

# Pragmatic Transfer in Moroccan EFL Learners' Requests<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Chomsky's generative paradigm has invaded and informed linguistic research and hence all linguistic subfields. The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has not been exempted from this ostensible invasion. Yet, research conducted within this new paradigm has focused only on exploring and teaching formal grammatical forms; other components of linguistic competence, namely Pragmatics, have been pushed to the edges. More recently (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper, 1992; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010 among others), however, a growing interest in the effects of culture and native language on the development of the learners' L2 has brought into focus the fact that for non-native speakers/ L2 learners to achieve a fully-fledged competence in the target language, they have, of necessity, to consider the sociocultural and pragmatic aspects of the target language. For this reason, the present paper is couched within the area of Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP), the aim being to address the issue of the role of pragmatic competence in SLA in general and, more particularly, in a Moroccan EFL context. Conducted within the framework of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), this study, then, purports to investigate the issue of pragmatic transfer from L1 into the Interlanguage of Moroccan learners of English, particularly when these learners make requests in English. The two main hypotheses that the present paper attempts to defend are: (i) there is pragmatic transfer in the English requests produced by Moroccan learners of English, both from a Pragmalinguistic and Sociopragmatic perspective; (ii) L2 pragmatic competence acquisition is still wanting among Moroccan advanced students. The participants involved in this study are Moroccan university learners of English (second year and third year) and native speakers of English. Under this light, this study seeks to compare the average frequencies of direct and indirect strategies used by both native Moroccan English as a foreign language learners and native English speakers. Finally, this study will further attempt to explore whether transfer decreases as the study level increases. The paper concludes with some pedagogical implications.

**Keywords:** Pragmatic Transfer, EFL Learners, Requestive Strategies, Pragmatic Competence.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

As its name indicates, the field of SLA has for long been concerned with how non-native speakers acquire a second language (L2), where L2 can mean any language learned after one's mother language (Ellis, 1994). Central to the field is the assumption that, in the course of acquiring a foreign language, learners construct a self-contained, yet unique, linguistic system referred to as Interlanguage (IL, henceforth) (Selinker, 1972). Since its inception, a proliferation of different studies have been conducted, with the aim to explore, as it were, the formal linguistic properties, be they syntactic, morphological or phonological, of the learner's IL (see Amrous, 2006 and Zeddari, 2010 for IL syntax in the Moroccan context).

As is well-known, these types of research have been couched within the Chomskyan linguistics. Since Chomsky (1965 and subsequent work), the concern of linguistics has been limited to studying competence, the speaker-hearer knowledge of his language, which is unaffected by any external factors such as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and errors (Chomsky, 1965: 3). One of the basic goals, then, is to uncover the underlying mechanisms of the language faculty within the mind, rendering thus the role of performance as subsidiary in the theory. For him, the investigation of performance will proceed only so far as the understanding of underlying competence permits (Chomsky, *ibid.* 10).

Compelling though these ideas may seem, Hymes (1971: 278) argues that "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless". For this author, language acquisition is not an individualistic mental process whose locus is the mind; rather language is acquired and learned through social interaction. In view of these facts Hymes introduces the concept of Communicative Competence<sup>2</sup> (CC, for short), through which he argues that the notion of competence should be extended to cover other aspects of language, namely language as appropriately used in a given speech community and as such acquired by its native speakers. In this new conceptualization, a child is not only endowed with grammatical competence of his/her language, but also the knowledge of the sociocultural rules of appropriate language use, for the evident reason that a child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical structures, but also as socially appropriate ones (Hymes, *ibid.*, 279). In fact, the theory successfully endorses the search for accounting for interactional and social dimensions of language. As a matter of fact, this communicative shift has remarkably managed to infiltrate a number of disciplines, of which Pragmatics and SLA are only two of them (see Firth and Wagner (1997) for a review).

One reflex of this new wave of interest has been the emergence of a new branch in SLA called Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP, henceforth). ILP is a newly emerging area of research, its locus of interest being to investigate how

non-native speakers acquire, use and develop L2 pragmatic knowledge in the target language<sup>3</sup> (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper, 1992). The bulk of the studies therein undertaken have shown that L2 learners and native speakers of the target language differ as how they use their pragmatic knowledge (see Ellis, 1994; Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Kasper & Rose, 1999, among others). The basic reason for this state of affairs resides in the fact that the rules that govern language use in context minimally vary from one language to another (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). Given the cross cultural differences, it therefore follows that the realization of speech acts is cross-linguistically different (see Lin, 2008 and references cited therein for examples). An immediate consequence of this cross-cultural variation is language transfer or, far more interesting to the present concern, pragmatic transfer (Thomas, 1983). Pragmatic transfer, as a sub-branch of cross-cultural pragmatics, delineates the inability of non-native speakers to convey appropriately a message in the target language due to their lack of pragmatic competence, the result of which is pragmatic failure/communication breakdown. Often times, this transfer is the corollary of importing L1 norms and culture to the second language. In fact, pragmatic failure all too often occurs in intercultural communication situations. To illustrate with a concrete example, consider the following exchanges between a Chinese female learner of English and an American male of student of literature (where ENS stands for “English Native Student” and CLE for “Chinese Learner of English”):

ENS: Bye!

CLE: Wait a moment, please. Have you seen my letter?

ENS: ....

CLE: The letter?

CLE: What?

ENS: Letter?

ENS: I think I've lost it.

CLE: Oh, you break my heart!

ENS: (embarrassed)

(Both felt embarrassed)

(Wang, 2004: 7, cited in Lin, 2008: 45)

According to Wang (2004), the expression “break my heart” demonstrates that the Chinese learner is not aware of the association ‘break one’s heart’ and love affairs, which in consequence resulted in an embarrassing situation. In a similar vein, Wolfson (1983, 62, cited in Lin, 2008: 43) maintains that these types of errors are not tolerated by native speakers, for they may not be aware of ‘sociolinguistic relativity’.

To push the line of the analysis further, Thomas (1983) made a distinction between two types of pragmatic transfer: principally Pragmalinguistic transfer and Sociopragmatic transfer. The former is defined as “the intersection of pragmatics and linguistic forms” (Brown, 2007: 233). Transfer, in this context then, is the result of selecting certain linguistic strategies and norms from L1 and transporting them into the target language. Sociopragmatic transfer, on the other hand, is seen as ‘the interface of linguistic actions and social structure’ (Barron, 2003: 8). More precisely, it describes the extent to which variables such as social status, social distance and degree of imposition affect the choice of linguistic realization of particular communicative acts or strategies.

## **2. SPEECH ACT THEORY**

The theoretical approach within which most of the studies, and particularly the present paper, are conducted is the speech acts theory. The theory of speech acts, as first inaugurated by Austin (1962) and later developed by Searle (1969 and subsequent works), holds the view that utterances can be used both as a means to convey messages and equally importantly to perform actions such as requesting, ordering, apologizing, to mention but a few. Another basic assumption made herein is that a given speech act - say, a request - can be performed either directly or indirectly. Direct speech acts, as Searle (1975b: 30) defines them, are cases where the speaker says something and means exactly and literally what he means; hence only one illocutionary force can be inferred, whereas indirect speech acts<sup>4</sup> are cases where the speaker’s utterance meaning and the sentence meaning are not the same. Put in other words, in performing indirect speech acts, the propositional content of the sentence and the utterance are all too often different. This usually creates confusion if the sentence is not put in its right context. An oft-cited example is “Can you pass the salt?”. As should be obvious, two interpretations are conceivable, the first of which is that the speaker is asking for the hearer’s ability to reach the salt. In this case, the appropriate answer would be either “Yes, I can” or “No, I can’t my arm is still broken”. The second interpretation is when the utterance is taken as a request, thereby urging the hearer to pass the salt which, in this context, happens to be away from the speaker and in the zone of the hearer. Another level at which speech acts can be performed is hints, also referred to as non-conventional indirect strategies (NCIS). To distinguish between CIS and NCIS, Blum-Kulka (1989: 82) maintains that, in conventional indirectness, conventions of propositional content and linguistic form combine to signal requestive force. Non-conventionally indirectness, on the other hand, is in principle open-ended, both in terms of propositional content and linguistic form as well as pragmatic force. This being the case, these types of requests are characterized by being ambiguous.

### 3. REQUESTS

Among the speech acts that have received much attention in the literature is ‘requests’ (Blum-Kulka, 1991; Hassall, 1997; Li, 2000; Rose, 2000, among others). Requests can be defined as an attempt made by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. There are various verbs that induce requests such as: ask, want, order, invite, and request. Note that the verbs in question differ in their degree of marking the intensity of the act (Searle, 1975). For instance, saying “I want you to clean up the kitchen”, in level tone, is not tantamount to saying “I order you to clean up the kitchen”, for the latter has an imperative reading. In fact, Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989: 278) identified nine levels at which requests can be performed. These strategies are presented in Table 1, below.

**Table1: Requestive Strategy Types:**

Types of Strategies	Examples
<b>a. Direct Strategies</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Mood derivable	Stop making that noise.
Performatives	I am asking you to stop making that noise.
Hedged performatives	I would like to ask you to clean up the kitchen.
Obligation statements	You have to move your car.
Want statements	I want you to lend me your suit.
<b>b. Conventionally Indirect Strategies</b>	
Suggestory formulae	Why don't you clean up the kitchen?
Query preparatory	Could you postpone the exam?
<b>c. Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies</b>	
Strong hints	You have left the kitchen in a real mess.
Mild hints	I am a teacher.

In addition, they argue that the illocutionary force of requests is analyzed by breaking it down into three major components. These components are (a) Address term, (b) Head act, the locus of the speech act, in this case the request, (c) Adjunct(s) to Head act whose function is to support or strengthen the speech act. Consider the following example: “Ayoub/ could you lend me your new suit/ I am invited to a wedding party tonight.”

The relevant elements are:

- a. “Ayoub” Address term.
- b. “Could you lend me your new suit?” Head act
- c. “I am invited to a wedding party tonight.” Adjunct to Head act.

With this background in mind, the remainder of this paper will be devoted to presenting the research instrument adopted and laying the ground for data analysis and discussion, with the aim to test the two hypotheses formulated herein.

### 4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

#### 4.1 The subjects:

The number of subjects who have taken part in the present study totaled 60 subjects. They were divided into two groups. The first group comprises the Moroccan learners of English (herein after MLE) who in turn are subdivided into two groups based on their academic level: Second Year (N=20) and Third year (N=20). The subjects in the second group are 20 native speakers of English (herein after NSE). The choice of these two groups is justified by the fact that the main focus of the study is to compare the average frequencies of direct and indirect strategies used by both native Moroccan learners of English and native English speaker when they make requests in English. The other justification is to test the hypothesis that transfer decreases as the study level increases.

The sample of the Moroccan learners of English includes both male and female subjects, whose age ranges from 18 to 24. All of these subjects are students at the English Department at the Rabat faculty of Letters. The group of native speakers is made up of American native speakers; some of whom were teachers at AMIDEST; others were just volunteers who showed their great willingness to take part in this research.

#### 4.2. Framework and data collection:

As has been pointed out above, the investigation in this present paper is couched within the framework of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). CCSARP is the most frequently used research project in the area of cross-cultural pragmatics and ILP. It aims at establishing patterns of speech act realization with different social constraints using a single coding system (cf. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). In fact, the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka *et al.*1989b: 18) identifies nine strategy types ranging from the most to least direct strategies (see table1). The table above is the coding scheme adopted in the present paper.

Additionally, the data of CCSARP is collected via the Discourse Completion Test (DCT); its major task is to provide a variety of socially controlled situations. This is achieved via providing the respondents with a set of incomplete

discourse sequences, where they are required to respond using the speech act under investigation, in this case requests. This helps gain insights into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance.

The DCT used in this study consists of seven situations, each of which is accompanied with a brief description. For the purpose of the present paper, a Moroccan Arabic (MA) DCT was also used in order to examine how Moroccan students perform requests both in English and their mother tongues and also whether or not there is pragmatic transfer. As a matter of fact, the whole seven situations were identical to English ones in that the same parameters were taken into account, particularly the social distance, social status and the degree of imposition. For expository clarity, the following table summarizes the different situations controlled in the DCT:

**Table2: Specifications of the Situations<sup>5</sup>**

Listener	Pragmatic situation	Power	Distance	Imposition	Request Goal
Friend	Asking a friend to lend you his/her new suit for a wedding party.	=P	+D	-IM	B
Citizen	Asking someone to move his/her car.	+P	-D	+IM	A
Friend	Asking a friend to clean up the kitchen.	=P	+D	-IM	A
Teacher	Asking a teacher to postpone the exam.	-P	+D	+IM	B
Father	Asking a father to attend a party.	-P	+D	-IM	C
Secretary	Asking a secretary to work on Saturday.	+P	+D	+IM	A
Stranger	Asking someone to get a book for you on the top shelf.	=P	-D	+IM	B

+P: High Power, =P: Equal Power, -P: Less Power, +D: Familiar, -D: Unfamiliar, +IM: High Imposition, -IM: Low Imposition, A: Right/ Duty, B: Favor/Service, C: Permission.

## 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As stated above, this study has as objectives to (a) endeavour to investigate the issue of pragmatic transfer from L1 into the Interlanguage of Moroccan learners of English, namely when these learners make requests in English; and to (b) compare the average frequencies of direct and indirect strategies used by both native Moroccan English as a foreign language learners and native English speakers. Finally, this study will further attempt to explore whether transfer decreases as the study level increases.

To meet the objectives of the study, transfer will be examined at two levels: Pragmalinguistic and Sociopragmatic level. The former is meant to identify the requestive strategies used by both MLE and NSE. The latter, on the other hand, purports to explore the impact of the situational variables such social distance, power relation, and the degree of imposition on the performance of the speech act of request.

## 6. REALIZATION OF REQUEST STRATEGIES

**Table3: Major Request Strategies by NSE & MLE**

	NSE		MLE 1				MLE3			
			English		MA		English		Arabic	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
DSs	20	18.19	43	33.85	76	61.41	33	38.97	78	58.22
CIS	80	72.72	82	64.56	46	34.66	78	57.35	49	36.56
Hints	10	9.09	2	1.59	5	3.93	5	3.68	7	5.22
Total	110	100	127	100	127	100	136	100	134	100

F= Frequencies.

DSs: Direct Strategies.

CIS: Conventionally Indirect Strategies

A close examination at Table 3 shows that CIS are the most widely used among the three groups, followed by DSs. Compared to the other strategies, hints are the least used strategy. Moreover, it seems that NSE are the least direct group in that this strategy represents 72.72%, followed by MLE 1 with a percentage of 64.56%. As one moves from MLE 1 to MLE 3, there are more similarities than differences as far as the use of CIS is concerned. Note that DSs are the most used strategies by MLE. For instance, MLE3 phrased 38.97% of their requests in DSs, followed by MLr1 with 38.97%. NSE, on the contrary, used only 18.19% of their requests in DSs. A similar pattern is revealed by MLE's performance in their L1. The majority of their requestive strategies, it appears, are in DSs. Since MLE surpass NSE in the use of direct strategies in IL, it would not be surprising to conclude that there is transfer from L1 into IL in terms of the preference of DSs by MLrs in IL, contrary to NSs who underuse these strategies. Another remark that can be made, along with this view, is that hints are the least frequently performed strategies in both MLrs' L1 and L2. This indicates that the use of hints by MLE in a similar rate in both L1 and IL may be considered as a positive transfer. The section that follows is

meant to present NSE and MLE's requests sub-strategies so as to provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the requests performed.

**Table4: Requests Sub-strategies used by NSE & MLE**

	NSE		MLE 1				MLE3			
	F	%	English		MA		English		Arabic	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Mood Derivable</b>	8	38.09	19	41.30	46	63.88	11	28.20	55	79.73
<b>Locution Derivable</b>	6	28.75	8	17.39	10	13.88	16	41.02	7	10.41
<b>Want Statement</b>	3	14.28	14	30.43	16	22.24	9	23.02	3	4.34
<b>Performatives</b>	2	9.52	5	10.86	-	-	3	7.69	4	5.79
<b>Verbless Expression</b>	2	9.52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	21	100	46	100			39	100	69	100

As shown in the table above, mood derivable, locution derivable, and want statement are the most frequently used sub-strategies across the three groups. By way of illustration, the following examples were performed by NSE for these particular strategies:

- This is a no-parking area, please move your car.
- Hey man! You gotta clean the kitchen. That was your party and you left it in a mess.

However, NSs do not heavily rely on DSs as is the case for MLE. For the sake of illustration, the following linguistic realizations were employed by MLE:

- Move your car from here.
- You should clean the kitchen.
- Clean the mess you and your friends did yesterday.

It is worth noting that NSs did not use want statements as the percentage realized is of only 14.28%. This again implies that there is transfer from L1. Indeed, the majority of MLE opted for performing their want statements with the verb 'to want', while NSE used the verb 'to need'. This claim is supported by the fact that MLE tend to use heavily the verb 'to want' in their L1, the equivalent of which in MA is 'byi:t'. In a similar vein, Latif (2000: 89) argues that MLE's limited reliance on 'need' might be due to the absence of an equivalent in MA which has the equivalent function.

## 7. SOCIOPRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

A Sociopragmatic analysis is meant to demonstrate the effects of such controlling parameters as "social status", "social distance" and "degree of imposition" on the choice of linguistic realization of particular communicative acts and strategies. For this reason, transfer will be examined in terms of each situation in order to see the influence of the social variable on the use of the requestive strategies across the three groups. For clarity of analysis, each situation will be discussed and analyzed on its own.

**Situation 1: Borrowing** (=P, +D, -IM, B) : In this situation, the power status between the speaker and the hearer is described as equal; NSE performed all their request goals in CIs. MLE, on the other hand, varied their request in both their L1 and IL, MLE3 seemed to be the least direct group with a percentage of 83.33%, while MLE1 had 64.70%. In fact, this situation provides a vivid picture of the negative transfer that L1 exerts on MLrs. This influence is explained by their preference of using direct strategies in this situation.

**Situation 2: Parking** (+P, -D, +IM, A): In this situation, the speaker is in a position of power as he is asking a driver to move his/her car from a no-parking area. The interlocutors are not familiar with each other, and the request goal is asking for a right/duty. The sociopragmatic parameters of this situation necessitate a high imposition request. Therefore, a higher degree of directness is expected. As anticipated, the three groups were on equal footing in terms of their use of direct strategies. This may be justified by the fact that the three groups perceived the situation as similar in both the cultures insofar as MLE also perform the request for this situation in direct strategies in their L1. Hence, this may be considered as a positive transfer.

**Situation 3: Kitchen** (=P, +D, -IM, A): This situation contains somehow the same sociopragmatic variables as situation 1 except that the speaker is asking for a right which is to get the hearer to clean the kitchen. This situation is also characterized by the lack of social distance, combined with low rate of imposition. The results indicated that MLrs1 appeared to be the most direct group with a percentage of 84.22%. Their performance in their IL was quite the same in their L1 with a percentage of 82.60%, whereas MLrs3 with 65.53% and 88.24% in their L1. NSE, on the other hand, seemed to be the least direct group in the sense that 50% of their requests were performed in CIs. In this situation academic level proved to be a key factor in MLE's performance. MLE1 were more influenced by their L1.

**Situation 4: Student to Professor** (-P, +D, +IM, B): This situation is concerned with a student who is asking his professor to postpone the exam till next week. The hearer is supposed to be in a superior position as compared to

the student. Their relationship is considered to be familiar (although it could be argued that the interlocutors do not have a personal relationship; cf. Latif, 2001). In this scenario, NSE were the least direct group with a percentage of 93.75%, followed by MLE1 with 89.48%, and then MLE3 with 78.94%. As a matter of fact, MLrs, again, showed a tendency towards performing a great number of their requests in direct strategies. Indeed, this tendency, as one may clearly notice when one compares their performance in L1 and IL, is similar to the one observed in their L1. Accordingly, transfer is quite clear in this situation.

**Situation 5: Permission** (-P, +D, +IM, C): In this situation, the speaker wants to ask his/her father for a permission to go to a party organized by friends. The sociopragmatic parameters of this situation require a low imposition request in the sense that both the interlocutors are familiar. However, the speaker is supposed to be in an inferior status. Thus, the use of politeness strategies is expected. This was the case for MLE who performed 90% of their requests in CISs, followed by NSE with 81.25%. MLrs3, on other hand, appeared to be strongly influenced by their L1 in the sense that they showed an overwhelming tendency towards the use of direct strategies in both their L1 and IL. In this situation and the previous one, the academic level does not seem to play a key role in the use of the strategies.

**Situation 6: Secretary** (+P, +D, +IM, A): In this situation, the speaker is in a position of power, asking his/her secretary to work overtime. The situation is also characterized by the lack of social distance, combined with the high rate of imposition as the manager is asking for working extra-time. As shown in the table above, NSE tended to perform a high rate of their requests in CISs 86.66%. In a similar way, MLE seemed to opt for CISs with a percentage of that ranged from (61.12%) to (65%), while a number of their strategies were used in direct strategies. However, the difference between NSs and MLrs in this situation is quite clear.

**Situation 7: Stranger** (=P, -D, +IM, B): The last situation involves someone who wants a book in the library, but it happens that the book is on the top shelf; therefore, the speaker decides to ask someone else to get it for him/her. The power status between the speaker and the unknown interlocutor is described as equal, but the speaker is faced with the added difficulty of asking the hearer, for they are both unfamiliar with each other. Thus, the speaker will seek positive politeness strategies. The results of this scenario indicated that the three groups perceived the situation equally in that they all opted for performing their requests in CISs. Therefore, transfer is considered to be positive.

All things considered, the results, as can be concluded, presented a number of differences between the groups in terms of each situation. The three groups varied their requestive strategies across the situations. MLE appeared to be influenced by their L1 norms. Indeed, they showed a quite clear tendency towards using direct strategies in almost all the situations in their L1. This also affected their performance in their IL. However, results also revealed some similarities between MLE and NSE. For example, in situation (2) where a high imposition request and a higher degree of directness is expected, the three groups performed their requests in the same way opting for direct strategies. This can be seen as a case of cross-linguistic similarities between English and MA regarding this situation. Along with this view, it should also be pointed out that transfer was found in both the groups, namely in situation (3) where MLE opted for using direct strategies in both their L1 and IL. As has been pointed out before, this transfer can be seen as the corollary of importing L1 norms and culture to the second language, in this case English. Noteworthy is the fact that the academic level did not seem to play a major role in pragmatic situations, for in some situations MLrs1 seemed to be similar to NSE as opposed to MLE3, who were more influenced than their counterparts by their L1 norms.

In brief, the results achieved hitherto provide evidence supporting the research hypotheses formulated in this paper. As far as the first hypothesis is concerned, it has been found that NSE and MLE differ as to how they perform the illocutionary act of request producing transfer. In point of fact, similar results have been found in a number of studies, all of which concur that L2 learners' L1 pragmatic knowledge affect their perception and production of pragmatic performance in L2 (Ellis, 1994; Kasper and Dahl, 1991; Latif, 2000; Benbarka, 2002, among others). In much the same way, a detailed analysis showed that MLE1 and MLE3 have chosen directness in their use of requestive strategies. However, the findings also indicate that the academic level does not play a major role in pragmatic ability, as the present study shows that there are more similarities than differences between the two groups. In some situations, for instance, MLE1 adopted the same behaviour as that of NSs. It is different from that of MLrs3 who were more influenced than their counterparts by their L1.

## **8. GENERAL CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The findings of the present paper have shown that MLE's pragmatic competence is far from satisfactory. Besides, this study adduces further support to the fact that sociocultural dimensions play a fundamental role in the acquisition of a second language. It has been demonstrated that the performance of requests among the three groups was different. This difference implies that there is transfer from L1 into the IL of MLE. Unquestionably, this state of affairs supports the thesis that pragmatic competence plays a major role in the communicative failure of a number of non-native speakers' learners. For this reason, a number of pedagogical implications can be drawn<sup>6</sup>.

(1) To start with, foreign language instructors and teachers have to include in their curriculum teaching pragmatic competence so as to raise both learners' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness of the target

language they intend to acquire and, more precisely, the target speech acts. This can be done via raising the students' awareness of the differences between English and MA in terms of speech act realizations. For instance, some linguistic strategies that might be preferred in MA are not necessarily appropriate in other languages, of English is only one.

(2) Other strategies that ought to be used in this respect would be those exposing students to authentic L2 by using audiovisual materials (Kasper, 1997). This context-based interaction would help learners pay attention to how language use is performed by native speakers so as to improve their communicative competence. In a similar context, Brown (2007: 241), adopting a communicative approach to language teaching, maintains that in the communicative classroom, students should use the language productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts. However, Porter (1986: 218, cited in Kasper & Schmidt (1996: 160)) concluded that "communicative activities in the classroom will provide valuable production practice for learners, but they will not generate the type of sociolinguistic input that learners need".

(3) As it turns out, however, much of the burden falls on the shoulder of EFL instructors who should be aware and make their students aware of the mismatch between English and MA regarding the use of speech acts. Ishihara (2010:23), for instance, identifies a number of requirements with which a teacher should be equipped to teach L2 pragmatics. This includes, among other things, knowledge of pragmatic variation, knowledge of how to teach L2 pragmatics and knowledge of how to assess L2 ability.

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**APPENDIX1 (English Version)**  
**The Discourse Completion Test**

This questionnaire is part of a research paper in the field of Second Language Acquisition. Your contribution is highly appreciated and will be duly acknowledged. All the information on this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential.

Age:   
Gender: Male  Female   
Mother tongue: Moroccan Arabic  Berber  English   
Others: Please specify.....  
Foreign languages: French  English  Spanish   
Others: please specify.....

Please respond to the following seven situations and write down what you would say in each of the situations. Make sure to read the whole situation carefully before you respond. This is not a test and so there are no wrong or right answers; just answer as spontaneously as you can.

1. You are invited to attend a wedding party. So you want Ayoub, a friend of yours, to lend you his new suit, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

2. You are a police officer. You see someone parking his car on the “no-parking” area. You want to ask him to move his car, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

3. Hicham is your roommate. Hicham had some friends over night and left the kitchen uncleaned. You want Hicham to clean the kitchen, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

4. Your teacher has scheduled an exam for next week. You are supposed to take another exam in the same week, so you want to ask him/her to postpone the exam until the following week, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

5. You are invited to a party organized by your classmates. You want to ask your father’s permission, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

6. You are the manager of a company; you are too busy doing some business work and you want the secretary to work overtime. If you ask your secretary to work on Saturday, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

7. You are in a library searching for a book. You find the book, but it is on the top shelf and you can’t reach it. Someone happens to be near you. You want to ask the person to get the book for you, what would you say?

You:.....  
.....  
.....

APPENDIX2 (MA version)

الرجاء الرد على الحالات السبع التالية. تأكد من قراءة الحالات بتمعن قبل الرد. المرجو أن تكون إجابتك تلقائية.

1. انت معروض لواحد العرس و باغي صاحبك أيوب يعطيك الكسوة عندو جديدة باش تمشي بيها العرس. شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

2. انت بوليسي. شفتي واحد موقف طوموبيلتو فواحد البلاصة مكيففوش فيها الطوموبيلات أو بغيتي تغول ليه يحيدها من تما . شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

3. انت و هشام ساكنين فنفس البيت. واحد النهار هشام عرض على صحابوا و خلا الكوزينة مرونة. انتبغيتي تغول ليه نصفها. شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

4. أستاذ ديالكم قال ليكم راه عندكم امتحان الحصة الجاية و لكن نتا عندك امتحان واحد آخر فنفس داك النهار و بغيتي تقول ليه بأجلو. شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

5. واحد الحفلة بغاو ينضموها صحابك و عرضو عليك و لكن خاصك ضروري تاخذ الإذن من عند الأب ديالك . شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

6. انت مدير ديال واحد الشركة و عندك الخدمة بزاف و بغيتي السكرتيرة ديالك تجي نهار السبت. شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

7. كنت فالمكتبة كنتقلب على واحد الكتاب. ولكن الكتاب لقيتيه فيبلاصة بعيدة عليك و بان ليك واحد الدرري طويل و بغيتي تقول ليه يجبدو ليك. شنو غادي تقول ليه؟  
انت :

.....  
.....  
.....

<sup>1</sup> I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Jilali Saib for his comments on the form and contents. I am also indebted to Dr. Nourddine Amrous for his rigorous guidance and comments. For proofreading the prefinal version of this paper, I should like to particularly thank Ayoub Noamane and Mohammed Amine Choraih. As the disclaimer goes, any error of facts, theory, methodology or analysis is purely mine.

<sup>2</sup> CC was subsequently developed by Canal and Swain (1980, cited in Brown (2007)) who argue that four components constitute the construct of CC: Grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. The interested reader can consult the authors' paper for more details or see Brown (2007) and references cited therein for a review. Along with this view, Bachman (1990) proposes the incorporation of pragmatics as a component in CC, hence the term pragmatic competence.

<sup>3</sup> Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993) state that such a definition would limit the scope of ILP, arguing, therefore, to include native speakers' intercultural style (see Blum-Kulka & Sheffer (1993) for an example).

<sup>4</sup> The term that is widely used for this type of utterances is "conventionally indirect strategies" (CIS). For ease of reference, therefore, the name CIS will be used throughout.

<sup>5</sup> See the Appendix for a full copy of the DCT, both the English and the MA versions.

<sup>6</sup> Note that the questions of whether or not pragmatic ability is teachable and how to teach it are still undergoing continuing discussion in the literature. Delving into details such these, albeit important, will take us too far afield. The interested reader is referred to Kasper, 1997; Kasper & Rose, 2001; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010 among others.