt 1996, p. 160). In order to teach speech acts, and requests particularly, we have to care about the teaching material, explicit instruction, and, more importantly, learners' efforts to learn

and perform speech acts. First, The EFL textbook plays a vital role in shaping learners' pragmatic behavior. Certain deviations in our learners' IL requests were interpreted as the effect of the teaching manuals. The growing literature on the studies analysing textbooks from the pragmatic standpoint have revealed various shortcomings in the input offered (e.g. Vellenga, 2004 and Salazar Campillo, 2007). In line with the recommendations of such studies, the EFL textbook should provide learners with empirically validated data or authentic one covering both the pragmalinguistic and the sociopragmatic dimensions. The data should also be supported with the relevant pragmatic and metapragmatic information pertaining to culture, context, politeness, register and the situational variables like dominance, distance, age, costly services in requesting in TL and so forth. Second, learners have to be explicitly instructed in speech acts. This may be achieved by means of creative activities designed to offer learners opportunities to learn and practice requests. The 'alternative' activities suggested by Usó-Juan (2007, pp. 238-240) are relevant here. He suggested a three-phase procedure: presentation (sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge), recognition (making use of knowledge, raising pragmatic awareness, and awareness about cross-cultural/linguistic differences), and production ('collaborative practice' of pragmatic information-rich scenarios, using, e.g., role-plays). Needless to say, teachers' intervention is inescapable. Their role entails suppliance of 'metapragmatic reflection.' In a similar way, Martinez-Flor (2007) states that films can be a 'powerful pedagogical tool' (p. 274). She suggested inductive and deductive approaches for integrating them in EFL classrooms (pp. 274-276). Third, for Cohen (2005), whatever we do to help learners acquire pragmatic competence, it would take them many years and their task still appears a "daunting challenge." Explicit teaching is never enough if we do not consider learners' efforts (p. 280/287). We strongly agree with Cohen in emphasizing the transition to *style-* and *strategic-based instruction* which aims at developing learners' sense of how to be tactful in dealing with speech acts via learning and performing speech acts as well as metapragmatic considerations (Cohen, 2005, pp. 288-292). Relying on themselves, learners are advised to learn speech acts by, for instance, seeking knowledge relating to semantic formulae and linguistic structure used in L1 and TL by means of observation, written tools, conducting 'lay' cross-cultural comparisons or accessing publications pertaining to speech acts (e.g. corpora, textbooks). Also, they should look for a chance to practice the acquired knowledge. They can take part in imaginary interactions and role plays with peers or NSs. Furthermore, there are certain metapragmatic aspects to consider. For example, learners should select a focus (e.g. production vs. comprehension) and check the appropriateness (of the level of directness, term of address, semantic formula, and linguistic form). It goes without saying that these strategies are little else than hypotheses, so we would invite researchers for testing them empirically.

In conclusion, the present cross-sectional study is merely a step forward in the research of transfer in the ILP of Algerian EFL learners. We suggest contrasting it with findings drawn from other data gathering tools (e.g. role play, naturally occurring data, and interviews) or combination of them. Our findings could, further, be validated by investigating a larger sample of subjects from different backgrounds or with focus on gender differences. Additionally, research in pragmatic transfer stands to benefit from comprehensive cross-cultural studies comparing Algerian Arabic and British or American English.

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“Kardeş, bu çantaları taşımama yardım eder misin? Omuzlarım ağrıyor.”  
Cezayirli İngilizce öğrencilerinin rica kullanımlarında aradil transferi

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### Öz

Mevcut çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Cezayirli öğrencilerin diller arası rica kullanımlarındaki faydacı transferlerinin incelenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın verileri üç parçalı Söylev Tamamlama Görevi ile toplanmıştır. Görev, her biri farklı ana dile sahip iki kontrol grubuna uygulanmıştır: Arapça ve İngilizce ve öğrenciler iki farklı yeterlik düzeyinden gelmiştir: orta ve yüksek. Tepkiler kodlanıp rica stratejilerinin frekanslarıyla analiz edilmiştir ve üslupları, rica perspektifleri ve değişiklikleri bazında incelenmiştir. Bulgular, Arapça ve İngilizce performanslarda ili farklı kibarlık sistemi göstermiştir: sırasıyla olumlu-yüz-tabanlı ve olumsuz-yüz-tabanlı. Öğrencilerin üretiminde, her ikisine de açıkça rastlanmıştır. Faydadilbilimsel çeşit, anadilin etkisiyle ve motomot çeviri ile bağlantılı görünmüştür. Toplumsalfaydacı çeşit, duruma bağlı değişkenler ve öğrencinin anadili ile ilişkili ortam değerlendirmesi ile alakalıdır. Transfere ek olarak, diller arası üretim, faydacı bilgi eksikliği, diller arası belirgin özellikler ve dilsel kısıtlamalardan etkilenmiştir. Dil yetkinlik etkeni, üst düzey öğrencilere orta düzey öğrencileri nazaran belirgin bir avantaj sağlamamıştır. Çalışmada aynı zamanda kültürlerarası iletişimin ve söz eyleminin pratik çıkarımları da dikkate alınmıştır.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Cezayirli öğrenciler; YDÖ, dillerarası rica, faydacı transfer, faydadilbilimsel, toplumsalfaydacı.

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