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INVESTIGATING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUESTS: THE CASE STUDY KOHAT UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUST

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Abstract
The current study aimed to investigate the realization and preference of request patterns in English language usage at Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) in Pakistan. The study adopted mixed model research utilizing the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and a structured questionnaire, evaluating qualitative and quantitative data based on a coding manual from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Project by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). 150 both male and female English Language Users participated in the study. English language users (ELUs) at KUST employ eight different request strategies, with direct requests being the most common, followed by nonconventional and conventional indirect requests. ELUs tended to favor direct requests, especially when communicating with interlocutors of equal or higher status, despite cultural norms suggesting a preference for indirectness. Female learners demonstrated higher frequencies of pragmatic competence in their requests compared to male students, particularly when approaching higher-ranking counterparts. This study contributes to understanding English request strategies among Pakistani learners and the impact of power dynamics on request patterns. It sheds light on the challenges posed by pragmatic competence and appropriateness in making requests, particularly in interactions with higher-status interlocutors. The study acknowledges limitations such as the lack of triangulation and the focus on a single speaking act. Future research is recommended to employ triangulation, examine additional speech acts, increase the number of request scenarios, utilize alternative data collection methods, and explore pragmatic transfer between Pashto, Urdu, and English. Furthermore, investigating the teaching of speech acts in different pragmatic contexts is highlighted as a potential area for further research.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Socio-Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Request Realization, Language in Context.

INTRODUCTION
Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics where we deal with "What is said and what is meant or less is said more is meant or more is said less is meant''. Socio-pragmatic is a subfield of pragmatics that deals with the study of meanings in a particular social situation. A request is realized according to a particular social situation. A request is realized in different societies differently. Different societies have different social contexts. It has different pragmatic meanings in different contexts. Request-making is highly dependent on social and cultural aspects. There are clear cultural influences on communication. A culture's members communicate in a certain way as a result of its values and norms. Language users are parts of the world of usage. Individuals never use language alone, but rather as part of a speech community that reflects the state of society as a whole. (Ekwelibe, 2015)
Socio-pragmatic competence is necessary for the correct realization of requests. Moreover, without exact knowledge of the particular cultural and social norms and values we cannot realize requests appropriately. When a request is not realized appropriately, it leads to a

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communication breakdown. Communication breakdown occurs when there is a mismatch between a person's Socio-pragmatic competence and the demands of a particular communication situation. Researchers also asserted that despite having great grammatical and lexical command of the English language, second language learners fail to adhere to socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic standards of language. Additionally, they stated that Pakistani English Learners are considered L2 learners and that they encounter pragmatic challenges when speaking in the target language. As a result, communication may break down or relationships between Native Speakers and Pakistani English Learners may be tarnished (Anwar, Kamran, Yasmin, & Asif, 2020; Anwar, Kamran, Yasmin, & Asif, 2020).
The same language used for a request may carry one pragmatic meaning in one social context and another one in another social context. The same language could be appropriate for the realization of requests in one society and may not be appropriate in another society. It means that social norms and values influence the pragmatic meanings in our communication.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aims and objectives of the study consist to investigate that request is realized appropriately or not by the English language users in KUST in different social situations and also know the strategies of request realization preferred by English language users in KUST.

Research Questions

1. Do the English language users in KUST realize requests appropriately in different social situations?
2. What strategies are preferred by the English language users at KUST realizing the speech act of request?

Significance of the Study

For successful communication to flow, pragmatic meaning must be understood. Even if someone fully understands the literal meaning, their attention may be diverted due to a lack of pragmatics expertise. The socio-pragmatic variance of request realization is the focus of this study. It seeks to determine which strategies are used by the people of the region. Also, it seeks to know if a request is realized appropriately. Learners of the targeted area will benefit from this study by improving their pragmatic comprehension of the targeted language by knowing different request strategies. They would also know whether they are realizing requests appropriately or not. They would also be able to avoid communication breakdowns brought on by improper request realization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language proficiency extends far beyond the realms of grammar and vocabulary; it encompasses the nuanced ability to wield language effectively in a multitude of contexts. Central to this proficiency lies pragmatic competence, a facet of linguistic aptitude that encapsulates an individual's capacity to comprehend and deploy language appropriately within diverse social milieus. This essay embarks on an exploration of pragmatic competence, delving into its definition, significance in communication, developmental trajectory, and strategies for its cultivation.
Pragmatic competence, at its core, revolves around the adept comprehension and application of language within social settings, taking into account various socio-cultural norms, contextual cues, and speaker intentions. It encapsulates an array of components, including the

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JALT

mastery of speech acts, politeness strategies, discernment of conversational implicature, and adept recognition of discourse markers.

Speech acts constitute fundamental units of communication, wherein language serves as a tool to perform actions, such as requests, apologies, or assertions (Austin, 1962). The ability to navigate these acts with finesse entails an understanding of their underlying conventions and implications within specific social contexts. For instance, the act of requesting may vary significantly in formality and directness depending on cultural norms and situational factors.

Conversational implicature, as elucidated by Grice (1975), refers to the process of deriving additional meaning from utterances beyond their literal interpretation. This entails an acute sensitivity to contextual cues, presuppositions, and pragmatic inferences embedded within discourse. A proficient communicator can adeptly navigate these layers of meaning to glean the intended message accurately.

Politeness strategies form another integral aspect of pragmatic competence, encompassing linguistic devices employed to maintain social harmony and mitigate potential face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Mastery of these strategies entails a delicate balance between expressing one's intentions and respecting social hierarchies and relational dynamics. Failure to adhere to these norms can lead to unintended offense or miscommunication.

Discourse markers serve as signposts within conversations, guiding the flow of discourse and signaling transitions between ideas or speaker turns (Schiffrin, 1987). Mastery of these markers aids in structuring conversations coherently and facilitating smooth communication exchanges. Furthermore, their usage often varies across cultures and linguistic communities, underscoring the importance of pragmatic sensitivity in discerning their nuanced functions.

The significance of pragmatic competence in communication cannot be overstated. It serves as the linchpin for effective interaction, enabling individuals to convey their intended meanings accurately while navigating the intricacies of social dynamics. A deficiency in pragmatic competence can engender misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and communication breakdowns, thereby impeding the flow of dialogue and fostering interpersonal discord.

The development of pragmatic competence unfolds through a multifaceted interplay of factors, including exposure to language input, cultural immersion, cognitive maturation, and socialization experiences. Children, in particular, undergo a gradual process of pragmatic acquisition through interactions with caregivers, peers, and the broader social environment (Ochs, 1992). These interactions serve as crucibles for internalizing social norms, linguistic conventions, and communicative strategies.

However, the developmental trajectory of pragmatic competence is not confined solely to childhood; it continues to evolve across the lifespan, shaped by ongoing linguistic and sociocultural experiences (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996). For second language learners, the acquisition of pragmatic competence may present distinct challenges stemming from disparities in cultural norms, linguistic conventions, and communicative styles (Kasper, 2001). Navigating these differences requires a heightened awareness of pragmatic nuances and deliberate efforts to bridge intercultural communication gaps.

Feedback and reflection foster metacognitive awareness and facilitate skill refinement by providing learners with insights into their pragmatic performance (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). Constructive feedback enables learners to identify areas for improvement and refine their pragmatic strategies through iterative practice and self-reflection.

The contextualized practice serves as a cornerstone for pragmatic skill development, offering learners opportunities to apply linguistic structures and strategies in authentic communicative

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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

tasks (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). Engaging in role-plays, simulations, and real-world interactions allows learners to internalize pragmatic norms and refine their communicative proficiency within supportive learning environments.

Various strategies can facilitate the cultivation of pragmatic competence among language learners and individuals seeking to enhance their communicative skills. Explicit instruction plays a pivotal role in raising learners' awareness of pragmatic features and providing them with the requisite tools for effective communication (Rose, 2000). By elucidating the underlying principles of speech acts, politeness strategies, and discourse markers, instructors can empower learners to navigate diverse communicative contexts with confidence.

Moreover, pragmatic competence assumes heightened relevance in multicultural and multilingual contexts, where individuals must negotiate diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes. Mastery of pragmatic norms facilitates smoother intercultural interactions, fostering mutual understanding and bridging communicative divides (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Role-playing and simulations offer immersive platforms for learners to enact various social roles and scenarios, thereby honing their pragmatic competence in contextually rich environments (Yule, 1997). By assuming different personas and navigating diverse communicative challenges, learners can develop a repertoire of pragmatic strategies and enhance their communicative versatility.

Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1995) highlighted the disparity between the micro-level lexico-grammatical knowledge of foreign and second language learners and their macro-level communicative intent and sociocultural context. Likewise, Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) outlined that even fairly advanced language learners' communicative acts often contain pragmatic errors or deficits, leading to a failure to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value.

Fraser (1983) defined pragmatic competence as the understanding of how a listener interprets a speaker's message and perceives the intended illocutionary force conveyed through subtle nuances in the speaker's utterance. Similarly, Crystal (1985) defined it as the study of language from the users' standpoint, particularly focusing on their choices, constraints encountered in social interactions, and the impact of their language use on other participants in communication.

Pragmatics and grammar represent two complementary yet distinct branches of linguistics. Grammar, often regarded as the backbone of language, pertains to the formal structure of linguistic systems, encompassing rules governing syntax, morphology, and phonology (Chomsky, 1957).

In contrast, pragmatics ventures beyond the realm of formal structure to explore the functional use of language in context (Levinson, 1983). Pragmatics delves into how language is employed to achieve communicative goals, considering factors such as speaker intention, social context, and shared knowledge.

Speech acts constitute a fundamental aspect of pragmatics, encompassing the actions performed through language, such as requesting, commanding, apologizing, or complimenting (Austin, 1962).Conversational implicature, as expounded by Grice (1975), refers to the process of deriving meaning beyond the literal interpretation of utterances.

Politeness strategies represent another crucial domain within pragmatics, governing the use of language to maintain social harmony and mitigate potential face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Discourse markers serve as linguistic devices that signal relationships between utterances and help structure conversations (Schiffrin, 1987).

In simple terms, while grammar primarily concerns structural accuracy, pragmatics deals with the appropriate use of language in specific contexts and with specific speakers.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

Following Bachman's (1990) Communicative Language Ability model, pragmatic competence comprises illocutionary competence, which relates to the knowledge of speech acts and functions, and sociolinguistic competence, which pertains to the ability to use language appropriately according to the context.

The researchers asserted that despite their strong grasp of English grammar and vocabulary, second language learners struggle to adhere to the pragmatic and sociopragmatic rules of the language. They emphasized that Pakistani English Learners, classified as L2 learners, encounter pragmatic challenges when communicating in the target language, potentially leading to communication breakdowns or strained relationships with native speakers (Anwar et al., 2020, pp. 35-36). Numerous interlanguage pragmatics studies have highlighted the difficulty L2 learners face in appropriately and politely performing speech acts, warranting further in-depth investigation (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Koike, 1989).

One essential component of pragmatic competence is speech acts. Speech acts are the actions performed through language, such as making requests, giving commands, or expressing opinions (Austin, 1962).

Politeness strategies represent another critical aspect of pragmatic competence. Politeness strategies encompass linguistic devices used to maintain social harmony and mitigate potential face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987 and Gul et al., 2023).

Culture profoundly influences pragmatic norms and expectations, shaping how individuals express politeness, assertiveness, and social hierarchy in communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Cultural differences in communication styles, such as directness versus indirectness, affect the interpretation of speech acts and conversational implicature.

High-context cultures, such as those found in East Asia and the Middle East, rely on implicit communication, where meaning is embedded in context and shared knowledge (Hall, 1976). In contrast, low-context cultures, such as those found in North America and Northern Europe, prioritize explicit communication, where meaning is conveyed directly through words.

Language serves as a vehicle for expressing cultural values, social relationships, and pragmatic norms (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Linguistic features such as vocabulary, grammar, discourse patterns, and speech acts vary across languages, influencing communication styles and expectations.

Vocabulary reflects cultural concepts and values, with languages often having unique words or expressions that encapsulate cultural phenomena (Sapir, 1921). For example, the Japanese concept of "omotenashi" conveys hospitality and customer service, reflecting cultural norms of politeness and hospitality(Sajjad et al.,2023).

Grammar structures the organization of language and influences communication patterns (Slobin, 1996). Languages may vary in grammatical complexity, word order, and morphological features, shaping how ideas are expressed and interpreted. For example, languages with grammatical gender may influence perceptions of gender roles and social relationships.

To navigate these challenges, individuals must develop cultural and linguistic competence, which involves awareness, sensitivity, and adaptability (Bennett, 1993). Effective intercultural communication requires bridging cultural and linguistic divides through mutual understanding and respect.

Variations in pragmatic principles and rules across different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can lead to miscommunication, as norms regarding silence or sociable talk differ between cultures. Additionally, linguistic differences in forming requests and responding to politeness strategies across languages were noted, emphasizing the need for L2 speakers to navigate directness and indirectness in their requests to prevent communication breakdowns (Gündüz, 2016; Karagöz & İşisağ, 2019, p. 86). The researchers also emphasized

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

the evident cultural influences on communication, citing the impact of values and norms on the communication patterns within a culture, reflecting broader societal conditions (Ekwelibe, 2015). The majority of research on pragmatic competence in second language learning has concentrated on differences between skill levels (Francis, 1997; Taguchi, 2006; Otçu-Zeyrek, 2008 Taguchi, 2006). There is compelling evidence to imply that learners' degree of proficiency is correlated with their pragmatic competence (Francis, 1997, Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). Even for advanced-level second-language students, achieving a sufficient degree of pragmatic competence is still difficult (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). To prevent misunderstandings or "pragmatic failure" in their interactions with others, second language learners must improve their pragmatic competence (Thomas, 1983, p.91), necessitating the adoption of the pragmatic norms of the target culture for effective communication. Speech Acts and Request Strategies in Language Learning.

Speech acts are categorized into several main types based on their illocutionary force, which refers to the speaker's intention in performing the act (Austin, 1962). These categories include directives, representatives, expressives, commissives, and declarations.

Speech acts are not only influenced by linguistic factors but also by cultural norms and conventions (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Different cultures may have varying expectations regarding politeness, directness, and social hierarchy, leading to differences in the performance and interpretation of speech acts.

In the realm of speech acts, requests are classified as directive speech acts, which are acts intended to get the listener to do something (Searle, 1969). Requests can take various forms, including explicit requests, hints, and indirect requests, each with its own level of directness and politeness.

Explicit Requests: Explicit requests involve straightforward language explicitly stating the desired action, such as "Please pass the salt" or "Could you help me with this?"

Hints: Hints are more subtle forms of requesting that imply the desired action without explicitly stating it. For example, "It's chilly in here" may hint at a request to close the window.

Indirect Requests: Indirect requests are couched in polite or indirect language, often to mitigate the imposition on the listener's autonomy or face. For example, "Would you mind turning down the volume?" or "Could I trouble you for a moment?"

The effectiveness of requests hinges not only on the linguistic form but also on pragmatic considerations such as context, social norms, and the relationship between the interlocutors (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Pragmatic aspects of requesting include considerations of politeness, imposition, and the social distance between the speaker and the hearer.

Politeness Strategies: Requests are often formulated with politeness markers such as "please," "thank you," or softening expressions like "would you mind" to mitigate potential face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Politeness strategies vary across cultures, with some cultures valuing directness and others emphasizing indirectness and politeness.

Imposition and Face Threat: Requests inherently impose on the listener's time, resources, or autonomy, potentially threatening their positive or negative face (Goffman, 1967).

Social Distance: The form and degree of politeness of requests are influenced by the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Requests made to close friends or family members may be more direct and informal, while requests made to acquaintances or authority figures may be more formal and indirect.

Cultural norms and values significantly influence the form and interpretation of requests, leading to variations in politeness strategies, directness, and social expectations (Hofstede, 1980). Cultures differ in their preferences for explicit versus indirect requests, as well as their tolerance for imposition and facing threats.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

High-context cultures, such as those found in East Asia and the Middle East, often prioritize indirectness and politeness in communication, relying on shared cultural knowledge and context to convey meaning (Hall, 1976). In contrast, low-context cultures, such as those found in North America and Northern Europe, value directness and clarity in communication.
Power Distance: Cultures vary in their levels of power distance, which refers to the extent to which hierarchical relationships are accepted and respected (Hofstede, 1980). In cultures with high power distance, such as many Asian cultures, requests to authority figures may be more deferential and indirect.
Navigating cultural variations in requesting is crucial for effective intercultural communication. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations often arise from differences in politeness norms, directness, and social expectations (Bennett, 1993). To mitigate these challenges, individuals must develop cultural competence and pragmatic awareness.
Strategies for navigating intercultural requests include sensitivity to cultural norms, flexibility in communication style, and the ability to adapt to the preferences of the interlocutor (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Active listening, empathy, and awareness of cultural differences can help bridge communication gaps and foster mutual understanding.
Blum-Kulka's division of request strategies is based on the degree of directness and politeness employed in making requests. She identifies three main types of request strategies: direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989).
Direct Request Strategies:
Direct request strategies involve straightforward language that explicitly states the desired action. These requests leave no room for ambiguity or misinterpretation, as the speaker's intentions are clearly articulated. Examples of direct request strategies include "Pass me the salt" or "Could you please open the window?"
Conventionally Indirect Request Strategies:
Conventionally indirect request strategies involve the use of polite or mitigating language to soften the request and reduce the imposition on the listener's autonomy or face. These requests are couched in culturally appropriate formulas or conventions that signal politeness and respect. Examples of conventionally indirect request strategies include "Would you mind passing me the salt?" or "Could you possibly open the window?"
Non-Conventionally Indirect Request Strategies:
Non-conventionally indirect request strategies involve the use of hints, suggestions, or implicit language to convey the desired action indirectly. These requests may rely on shared knowledge or context between the speaker and the listener to be understood. Examples of non-conventionally indirect request strategies include "It's a bit warm in here, don't you think?" (implying a request to open the window) or "I could really use some help with this" (implying a request for assistance).
Theoretical Underpinnings:
Blum-Kulka's division of request strategies is grounded in speech act theory and politeness theory, which provide frameworks for understanding how language functions in social interaction. Speech act theory, pioneered by philosophers such as J.L. Austin and John Searle, posits that utterances have both a locutionary and illocutionary force, with the illocutionary force representing the speaker's intention in performing the act (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Request strategies are a prime example of illocutionary acts, as they are intended to get the listener to perform a certain action.
Implications for Intercultural Communication:
Blum-Kulka's division of request strategies has significant implications for intercultural communication, highlighting the importance of understanding cultural variations in communicative behavior. Different cultures may have distinct preferences for directness,

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

politeness, and indirectness in making requests, leading to potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

For example, cultures that prioritize positive face may prefer conventionally indirect request strategies, employing polite language and mitigating expressions to avoid imposing on the listener's autonomy or face. In contrast, cultures that prioritize negative faces may prefer direct request strategies, valuing clarity and efficiency in communication.

Moreover, language learners and intercultural communicators can benefit from explicit instruction and awareness-raising activities focused on request strategies in different cultural contexts. By developing pragmatic competence and cultural awareness, individuals can navigate diverse communicative situations with sensitivity, empathy, and effectiveness.

In conclusion, Blum-Kulka's division of request strategies provides a valuable framework for understanding how individuals formulate and interpret requests in different cultural contexts. Grounded in speech act theory and politeness theory, her categorization highlights the importance of cultural factors in shaping communicative behavior. By recognizing and adapting to cultural differences in request strategies, individuals can enhance their intercultural communicative competence and foster mutual understanding in intercultural interactions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The case study and mixed model research methodology were deemed the most suitable approach for this study, as it aimed to comprehensively explore the socio-pragmatic understanding of request realization in various social contexts by English Language Users (ELUs). In order to achieve this, both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were integrated into the study. The qualitative methodology was chosen to accommodate the nature of the data, which was gathered by employing the Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) (İŞİSAĞ, 2019).

In order to integrate the qualitative data with the qualitative data the sequential integration method was utilized to build on findings from one phase of the research to inform the other.

3.3 Site of the Study

The Kohat University of Science and Technology was the site of the research study, focusing on the postgraduate students enrolled in the Department of English. This choice was motivated by the university's academic relevance and the availability of a diverse pool of participants, offering an ideal setting for investigating the socio-pragmatic understanding of request realization.

Data Collection Procedure

The participants in the study were given plain language statements explaining the research, its objectives, and research tools and asked if they were willing to complete a questionnaire and Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs). Once they agreed, fifty postgraduate students were asked to fill DCTs containing ten items. After completing the discourse completion test a close-ended structured questionnaire with multiple-choice options was given to a hundred English language learners at Kohat University.

Piloting of DCTs

The researcher created a DCT to gather the qualitative data for the investigation. The DCT preparation process needed to be done in a methodical manner. Creating an item pool was the first step The DCT at this stage included sixteen situations. Following the proper items' selection for the DCT, expert opinions were sought regarding the items' suitability and application to the aim. One of the experts was a lecturer in the English department of English

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

at Kohat University of Science and Technology, and one of them was an assistant professor there. Two expert opinions were obtained in person at a session. After that, the DCT was piloted with 10 English Language students to ensure that the necessary modifications could be made and enabled it to elicit the target speech act. It was tested on a set of people who met the same requirements for the study's real sample. The DCT took on its final shape when the required adjustments were made, and it worked well to elicit the desired speech act of making requests.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The qualitative data for this study was collected from English language learners. The discourse completion test was distributed among them. The DCT contains 10 situations.

Participants were asked to write their responses below every situation. Responses were gathered from the participants. All the tests were given serial numbers and scanned into computer files. The content analysis method was utilized to analyze the collected employing discourse completion tests (DCTs).Opinions of pragmatic experts/native speakers were taken on the collected data, and they categorized the made requests into appropriate and inappropriate requests in the given instances on the basis of degree of politeness, indirectness, and formality.

Quantitative data was gathered utilizing a structured questionnaire. Quantitative data was collected from 100 English language learners. The questionnaire used for data collection contained 8 situations and the students needed to choose a single option below every item.

Quantitative analysis methods were used to examine the data acquired by questionnaire. In order to answer the second research question, and to learn more about the most preferred request patterns used by ELUs, the study used content analysis. As a result, the coding manual utilized by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) for the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Project was employed to analyze the data obtained from postgraduate students through the questionnaire (See Appendix III).

DATA ANALYSIS and INTERPRETAION

Findings of the Qualitative Data

The qualitative data for this study was collected through Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs). The data was finely scanned into a computer file and was sent to native English speakers. They need to determine the appropriateness of requests based on formality, indirectness, and politeness. The opinion of native speakers was therefore preferred because native speakers only understand better the pragmatics of their language. As the study focuses on the pragmatics aspects of language, therefore they have differentiated between appropriate and inappropriate responses.

4.2.1 Table of Appropriate and Inappropriate Requests Frequencies

Discourse Completion Test						
Situations	**Status**	**Appropriate Requests**	**Percent %**	**Inappropriate requests**	**Percent%**	**Total**

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

S.1. You are a worker in a company. You have been working there nearly for a year and think that you deserve a raise in your salary. You go to the office of your boss, David Taylor and make request.	High er	15	36.6	26	63.4	41
S.2 You are walking to the international house from outside the university when you see your best student also living in the same place getting on his motorbike. You could get a lift. How would you make request?	Low er	23	59	18	41	41
S.3 You lent some money to your close friend, Jane two weeks ago. She was supposed to repay it to you in a week but didn't. You need some money urgently, so ask for it by making request:	Sam e	26	65	14	35	40

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

S.4 Imagine that you want to ask your best friend to lend you a substantial amount of money. would say using request?	Same	21	52.5	19	47.5	40
S.5 You are studying in your room and you hear loud music coming from a room down the hall. You don't know the student who lives there. What would you say by using request?	Higher	16	41	23	59	39
S.6 You are in a hurry and the queue for canteen is very long. How will you request the first person (stranger) in the queue so that you can buy your lunch first?	Higher	9	23.7	29	76.3	38
S.7 You want to borrow a book from professor. How will you request him/her?	Higher	19	46.3	22	53.7	41
S.8 You want to sit beside your friend and there is a person sitting already beside	Higher	11	28.2	28	71.8	39

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

your friend. How will you request that person to leave the chair for you?						
S.9 You receive an emergency call from your home while you are taking a lecture. How will you request your professor to leave the class during lecture?	Higher	18	45	22	55	40
S.10 You need to call at home urgently and your cell phone's battery has died. There is a stranger sitting next to you in lobby. How will you request that person to lend his/her cell phone so that you can make a quick call?	Higher	14	35	26	65	40
		Total Responses	Appropriate 172	Total Inappropriate Responses227	Total/given Responses. 500	Total Received. 399

Table 1 Table of Appropriate and Inappropriate Requests Frequencies

Table 1 shows the appropriate and inappropriate responses to the situations. Study participants were asked to make a request in the provided situations.

S.1: Requesting a raise from the boss

Table 1 shows in the first situation that most responses (63.4%) were inappropriate requests, it shows that respondents struggled to effectively make requests for a raise in salary from their boss. The status of the relationship was high because the boss was higher in power, social status, and psychological status. Hence, this shows a potential lack of understanding of appropriate workplace communication in requesting a salary raise.

S.2: Asking for a lift from a student

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

The second situation in Table 1 shows that 59% of the responses were appropriate requests. The status of the relation was lower. it shows that respondents were generally able to effectively request a lift from their students. It means a better understanding of requesting favors in a casual or informal setting.

S.3: Requesting repayment of money from a friend

In Table 1, the third situation having equal status of relationship, 65% of the responses were appropriate, indicating that respondents were generally able to effectively request the repayment of money from their friend. This shows a good understanding of how to make such requests in a personal context.

S.4: Asking a friend for a substantial loan

The data in the fourth situation shows that 52.5% of the responses were appropriate. The status of the relationship was equal, which indicates the respondents were somewhat capable of effectively requesting a substantial loan from their friend. However, there is still some room for improvement in making such requests.

S.5: Requesting a neighbor to lower the music volume

In the situation fifth in Table 1, the status of the relation was higher. In this situation, the majority of responses (59%) were inappropriate requests, indicating a challenge in effectively requesting the neighbor to lower the music volume. it suggests a potential difficulty in making requests to unknown individuals in a shared living environment.

S.6: Requesting to cut the queue in a canteen

The sixth situation has a higher status of relationship. Here, data shows that 76.3% of the responses were inappropriate, which clearly indicates a significant struggle in effectively requesting to cut the queue. This suggests a difficulty in understanding the situation and making requests to strangers in a public setting.

S.7: Requesting to borrow a book from a professor

In situation seventh on the table, 53.7% of the responses were inappropriate, the status of relation between them was higher which indicates respondents were somewhat capable of effectively requesting to borrow a book from a professor. However, there is still enough room for improvement in making requests in an academic setting.

S.8: Requesting a seat from a person next to a friend

The data on row eight shows that 71.8% of the responses were inappropriate requests, indicating a remarkable issue in effectively requesting the person to leave the seat. The status of the relationship was higher between speaker and listener. It indicates a difficulty in making requests to strangers in a social context.

S.9: Requesting to leave a lecture due to an emergency

In this situation the status of the relation was higher, 55% of the responses were inappropriate requests, showing remarkable challenge in effectively requesting to leave the lecture due to an emergency. This suggests a potential problem in making urgent requests in an academic context.

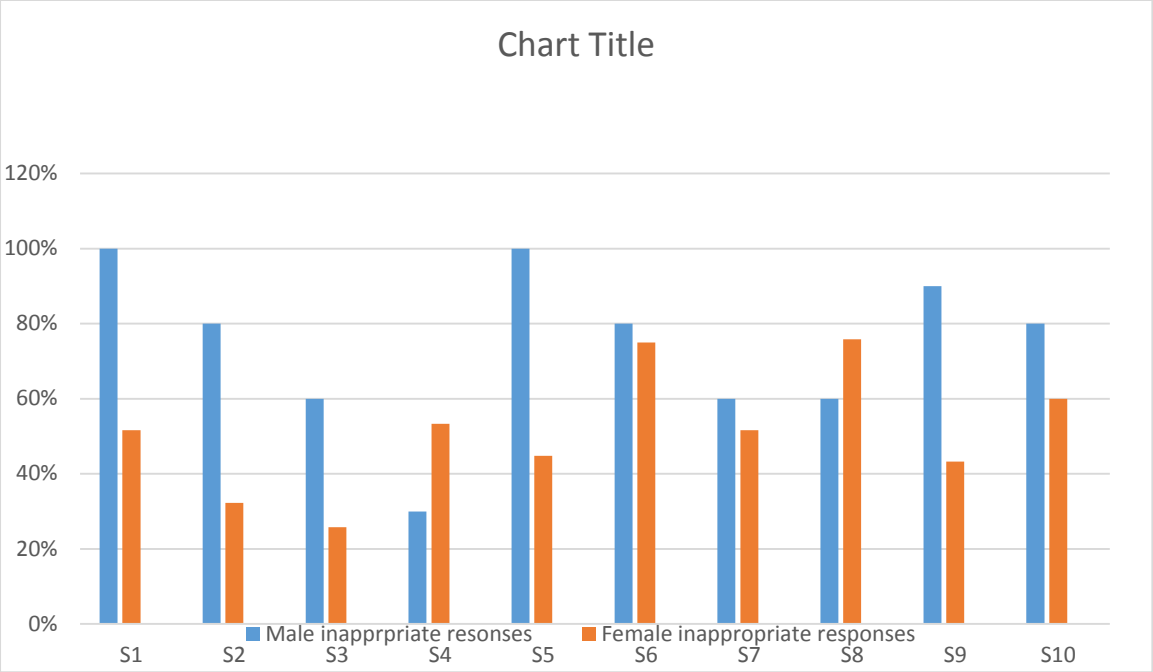
S.10: Requesting to borrow a phone from a stranger

The data on row ten in Table 1 shows that 65% of the responses were inappropriate requests, indicating a significant struggle in effectively requesting to borrow a phone from a stranger. This suggests a difficulty in making requests to unknown individuals having high status in a public setting.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

4.2.1 Appropriate And Inappropriate Requests Frequencies of Males and Females

Figure 1 Table of Appropriate and Inappropriate Requests Frequencies



Figures in Chart No. 2 explain the ratio of inappropriate requests of male and female participants in each situational context. The blue line shows male's inappropriate requests and the yellow line shows female's inappropriate requests in given situational contexts. The total number of male and female participants were 10 and 30 respectively. Overall, 100 tokens were provided, and 74 tokens of inappropriate requests were received from male participants. Moreover, 300 tokens were distributed, and 153 tokens of inappropriate requests were collected from female participants. It indicates that 74% percent of male participants faced difficulty in pragmatic understanding of situational context by making inappropriate requests. In contrast, only 51% of female participants faced challenges in understanding the situational settings.

As shown in the chart, the situation first, where an employee was requesting a raise from the boss in his salary, showed that 100% of male participants made inappropriate requests in the given scenario and faced pragmatic difficulties. All the male participants faced challenges where the status of relation was higher.

In the second scenario, the male participants demonstrated 80% inappropriate responses, however, the female participants 32.25% faced difficulty in realizing appropriate requests where the status of the relation was lower.

The third situation was about requesting repayment of money from a friend, the status of the relation was equal where 60% of the male participants faced issues in understanding the situational context. Furthermore, 25.8% of females expressed inefficiency in realizing appropriate requests.

30% of male and 53.3% of female participants made inappropriate requests by not realizing enough formality and politeness in the fourth situation as shown in chart 2, where the status of the relationship was equal between friends.

In the fifth scenario, the status of the relation was higher between the interlocutor and the listener. 100% of male participants were found facing difficulty in understanding pragmatic situational context. In contrast, 44.82% of female participants made inappropriate requests in the given scenario as shown in Chart 2.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

The sixth situation shows that 80% of male participants were unable to comprehend pragmatic situations. In contrast, 75% of female participants faced difficulties in realizing appropriate requests.

The seventh scenario shows a pragmatic relation where a student asks his/her professor for a book by making a request. There 60% of male participants were unable to make appropriate requests. In such a way, 51.6% of female participants also made appropriate requests in the given situation.

The eighth situation on the chart shows that complex situation between two strangers. The finding shows that 60% of males and 75.86% of females were facing issues in comprehending the pragmatic situation which led to the formation of inappropriate requests.

The chart shows the ninth the finding of ninth situation. It indicates how many males and females experience challenges in pragmatic understanding. It shows, that 90% of males and 43.3% of female participants faced the complexities of pragmatics.

The last situation on the chat was about a person requesting a stranger for his phone to make a call. The status of the relation was higher. The findings show that 80% of male and 60% of the female learner made inappropriate requests. They were unable to comprehend the situation while making a request in it.

4.3 Findings of the Quantitative Data

Quantitative findings were obtained from a structured questionnaire. The Questionnaire containing 800 tokens was distributed to 100 participants. However,560 tokens were received. The questionnaire included 8 strategies of request including *Mood Derivable, Want Statement, Explicit Performative, Obligation Statement, Hedged Performative, Mild Hint, Strong Hint, and Preparatory strategy.*

Most of the participants were female. A limited number of males showed willingness to participate in the study.

4.3.1 Table of Frequencies Of Requests In Eeach Request Strategy

Total tokens	Situation.8	Situation.7	Situation.6	Situation.5	Situation.4	Situation.3	Situation.2	Situation.1	Request strategies
183	**19**	**14**	**26**	**26**	**31**	**13**	**24**	**30**	**Mood derivable**
53	**1**	**9**	**6**	**3**	**13**	**6**	**4**	**11**	**Explicit performative**
40	**1**	**1**	**11**	**8**	**3**	**4**	**3**	**9**	**Hedged performative**
42	**6**	**1**	**3**	**9**	**7**	**2**	**8**	**6**	**Obligation statement**
155	**21**	**35**	**9**	**13**	**16**	**28**	**19**	**14**	**Want statement**
25	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**9**	**6**	**0**	**Preparatory**
30	**11**	**3**	**4**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**Strong hint**

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

32	**10**	**4**	**6**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**2**	**0**	**Mild hint**
T.D.T 800 T.R.T 560	**Total 71**	**Total 70**	**Total 69**	**Total 70**	**Total 72**	**Total 70**	**Total 70**	**Total 70**	

Table 2 Table of Frequencies Of Requests In Every Request Strategy

4.3.2 Statistics of Most Preferred Strategies

DIRECT LEVEL	Total tokens	percentage
Mood Derivable	183	32%
Want Statement	155	27%
Explicit Performative	53	9.4%
Obligation Statement:	42	7.5%
Hedged Performative	40	7.1%
THE NON CONVENTIONALLY INDIRECT		
Mild Hint	32	5.7%
Strong Hint	30	5.4%
CONVENTIONALLY INDIRECT		
Preparatory	25	4.5%

Table 3 Statistics of most preferred strategies

The table shows that 32% of the participants opted for the *mood-derivative* strategy while making a request. It was followed by 27% of the wants statement strategy. Moreover, *explicit performative* was chosen by 9.4% ELU. The strategy of *obligation statement* was chosen by only 7.5% of participants. However, it was followed by *hedged performative* where 7.1% of patricians selected it. 5.7% of participants liked *mild hint* and 5.4% of people opted for a *strong hint strategy* while making requests. Furthermore, a very small number of participants opted for the preparatory request strategy. It means only 4.5% of participants chose it in their formation of request.

Conclusion

The two primary goals of the current study were to: (1) know if the requests are realized appropriately in different situations by English language users in KUST; and (2) acquire insight into the most preferred request patterns in KUST. To respond to these inquiries, a DCT, and a structured questionnaire were employed as study tools. Based on the coding manual used in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Project by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the discourse completion tests and questionnaire were evaluated.

According to the study's findings, ELUs employ eight different request strategies. They employ direct requests called *want statements* and "*obligation statements*" as well as *mood-derivable*, *explicit*, *hedged*, and *preliminary performatives*. They employ *strong* and *mild hints*, which are characterized as nonconventional indirect requests strategies, and *preparatory* which is classified as conventional indirect requests. Furthermore, the study's findings indicate that ELUs have made the highest use of direct requests. Nonconventional indirect requests are the second group that is used most frequently. Conventional indirect requests are thus the least used category. Consequently, the study's conclusion is that ELUs

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

When compared to indirect strategies, learners typically choose to use direct request patterns. Remarkably, the study also shows that when a requester interacts with a higher-status counterpart, they used to be the least direct according to cultural context. Unfortunately, the participants were unable to employ this knowledge and frequently chose direct patterns because of the lack of pragmatic competence. Apart from one scenario—the fifth situation, where the requesters were trying to make requests to interlocutors of higher status who were strangers, the ELUs in this study tended to favor direct requests more often. The most common, when the requester was expected to communicate with equal status interlocutors, the request pattern in this instance also employed *mood derivable* that was categorized as the most direct requests. In other words, it appears that English Language users were trying their best not to ask for something from someone with more authority, like a supervisor. But still, their choice of word patterns showed more directness. The participants frequently used *mood derivable* and *want statements excessively* When they were interacting with interlocutors of higher status while realizing requests. They did make requests in a polite or proper manner. Therefore, the analysis suggests that the current state of the Interlocutor has an impact on the requester's chosen request strategy types. Given the nature of the requests and the intimidating actions, this is most likely connected to them.

When it comes to the pragmatic competence and appropriateness of the learners' requests, female learners have consistently more frequencies than male students; yet, overall, the ELLs appear to fulfill their requests in a pragmatically sound manner. For scenario 1 (DCT), in which they were expected to approach a higher-ranking counterpart with a request. Furthermore, this scenario also exhibits the highest degree of directness, informality, and directness. As a result, it appears that the ELLs to engage or ask questions in a style that is appropriate or polite to a higher-status interlocutor remained abstract.

This study is important because it advances our knowledge of requests as potentially dangerous behaviors, the English request strategies used by Pakistani learners, and the influence of power dynamics on the request patterns chosen by ELLs.

Implications of the Study

A person needs to be pragmatically proficient in a target language to communicate in it. One of the crucial components of pragmatic competence is Communicating effectively in a target language. A request is one of the most common speaking among other acts and is also considered a face-to-face frightening action. Thus it's critical to be able to make requests effectively so that the person hearing them can respond appropriately. To avoid pragmatic failure and communication breakdown that could result in serious issues, it is also vital to carry out the request in a suitable manner. Thus, foreign language learning environments ought to be able to give students the best environment possible so they may become pragmatically competent and behave appropriately when speaking English as a foreign language. This study makes some recommendations and consequences for teaching:

1) First and foremost, it is important to make sure that both the English language learners and teachers must have an adequate level of practical knowledge and skill.
2) Moreover, pragmatics courses ought to be added to or included in both English language environments such as university teacher education programs, and EFL environments like foreign language departments.
3) A separate language class must be formed in the department where learners can practice only language skills for instance listening speaking, reading, and writing.
4) The organization of curricula and syllabuses should allow students to exercise their pragmatic knowledge. For example, ELLs can practice speaking English in a variety of contexts and social classes.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

5) In addition to acquiring a theoretical foundation in their English language classes. Dramatic exercises like role-plays could be beneficial in achieving this goal.
6) When executing any type of speech act in a target language, teachers must teach their students what is deemed polite and appropriate pragmatically.
7) The used textbooks ought to cover all these topics as well.
8) Another recommendation would be to make use of technology for activities inside all the language classrooms. More precisely, students' pragmatic ability may be enhanced by watching TV shows and movies in the target language.

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