

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH OF FIRST-YEAR
STUDENTS AT VISTA UNIVERSITY (SOWETO)

Miller M. Matola

Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of **Master of Arts** in the
Faculty of Arts at the Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir
Christelike Hoër Onderwys.

Promoter: Prof. J.L. van der Walt

Potchefstroom

June 1993

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following persons and institutions for their support and co-operation:

- * My promoter, Prof. J.L. van der Walt, for his guidance and all the invaluable experience I have gained from working with him.
- * Prof. A. Combrink for her encouragement and support.
- * Prof. A. Potter and Mrs Walsh, from the Rand Afrikaans University, who made a significant contribution to this study by granting me the opportunity to administer a test to one of their first-year classes.
- * Dr C. Dreyer, for her willing guidance and advice with respect to the statistical analyses used in the study.
- * Library staff at Vista and other universities.
- * Ms. I.R. Ribbens, Ms. M. Lottër, Mr N. Bernitz and Mr F. Mokoena for their willing assistance.
- * The students of English at Vista University (Soweto) and the Rand Afrikaans University, without whose co-operation this study would never have seen the light of day.
- * Vista University for financial assistance.
- * The Institute for Research Development of the Human Sciences Research Council for financial assistance.
- * My family, and Ms. L. Makhene, for their constant encouragement and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Problem Defined	1
1.2 Purpose of the Study	3
1.3 Hypotheses	4
1.4 Method of Research	4
1.5 Division of Chapters	4
CHAPTER 2	6
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Competence and Performance	6
2.3 Communication Centred Notions of Competence	10
2.3.1 Hymes and the notion of Communicative Competence	12
2.3.2 Canale's Framework of Communicative Competence	16
2.3.3 Bachman's Framework of Communicative Language Ability	20
2.3.4 Conclusion	22
CHAPTER 3	23
SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE	23
3.1 Introduction	23
3.2 Sociolinguistic Competence	23
3.2.1 Sociolinguistic Rules	27
3.2.2 Mastery of Speech Act Conventions	31
3.2.3 Mastery of norms of Stylistic Appropriateness	32
3.2.4 Uses of Language to Establish and Maintain Social Relations	35
3.2.5 Cultural References and Figures of Speech	36
3.3 Conclusion	37

CHAPTER 4	39
EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	39
4.1 Introduction	39
4.1.1 Methodological Issues in General	39
4.1.2 Apologies, Requests and Condolences as Speech Acts	42
4.1.2.1 Apologies	44
4.1.2.2 Requests	45
4.1.2.3 Condolences	46
4.2 Method of Research	46
4.2.1 Instrumentation	46
4.2.2 Subjects	50
4.2.3 Procedure	50
4.2.4 Data Analysis	51
4.2.4.1 Framework for Analysis of Apologies	52
4.2.4.2 Framework for Analysis of Requests	55
4.2.4.3 Framework for Analysis of Condolences	64
4.2.4 Determining Test Scores	68
4.3 Conclusion	70
CHAPTER 5	71
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	71
5.1 Introduction	71
5.2 Results	71
5.2.1 Frequencies	71
5.2.1.1 Apologies	71
5.2.1.2 Requests	74
5.2.1.3 Condolences	79
5.2.2 Test Scores	82
5.3 Discussion	85
5.3.1 Apologies	85
5.3.2 Requests	87
5.3.3 Condolences	89
5.4 Conclusion	90

CHAPTER 6	92
CONCLUSION	92
6.1 Introduction	92
6.2 Hypotheses	92
6.3 Implications for ESL Learning and Teaching	93
6.4 Recommendations for Future Research	97
6.5 Conclusion	98
APPENDIX A	100
APPENDIX B	101
APPENDIX C(1)	105
APPENDIX C(2)	106
APPENDIX C(3)	107
APPENDIX C(4)	108
APPENDIX C(5)	109
APPENDIX C(6)	110
BIBLIOGRAPHY	111
SUMMARY	118
OPSOMMING	120

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Coding and Analytical Framework for Apologies	54
Table 2: Request Strategy Types	57
Table 3: Framework for Request Analysis	59
Table 4: Analytical Framework for Request Modification	60
Table 5: Request Modifiers	62
Table 6: Condolences: Key and Coding Scheme for Supportive Moves	67
Table 7: Apology: Frequency of Use of Semantic Formulas by Situation	72
Table 8: Requests: Frequency of Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders	77
Table 9: Requests: Frequency of Supportive Moves by situation	78
Table 10: Condolences: Frequency of Use of Supportive Moves	82
Table 11: Speech Act Performance by EL2 and EL1 Groups	83

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Components of Communicative Competence	18
Figure 2: Components of Language Components	20
Figure 3: Apology: Frequency of Intensification of Regret	74
Figure 4: Percentage Frequencies of Conventionally Indirect Strategy Types	75
Figure 5: Requests: Percentage Frequencies of Impositives	75
Figure 6: Requests: Percentage Frequencies of Request Perspective	79
Figure 7: Condolences: Percentage Frequencies of Semantic Formulas	80

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem Defined

The rise of Sociolinguistics brought about a shift of interest from linguistic competence to communicative competence (Askes,1989:37). A significant consequence of this shift - from the point of view of language learning and intercultural communication - has been a recognition that the individual who wishes to learn a new language must, in addition to acquiring a new vocabulary and a new set of phonological and syntactic rules, learn what Hymes (1972:278) calls the **rules of speaking**; the patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour of the target language (Wolfson,1983:61). Over the past two decades there has been a growing trend in second language teaching to place emphasis on "communicative competence" as the desired goal of language teaching.

These developments were accompanied by various debates and, subsequently, theoretical standpoints regarding the nature and properties of a second language learner's proficiency. Thus the initial views of a unitary proficiency were discarded as more theories on proficiency gravitated towards the conception of communicative competence as a multifaceted construct (e.g. Savignon,1983; Canale,1983; Tarone & Yule,1987; Spolsky,1989; Bachman,1990).

Recent studies, however, indicate that there is still a tendency in many ESL classrooms to treat sociolinguistic competence (defined in section 3.2) as less important than grammatical competence (Canale,1983:8). Recent research also shows that ESL speakers who seem to have perfect mastery of the grammatical system of the target language find that they have difficulty at the interpersonal level when interacting with native speakers; they violate sociolinguistic **rules of speaking** - defined in section 3.2.1 - (Cohen &

Olshtain, 1981:113-134; Thomas, 1983:91-112). An investigation of sociolinguistic relativity within the South African context by Ribbens (1990:40-50) has also indicated that there are deviations, from target language patterns, in the forms used by Africans to realise the following speech acts in English: apology, greetings and expression of sympathy.

Despite growing indications of the centrality of sociolinguistic abilities in communicative competence, there are very few studies which have attempted a systematic investigation of sociolinguistic proficiency amongst ESL speakers from diverse backgrounds, let alone refine existing measures of such competence. One study which deals with cross cultural investigation of speech act realisation patterns, coupled with assessment of sociocultural competence, is by Cohen and Olshtain (1981). However, there are studies which have proved valuable in providing the present study with analytical frameworks, although they do not include testing for sociolinguistic competence. Most of these studies have been conducted by researchers working within the **Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP)** project (e.g. Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Wolfson, Marmor & Jones, 1989). A comparative study of requesting behaviour in Tasmanian and South African English has also been conducted by Hodge (1990:121-128).

In the light of the foregoing, it is evident that there is a need for more investigations into sociolinguistic competence in relation to African ESL speakers within the South African context. Hence, this study sets out to investigate the sociolinguistic competence of a group of ESL learners from various language backgrounds. The scope of the study is limited to the realisation of the following speech acts: **apologies, requests and condolences**. The motivation behind this choice is that experience has shown that ESL learners often have problems with these speech acts.

The central questions underlying the study are the following:

- * To what extent is a particular group of ESL speakers aware of the sociolinguistic conventions of the language they are learning, or learning through; and to what extent is their realisation of the apology, request and condolence speech acts concordant with that of first language speakers of English?
- * What is the group's level of performance on a test intended to measure sociolinguistic competence?
- * Is there a practically significant difference in the speech act performance of the second language speakers on the one hand, and the first language speakers of English on the other?

A relationship or difference can be regarded as practically significant if the results are of practical value to the researcher, language practitioner or teacher (Dreyer, 1992:3). Hence, in view of the fact that one of the envisaged objectives of this study is to make suggestions or recommendations regarding the aspects of sociolinguistic competence under investigation (depending on the findings), it is imperative that the practical significance of the differences in performance (if any) be detected. As Dreyer (1992:3) aptly points out: "...very few studies, if any, conducted in the ESL field have indicated the practical significance of the relationships that were investigated".

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze, assess and describe the performance of apology, request and condolence speech acts by a group of ESL learners. The study therefore aims to investigate the sociolinguistic competence in English of the subjects and, subsequently, to make recommendations or

suggestions regarding this area of communicative competence.

1.3 Hypotheses

The main hypotheses on which the present study is based are the following:

- * There are deviations from first language (English) speaker norms of interaction in the speech act performance of the ESL group as regards the apology, request and condolence speech acts, and such deviations are due to deficiencies in sociolinguistic abilities.

- * The ESL group is likely to perform at a lower level than the native speaker group on a task intended to measure sociolinguistic competence.

- * There is a practically significant difference in the speech act performance of the ESL group on one the hand and the native speaker group on the other.

1.4 Method of Research

The study involved an in-depth review of the relevant literature on communicative competence and speech act performance as well as an empirical investigation. The empirical component of the study involved the elicitation, analysis and evaluation of speech act data from a total number of 42 subjects; 21 ESL students and 21 students who are first language speakers of English. A descriptive research design - with a quantitative element - was used.

1.5 Division of Chapters

Chapter 2 outlines the notion of communicative competence by tracing the various developments related to the emergence of a multidimensional conception of the second language

learner's proficiency.

In Chapter 3 sociolinguistic competence and the various skills subsumed under such competence are discussed.

Chapter 4 focuses on the empirical investigation. In this chapter the components of the empirical study; namely the elicitation methods, analysis and scoring procedures, as well as the statistical measures employed, are described and explained.

In Chapter 5 the results are presented and discussed.

Chapter 6 concludes the study. In this chapter a summation of the findings is presented, followed by a discussion of the implications for ESL pedagogy and the recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

2.1 Introduction

The most common goal of learning a second language is to gain "sufficient" knowledge of, and about, that language in order to enable one to interact and communicate with native and other speakers of the language as effectively as possible. The question of what exactly constitutes "knowing a language" has, however, always been a point of controversy in linguistics and language pedagogy. It is a question that has been viewed from differing perspectives, often closely tied to the prevailing views about the nature of language.

Today proficiency in a language is defined by most linguists and language teachers in terms of communicative competence. Moreover, language proficiency has also come to be seen as consisting of several distinct abilities which are, all the same, related.

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate how such a multidimensional view of proficiency is conceived and, by implication, to show its application to the notion of communicative competence. To this end an outline of the development, as well as the various formulations of the notion of communicative competence, will be sketched.

2.2 Competence and Performance ,

According to Stern (1983:340) the notion of the native speaker's 'competence', introduced by Noam Chomsky and later reinterpreted by Dell Hymes and other sociolinguists, has been helpful in dealing with the question of what exactly it is that the native speaker in the first language has that the second language learner lacks and wants to develop. Stern (1983:341) further points out that the native speaker's

competence, proficiency or knowledge of the language is a necessary point of reference for the "second language proficiency concept" used in language teaching theory. It therefore seems proper to preface the discussion of communicative competence with some reference to one of the earliest formulations of competence which has been seminal in the development of the notion of communicative competence. The argument that a theory of language had to be a theory of competence was introduced by Chomsky (1965:3) through his assertion that:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

Chomsky also drew a distinction - in many ways similar to Ferdinand de Saussure's 'langue' and 'parole' - between competence and performance. In terms of this distinction performance refers to the infinitely varied individual acts of verbal behaviour with their irregularities, inconsistencies and errors; that is, actual use of language in concrete situations. Competence is then taken to be the underlying capacity of the individual to "abstract from these acts of performance and to develop system and order" (Stern, 1983:129).

A theory of language therefore had to focus on linguistic competence (what the speaker knows) and not on performance (what the speaker does) "lest the linguist vainly try to categorize an infinite number of performance variables which are not reflective of the underlying linguistic ability of the speaker-hearer" (Brown, 1987:25).

Thus competence was to be specified in terms of knowledge of the grammatical system of the language; "the underlying knowledge of a native speaker of a language that enabled such a person to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences of a language" (Spolsky,1989:51).

Furthermore, the native speaker's judgement regarding what are grammatical and ungrammatical sentences of the language (i.e. the speaker's competence) was considered to be "based on some property of the human mind" since there were "genetically inbuilt principles" of the mind which help the learner to "fix the parameters" of the rule system of the language (Weidemann,1988:14).

The above-mentioned point is significant for the purposes of this discussion because not only does it point towards the "cognitive perspective from which Chomsky viewed competence", but it also helps explain the "disregard of performance" (Cooley & Roach,1984:16) in Chomsky's theory of competence.

Chomsky's view of competence has been criticised on the grounds that it offers a limited definition of competence; it deals primarily with abstract grammatical knowledge and "characterizes linguistic competence in a restricted sense, i.e. the capacity to construct correct grammatical sentences independent of all linguistic or situational context" (Roulet,1979:76).

The most useful criticism of Chomsky's theory of competence came in the form of Hymes's (1972) revealing redefinition of the competence/performance distinction. Hymes (1972:279) argued that the chief difficulty of such linguistic theory was that it would seem to require one to identify the study of the phenomena of language in use with its category of performance. Hymes therefore argued that:

the theory's category of performance, identified with the criterion of grammaticality, provides no place. Only performance is left, and its associated criterion of acceptability. Indeed language use is equated with performance (1972:279).

Chomsky's conceptualisation of competence was regarded as flawed because it "fails to account realistically for actual language behaviour and omits considerations of the relevance of social/cultural factors to a person's knowledge of language" (Cooley & Roach, 1984:17). Performance, which is a significant indicator of the speaker's competence, was therefore not accorded the attention it deserves. Firstly Chomsky's definition of performance restricted the latter to the grammatical correctness of sentences, without any regard for sociocultural factors. Secondly the notion of performance, as used in Chomsky's discussion,

... seems confused between different meanings. In one sense, performance is observable behaviour, as when one speaks of determining from the data of performance the underlying systems of rules..., and of mentalistic linguistics as that linguistics that uses performance as data, along with other data, e.g. those of introspection, for determination of competence (Hymes, 1972:280).

As more 'semantic' and 'functional' views of language were advanced, the second language speaker's competence came to be construed differently. The reaction against "the view of language as a set of structures ... towards a view of language as communication, a view in which meaning, context, and the uses to which language is put play a central role" (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979:3) inevitably conduced towards a 'communication-centred' conception of competence.

2.3 Communication-centred Notions of Competence

The recognition of the context in which language use takes place has, inevitably, been accompanied by a recognition of the "dynamic interaction between that context and the discourse itself", as well as an "expanded view of communication as something more than the simple transfer of information" (Bachman,1990:83). Theories of communicative competence are therefore informed by this basic premise of communication as "a dynamic rather than static process of expression, interpretation, and negotiation...[which is primarily] context-specific" (Savignon,1983:8-9).

Although proficiency in a second language is currently defined in terms of communicative competence, the latter is, in the words of McCroskey (1984:259), "an elusive construct". Askes (1989:37) has also pointed out that to obtain a clear definition of what is actually meant by communicative competence is not an easy task. Some linguists say that a pupil/student possesses good competence when he is able and willing to use the second language (other language) in everyday situations when he meets speakers of that language. The aim is to enable the learner to communicate accurately, fluently and appropriately in the language.

Cooley and Roach (1984:11) have also observed that "there are many definitions of the concept of communicative competence" and these definitions are "not specific about the components of competence and leave undefined certain crucial concepts which are necessary to understand the nature of communicative competence". Besides, the definition of the notion is also made complex by the fact that various models are proposed from the perspective of teaching and testing (Yalden,1987:17).

Be that as it may, the reorientation brought about by functionally and socially orientated views of language and

communication played an important role in the crystallisation of the notion of communicative competence. The linguist Michael Halliday, for instance - building on the foundational work of John Firth and the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski - "elaborated a powerful theory of the functions of language" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986:70). Interested in language in its social context, and in the way language functions are realised in speech, Halliday rejected, rather than try to expand upon, Chomsky's definition of competence (Yalden, 1987:18).

These changes in theoretical linguistics were accompanied by a parallel redirection of focus in language teaching circles. One of the important developments one can cite in this regard is the work of the linguist D.A Wilkins, who helped formalise a notional-functional syllabus for second language learning based on an analysis of the communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand and express. Wilkins's work was thus a significant attempt at demonstrating the systems of meanings that lay behind the communicative uses of language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986:65). His work provided valuable input to the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project, widely known for the Threshold Level syllabuses (Yalden, 1987:30).

Work done by Van Ek and other applied linguists in developing the Threshold Level specifications of what a learner needs to communicate effectively in a foreign language, also recognised the need for a functional and communicative element in such specifications. Consequently, within the threshold-level framework objectives were specified in terms of the needs such as those uncovered by Wilkins's analysis.

Competence, or knowledge and ability to use the language, would, accordingly, be defined in terms of the "degree of skill" the learner possesses to engage in various language activities and to realise communicative functions (for

example, imparting and seeking information, expressing and finding out certain emotional intellectual, and moral attitudes) successfully and appropriately in given situations, settings and topics (Van Ek,1980:91-128). Thus a "fundamental characteristic of language that had been inadequately addressed" in linguistic and language teaching circles at that time began to be emphasised; the "functional and communicative potential of language" (Richards & Rodgers,1986:64).

Functional and semantic views of language contributed significantly in highlighting functional and communicative factors relating to a speaker's competence. It is, however, to the sociolinguist Dell Hymes that we are strongly indebted for the notion of 'communicative competence'.

2.3.1 Hymes and the Notion of Communicative Competence

Sociolinguistics is a new subdiscipline in linguistics; it is "that part of linguistics which is concerned with languages as social and cultural phenomenon. While earlier linguistic theories had restricted their focus upon the formal aspects of language, sociolinguistics "investigates the field of language and society and has close connections with the social sciences..." (Trudgill,1983:32).

Drawing attention to the point that sociolinguistics essentially has as its matrix attempts to link language to society and culture, Stern further goes on to outline the principal areas of sociolinguistic enquiry:

Three major directions characterize the development of sociolinguistics as a distinct discipline. One is a redirection of general or theoretical linguistics into a study of language in society. The second has extended the concept of the native speaker's linguistic competence into the concept of communicative competence

by changing the focus from an abstract study of language to concrete acts of language use: an 'ethnography of speaking'. The third derives more distinctly from sociology and is often referred to as 'sociology of language': it is the study of speech communities (1983:218).

The linguist Dell Hymes is considered to be "one of the pioneers of sociolinguistic theory" (Weidemann,1988:3). Dittmar has drawn attention to the point that:

[The sociolinguist]...Hymes was the first to coin the term communicative competence with his demand for qualitative extension of linguistic theory by the incorporation of aspects of functional communication. He criticized Chomsky's postulate of the ideal speaker-hearer for excluding social aspects of communication which the latter had assigned to the sphere of performance. Chomsky's concept of performance however, is of little use as it relates to psychological factors of actual speech... and does not consider speech as action related to situation. Performance rules are thus seen solely in a psychological dimension (1976:163).

In dealing with Chomsky's competence-performance distinction Hymes, just like Halliday, added to the concept of proficiency in language "the dimension of social appropriateness or social context" (Yalden,1987:18). Unlike Halliday, however, Hymes did not simply reject Chomsky's definition of competence but tried to expand upon it, redefining it within his own notion of communicative competence.

It is thus on Hymes's definition that most definitions of communicative competence are founded. Crystal (1991:66) defines communicative competence as follows:

The notion of communicative competence...focuses on the native speaker's ability to produce and understand sentences which are appropriate to the context in which they occur - what speakers need to know in order to communicate effectively in socially distinct settings. Communicative competence then subsumes the social determinants of linguistic behaviour, including such environmental matters as the relationship between speaker and hearer and the pressures which stem from the time and place of speaking.

The notion of communicative competence proved to be one of the strongest lines of attack on what Hymes (1972:272) called Chomsky's "restriction of competence to notions of a homogeneous speech community, perfect knowledge and independence of socio-cultural factors". For Hymes the equation of knowledge of a language with 'linguistic' competence - knowledge of the rule system of the language - does not take cognisance of issues such as appropriacy. Hence the observation that: "... there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" and, as Hymes further points out:

We have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner (1972:277).

In extending the notion of competence to include sociocultural factors, Hymes provides a detailed account of his concept of communicative competence, distinguishing "several sectors of communicative competence of which the grammatical is one". The essence of such a view of competence is clearly captured in Hymes's assertion that:

There is behaviour, and underlying it there are several systems of rules reflected in the judgements and abilities of those whose messages the behaviour manifests. In the linguistic theory under discussion, judgements are said to be of two kinds of, grammaticality, with respect to competence, and of acceptability, with respect to performance (1972:281).

The four sectors on which judgements of "socially situated language depend" (Bell,1976:209) and on which Hymes elaborates, are judgements relating to:

- * whether (and to what degree) something is **formally possible**: This sector has to do with whether a language permits a sentence as grammatical (possible) or rejects it as ungrammatical (impossible).
- * whether (and to what degree) something is **feasible**: A sentence may be grammatically possible, but hardly feasible because it does not form part of our competence.
- * whether (and to what degree) something is **appropriate**: This pertains to appropriateness to context because a speaker-listener's competence includes rules of appropriateness. A sentence can be 'formally possible', 'feasible', but 'inappropriate'.
- * whether (and to what degree) something is **done**: A sentence may be possible, feasible, appropriate and not occur (Hymes,1972:281-285).

Hymes's formulation of competence and his redefinition of Chomsky's competence-performance distinction is significant for its "inclusion of social and other non-cognitive features as constitutive of competence"; it postulates - in the words of Stern (1983:146) - "a more socially oriented communicative competence". By further suggesting that communicative competence depends on the recognition of tacit knowledge and ability for use, because "it is one thing to know and quite

another to do" (Bell,1976:209), Hymes accords performance its due place in competence.

It seems quite clear that viewed from such a perspective, the "user's ability will need to be understood in terms of communicative rather than linguistic competence" (Ellis,1990:77). Hence, although Hymes's notion of communicative competence has been "defined by some as linguistic competence plus all other rule governed aspects of language use" (Spolsky,1989:52), there is much validity in Spolsky's counter argument that, "Hymes himself saw [it] as something that contrasted with rather than supplemented grammatical competence". Nonetheless, communicative competence, as Stern (1983:229) asserts, "no doubt *implies* linguistic competence but its main focus is the intuitive grasp of social and cultural rules and meanings that are carried by any utterance".

Most of the issues raised by Hymes in his definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent, have been valuable in suggesting criteria for assessing communicative competence. Besides, the concept itself sets - in the words of Spolsky (1989:52) - " a wider goal for the second language learner, for it suggests that he or she be required to develop all the communicative skills of a native speaker and not just control of the grammar".

2.3.3 Canale's Framework of Communicative Competence

More recent and comprehensive accounts of communicative competence are found in Canale's (1983) re-examination of an earlier analysis (Canale & Swain 1980), and in Bachman's (1990) analysis. In Canale and Swain (1980) the controversial issues of whether communicative competence includes or is separate from linguistic competence, and whether one can usefully distinguish between communicative competence and performance, are carefully examined

(Spolsky,1989:52). According to Brown (1987:199) the work of Canale and Swain has become a reference point for virtually all discussions of communicative competence vis-a-vis second language teaching. Although the present study is based on Canale's (1983) framework, some reference will also be made to Bachman' analysis of communicative competence in order to point out some of the areas in which the two views converge or diverge.

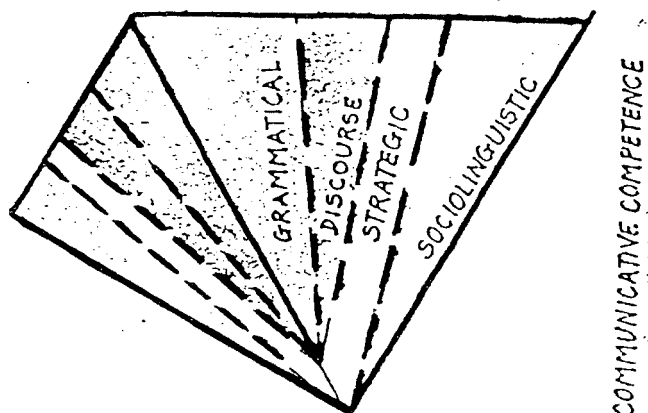
The fundamentals of Canale's definition of communicative competence are derived from an earlier account of the latter notion. Canale (1983:5) draws attention to this point:

In Canale and Swain (1980) communicative competence was understood as the underlying system of knowledge and skill required for communication (e.g. knowledge of vocabulary and skill in using the sociolinguistic conventions for a given language... Knowledge refers here to what one knows (consciously and unconsciously) about the language and about other aspects of communicative language use; skill refers to how well one can perform this knowledge in actual communication.

Four dimensions, or "components", of communicative competence are identified by Canale, namely: **grammatical**, **discourse**, **strategic**, and **sociolinguistic** competence. The four components of Canale's "communicative competence" are illustrated in Figure 1. The diagram is a representation of the four components of communicative competence by Savignon (1983:46).

The use of Savignon's diagram is motivated by the fact that the her analysis of communicative competence is similar to Canale's and she intendeds her diagram to show that the components interact constantly. Moreover, Canale's four components are accepted by Savignon (Yalden,1987:21).

Figure 1. The Components of Communicative Competence



(S, Savignon, Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice, p.46)

Grammatical competence as conceived of by Canale (1983) corresponds to Chomsky's linguistic competence and to what is subsumed, in Hymes (1971:12), under judgements related to 'formal possibility'. This component of communicative competence is concerned with mastery of the language code. It thus includes "features and rules of the language" such as vocabulary, word and sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics (Canale, 1983:7).

Discourse competence concerns "mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text...[such] unity of text is achieved through cohesion in form and coherence in meaning (Canale, 1983:9). It is noteworthy that this component of competence has a close affinity with what Hymes (1972:280) has described as the "sector of communicative competence" concerned with, "whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available".

Canale's premise of language as dynamic and involving the negotiation of meaning is reflected in the inclusion of strategic competence as a component of communicative competence. The essence of **strategic competence** is clearly spelt out in a very illuminating observation by Stern (1983:229) to the effect that, although communicative competence encompasses both linguistic competence as well as social and cultural rules and meanings of utterances, the "complexity of the entire rule system is such that it might appear almost impossible for anyone except the native speaker to acquire communicative competence". In Stern's view this observation leads to the conclusion that:

...the communicative competence of a second language learner must be conceived somewhat differently from that of a native speaker. It suggests, besides grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, which are obviously restricted in a second language user, a third element, an additional skill which the second language user needs, that is to know how to conduct himself as someone whose sociocultural and grammatical competence is limited, i.e. to know how to be a foreigner. This skill has been called by Canale and Swain 'strategic competence (1983:229).

Tarone and Yule (1989:103) distinguish two broad areas which relate to strategic competence, namely, (1) the overall skill of a learner in successfully transmitting information to a listener, or interpreting information transmitted, and (2) the use of communication strategies by a speaker or listener when problems arise in the process of transmitting information.

This view is in line with Canale's definition of strategic competence. Strategic competence then is that component of competence concerned with "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to

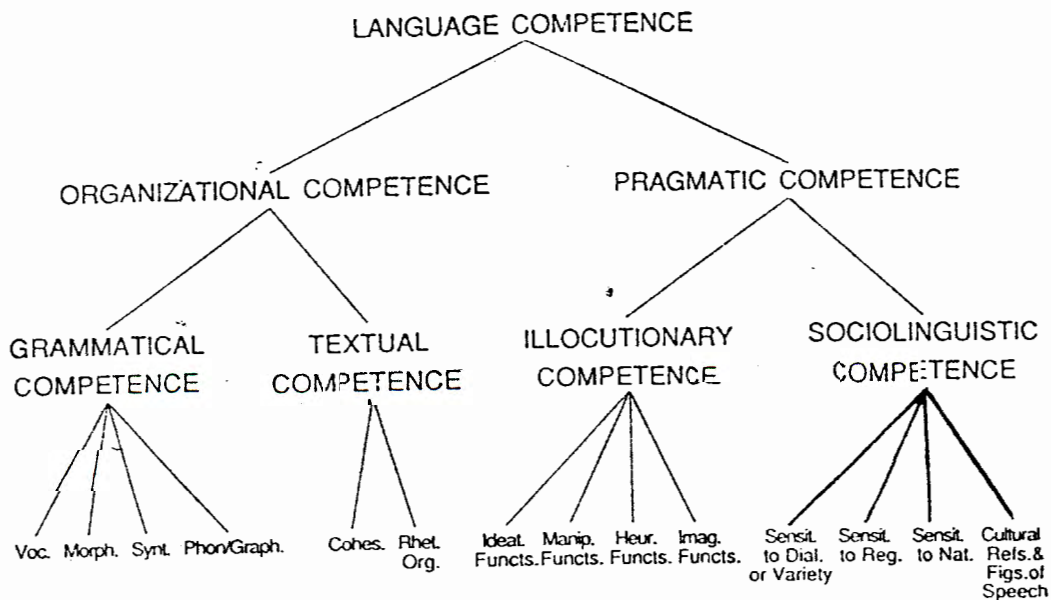
compensate for breakdown in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (Spolsky,1989:53). It has to do with the ability to get one's meaning across to particular listeners successfully.

The last component of communicative competence recognised by Canale (1983:7) is **sociolinguistic competence**, concerned with the social and cultural rules and conventions of language use. As this dimension of communicative competence is the focus of the present study, it is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

2.3.3 Bachman's Framework of Communicative Language Ability

In Bachman's (1990:81-110) proposed framework of communicative language ability, three components are distinguished: **language competence**, **strategic competence**, and **psychophysiological mechanisms**. The different components of Bachman's language competence are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Components of Language Competence



Language competence is classified into two types: **organisational competence** and **pragmatic competence**. Each of these in turn consists of several categories. On the basis of the findings of an earlier empirical study - which suggested that components of grammatical and pragmatic competence are closely associated with each other - Bachman (1990:81-110) groups morphology, syntax, and vocabulary under organisational competence.

Pragmatic competence, on the other hand, is redefined to include elements of sociolinguistic competence as well as those abilities related to the functions that are performed through language use (for example, speech acts). Textual competence corresponds to Canale's discourse competence and pertains to similar language abilities.

As far as strategic competence is concerned, it is Bachman's (1990:99) view, however, that although definitions like Canale's (1983) do provide an indication of the function of strategic competence in facilitating communication, they are limited in that they do not describe the mechanism by which strategic competence operates. Thus, in line with his view that strategic competence is an important part of all language use (and not just that in which language abilities are insufficient and must be compensated for by other means), Bachman (1990:100) includes three other components in strategic competence: assessment, planning, and execution.

Despite some differences, Bachman's framework of communicative language ability and Canale's framework of communicative competence have much in common. In both the interaction of the components, with each other and with features of the language use situation, is emphasised. Indeed, as Bachman (1990:86) indicates, it is this very interaction between the various competencies and the "language use context" that characterises communicative language use.

At this point it is imperative to indicate that while the focus has been confined only to those theories and analyses in which communicative competence is viewed as comprising different, but related sectors or components, the present study recognises the fact that other views of communicative competence have been advanced.

Canale (1983:12) as well as Stern (1983:349) have noted that in Oller's (1978) view, for instance, communicative competence is seen as a single "global factor"; a "unitary proficiency". Nonetheless, the basic premise in this study is not a unitary but multi-faceted conception of competence confirmed by recent research, for example Bachman (1990). Hence communicative competence is understood as comprising - to borrow from Canale (1983:12) - "several separate factors or areas of competence that interact". It is now generally agreed that language proficiency is not a single unitary ability, but that it consists of several distinct but related constructs in addition to a general construct of language proficiency (Bachman, 1990:68).

2.3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the development of the notion of communicative competence has been outlined, and some of the problems relating to the concept have been pointed out. What comes out clear from the discussion is that there is general agreement that language proficiency entails more than simple mastery of the grammatical system of the target language. Furthermore, proficiency can not be regarded as a unitary ability, but several abilities which interact and which are related to features of the language use context.

The next chapter focuses on sociolinguistic competence as one of the components of communicative competence, and as one of the abilities a proficient speaker is expected to possess.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

3.1 Introduction

It is evident from the discussion in the preceding chapter that communicative competence comprises several sectors or competencies which interact. It has also emerged that there is agreement that language proficiency entails the processing of both linguistic as well as social and cultural knowledge. The component of communicative proficiency which involves this sociolinguistic dimension of language use has been identified as sociolinguistic competence.

This chapter will discuss sociolinguistic competence with a view to elucidating the concept, and illustrating the various skills which sociolinguistic competence entails.

3.2 Sociolinguistic Competence

While "sociolinguistic competence" is the term used in this study, it is worth pointing out that this sociolinguistic dimension of communicative competence is often referred to in different ways. What is clear, however, is that although sociolinguistic competence involves elements and abilities from within the linguistic dimension, it is quite distinct from grammatical competence.

Although Thomas (1983:104) uses the term "**sociopragmatic competence**", it is clearly used in the same sense as sociolinguistic competence is. According to Thomas, "while the ability to make judgements according to scales of social value is part of the speaker's 'social competence', the ability to apply these judgements to linguistic utterances - knowing how, when, and why to speak - comes within the field of pragmatics" (1983:104).

Although Bell (1976:210-211) also refers to "**social competence**", in Weidemann (1988:100) sociolinguistic competence seems to be subsumed under "**transactional competence**". The term used by Canale (1983), Bachman (1990), Brown (1987), Tarone and Yule (1987), and many others is "sociolinguistic competence". Cohen and Olshtain (1981,1983) use the term "**sociocultural competence**" to refer to the ability - in their own words - "to use target language knowledge in communication situations".

Nonetheless, despite these differences in terminology, there is a common point of departure, which is that sociolinguistic competence presupposes some knowledge of, and about, the second language which is particularly social and/or cultural in dimension. This is the fundamental issue raised by Hymes (1972:277) when he argues that the competency of users of language entails abilities and judgements relative to, and interdependent with, socio-cultural features. In terms of Cohen and Olshtain's (1981:113) definition:

One important aspect of [sociocultural] competence is the ability to use appropriate sociocultural rules of speaking (also referred to as sociolinguistic rules), i.e the ability to react in a culturally acceptable way in that context and to choose stylistically appropriate forms for the context.

According to Tarone and Yule (1987:88) mastery of sociolinguistic skills in a language entails mastery of speech act conventions, norms of stylistic appropriateness, and the uses of language to establish and maintain social relations. In terms of Bachman's (1990:94) definition sociolinguistic competence is understood as: "the sensitivity to, or control of the conventions of language use that are determined by features of the specific language use context; [which] enables us to perform language functions in ways that are appropriate to that context".

Although Bachman's analysis of sociolinguistic competence is quite comprehensive in that the various abilities underlying sociolinguistic competence are elaborated upon, Canale's discussion of this component of communicative competence is equally illuminating. In Canale's (1983:7) view,

Sociolinguistic competence addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purpose of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction.

Appropriateness, which emerges as a significant element of sociolinguistic competence, refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form. According to Canale (1983:7) appropriateness of meaning refers to the extent to which particular communicative functions, such as apologising, commanding, refusing, attitudes (including politeness and formality) and ideas, are judged to be proper in a given situation. Appropriateness of form, on the other hand, has to do with the extent to which a given meaning (including communicative functions, attitudes and propositions/ideas) is represented in a verbal and/or non-verbal form that is proper in a given sociolinguistic context.

Appropriateness then stems from sensitivity to features of the "language use context". (Bachman,1990:86). Such sensitivity implies that the choices speakers make regarding what is the suitable thing to say in a given situation are based on "**social structural factors**" (Grimshaw,1976:137); hence the definition of sociolinguistic competence as "the ability to use the sociolinguistic/sociocultural **rules of speaking**" (Cohen & Olshtain,1981:113).

According to Hymes (1972:279) the sociocultural factors

relating to language use are of great importance because of the fact that:

Within the developmental matrix in which knowledge of the sentences of a language is acquired [speakers] also acquire knowledge of a set of ways in which sentences are used. From a finite set of speech acts and their interdependence with sociocultural features they develop a general theory of the speaking appropriate in their community, which they employ, like other forms of tacit cultural knowledge (competence) in conducting and interpreting social life...

The following are some of the social structural factors, or variables, on which we base our choice when we speak as summarised by Saville-Troike (1982:138):

- * **Setting:** the time and location of the event and to the physical circumstances.
- * **Participants** in the communicative situation, including such variables as their age, sex, ethnicity, social status and their relation to one another.
- * **Goals and outcome:** the purpose of the interaction.
- * **Form and content:** the choices regarding the medium of transmission of speech, for example oral, written etc.
- * **Manner and spirit** in which the speech act is done.
- * **Norms of interaction and interpretation:** the former refer to the specific behaviour and properties that attach to speaking (e.g. the way one is expected to respond to a compliment) while the latter involve common knowledge and the "cultural presuppositions or shared understandings which allow particular inferences to be drawn about, for an example, what is to be taken literally, what discounted".
- * **Genre:** this refers to the type of event e.g. a conversation, a lecture, a greeting etc.

These variables or social structural factors, and the way they affect a speaker's choice, constitute what Hymes (1972:278) has called the "rules of use". Hence, according to Grimshaw (1976:137), the "relationships between the components of speech can be generalized into formal **rules of speaking**".

Given then that sociolinguistic competence involves the ability to use the sociolinguistic rules of the target language, it is necessary to clarify the concept "rule" as used in this sense. The rules of code usage (i.e. sociolinguistic rules) should be differentiated from the rules of the code. To this end a discussion of the exact nature of sociolinguistic rules is in order.

3.2.1 Sociolinguistic Rules

According to Bach and Harnish (1984:122) rules are socially accepted forms of behaviour, and they specify things to be done. Implicit in Bach and Harnish's conception of rules are the anticipatory and normative aspects of social expectations. In his definition of the term "rule", Crystal (1991:305) makes the point that the linguistic sense contrasts with the traditional use of the term, where rules are recommendations for correct usage. No prescriptive or proscriptive implication is present in the linguistic sense.

In an illuminating discussion of "norms of language", Bartsch (1987:160) draws a distinction, between the two types of methodical rules; i.e. methodical rules which define notions of a correct expression and a correct inference step (e.g. formation and transformation rules) and those which do not (e.g. strategic rules).

According to Bartsch (1987:160) methodical rules which define notions of correct expression and a correct inference step are constructive and constitutive in that they can be stated

in an algorithm; they are a set of rules that uniquely determines every step and in that way determine the order of steps which are necessary and sufficient for building up a formula. Such methodical rules are also restrictive in that they restrict the method of deduction.

It is methodical rules that define notions of correctness and correct steps of inference which mainly apply in theoretical linguistics; for example, the "syntactic rules of a language L are taken to define the notion sentence in language L" (Bartsch,1987:160). The second type of methodical rules involves rules which do not define notions of correctness, but rather provide good methods for reaching a certain goal. Such rules give criteria as to what is a "good" method for reaching the goal, without guaranteeing that the goal actually will be reached by the proposed method applied in similar cases. These rules are the so-called strategic rules (Bartsch,1987:161).

Sociolinguistic rules, concerned as they are with appropriate, and culturally or socially acceptable forms of linguistic behaviour, are subsumed under strategic rules. Hence, according to Ribbens (1990:42) , "... by rules of speaking is meant 'strategies' employed subconsciously by mother tongue speakers in all languages". According to Coulmas (1981:17) "... a [conversational] **routine** is not an expression or strategy, but rather an expression which is appropriate to a situation of a certain kind or a strategy which is appropriate relative to certain communicative ends". It is worth pointing out in this regard that the term "conversational routine", as used by Coulmas, is synonymous with the notion "rules of speaking".

Pointing out that strategic rules are not stated explicitly, Bartsch (1987:163) goes on to state that:

Strategic rules have never played any role in theoretical linguistics. They have figured, however, in stylistics and sociolinguistics, including ethnolinguistics, when it is said that under certain contextual and situational conditions certain linguistic forms are chosen rather than others, or are more adequate than others.

As already pointed out, sociolinguistic competence entails the ability to use appropriate sociolinguistic rules, which involve - among other things - speech act conventions and norms of interaction. In clarifying the concepts **norm** and **convention** as understood here, reference to Bartsch's (1987) definition of norms of language is imperative.

According to Bartsch (1987:168) social rules usually refer to social interaction, and **norms** are social rules that hold to the whole community as in principle holding for everybody who wants to live in this community. Thus social rules with a normative force which are not prescriptions or regulations are norms, although not all norms are social rules.

Bartsch (1987:166) accordingly states: "the normative force of a norm is reflected in criticism, correction or sanction. Deviation of a norm, i.e. not realizing the expected regularity, does not abolish or abrogate the norm as long as deviation is subject to criticism, correction and sanction, or is accepted as an exception in special cases".

Conventions are understood - in the sense Bach and Harnish (1984:122) conceive them - as "specifications or ways of doing things; actions that if performed in certain situations count as doing something else". In the light of the foregoing observations it is the position of the present study that sociolinguistic competence - in the same way as Thomas (1983:98) maintains regarding "pragmatic competence" - is best regarded as entailing "probable rather than

categorical rules". Be that as it may, social rules, and by implication sociolinguistic rules, are like linguistic rules in a certain sense: they determine the actor's choice among culturally or socially available modes of action or strategies in accordance with constraints provided by communicative intent, setting, and identity relationships.

The next important point regarding the nature of sociolinguistic rules that needs to be mentioned is that they are - in the words of Wolfson (1983:61) - "largely below the level of conscious awareness". This means that even though speakers may be competent in the uses and interpretation of the sociolinguistic patterns of their language, they are usually not conscious of the "patterned nature of their speech behaviour" (Wolfson, 1983:61) or that different norms and patterns prevail in other societies and, by implication other languages. This follows from the fact that sociolinguistic rules are culture specific, although they may vary not only across cultures but sometimes within them. So some rules are language universal while others are language specific, and they are determined, as indicated earlier, by social structural factors. The cultural underpinnings of sociolinguistic knowledge are clearly illustrated by Saville-Troike's (1982:24) statement that:

The systems of culture are patterns of symbols and language is only one of the symbolic systems in this network. Interpreting the meaning of linguistic behaviour requires knowing the meaning in which it is embedded... Shared cultural knowledge is essential to explain the shared presuppositions and judgement of truth value which are the essential undergirding of language structures, as well as of contextually appropriate usage and interpretation.

The diversity among cultures therefore implies that what is shared knowledge in one culture may not be common knowledge

in another culture. It follows then that rules of speaking, or rather norms of interaction in general, will vary from language to language. It is for these reasons that speakers need to master sociolinguistic skills in their target language.

Some of the sociolinguistic skills which a speaker needs to master are the following: "speech act conventions, norms of stylistic appropriateness, and the uses of language to establish and maintain social relationships" (Tarone & Yule, 1987:88).

3.2.2 Mastery of Speech Act Conventions

By mastery of speech act conventions is meant ability and skill in interpreting and using the various means available in the target language to realize certain communicative functions appropriately in different contexts. The notion of speech acts derives from speech act theory and, in the sense in which it is understood and used here, is grounded in the widely accepted view propounded - amongst others - by Searle (1969:16) that "speaking a language is performing speech acts (e.g. making statements, promises etc.)". Speech acts are minimal units of human communication of a type called illocutionary acts (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985:9). A speech act then, as defined by Crystal (1991:323), is:

a communicative activity (a **LOCUTIONARY** act), defined with reference to the intentions of speakers while speaking (the **ILLOCUTIONARY** force of their utterances) the effects they achieve on listeners (the **PERLOCUTIONARY** effects of their utterances).

As Searle and Vanderveken (1985:10) indicate, whenever a speaker utters a sentence in an appropriate context with certain intentions, he performs one or more illocutionary acts. Illocutionary acts may be realised directly or

indirectly, depending on features of the language use context. Thus the utterance "Is that the salt over there?" made at a dinner table, has the illocutionary force of a **request** to be passed the salt. Speakers need to have the skills pertaining to the various means available for encoding speech acts in their target language.

While this might appear to be an obvious, and not too difficult, element of language use, empirical studies suggest that speech act conventions do present non-native speakers with some problems. As Blum-Kulka (1983:79) observes: "only the basic properties of speech acts (like direct versus indirect ways) are shared across languages; the actual ways by which these properties are realized might differ in every respect".

It follows, therefore, that mastery of sociolinguistic skills related to speech act conventions is essential in order for the speakers to interpret and realise the illocutionary and perlocutionary forces of speech acts. It is, however, not enough to know how speech acts are realised in the target language; the speaker also needs to know which of the various ways of, for example, apologising or making requests, will be more appropriate than others in particular contexts and situations. Hence the need to master the norms of stylistic appropriateness of the target language.

3.2.3 Mastery of Norms of Stylistic Appropriateness

Sociolinguistic competence implies an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the social context in which language is used; that is, the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. As Savignon (1983:37) states: "only in a full context of this kind can judgements be made on the appropriateness of a particular utterance...". For instance, while the following expressions, (1) "Could I possibly use your photocopy machine?" and (2)

"How about using your photocopy machine?", may be used to ask for permission, their appropriateness will depend to a large extent on the roles and status of the participants.

It is thus clear that speakers have to know which language is appropriate to "a wide range of sociolinguistic variables" as well as "the different rules for changing speech when addressing speakers of different status (i.e. age, sex, role, power) in different social situations" (Hatch,1983:xii). As a result, Bachman (1990:95) includes in his discussion of some of the abilities relating to sociolinguistic competence, "sensitivity to differences in dialect and register".

Sensitivity to differences in dialect has to do with variation associated with language users in different geographic regions, or who belong to different social groups. Different conventions can apply to such regional or social dialects, and the appropriateness of their use will vary depending on the "language use context" (Bachman,1990:95).

As an example of the way different contexts require the use of different varieties of English, Bachman (1990:95) cites the case of a Black student who indicated that she would not consider using Black English in class, where standard American English would be appropriate. On the other hand, she would probably be understood as either affected and pretentious or joking, were she to use Standard American English in informal conversations with Black friends.

Sensitivity to register has to do with the appropriateness of the style to the communicative situation. Register refers to "a variety of language defined according to its use in social situations, e.g. a register of scientific, religious, formal English" (Crystal,1991:295). A speaker should therefore be able to use appropriate register as demanded by features of the language use context. For example, academic essays and scientific or legal reports are generally

taken to call for the use of formal language.

Bachman (1990:97) also identifies **sensitivity to naturalness** as an aspect of sociolinguistic competence which "allows the user either to formulate or interpret an utterance which is not only linguistically accurate, but which is also phrased (in a nativelike way) as it would be by speakers of a particular dialect or variety of a language who are native to the culture of their dialect or variety".

Yet another aspect of sociolinguistic competence which should be mentioned is what Saville-Troike (1982:27) has called the **competence of incompetence**. This ability is also recognised by Savignon (1987:37), who indicates that judgements of appropriateness involve more than knowing what to say in a situation and how to say it. Judgements of appropriateness also involve knowing when to remain silent, or in fact when to appear incompetent. According to Saville-Troike (1982:27-28) part of communicative competence is being able to sound appropriately "incompetent" in the [second] language when the situation dictates. An example of such competence of incompetence is the utterance "I don't know what to say", which may be interpreted as the most sincere expression of deep emotion to someone who is bereaved.

According to Saville-Troike (1982:28) "a speaker of a second language may be well advised in some instances not to try and sound too much like a native speaker for fear of 'appearing intrusive or conversely, disloyal, from the perspective of the speaker's own L1 community'." The competence of incompetence in a way involves some sensitivity to register as well. This is because the speaker has to have the ability deliberately to maintain, under certain situations at least, a formal register or an academic style of speech where a familiar or informal register might be appropriate for native speakers.

3.2.4 Uses of Language to Establish and Maintain Social Relations

In addition to mastery of norms associated with particular registers or styles of the target language (as discussed in the preceding section), the aspect of sociolinguistic competence pertaining to the **use of language to establish and maintain social relations** involves turn-taking skills and skills related to opening, joining, and ending, a conversation. Saviile-Troike (1982:23) has pointed out that since there are cross-cultural differences in norms of interaction, a second language speaker needs to know "what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation". This also holds true for all other conversational "routines".

In the light of the foregoing, the ability to use language to establish and maintain social relations may be summed up as sensitivity to and skill in interpreting and using what Keller (1981:93) has called "**gambits**", i.e. "conversational strategy signals". These are signals which are used to introduce level shifts within the conversation, or to prepare the listeners for the next turn in the logical argument. According to Keller (1981:93-113) conversational strategy gambits can act as:

- * semantic introducers, indicating the general frame of the topic which is about to be broached in the conversation.
- * signals of the participants' social context in the conversation. They may be used to signal a wish to take a turn in the conversation or to express a wish to end a conversation, e.g. the utterance "Its been nice talking to you".
- * signals of a person's state of consciousness. For example, a person's readiness to receive information can be indicated by the utterance "Yes, I am listening".

* communication controllers, for example, gambits which have the purpose of filling in time, or holding the line, to look for a word or for an adequate syntactic structure.

Once again, it may be pointed out that although some of these skills - as reflected in the successful use and interpretation of the above mentioned gambits - might appear quite obvious and within easy grasp of L2 speakers, this is not always the case. As Wolfson's (1983:63) observation indicates:

...such seemingly simple interactions as those involving conversational openings, invitations and compliments are all open to serious misinterpretation on the part of the language learner, misinterpretation which may lead to shock, disappointment and even grievous insult.

Tarone and Yule (1987:93) draw attention to the findings of a study, by Smith (1986), involving the turn-taking skills of several students from different cultural backgrounds. The results of the latter study suggested a need for explicit presentation and practice on turn-taking norms in American English since the subjects had not unconsciously absorbed the appropriate norms from their contact with American academic society. For instance, lack of cohesion between some adjacent turns, and transfer of interactional patterns from their native language frequently occurred.

3.2.5 Cultural References and Figures of Speech

The ability to interpret and use the cultural references and figures of speech of the second language is another dimension of sociolinguistic competence recognised by Bachman (1990:97). Such references and figures of speech will obviously be part of the lexicon of any language and can thus

be considered part of lexical or vocabulary competence. However, it is Bachman's (1990:97) view that knowledge of the extended meanings given by a specific culture to particular events, places, institutions or people is required whenever these meanings are referred to in language use.

Thus in order to interpret such meanings a speaker needs to know not only the referential meanings of certain references, but also what they connote within the given culture of the target language. As Bachman (1990:97) illustrates, to interpret the following exchange the language user would have to know that 'Waterloo' is used linguistically to symbolize a major and final defeat with awful consequences for the defeated:

A: I hear John didn't do too well on his final exam.

B: Yeah, it turned out to be his Waterloo.

The ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech is clearly an important part of sociolinguistic competence. In drawing attention to the significance of this aspect and its subsequent inclusion as part of sociolinguistic competence, Bachman (1990:98) points out that:

Although individuals from different cultural backgrounds will, no doubt, be able to attach meaning to figures of speech, the conventions governing the use of figurative language, as well as the specific meanings and images that are evoked are deeply rooted in the culture of a given society or speech community.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter the sociolinguistic dimension of communicative competence has been examined. Several definitions of the concept of a sociolinguistic competence

have been considered. In examining the essence of such competence the discussion has focused on defining **sociolinguistic rules**, and distinguishing and discussing the **abilities** and **skills** underlying sociolinguistic competence. In the course of the discussion the significance of sociolinguistic competence has also been alluded to. The next chapter focuses on the empirical study conducted as part of this research.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

Investigating and assessing sociolinguistic competence - as is the case with any kind of competence for that matter - inevitably entails observing some kind of performance. It is through performance that we can deduce competence. Consequently, in seeking answers to some of the questions which prompted this research, an empirical study - which involved 'tapping performance for competence' - was conducted.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to describe the components of the empirical study, and the elicitation methods and analysis procedures which were employed to obtain data regarding the sociolinguistic competence of the research group.

4.1.1 Methodological Issues in General

Various techniques have been devised to collect sociolinguistic data. In this study a questionnaire-type completion test was used. Before discussing the method in this study, however, a few points regarding methodological issues related to sociolinguistic investigation at large need to be raised. Such a review of methodology will, it is hoped, help to put the choice of test instrument in this study in proper relief, and thereby justify the research method.

Cohen and Olshtain (1981:114) have made the observation, and rightly so, that developing a measure of sociocultural competence is not an easy task. As a result this is an area which is undergoing a process of constant revision and refinement.

Some measures of sociolinguistic competence have focused on the "receptive side", that is, "having non-natives rating the appropriateness of utterances according to some sociocultural criterion such as politeness" (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981:114). Other research has concentrated on the productive side; collecting data and rating the responses of natives and non-natives in selected role-play situations. The latter method was used in Cohen and Olshtain (1981) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983).

Another technique which is used in collecting data involves multiple choice questionnaires. This method entails manipulation tasks in which a social situation is described followed by several possible responses. The respondent is then expected to choose the appropriate response. However, the validity of multiple choice questionnaire-type tests, as well as native speaker ratings of L2 speakers' responses, has been questioned.

One primary disadvantage of the multiple choice and Likert formats is that - according to Hatch (1983:xv) - the data are judgements of appropriateness of form (recognition of appropriate behaviour) rather than production of that behaviour. A further objection in the view of Thomas (1983:79) is that "judgements of appropriateness can never be spelt out significantly to be incorporated in grammars or textbooks as other than fairly crude rules of thumb".

Tarone and Yule (1987:89) also argue that there is no one to one correspondence in the relationship between an individual's performance on tests and performance in actual oral interaction. Furthermore, the argument goes, the items usually selected for inclusion in materials for teaching sociolinguistic competence are based on nothing more than the speculations of the material writers. However, it is noteworthy that the thrust of Tarone and Yule's objections is largely aimed at the use of these methods in so far as

their goal is to produce communicative teaching materials, and not necessarily when the goal is to measure sociolinguistic competence. Nonetheless, the same objections can be raised regarding multiple choice formats of testing sociolinguistic competence, after all, the situations and responses are often 'created' by the investigator or tester.

A popular method currently being used by most researchers working within the **Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP)** project (comprised of a team of researchers operating from countries like Germany, Australia, Israel and the United States of America) is the **Discourse Completion Test (DCT)**. This instrument has been used by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:196-213) and Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989:1-34) in their studies on requests and apologies. Other researchers outside the project have also used this method, for example, Hodge's (1990:121-128) cross-cultural study of the request patterns of Australian and South African English. The Discourse Completion Test method has been especially effective for the comparison of strategies from different languages, and for comparison of strategies used by native speakers and learners of the same language (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989:250).

Some of the shortcomings inherent in this method are the following: (1) the extent to which what respondents write is a true indication of what they would say, (2) the restriction on response length imposed by the spaces provided, and (3) the fact that subjects may perceive writing as a more formal activity and thus choose to write more formal language on the questionnaire (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989:250). As far as the latter point is concerned, however, Rintell and Mitchell (1989:270-271) - in their comparative investigation of the validity of the written as against oral data collection instrument - come to the conclusion that:

... despite known distinctions between spoken and written languages, in many ways, language elicited [in the study] is similar whether collected in written or oral form. [The] reason for this similarity is that, although the data appear in the two modalities, they do not truly reflect the contrast between spoken and written language. In fact, the discourse completion test is, in a sense, a role-play like the oral one.

These drawbacks raise some serious implications for a research method which will be discussed later when the questionnaire used in this study is described.

4.1.2 Apologies, Requests and Condolences as Speech Acts

A speech act, as mentioned earlier in the discussion of the dimensions of sociolinguistic competence, is a minimal unit of human communication of the type called **illocutionary acts**, and is defined in terms of its **illocutionary force**, i.e. what the speaker intends to communicate to the hearer (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985:1). Generally an illocutionary act consists of an illocutionary force and a propositional content, as Searle (1977:43) states:

From a semantic point of view we can distinguish between the propositional indicator in the sentence and the indicator of illocutionary force. That is, for a large class of sentences used to perform illocutionary acts, we can say for the purpose of our analysis, that sentence has two (not necessarily separate) parts, the proposition - indicating element and the function - indicating device. The function indicating device shows how the proposition is to be taken, or, to put it another way, what illocutionary force the utterance is to have, that is, what illocutionary act the speaker is performing in the utterance of the sentence.

Existing taxonomies of illocutionary acts have been based on a classification of the various communicative functions that occur in speech and, to a lesser extent, in writing (Ellis,1990:3).

Searle (1977) distinguished five general classes of speech acts: directives, commissives, expressives, and assertives. The definitions of various speech acts which were offered by Searle were based on the conditions which were required to be present if a given speech act was to be effectively performed (Leech & Thomas, 1985:177). These conditions were described as four kinds of rules:

- a) PROPOSITIONAL CONTENT rules specify the kind of meaning expressed by the propositional part of an utterance.
- b) PREPARATORY rules specify conditions which are prerequisites for the performance of the speech act (e.g., according to Searle, for an act of thanking, the speaker must be aware that the addressee has done something of benefit to the speaker).
- c) SINCERITY rules specify conditions which must obtain if the speech act is to be performed sincerely (e.g. for an apology to be sincere the speaker must be sorry for what has been done).
- d) ESSENTIAL rules specify what the speech act must conventionally count as (e.g. the essential rule for a warning is that it counts as an undertaking that some future event is not in the addressee's interest).

According to Leech and Thomas (1985:179) "more recent work in pragmatics indicates that the establishment of discrete categories is far more problematical than Searle leads us to believe". However, Searle's taxonomy is still found to be very useful when it comes to investigating speech act performance. Hence it is, by and large, Searle's taxonomy of speech acts which will be used in the present study.

The study focused on three speech acts, namely apologies, requests and condolences. The basic properties of these speech acts are considered below.

4.1.2.1 Apologies

Apologies belong to the class of speech acts called **expressives**; they are thus - along with speech acts such as thanking, congratulating, and offering condolences - expressive acts.

Apologies, like requests, are face threatening acts, and call for redressive action, and they both concern events that are costly to the hearer (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989:12). However, unlike requests - which are pre-events - apologies are post events.

According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985:211) the point of apologizing is to express sorrow or regret for some state of affairs that the speaker is responsible for. The preparatory condition is thus that the speaker must be responsible for the thing about which the sorrow is expressed.

By apologising a speaker acknowledges that a violation of a social norm has been committed and admits to the fact that he or she is at least partly involved in its cause (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989:12). Apologies therefore tend to be aggravated, as they themselves count as remedial work and are inherently hearer-supportive. There are various semantic formulas for realising the speech act of apologising, depending on variables pertaining to the relationship between speaker and hearer, and the nature and extent of the violation or offense.

4.1.2.2 Requests

Requests, together with demands, commands, orders, suggestions and others, belong to a class of speech acts called **directives**. The class consists of all those specific acts whose function is to get the hearer to do something (Ellis,1990:4). Directives therefore include requests for information, goods, services, and permission. The definition of requests as used in this study is intended to include requests for information and permission. Some general characteristics of requests which can be distinguished will be discussed.

Requests are by their very nature what Brown and Levinson (1978:70-71) call "face threatening acts". A request, in requiring a future effort from the interlocutor, imposes mainly on the hearer. Furthermore, requests are "pre-events" (Blum-Kulka et al,1989:12); they often serve an initiating function in discourse and can be performed in a single turn, or over more than one turn (Ellis,1990:5).

The fact that a request is a face threatening pre-event is manifested in the modifications employed in its realisation: requests call for modification, compensating for their impositive effects on the hearer. Blum-Kulka et al.(1989:12) identify three dimensions of request modification: (1) directness level, (2) internal modification and (3) external modification.

Requests can be realised linguistically in a variety of ways: they can be realised directly or indirectly, the level of directness depending on the extent to which the speaker wishes to lessen the impact of the request, and on the intended level of politeness. This is tied to the fact that requests are face threatening acts, and to a variety of social variables pertaining to the relationship between speaker and hearer as well as the perceived degree of

imposition of the request. The perspective of a request can emphasise the role of either the speaker or the hearer, or it can be inclusive or impersonal.

4.1.2.3 Condolences

Like apologising, offering condolences belongs to a class of speech acts called **expressives**; it is thus an expressive act. According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985:212) the expressive verb "condole" which name the illocutionary force of the act is obsolete and has been replaced by the use of the noun "condolence", thus: when one condoles one expresses sympathy, and the preparatory condition is that the thing in question is bad for the hearer - usually some great misfortune.

The term expressing sympathy will therefore be used to refer to the speech act of "condoling" as defined above. Expression of sympathy is a post-event in which the speaker shows concern about the state of affairs in which the hearer is placed. There are various semantic strategies available for encoding sympathy, and modification of the speech act of sympathising seems to be tied - as is the case with other speech acts - to situational variables. Some of the variables are social distance, the magnitude of the misfortune, and the nature of the communicative situation (e.g. whether the act is done as speech offered at a funeral, an exchange between two people or a written expression of sympathy).

4.2 Method of Research

4.2.1 Instrumentation

A questionnaire modelled along the lines of a discourse completion test was used. Ideally it would have been more useful to use the role play type of elicitation procedure used by Cohen and Olshtain (1981:113-133). However, there were practical considerations to be taken into account in

this regard; for example, the necessity of using a language laboratory when employing the role-play method. Furthermore, accurate transcription of utterances in a study of this nature has proven to be a cumbersome and time consuming task. Hence, in the present study a written test was administered.

Some measures were taken to try and avoid one of the drawbacks Tarone and Yule (1987:89) have linked to multiple choice formats: that the items in such tests are often based on "nothing more than the speculations of the materials writer". To start with, the situations in the questionnaire were based on a selection of situations obtained by asking 20 students (not part of the sample population) to describe some situations they could recall in which they had to express apologies, sympathy, refusals, compliments, and make requests (see Appendix A). The descriptions obtained in this way were then used as a basis to design the research questionnaire (see Appendix B). It was hoped that this procedure would increase both the construct and content validity of the test. Some of the apology situations were adapted from a study by Cohen and Olshtain (1981:113-133).

The research questionnaire comprised descriptions of 22 social situations designed to elicit controlled responses from the respondents in the form of the following speech acts: apology (7 situations), sympathy (5 situations), requests (6 situations), and refusals (4 situations). However, the data analysis focused only on the first three speech acts. The refusal situations were meant to serve as distracters and to add to the length of the test in order to ensure its reliability. The situations were presented in random order to avoid a "response set", i.e. to ensure that the respondents would respond in as natural a manner as possible.

A brief and explicit description of each situation was given, and below each description spaces were provided for the

respondents to write their responses. The questionnaire contained explicit instructions on how the respondents should complete the questionnaire: in each case they had to write what they would say in that particular situation, saying as much or as little as possible as they would in an actual situation.

Three examples of the descriptions in the questionnaire are given below (see Appendix B for the full text of the research questionnaire):

- a) Walking into a supermarket, you bump into an elderly lady, hurting her leg and knocking her packages out of her hands...
- b) You go to your lecturer to ask for an extension to finish writing an assignment that you were supposed to submit on that day...
- c) You are in a bus. As the bus approaches a busy intersection, the lady sitting next to you suddenly remarks that she does not like that intersection because that is where her son was killed in a car accident only two weeks before...

All of the situations were aimed at assessing sociolinguistic competence in general, that is, being able to react in a socially acceptable way in context and to choose stylistically appropriate forms for the context. The questionnaire items varied in terms of the participants' role relationships, that is - as Blum-Kulka *et al* (1989:15) put it - on the dimensions of **Dominance (social power)** and **Social Distance (familiarity)**. Sex of interlocutors was randomly varied across all situations since the questionnaire was not designed to investigate this variable.

Three of the **apology** situations were intended to assess intensity of regret in expressing apology (for example, from "I'm terribly sorry" - high intensity - "to I'm sorry" - low intensity):

- a) Bumping into an elderly lady, hurting her leg and knocking her packages out of her hands. (Situation 1)
- b) Being confronted by an angry customer. (Situation 5)
- c) Bumping into an elderly gentleman, shaking him a bit. (Situation 12)

Dominance, social distance, and the nature of the offence were regarded as some of the variables which would contribute significantly to the apology strategies used.

The **request** situations were also aimed at assessing stylistic appropriateness in terms of the way the respondents were able to vary their request strategies in accordance with the contextual variables of the communication situation. The variables which would be expected to contribute to the type of request strategy employed were dominance and social distance, as well as the degree of imposition of the request. Hence, the situations were varied accordingly.

While considering sociolinguistic competence in general, the **sympathy** situations were particularly intended to assess competence in so far as appropriate form-function relations are concerned (e.g. knowing which semantic form or formula carries the desired illocutionary force in a given situation). Social distance, and the nature and/or magnitude of the misfortune were taken to be important variables which would contribute to the strategies and forms used in expressing sympathy.

4.2.2 Subjects

The subjects were 42 randomly selected university students. Half (21) of the subjects were first language speakers of English drawn from an English 100 classroom at the Rand Afrikaans University. This group served as informants for first language speaker patterns in order to enable the researcher to set up norms for the acceptable patterns of the three speech acts under investigation. The other 21 subjects were second language speakers of English drawn from an English 100 classroom at the Vista University (Soweto). For the sake of convenience, the first language and second language speakers will be referred to as the EL1 and EL2 groups respectively. Furthermore, while the terms first-language speaker and native speaker will be used interchangeably, they are both used in the sense of, "mother-tongue" speaker of South African English.

The EL2 group, who constituted the research group of this study, came from various language backgrounds; half of the group consisted of native speakers of Zulu while the rest were either Tswana, Xhosa, Tsonga, Northern-Sotho, or Venda speakers. The sex of respondents was randomly varied: there were 14 females and 7 males in the EL1 group, and 10 females and 11 males in the EL2 group.

4.2.3 Procedure

The same investigator administered the test to both groups. In each case the data were collected in one sitting, i.e. the respondents completed the questionnaire in a classroom during one session. Although no strict time constraints were imposed, in both cases the subjects were informed that they had about thirty to thirty-five minutes to complete the questionnaire. It was hoped that by not allowing the respondents too much time spontaneous responses would be ensured, thereby capturing data that approximate to that

obtained under natural conditions.

In each case the investigator began by explaining the purpose of the study to the class. It was explained to the EL1 group that their responses were to be used as a basis for native speaker norms. The EL2 group were also made aware that in their case the purpose of the data collection was to determine their responses in certain situations. The EL1 group's responses were obtained first and, after being analyzed, used as baseline data or criteria with which to determine any deviations from the L1 norm in the EL2 group's responses. The EL2 group completed the same questionnaire a week later. The procedure thus yielded the responses - in English - of native and non-native speakers of English to similar social situations.

4.2.4 Data Analysis

The primary aim of the data analysis was to determine whether there were any significant deviations in the utterances of the EL2 group, and if so, whether such deviations were the result of a deficiency in sociolinguistic competence. To this end, the range of patterns amongst the EL1 group first had to be determined, and used as a basis to determine deviant sociolinguistic behaviour in the EL2 group.

The framework for data analysis used in this study is based on the procedures and coding schemes employed by Olshtain and Cohen (1983), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) and Blum-Kulka et al, (1989). In all the speech acts the units for analysis were taken to be all the utterances - except address terms - provided by the subject in responding to the described situation. The frameworks for data analysis of the various speech acts are outlined below.

4.2.4.1 Framework for the Analysis of Apologies

According to Blum-Kulka et al, (1989:19) the linguistic realisation of the act of apologising can take one of two basic forms or a combination of both. Firstly there is the most explicit realisation of an apology via an explicit illocutionary force indicating device (IFID), which selects a routinised, formulaic expression of regret such as (be) sorry, apologise, regret, excuse etc. The IFID fulfils the function of signalling regret; the speaker asks for forgiveness for the violation that motivated the need to apologise, thereby serving to placate the hearer.

The second way in which an apology can be performed (with or without the IFID) is by means of an utterance which contains reference to one or more elements from a closed set of specified propositions, the semantic content of which relates directly to the apology preconditions (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989:20). In view of these diversified means of realising an apology, Olshtain and Cohen (1983:18-35) have come up with the notion of an apology speech act set to embrace all these formulas and sub-formulas. The description of apology strategies within the speech act set which is given below is based on work done by Cohen and Olshtain (1981:113-134), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), as well as Blum-Kulka et al (1989:1-36):

1. **An explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violation.**
2. **An expression of responsibility for the offence.** The common sub-formulas in this regard are the following:
 - a) Accepting the blame, e.g. 'Its my mistake'.
 - b) Expressing self deficiency, e.g. 'I didn't see you'.
 - c) Recognising the other as deserving an apology, e.g. 'You're right'.
 - d) Expressing lack of intent, e.g. 'I didn't mean to do that'.

3. **An offer of repair:** this strategy is used in situations where the damage or inconvenience affecting the hearer can be compensated for. Thus the speaker may apologise by way of offering to repair, for example 'Let me pick up your parcels'.
4. **A promise of forbearance:** this formula is used when the feeling of responsibility is so strong that the speaker feels the need to promise forbearance (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989:21), for example, 'It won't happen again'.

In addition to the above strategies, there are various supportive semantic formulas which can be utilised by speakers to aggravate their apologies depending, by and large, on the seriousness of the offence. The following devices can be used to intensify apologies:

- a) an intensifying expression within the IFID (e.g. very, terribly, extremely, or repetition of any of these adverbs).
- b) an expression of concern for the hearer (e.g. 'Are you okay?').
- c) using multiple strategies; an IFID and any of the four other strategies.

A speaker may also downgrade an apology by adding to the strategy employed, thus minimising the offence, for example, 'I'm sorry, but you really shouldn't be standing in the way'.

In the analysis of apologies other features forming the context of the apology situation are considered significant determinants not only of the strategy employed but also the degree of intensification and modification. According to Blum-Kulka et al (1989:21-22) the decision to perform the act of apologizing and then the decision to choose one or more

strategies is affected by a number of different factors. Some of these are socio-cultural and relate to the performance of speech acts in general, such as social distance, social power, and age. Other factors are closely connected to the situational context bringing about the need to apologize. Thus the severity of the violation, and the perceived obligation of the speaker to apologize are, most probably, very significant factors in the choices made by the speakers.

The coding and analytical framework applied in respect of the semantic formulas used to realise the apology speech act is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Coding and Analytical Framework for the Apology Speech Act

KEY: APOL - expression of apology
EXP - explanation or account of the cause
RESP - acknowledgement of responsibility
REPR - offer of repair/help
FORB - promise of forbearance

The analysis procedure undertaken in this study is illustrated by means of two responses; one from the EL1 and the other from the EL2 group (For the purposes of the examples the native respondent is referred to as A and the non-native respondent as B).

Example

Situation 16: In a parking lot.

Reversing the car out of a parking lot, you smash into the car behind you. The owner jumps out and comes over to you, shouting angrily that you have ruined his car...

Response A: 'I'm sorry, it was an accident. I didn't mean to, please, I'm so sorry.'

Response B: Sorry, I didn't saw [sic] your car was behind mine.

Dimension	Category	Element
a) Semantic formula	(1) A. APOL (regret)	I'm sorry
	B. APOL (regret)	Sorry
	(2) A. RESP (lack of intent)	It was an accident I didn't mean to.
	B. RESP (self deficiency)	I didn't saw [saw] your car was behind mine.
b) Modification	A. INTENS (repetition) (politeness marker) (adverb)	I'm sorry please so
	B. -	-

4.2.4.2 Framework for the Analysis of Requests

The principal categories distinguished by Blum-Kulka et al, (1989:17) in their analytical framework for the request speech act are the following:

- **Alerters** (eg. address terms such as Madam, sir or Mr)
- **Supportive moves**
- **Head acts** (analyzed in terms of **strategy type** and **request perspective**)

In the present study address terms were not considered in the analysis of the data since this element was regarded as 'transparent' in most of the descriptions (for example, in the situation involving an elderly lady (Situation 1), most of the EL2 respondents used 'lady' as an address term). The focus in the data analysis was therefore on the request strategy types used, the request perspective, and supportive moves such as internal and external modifiers.

Request Strategy Types

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:201) distinguish three major **levels of directness** that can be manifested universally in requesting strategies. First there is the most direct, explicit level, which is realised by requests syntactically marked as such, such as imperatives, or by other verbal means that name the act as a request, such as performatives and hedged performatives. Such requests are subsumed under the category of **impositives**.

The second level of directness is the conventionally indirect level which is commonly referred to as indirect speech acts; such as, for example, 'Would you move your parcels?' used as a request. This level constitutes the category of **indirect request strategies**. Thirdly there is the non-conventionally indirect level; what Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:201) refer to as "the open ended group of indirect strategies (hints) that realize the request by either partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act", for example 'Do you like the door open' (as a request to close the door).

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:196-213) and Blum-Kulka *et al*, (1989:17-19) have also subdivided these three levels into nine distinct sub-levels called **strategy types** that together form a scale of indirectness. The nine strategies are presented (on a scale of indirectness) in Table 2. Some of

the examples in the table come from the research data (the responses of the EL1 and the EL2 group) in this study, and others from the Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) study.

Table 2: Request Strategy Types (definitions and examples)

1 Mood derivable

The grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance marks its illocutionary force as a request.

- Leave me alone.
- Prepare a speech for my party.#

2 Explicit performatives

The illocutionary force of the utterance is explicitly named by the speakers.

- I ask you to give a speech at my party.*

3 Hedged performative

Utterances embedding the naming of the illocutionary force.

- I'd like you to to (sic) render a speech at my party.*

4 Locution derivable

The illocutionary point is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution.

- Madam you'll have to move your your car

5 Scope stating

The utterance expresses the speaker's intentions, desire or feeling vis a vis the fact that the hearer do X.

- I really wish you'd stop bothering me.

6 Language specific suggestory formula

The sentence contains a suggestion to X.

- How about moving your parcels?

7 Reference to preparatory conditions - Could you please
 Utterance contains reference to prepara- give me an
 tory conditions (e.g. ability, wil- extension?*

- Would you mind
 removing these?#

8 Strong hints

Utterance contains partial reference to - Are your offices
 objects or elements needed for the always this
 implementation of the act (directly cold?#
 pragmatically implying the act.

9 Mild hints

Utterances that make no reference to the - I have a
 request proper (or any of its elements) severe flu.*
 but are interpretable through the context
 as requests (indirectly pragmatically
 implying the act).

= taken from EL1 data.

* = from EL2 data.

As mentioned earlier, requests are face threatening acts. Hence, the variety of direct and indirect ways for making requests available to speakers in all languages is probably socially motivated by the need to minimise the imposition involved in the act of requesting (Blum-Kulka *et al*, 1989:16-19). One way of minimising the imposition is by preferring an indirect strategy to a direct, one, "activating choice on the scale of indirectness" (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984:201). The speaker may also mitigate a request by manipulating the request perspective and/or using modifiers. The analytical framework and coding scheme used in this study for request strategies is illustrated in Table 3 below. Although the requests were analyzed in terms of the nine request strategies or directness levels outlined above, these strategies were in turn collapsed - as in Blum-Kulka and

House (1989:123) - to yield the following three categories: impositives, conventionally indirect strategy types, and the non-conventionally indirect strategy types or hints.

Table 3: Framework for Analysis of Requests

1. Request level	Category	Strategies
Direct	Impositives	Mood derivable Explicit performatives Hedged performatives Locution derivable Scope stating
2. Indirect	Conventionally indirect	Suggestory formula Query preparatory
3. Indirect	Non-conventionally indirect (Hints)	Strong hints Mild hints

Request perspective

A request can be phrased in such a way that it emphasises the role of either the speaker or the hearer, or of both participants in the communication situation. It is also possible for a request to be impersonal in so far as its perspective is concerned. According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989:19) "choice of perspective affects social meaning since requests are inherently imposing, avoidance to name the hearer as actor can reduce the, [request] form's level of directness".

Request modification

Requests can be modified internally or externally. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989:19) define internal modifiers as elements within the request utterance proper (linked to the Head Act), the presence of which is not essential for the utterance to

be potentially understood as a request. In contrast, external modifiers operate outside the head act; external modification "does not affect the utterance used for realizing the act, but rather the context in which it is embedded, and thus indirectly modifies illocutionary force" (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984:204).

In this study request modification has been analyzed in terms of internal modifiers (lexical and phrasal downgraders) and external modifiers (supportive moves). Examples and, in some places, definitions of these modifiers, as found in the **CCSARP** coding manual (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:273-289), are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Analytical Framework for Request Modification

a) **Lexical and phrasal downgraders**

- **Politeness marker** (e.g. please).
- **Understater**: adverbial modifiers by means of which the speaker underrepresents the state of affairs denoted in the proposition (e.g. Could you tidy up a bit?).
- **Hedge**: adverbial phrases used by a speaker when he or she wishes to avoid a precise propositional specification in order to avoid the potential provocations of such precision (e.g. I wonder if you could sort of give room for my parcels?).
- **Subjectivizer**: elements in which the speaker explicitly expresses his or her subjective opinion vis a vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force of the request (e.g. I wonder if you could give me an extension on the assignment?).

- **Downtoner:** modifiers which are used by a speaker in order to modulate the impact his/her request is likely to have on the hearer. (e.g. Could you possibly/perhaps turn the air-conditioner down?).
- **Appealer:** elements used by a speaker when he or she wishes to appeal to his/her hearer's benevolent understanding (e.g. Clean up the kitchen dear, will you?)

b) **Supportive moves**

- **Preparator:** the speaker prepares the hearer for the ensuing request by announcing that he or she will make a request by asking about the potential availability of the hearer to carry out the request;

May I ask you a question...

- **Getting a precommitment:** in checking on a potential refusal before making his or her request, a speaker tries to commit his or her hearer before telling him or her what he is letting him or herself in for;

Can I ask you a favour? (Would you lend me your car?)

- **Disarmer:** the speaker tries to remove any potential objections the hearer might raise upon being confronted with the request;

I really hope you don't think I'm being too presumptuous or forward, but could you turn the air-conditioner down a bit?

- **Imposition minimizer:** the speaker indicates consideration of the 'cost' to the hearer;
- Would you give me a lift, but only if you are going my way.

- **Grounder:** the speaker indicates reasons for the request;
I couldn't find any references in the library, could
you give me an extension on the assignment?
-

The categories of modifiers outlined in Table 4 are those which tended to be typical in the data obtained from the two groups of respondents. The framework and coding scheme for request modifiers is given in Table 5; the application of the framework and codes is also illustrated in the subsequent example.

Table 5: Request Modifiers

<u>Supportive moves</u>	<u>Lexical / phrasal downgraders</u>
PRPT = preparator	Politeness marker
PC = getting a precommitment	Understater
GR = grounder	Subjectivizer
DA = disarmer	Downtoner
IM = imposition minimiser	Appealer
SW = sweetener	

Example

Situation 13: At work

You are doing temporary work in a department store. You need to go and see the doctor. You approach the manager of the store to request the day off...

Response A: Could I please have tomorrow off as I have to see the doctor?

Response B: May you [sic] please give me a day off tomorrow because I want to see a doctor?

Dimension	Category	Element
a) Request perspective	A. Speaker orientation	Could <u>I</u>
	B. Hearer orientation	May <u>you</u> [sic]
b) Request strategy	A. Indirect preparatory	Could I ...have
	B. Indirect preparatory	May [I]...
c) Downgraders	A. Politeness marker	please
	B. Politeness marker	please
d) Supportive moves	A. Grounder	as I have to see the doctor
	B. Grounder	because I want to see the doctor

4.2.4.3 Framework for Analysis of Condolences

While the study of speech act performance pertaining to speech acts such as requests, apologies, refusals and compliments seems to be on the increase, it would appear that there is still a scarcity of studies which have focused on condolences.

As a result, there is presently no well-developed analytical framework and coding scheme dealing with the condolence speech act. The analysis of data from the 'sympathy situations' in the present study tended therefore to be a challenging - if not difficult - undertaking. Be that as it may, it was felt that the absence of a well-developed analytical framework did not constitute strong grounds for omission of this speech act in the analysis of the data.

Nevertheless, existing theoretical bases and analytical frameworks for other speech acts proved useful in the analysis of the condolence speech act data. The data analysis procedures used for this speech act have been adapted from the CCSARP coding and analysis schemes for apologies and requests. However, some of the semantic categories were developed for the purposes of this study from patterns observed in native speaker data. The major semantic formulas and supportive moves involved in the realisation of the condolence speech act will be discussed.

The following three are some of the semantic formulas which emerged from native speaker responses (it is possible that a broader study may yield others which are not represented in the present data):

- 1 **Explicit expression of sympathy** by the speaker, involving the use of an IFID; for example 'I sympathise with you...' (This formula was not very common in the data).

2 **Expression of regret:** the speaker expresses regret at the misfortune or injury which has befallen the hearer, for example 'I'm sorry to hear about your father's death'. This category is also taken to include expressions like 'What a shame' or 'That's a pity'.

3 **Expressing concern for the hearer:** this semantic category covers all those utterances by means of which the speaker expresses his or her desire that the hearer get well, or get over the misfortune. Some of the semantic formulas in this category involve enquiries about the hearer's condition or 'well-being' (e.g. Are you alright?, Did you hurt yourself? or How are you coping?).

The framework and key used for the analysis of the condolence speech act is illustrated below:

KEY: **SYMPATHY** = explicit expression of sympathy
 REGRET = expression of regret
 CONCERN = expression of concern for the hearer

These three semantic formulas can serve the function of expressing sympathy when used alone or with other semantic sub-formulas which we will call **supportive moves** (see Table 6). However, while such supportive moves are mainly used as modifiers, there are situations in which they directly serve as expressions of sympathy.

Supportive moves

- **Emotional expressions:** expressions that often preface expressions of concern or regret; emotional expressions have the supportive function of projecting the speaker's feeling(s) vis a vis the state of affairs, for example emotional expletives such as 'Oh my God...' or 'Oh no...'

- **Offer of assistance:** in addition to a direct expression of concern for the hearer a speaker may offer assistance to the hearer (e.g. Is there anything I can do to help?), especially in cases where the misfortune involves physical injury or loss of bodily control like tripping and falling.
- **Offer of support:** this semantic formula is distinguished from offer of assistance by the fact that it pertains to moral or spiritual rather than material support, for example an utterance like 'Would you like to talk about it?' in response to somebody who has just mentioned the loss of a beloved.
- **Mitigation:** this category involves all those utterances which are made by speakers to try and give encouragement to the hearer, or to assuage his or her pain or grief, e.g. 'You will get over it', or 'I know how it feels'.
- **Intensification:** adverbial and adjectival phrases expressing the speaker's personal attitude and feeling about the misfortune, e.g. 'That really sad', 'That's a terrible tragedy'.
- **General moral maxim:** the speaker makes an utterance containing a general moral maxim, as in 'I'm sorry to hear that, but what can one say it is, it is God's will'.

The framework used to analyze the supportive moves of the condolence speech act is given in Table 6.

Table 6: Condolences: Key and coding scheme for supportive moves

KEY: **EEXP** = emotional expressions/expletives
OSUPP = offer of support
MIT = mitigating expressions
INTENS = intensifying adverbial/adjectival phrases
GMM = general moralising maxim/expression

Example

Situation 14. In the bus

You are in a bus. As the bus approaches a busy intersection, the lady sitting next to you suddenly remarks that she does not like that intersection because that is where her son was killed in a car accident only two weeks before...

Response A: That is a terrible tragedy - I'm sorry to hear that. How are you coping?

Response B: That was a terrible thing - it will pass don't worry so much.

Dimension	Category	Element
a) Semantic formula	A. REGRET	I'm sorry
	CONCERN	How are you coping?
	B. REGRET	sorry
b) Supportive moves	A. INTENS	that's a terrible tragedy
	B. INTENS	that was a terrible thing
	MIT	it will pass don't worry

4.2.5 Determining Test Scores

The data analysis was generally concerned with establishing the strategies and semantic formulas employed by the EL2 speakers in the realisation of the speech acts under observation. Using the native speaker responses as baseline data, an attempt was also made to identify deviant utterances and speech act performance. To arrive at some useful conclusions about the sociolinguistic competence of the individual subjects, however, marks had to be allotted for each response.

The scoring procedure used in the study involved a three-point scale. The scale represented a continuum from appropriate utterances on one end to inappropriate ones at the other end of the scale. Thus utterances which were considered inappropriate were given a zero while those utterances which were not directly inappropriate but were either deviant in terms of the linguistic realization means, or the requirements of the situation, were given one mark. Appropriate utterances were awarded two marks. Appropriateness was taken here to extend - as defined earlier - to appropriateness of form and of meaning.

Following the scoring procedure used by Cohen and Olshtain (1981:113-134), two points were awarded to EL2 respondents when they used a semantic formula or a strategy which the findings of the study showed non-natives to "underuse" in comparison to native speakers. For instance, in apology situations where an apology and an intensification were called for, respondents who apologised but failed to intensify such apology were given one mark. Likewise in request situations calling for a higher level of indirectness and modification of request perspective, those subjects who responded appropriately would be credited with two marks, while those who failed to activate modification on one of these levels obtained only one mark. The scoring procedure

therefore allowed for partial credit and in the end only those utterances which were clearly inappropriate and deviant in terms of form-function relations were given a zero. The following maximum scores were allowed for each of the speech acts: apologies: 14, requests: 12, and condolences: 10.

Determining the frequency of occurrence of particular speech act strategies and formulas in the data proved to be a useful exercise in so far as it shed more light on areas of concurrence and of deviation. However, it was also imperative that the central tendency of the scores be measured so as to determine the average performance of the EL2 group on the test. Because of "its stability in repeated sampling" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989:215) the **mean** (\bar{X}) was used to measure the central tendency of the scores. Next the degree of variability - from the central tendency - of the scores was measured, using the **standard deviation** (S.D.). Furthermore, Cohen's (1988:20-27) **effect size d** was used to determine whether the observed differences between the EL2 and the EL1 were of any **practical significance**. The scale used by Cohen (1988:25-27) for the **d** values is as follows:

Small effect size - 0.2

Medium effect size - 0.5

Large effect size - 0.8

From the foregoing it will be evident that the effect size is a valuable statistical measurement for establishing the extent of the difference between the means of the two groups. In addition, the effect size **d** affords the researcher more valid ways of talking about the implications of the findings of a study. Therefore, if the differences in the performance of the two groups in the present study were found to be of practical significance then there would be strong reasons in favour of recommendations for the inclusion of a sociolinguistic component in teaching materials.

The above statistical measures provided valuable information about the results of the study and, in addition, presented the background against which fruitful conclusions in respect of the EL2 speakers' sociolinguistic performance could be drawn.

Although the likelihood of the investigator's own judgement coming into play in the scoring of the responses can not be ruled out, native speaker responses served as baseline data and, therefore, the basis for scoring throughout. Thus a greater measure of validity in respect of the results was ensured. Moreover, it was hoped that the semantic approach used for data analysis would be able to capture the creative aspect of language use; thus any novel utterances not observed in native speaker data but manifested in the EL2 speakers' responses would not be misjudged or undervalued.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on describing the research method employed in this study. In addition to outlining the components of the empirical study and the analytical frameworks involved, the discussion has also endeavoured to sketch - wherever possible - all the parameters that have a bearing on the methodology. The results of the study are presented and elaborated upon in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

Most of the procedures and processes involved in the empirical study were discussed in the previous chapter. Hence, the preceding chapter has laid the background against which the results of the study can be reported on and discussed. The results are presented in the form of frequencies of occurrence of particular formulas and strategies, as well as scores obtained by individual respondents.

5.2 RESULTS

5.2.1 Frequencies

The decision to analyze the responses in terms of frequency distribution of semantic formulas and speech act strategies was motivated by a need to establish typical patterns of speech act realisation amongst the native speakers. It was hoped that this would facilitate the placement of deviations by the EL2 respondents, thereby ensuring more valid criteria for scoring individual responses.

5.2.1.1 Apologies

While a greater number of respondents from both groups used one or the other apology formula to express apology some of the sub-formulas featured to a lesser extent in the responses of the EL2 respondents. This in turn suggested there were instances in which some of the EL2 speakers did not adjust their apology strategies in accordance with the contextual features of the situations, for example, the need to offer repair or assume responsibility when it is the respondent who is at fault.

Only 57% of the EL2 speakers, as against 90% of the EL1 respondents, offered repair for (Situation 1) "bumping into an elderly lady and knocking her packages out of her hands" (see Table 7). In the situation involving "a customer who had been given the wrong shoes" (Situation 5) only 48% of the EL2 speakers (compared to 81% of the native speakers) offered repair.

Table 7: Apology: Frequency of use of semantic formulas by situation.

SITUATION 1. In a supermarket.					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	21 (100)	-	7 (33)	19 (90)	-
EL2:	21 (100)	-	10 (38)	12 (57)	-
SITUATION 5. At work: confronted by an angry customer.					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	21 (100)	7 (33)	5 (24)	17 (81)	1 (5)
EL2:	17 (81)	3 (14)	8 (38)	10 (48)	1 (5)
SITUATION 8. At home.					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	15 (72)	3 (14)	10 (48)	15 (72)	-
EL2:	18 (86)	6 (29)	3 (14)	7 (33)	1 (5)
SITUATION 12. At the post office.					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	20 (95)	-	12 (57)	2 (10)	-
EL2:	20 (95)	-	14 (67)	1 (5)	1 (5)
SITUATION 16. At a parking lot: smashing into a stranger's car					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	20 (95)	-	11 (52)	14 (67)	-
EL2:	12 (57)	2 (10)	14 (67)	12 (57)	-
SITUATION 20. In a public library: bumping into an elderly lady					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	20 (95)	-	5 (24)	6 (29)	-
EL2:	14 (67)	1 (5)	-	3 (14)	-
SITUATION 21. At home: smashing into the neighbour's gate					
	APOL	EXP	RESP	REPR	FORB
EL1:	9 (43)	1 (5)	15 (72)	14 (67)	-
EL2:	15 (72)	2 (10)	12 (57)	19 (90)	-

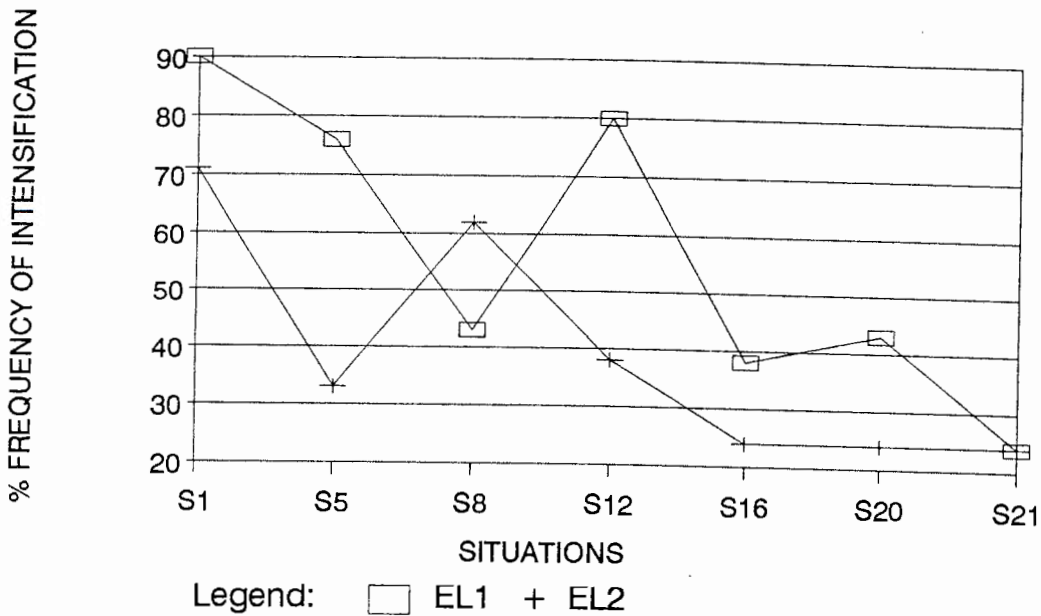
Percentage frequencies are shown in brackets.

It is also noteworthy that the EL2 respondents were less likely to express a direct apology for "smashing into a stranger's car while reversing out of a parking" (Situation 16): 57% of the latter group as against 95% of the EL1 group expressed an apology. An interesting observation emerged where respondents had to apologise to their "neighbour" for smashing into his gate (Situation 21). While 72% of the EL2 speakers used explicit apology formulas, only 43% of the EL1 speakers did so (Table 7). This percentage, however, was not necessarily due to the fact that most of the natives did not apologise but, rather, that they used **humour** as a supportive move: for example "Oops! That's a first for me..." or "Can you believe it? After all these years and I never knew you had such a big gate...". This formula only featured once in the responses of the EL2 group.

Promise of forbearance did not feature in any significant way in the responses of either group; this sub-formula accounted for only 5% in EL1 data, and only 15% of the EL2 data. However, this could have been due to the nature of the situations; most of them involved incidents which were less likely to be repeated.

In the four situations calling for intensification of regret (due to magnitude, seriousness or nature, of offence), a greater number of the EL2 respondents did not modify their expression of regret accordingly (see Figure 3). In situation 5 (apologising to a customer) only 33% of the EL2 speakers - as against 76% of the EL1 speakers - intensified their regret. While 80% of the EL1 speakers intensified their regret at "bumping into an elderly gentleman", only 38% of the EL2 respondents did.

Figure 3. Apology: Frequency of Intensification of Regret.



5.2.1.2 Requests

As far as the level of directness of the requests is concerned, there were situations in which the EL2 respondents tended to use more direct strategies than the EL1 speakers (see Figures 4 and 5). Thus in some of the situations where social distance and dominance turned out to be factors which resulted in significant levels of indirectness in native speakers, a significant number of the EL2 speakers did not adjust their request strategies accordingly. However, where some of them tried to adjust the level of directness of their requests the linguistic realisation means tended to be deviant; as a result in some of the requests the aspect of sociolinguistic competence which has to do with **appropriateness of form** was violated.

While this might suggest that the level of directness of the EL2 speakers' requests was due to a higher incidence of **impositives**, the results indicate that it was more a matter of the EL2 speakers using less **conventionally indirect requests** than their EL1 counterparts (Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 4. Requests: Percentage Frequencies of Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy Types.

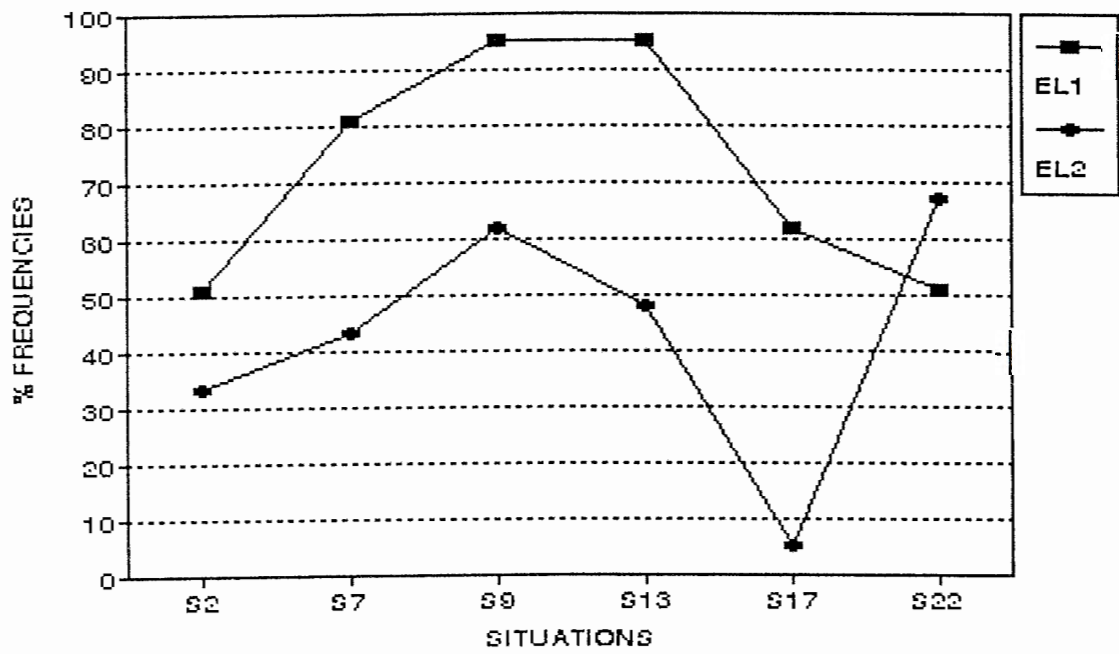
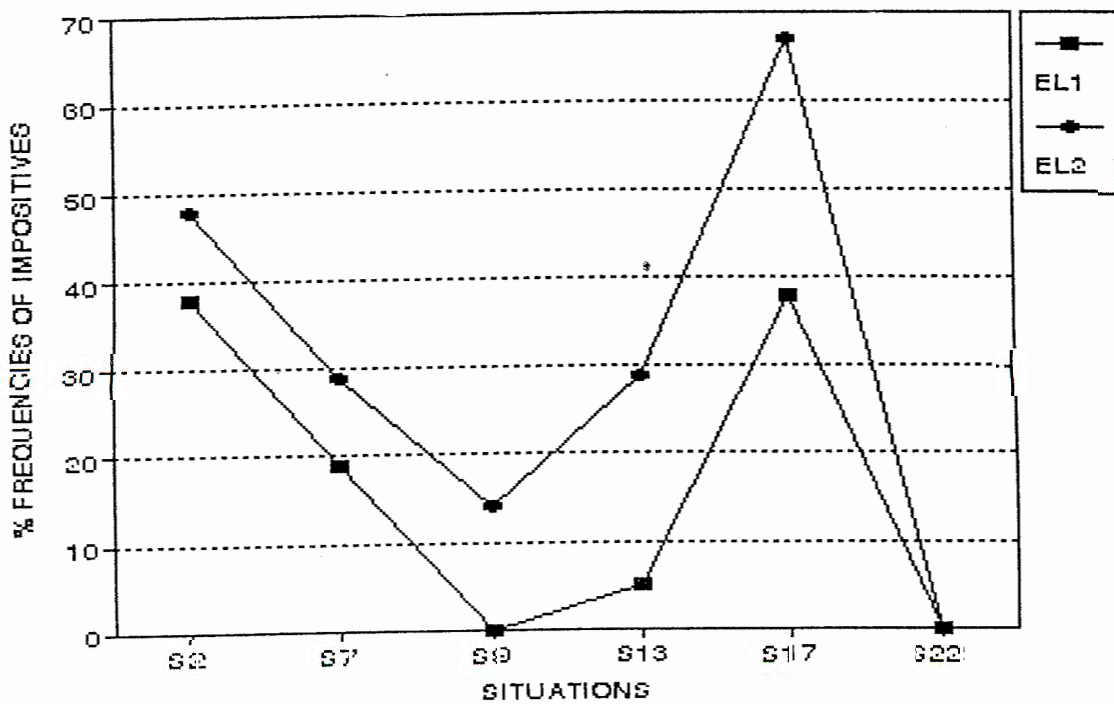


Figure 5. Requests: Percentage Frequencies of Impositives.



In requesting the lecturer for an extension (Situation 7), for example, 81% of the EL1 respondents used conventionally indirect requests while only 43% of the EL2 respondents successfully used such requests. In the "employee-to manager" situation the use of indirect request strategy types by the EL2 respondents was low as well (EL2 48% vs. EL1 95%). In the "secretary-to-caller" situation (Situation 17) conventionally indirect requests accounted for only 5% of the EL2 responses as against 62% for the EL1 respondents. However, it is noteworthy that the EL2 speakers used a deviant form of the permission directive "May I...". Thus some of them would for example request an extension by saying " **May you** please give me an extension..."

It is also noteworthy that in Situation 22 (asking the manager to lower the air conditioner) the number of the EL2 speakers who used conventionally indirect requests was higher than that of the EL1 speakers. However, it would seem that this was due to the fact that some of the EL1 speakers apparently felt the imposition to be too great as a result of the social distance and dominance and consequently preferred to "sit it out" rather than make the request.

The **lexical downgraders** most commonly used by both groups were the politeness markers (see Table 8). However, a small number of EL1 speakers also used understaters (14% in Situation 2 and 19% in Situation 22) while none of the EL2 speakers did so. Contrary to what one would have expected, the EL2 speakers used more politeness markers - especially "please" - than the EL1 speakers.

Table 8. Requests: Frequencies of Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders by Situation.

	Politeness marker	Understater	Subjecti- vizer	Downtoner	Appealer
S2					
EL1:	2 (10)	3 (14)	-	-	-
EL2:	6 (29)	-	-	-	-
S7					
EL1:	5 (24)	-	2 (10)	3 (14)	2 (10)
EL2:	12 (57)	-	-	-	2 (10)
S9					
EL1:	4 (19)	-	-	-	-
EL2:	10 (48)	-	-	-	-
S13					
EL1:	5 (24)	-	2 (10)	-	3 (14)
EL2:	6 (29)	-	2 (10)	-	3 (14)
S17					
EL1:	5 (24)	-	-	-	-
EL2:	-	-	-	-	-
S22					
EL1:	1 (5)	4 (19)	-	-	-
EL2:	10 (48)	-	-	-	-

Percentage frequencies are indicated in brackets

There were no significant differences in the frequency of occurrence of **supportive moves** in the responses of the two groups (see Table 9). However, the EL2 speakers used fewer precommitments than the EL1 speakers in Situation 2, where there was no social distance between participants. The supportive move most commonly used by both groups was the grounder, but still, this supportive move was more common in the EL2 responses.

Table 9. Requests: Frequencies of Supportive Moves by Situation.

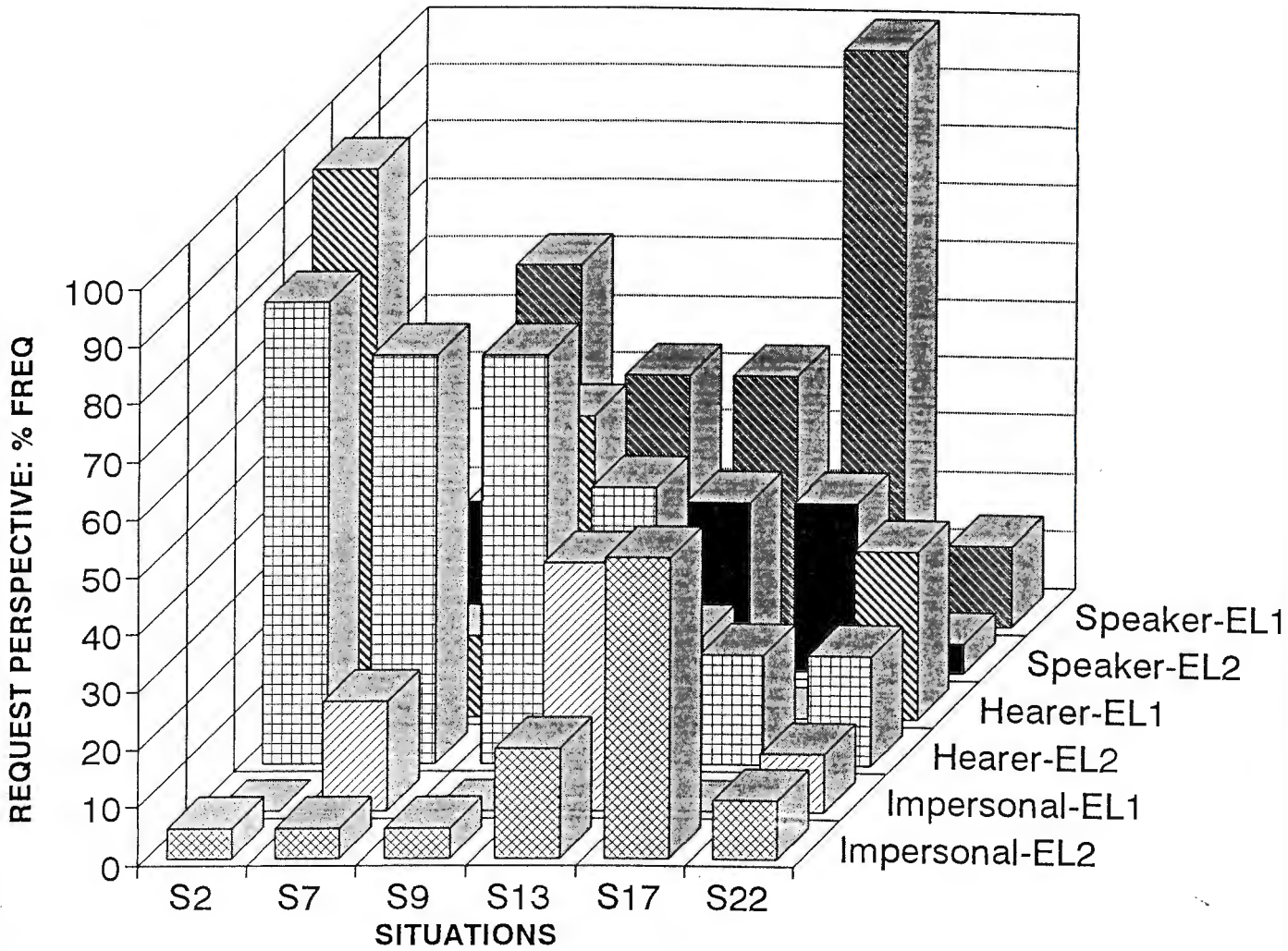
	PRPT	PC	GR	DA	IM	SW
S2						
EL1:	-	11 (52)	4 (19)	-	1 (5)	7 (33)
EL2:	-	1 (5)	10 (48)	1 (5)	-	5 (24)
S7						
EL1:	-	-	18 (86)	5 (24)	-	1 (5)
EL2:	-	-	18 (86)	2 (10)	-	3 (14)
S9						
EL1:	-	-	9 (43)	-	1 (5)	-
EL2:	-	-	14 (67)	1 (5)	-	-
S13						
EL1:	3 (14)	1 (5)	20 (95)	2 (10)	-	-
EL2:	2 (10)	-	21 (100)	-	1 (5)	-
S22						
EL1:	-	-	10 (48)	4 (19)	1 (5)	1 (5)
EL2:	-	-	13 (62)	3 (14)	-	-

Percentage frequencies are shown in brackets.

KEY: PRPT = preparator
 PC = getting a precommitment
 GR = grounder
 DA = disarmer
 IM = imposition minimiser
 SW = sweetener

As far as request perspective is concerned, the EL2 respondents evinced a very strong leaning towards hearer-oriented requests, even in situations where size of imposition as well social distance and dominance relations called for mitigating the request (see Figure 6). In the student-lecturer exchange, for example, 71% of the EL2 requests - compared to 14% for the EL1 requests - were hearer-oriented. A greater number of the EL2 speakers did not modify their request perspectives to a speaker or impersonal orientation as much as the EL1 speakers. In the situation involving a "caller" the results show a 100% speaker orientation in EL1 requests as against 29% in EL2 requests.

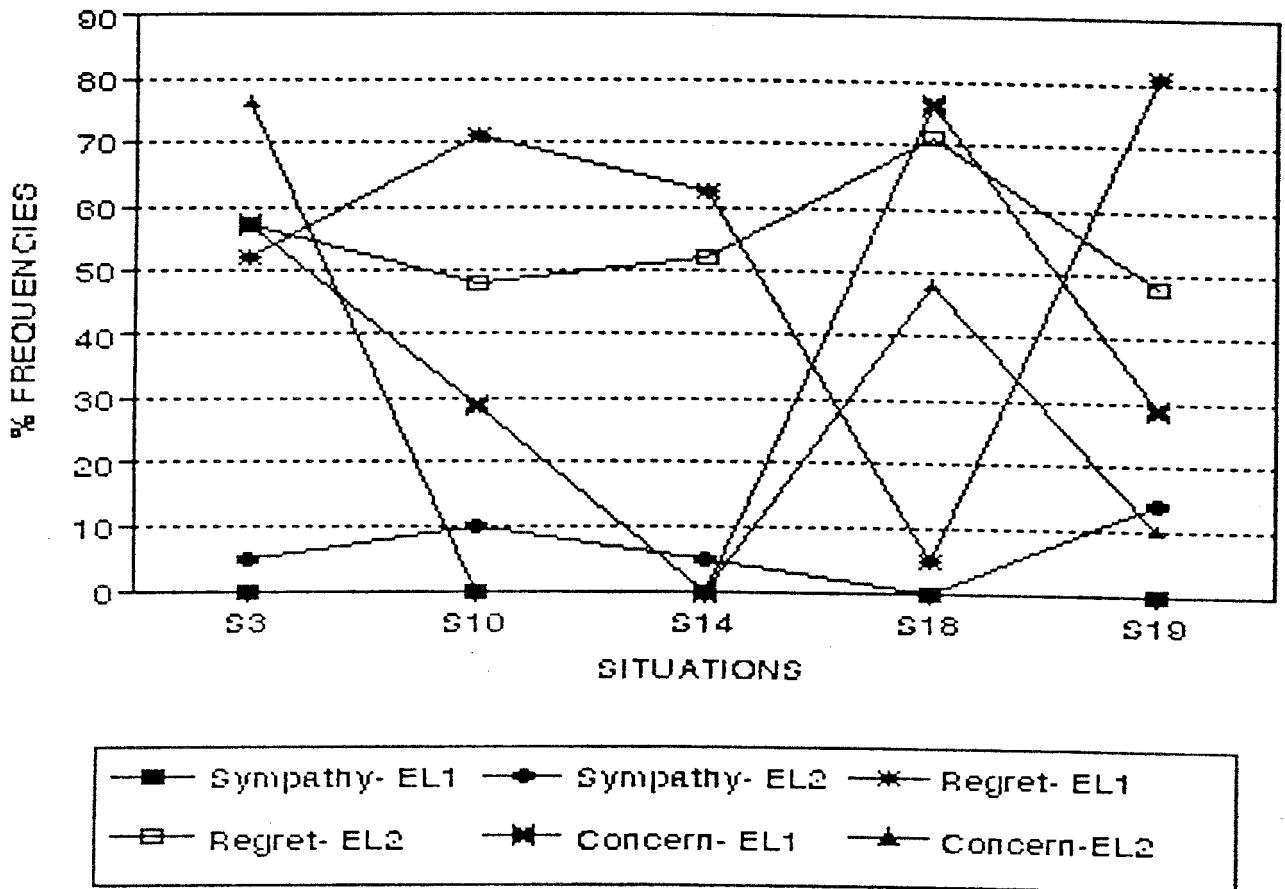
Figure 6. Requests: Percentage Frequencies of Request Perspective



5.2.1.3 Condolences

There were only a few sympathy situations in which significant differences were observed in the semantic formulas and supportive moves used by the EL1 respondents on one hand and the EL2 speakers on the other. Some notable differences in frequency of occurrence of semantic formulas were also observed in some of the situations. While none of the EL1 speakers used an explicit IFID in expressing sympathy, this strategy features in some of the EL2 responses (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Condolences: Percentage Frequencies of Semantic Formulas.



The most common semantic formula for expressing regret in both groups turned out to be "an expression of regret". Nonetheless, there were situations where the EL2 speakers were less likely use this formula; for example in the situation involving a friend whose dog has died 48% of the EL2 speakers as against 71% of the EL1 used this formula. In Situation 19 (expressing sympathy to a friend who has lost a father) 48% of the EL1 speakers compared to 81% of the EL1 speakers used an expression of regret. It is possible that the choice of semantic formula could have been influenced by other variables such as cultural perception of injury or death.

A significant deviation emerged in the situation where respondents sympathised with "a man who trips on a brick" (Situation 18). In this situation none of the EL1 respondents used the formula expression of regret while 71% of the EL2 respondents did so. The most typical strategy used by the EL1 speakers in this situation was to express concern for the other person and 76% of the latter used this formula; the figure for the EL2 speakers was 48%. This deviation was seemingly due to a confusion of form-function relations in the realisation of speech acts, and in particular the sympathy speech act.

As far as the supportive moves used in realising the condolence speech are concerned, there were only a few instances where some notable differences were observed (see Table 10). In sympathising with a friend whose dog has died (Situation 10) 14% of the EL2 speakers as against 29% of the natives used emotional expressions. In the situation involving a friend whose father has died only 10% of the EL2 speakers used emotional expressions; the figure for the EL1 speakers was 29%.

There were no significant differences between the two groups in respect of **offering assistance**. The EL1 speakers were, however, more likely to **offer support** than were the EL2 speakers; 33% of the EL2 speakers - compared to 76% of the EL1 speakers - offered support to "a friend whose father has died".

There were some situations in which the EL2 group used more mitigating expressions than did the EL1 group; for example in the situation involving a friend whose dog has died 43% of the EL2 speakers used mitigating expressions while only 14% of the EL1 speakers did. The results also indicate that the EL2 respondents were less likely to use **intensifying expressions**. As Table 10 shows, no EL2 speakers used any intensifying expression at all in sympathising with a friend

whose dog has died while 48% of the EL1 respondents did. In situation 14 (expressing sympathy to a lady whose son died in a car accident) only 10% of the EL2 respondents - as against 52% of the EL1 - used intensifying adverbial or adjectival phrases. Finally, there were no notable differences in the use of general moral expressions by the two groups of respondents.

Table 10: Condolences: Frequencies of Use of Supportive Moves.

	EEXP	OASS	OSUPP	MIT	INTENS	GMM
S3						
EL1:	4 (19)	4 (19)	1 (5)	-	2 (10)	1 (5)
EL2:	3 (14)	5 (24)	-	-	5 (24)	-
S10						
EL1:	6 (29)	5 (24)	2 (10)	2 (10)	10 (48)	2 (10)
EL2:	3 (14)	-	-	9 (43)	-	3 (14)
S14						
EL1:	5 (24)	-	2 (10)	7 (33)	11 (52)	3 (14)
EL2:	6 (29)	-	1 (5)	5 (24)	2 (10)	3 (14)
S18						
EL1:	-	6 (29)	-	-	-	-
EL2:	-	5 (24)	-	-	-	-
S19						
EL1:	6 (29)	6 (29)	16 (76)	1 (5)	3 (14)	-
EL2:	2 (10)	3 (14)	7 (33)	3 (14)	3 (14)	3 (14)

Percentage frequencies are shown in brackets.

5.2.2. Test Scores

The test scores and statistical measures considered in the following discussion pertain to the EL2 group only; the complete details in respect of both the EL1 and EL2 groups are given in Appendix C (1-6).

It has been indicated in the discussion of the scoring procedure used in the study that a three-point scale was used; ranging from a zero (0) for completely deviant and inappropriate utterances to one (1) mark for utterances which were neither completely deviant nor completely inappropriate and, two (2) marks for appropriate and non-deviant responses. There were instances in EL1 data which warranted a zero; these were mainly instances where no response had been supplied. The maximum scores allowed for in respect of each speech act were as follows:

Apology: 14
 Request: 12
 Condolences: 10

The mean score for the apology speech situations for the EL2 group was 9,43 with a standard deviation of 0.98 (cf. Table 11). The highest score obtained was 14, while the lowest score turned out to be 5 (cf. Appendix C1). There was, however, one instance in which a zero was given as a result of an omission, i.e. no response supplied. An effect size of 1,3 was established in this section of the test.

Table 11. Speech Act Performance Results for EL2 and EL1 Groups.

	Apology	Request	Condolence
EL1: X =	13,52	11,52	9,57
S.D =	0,98	0,87	1,02
EL2: X =	9,43	8,47	6,66
S.D =	3,07	2,82	2,10
d. =	1,3	1,08	1,38

$d > 0,8$ = large effect size (practically significant)

The mean score for the **request speech situations** was 8,47 with a standard deviation of 2,82 (cf. Table 11). The highest score obtained was 12, and only three of the EL2 subjects obtained this score. The lowest score obtained was 2. There were five omissions (see Appendix C5) by the EL1 speakers in situation 22 (requesting the manager to lower the air conditioner). These EL1 respondents who refrained from making the request apparently felt the imposition to be too great and that such a request would jeopardize their chances of getting the job. Hence some of them indicated that they would rather "sit it out" than make the request.

Only one EL2 respondent indicated that he/she would not say anything, seemingly also because of fear of jeopardizing his/her chances of getting the job, or due to the perceived size of the imposition. That such omissions may have influenced the results is a fact that was not lost upon the researcher; which is not the same thing as saying they actually did. One omission in the actual group under investigation, and this in only one speech situation, was therefore not considered serious enough as to vitiate the results of the entire study. Finally, the effect size established in the section on requests was 1,08.

The mean score in the condolence speech situations was 6,66 with a standard deviation of 2,10. The highest score obtained was 9 and the lowest 2. An effect size of 1,38 was established for this section.

It will be clear that the effect sizes established for the three speech acts are well above the 0,8 level considered by Cohen (1988:20) to constitute a "large effect". Hence, the observed differences in performance between the EL2 and EL1 speakers in respect of all the speech acts under investigation can be considered as practically significant (see section 1.1).

5.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.3.1 Apologies

Contrastive analyses of EL2 and EL1 apology responses indicated that there were deviations from EL1 norms or patterns in the apologies of the EL2 learners. Stylistic inappropriateness accounted for a negligible percentage of such deviations. Most of the deviations within the Head Act per se can be explained in terms of inappropriate linguistic realisation means or inappropriate usages. This may be seen from utterances such as "Please apologise me..." or "I'm very much apologetic for my inconvenience".

Other deviations pertaining to failures to modify or adjust the apology strategy type employed, for example intensification of regret, can be ascribed to either sociolinguistic failures or linguistic inadequacies, such as a lack of linguistic repertoire. One possible explanation in this regard is that of differences in norms of interaction (between the subject's first language and English) and, consequently, what may be called sociopragmatic transfer; i.e. transferring native sociopragmatic norms to target language communication. Another explanation for such deviations has to do with an important aspect of communication which is, significantly, not provided for in the questionnaire type of test used in the present study; namely **non-verbal communication**. However, as regards the latter explanation, it should be borne in mind that the instructions in the questionnaire explicitly called for verbal realisation of the said communicative function.

The first explanation - mentioned above - assumes validity only in so far as the use of tonal qualities to aggravate apologies in some languages is taken into account. According to Ribbens (1990:47) in Xhosa, for example, "please" has no direct equivalent, but is implied by tone of voice. While

this may explain the absence of intensification in some requests, analyses of the frequency distribution of intensifiers suggest an alternative explanation. The latter may be seen in the fact that while the EL1 speakers used a wider variety of intensifying adverbs (e.g. very, terribly, extremely, frightfully) the EL2 speakers seemed to be limited to only a few, particularly the adverb "very". This observation therefore seems to suggest that, even if the subjects realised the need to intensify in certain situations, lack of linguistic "repertoire" probably - through avoidance - contributed to some of the deviations observed. However, since there were no follow-up exercises or interviews to confirm the validity of this explanation, it can only be seen as one "possible" explanation and, therefore, one that merits further research (see section 6.3).

The results indicated that some of the EL2 subjects had difficulty with appropriate realisation of the apology speech act, and that such difficulty tended to translate into violations of the appropriateness of form dimension of sociolinguistic competence. There were also situations in which sociolinguistic deficiencies manifested themselves in failures to modify apology strategies in accordance with the situational context and, consequently, to convey the desired "level" of regret. Some of the apologies therefore did not attain the expected illocutionary force. The difficulties in speech act realisation and, by implication, some of the sociolinguistic deficiencies of the EL2 speakers are attested to by the latter's test scores; the average performance of the EL2 group turned out to be lower than that of the EL1 group. Furthermore, the large **effect size** of 1,3 established in the condolence section of the test suggests that these differences are of high practical significance.

5.3.2 Requests

With regards to the request speech act the results indicated that some of the EL2 subjects were not always able to realise requests appropriately in different situational contexts. Although the problem with some of the requests was stylistic appropriateness, violations in this area did not account for a high percentage of the deviations. Only a few respondents used a more formal style of requestive behaviour in situations involving friends. Most of the deviations observed can be ascribed to inadequacies pertaining to sociolinguistic competence, for example, violations of speech act conventions.

Most of the respondents used direct requests even in situations where there was **Social Distance (+SD)** between interlocutors and/or **Dominance ($x < y$)**, or in others with no Social Distance (**-SD**) but with $x < y$. Thus failure to modify the request or choose an alternative strategy resulted in inappropriate requests, which - despite the requirements of the situational factors mentioned - were not mitigated and consequently the expected politeness value was not attained. For example, the following are some of request forms which were used to "ask a lecturer for an extension" (Situation 7): "I request for the extension of the assignment", "I'd like an extension please" and "I'm here to ask for an extension...". The following were directed at a "caller who wants to speak to the manager" (Situation 17): "Who am I speaking to?" and "Who are you, that want to talk to the manager?".

While examples like the above point towards a lack of awareness that less direct means are called for in such situations, there are strong indications that the deviations were the result of pragmalinguistic transfer - "transferring native procedures and linguistic means of speech act performance to interlanguage communication" (Blum-Kulka *et*

al, 1989:10) - and/or inadequate grammatical competence. For instance, there were numerous responses which reflected an awareness of the need to choose alternative request strategies, especially in situations entailing +SD with $x < y$, but which were inappropriately formulated because the respondents used the permission directive "May I...", but with a hearer orientation: e.g. "May you take your parcels Ma'm?" or "May you please extend the date?". If one considers that the most common strategy types in the data were the routinized formulas "Could/Would you..." which, like the permission directive, are indirect request strategies, it becomes evident that the problem can not simply be reduced to lack of awareness about the sociolinguistic requirements (in terms of directness and politeness level) of a particular situational context. Grammatical deficiencies on the part of the respondents resulted in pragmalinguistic transfer which in turn translated into violations of speech act conventions.

The failures to modify perspective and mitigate the requests observed in the data also point towards deficiencies in the area of speech act conventions. The observations detailed in respect of level of directness of requests suggest that the use of conventionally indirect requests in the form of routinized formulae like "Could you.../ Would you..." by the respondents may not necessarily have been due to conscious activation of choice along the scale of directness. Hence the failure to change the request perspective when resorting to what is considered an "appropriate form": "May you...".

The extensive use of the politeness marker "please" and the underutilization of lexical/phrasal downgraders by the EL2 group, though not a sociolinguistic violation in itself, could also be interpreted as an attempt to compensate for deficiencies of strategies to mitigate requests.

The EL2 group's average performance in request speech act realisation is therefore thrown into proper relief when considered against background of the foregoing discussion. The results indicate that the deviations in the speech act performance of the EL2 subjects translated into a lower level of performance on the test than the EL1 group. Finally, the differences were found to be of high practical significance because a large **effect size** (1,08) was established for the request situations.

5.3.3 Condolences

A few of the deviations observed in the condolence speech act point towards problems with encoding this speech act in stylistically appropriate register even where the exchange was between friends: for example, "I sympathise with you for the death of your dog". Most of the deviations, however, stemmed from violations of speech act conventions; particularly in respect of form-function relations.

There were thus instances where the EL2 speakers used the expression of regret "I'm sorry" or "Sorry" to sympathise with someone who "trips on a brick..." when none of the EL1 speakers used the expression in this context at all. Overgeneralization of this semantic formula by the respondents appeared to be one explanation for its frequent use in such contexts. This confirms Ribbens's (1990:47) view that when uttered by speakers of African languages the expression "Sorry" in such contexts is not used as an apology but as a means of expressing sympathy with someone who, for example, "has tripped over his own feet or has dropped something".

There was therefore an apparent confusion of form-function relations in the sociolinguistic behaviour of the EL2 respondents in this particular context which can alternatively be ascribed to sociopragmatic transfer; the

respondents transferred their native sociopragmatic norms to the situation. As Ribbens (1990:47) points out, while this kind of situation does not call for an utterance at all in English terms, in Xhosa the equivalent "Ungafi" ("You must not die") is normally used: the closest equivalent in English being "Did you hurt yourself?". Almost all the EL1 speakers used either the latter form or an "expression of concern" for the hearer, for example "Are you okay?".

The use of an "expression of regret" by EL2 speakers in a situation where the native speaker's reaction would be to say nothing or simply to utter an expression of concern raises some interesting questions. While empirical evidence indicates that the behaviour is deviant from native speaker norms, to what extent can it be viewed as sociopragmatic failure by the addressee? Does the expression fail to achieve what is perceived by the speaker as the desired illocutionary force? Furthermore, if the expression is used by EL1 speakers as an expression of regret in some contexts calling for sympathy, but not in others, is its "overgeneralisation" not perhaps indicative of a "variety of South African English?"

The latter are questions which are outside the scope of the present study but which, however, need further research (see section 6.3). Nevertheless, in the final analysis the EL2 group's average performance was lower than that of the EL1 group, and a large effect size of 1,38 was detected in this section of the test.

5.4 Conclusion

While the central questions underpinning this study pertain to sociolinguistic competence, it is evident that answers to some of these questions will have to be sought across the various other dimensions of language use such as the grammatical. This chapter has been concerned with reporting

and discussing the results of the empirical component of the study. In respect of the initial questions posed in this study, the results indicate that there are deviations from native speaker norms and patterns in the speech act behaviour of EL2 speakers. But while such deviations can be imputed to violations of one or the other sociolinguistic dimension of language use and in consequence sociolinguistic deficiencies, the effect of grammatical deficiencies can also not be ignored. Furthermore, there are practically significant differences between the EL2 and EL1 group in terms of appropriate speech act performance.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter the results of the study were presented and discussed. Although the results provided some useful answers regarding the major questions forming the basis of the study, other pertinent questions seem to have emerged in the process. The aim of the present chapter is to summarise the results of the study and to discuss the implications of the latter for ESL learning and teaching. In addition, the chapter also presents some recommendations for future research suggested by some of the questions which have arisen in the course of the study.

6.2 Hypotheses

The conclusions which can be drawn in respect of the hypotheses posed in the first chapter (section 1.3) are the following:

According to the results of this study there are **deviations** in the speech act performance of the EL2 speakers in the research group with regards to the apology, request, and condolence speech acts (cf. section 5.2). However, not all deviations could be imputed to lack of sociolinguistic competence alone; some of them were the direct result of grammatical errors impinging on one or the other area of sociolinguistic performance, for example speech act conventions. In view of this observation, the first hypothesis posited in section 1.3 can therefore be accepted, though with some minor refinements to the effect that: "the deviations in apology, request and condolence speech act performance can be attributed to sociolinguistic competence, and grammatical deficiencies".

As a result of the observed violations and deviations the **level of speech act performance** of the EL2 group was lower than that of the EL1 in a test designed to assess sociolinguistic competence; hence the lower average scores recorded for the former group. The second hypothesis (section 1.3) can therefore also be accepted.

The results also indicate that the differences in the average scores obtained by the two groups are **practically significant** because effect sizes larger 0,8 - regarded as highly practically significant (Cohen,1988:20) - were registered: 1,3 for apologies, 1,38 for requests and 1,8 for condolences. It is therefore possible to accept the third hypothesis posited in chapter one (cf. section 1.3).

6.3 Implications for ESL Learning and Teaching

The results of the study hold some implications for second language learning and teaching, and these are considered in this section. However, since such implications are considered to hold for sociolinguistic competence in general, they are not discussed in terms of individual speech acts although specific reference to particular speech acts is made wherever necessary.

The results of the study have indicated that there were deviations in the speech act performance of the EL2 speakers and that such deviations are either due to sociolinguistic or grammatical inadequacies. Moreover, it was also found that this was particularly true for apologies and requests and that the major violations were in the area of speech act conventions. This clearly suggests, therefore, that a sociolinguistic component is essential in ESL learning materials. In terms of teaching, the findings suggest that it is even more important to raise learners' consciousness about the sociolinguistic dimension of language use. However, proficiency in the latter requires some strong

grammatical "consciousness raising" as well (the term "consciousness raising" is used out of the necessity to avoid potential bias towards any particular method or technique in this regard). A sociolinguistic component in secondary school teaching materials, presented in conjunction with explicit grammatical consciousness raising, seems better placed to conduce to communicative competence in certain areas of speech act performance.

Despite what has been mentioned above, the results point towards more than just a need to incorporate, and teach, a sociolinguistic component especially at secondary school level. It seems that the design of such materials, and the approaches currently used, need some refining. To start with, the results suggest that presentations (as found in textbooks which purport to teach language as communication or "communicatively" in secondary schools) of so-called "appropriate" utterances, often presented in the form of formulaic expressions, which can be used to realise various communicative functions do not always equip learners with the necessary sociolinguistic competence to do so successfully in different situational contexts.

Although such routinized formulas are eventually internalized - as unanalyzed chunks - by the learners, their application likewise tends to be regurgitations of learnt formulas which are in themselves restrictive and not facilitative of communication because the speaker is unaware of the underlying processes accompanying his/her choice of formula. Thus, for example, a speaker may know that one expression is more appropriate than another without knowing exactly why this is the case. In this study this was reflected in the use of formulaic preparatory strategies by the EL2 speakers, and the deviations which emerged when they tried to apply different requestive strategies. Such observations therefore imply that learners need to be made aware of the underlying factors which determine the appropriateness or

inappropriateness of expressions, and consequently their choice and use.

Presentation of sociolinguistic materials should therefore draw attention to inherent properties of speech act performance in general in the target language rather than lists of expressions which can be used under different situational contexts. Thus, teaching learners that in their target language indirect requests, and/or those with speaker perspectives would be appropriate for particular contexts seems to be a more useful exercise than such lists. Equipped with such an awareness of the general properties of appropriate requestive or apology behaviour, the speaker would then be able to carry such knowledge over and apply it to various situational contexts. Advanced and comprehensive consciousness raising about speech act properties seems even more desirable for learners at tertiary institutions who are training to become teachers.

It could be argued that the issues raised above are not of significance since native speakers do not themselves know the underlying rules governing speech act behaviour in their own language because it involves unconscious processing of sociocultural and linguistic knowledge. However, the above stated suggestions - which derive from the findings of the study - are premised on the view that if the communicative competence of a second language learner needs to be conceived differently from that of the native speaker (Stern, 1983:229), the same holds for the acquisition and application of sociolinguistic knowledge.

The fundamental implications emanating from the results of the study with regards to second language pedagogy and especially with regards to requestive and apology behaviour can be summarised as follows:

- * A sociolinguistic component is an essential part of second language teaching materials, especially at secondary school level.
- * Successful acquisition of appropriate sociolinguistic behaviour entails more than just the ability to select what is considered an appropriate expression for particular communicative functions from "lists" of formulaic expressions. It is therefore necessary to familiarise learners with the **general principles and processes** underlying speech act behaviour in the three speech acts investigated.
- * Second language pedagogy needs to take cognizance of the possibility that grammatical consciousness raising can also conduce to more effective speech act performance and, consequently, proficiency in certain areas of sociolinguistic behaviour.

Finally, the results suggest that second language pedagogy - as some of the questions raised in respect of the condolence speech act illustrate - will need to take cognizance of the emergence, or co-existence, of varieties of English. In this regard the question of what constitutes the target norm appears to be one that will need careful consideration. It is possible that what is viewed within the narrow limits of an ESL classroom as a case of sociolinguistic failure could in fact be - considered against the broader context of South African English speech communities - a manifestation of a variety of English (cf. Buthelezi, 1989:38-61), in which case second language pedagogy needs to confront the question of which speech community's norms of interaction to follow, and whether it is necessary to insist on these norms.

This gives rise to the question of whether second language pedagogy is therefore not perpetuating "ethnocentricity and linguisticism" (Phillipson,1992) by insisting on one speech community as a norm within such a multilingual context as South Africa's. All these are questions which in turn seem to point towards the need for more ethnographic studies of South African English; such studies could then contribute to preparation of sociolinguistic materials better suited for our context. The materials thus developed would for example take into account "nativization", i.e. the process by which English has indigenized in different parts of the world, and developed distinct and secure local forms determined by local norms as opposed to those of the native speaker in, for example, England (Phillipson,1992:195).

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The significance of sociolinguistic competence in cross cultural communication is attested to by observations regarding the effects of sociolinguistic violations on miscommunications, as well as by the results of this study. In spite of its apparent importance, there are very few well-developed measures of sociolinguistic competence. This is therefore an area which needs further investigation.

The sociolinguistic dimension of language use also calls for further investigation, especially in the form of cross cultural studies which will explore issues such as sociolinguistic relativity and sociolinguistic transfer. The observation that some of the deviations were the direct result of linguistic deficiencies also points towards a potential area of investigation. One recommendation in this regard could be that any future research into sociolinguistic competence should try to make systematic provision for the tapping of grammatical competence as well. For instance, in the present study there were grammatical errors which had to be overlooked because it was assumed they were of

orthographic origins, or that they would not be conspicuous in spoken language. Another related area which needs following up is an investigation of the correlation between range of linguistic repertoire or vocabulary and deviant speech act performance (see section 5.3.1).

Finally, investigations into varieties of South African English in relation to speech act performance, as well as into "nativization" of English within the South African context are also in order. While these might appear to be of no direct relevance to second language pedagogy, there are all indications that they have an influence on communicative phenomena. If second language pedagogy still sees its goals in terms of communicative competence, then it is evident that the foregoing are issues which can not be ignored.

6.5 Conclusion

This study has attempted to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing investigations about second language learners' communicative competence. The study has focused on one of the components of communicative competence, namely sociolinguistic competence; in this way the latter's contribution to communicative proficiency could be closely examined. The results indicated that deviations in the speech act performance of the EL2 speakers were in some instances directly due to violations of the sociolinguistic dimension of language use and, in other instances, to grammatical deficiencies or an interplay of both. It is thus clear that the second language learner's communicative competence can not be adequately addressed without giving its underlying competencies due consideration. Finally, the results indicate that an appreciable number of the EL2 subjects did not (in addition to the sociolinguistic deficiencies manifested) have the linguistic proficiency expected of learners in their first year university studies. This in turn sets a wider goal for ESL teachers because it

suggests that they will have to ensure that the learners get more exposure to grammatical consciousness raising if their sociolinguistic competence, and by implication their communicative competence, is to be developed.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

- * This questionnaire is aimed at obtaining information about communicative situations you have engaged in, which involved expression of the following: apologies, sympathy/condolences, requests, refusals.
- * Please describe the situations as accurately and faithfully as possible.
- * REFER ONLY TO SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION WAS ENGLISH.

EXERCISES:

Describe any situations that you can recall where you had to apologise to somebody, make a request, compliment someone, refuse someone's request, and express condolences/sympathy. Give a clear indication of the following: what had happened, where were you, who were you talking to, and any other relevant information.

SITUATION 1.(Apologies)

SITUATION 2.(Requests)

SITUATION 3.(Compliments)

SITUATION 4.(Condolences/Sympathy)

SITUATION 5 (Refusals)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

INSTRUCTIONS

- * Please read the following descriptions of some social situations in which you might find yourself. The descriptions involve situations calling for expression of the following: apologies, requests, sympathy/condolences, and refusals.
- * In each case write down **WHAT YOU WOULD SAY** in that particular situation. Say as much, or as little, as possible as you would in an **ACTUAL SITUATION**.
- * Please indicate the following: (1) **Sex....** (2) **Home Language.....**

* * * * *

1. Walking into a supermarket, you bump into an elderly lady, hurting her leg and knocking her packages out of her hands...

2. You are making arrangements for your birthday party. You would like one of your friends to give a speech at the party. You call to ask her to be one of the speakers...

3. You are watching television at home. Your friend calls to tell you she has injured her ankle in that afternoon's cricket game...

4. You are in a doctor's consulting room and the doctor is preparing to give you an injection. You have, however, noticed that the doctor has not changed the needle on the syringe and so you don't want to be injected with a used needle...

5. It is during the school vacation and you are doing temporary work in a department store. An angry customer confronts you in connection with a pair of shoes bought the day before. You discover that the shoes you gave her are not of the right size...

6. Your cousin calls asking you to accompany him to a seminar. You are unable to do so because you have to prepare for a test that you are writing the next day...

7. You go to your lecturer to ask for an extension to finish writing an assignment that you were supposed to submit on that day...

8. You forgot to send your friend some information that he/she had requested. You call him/ her to apologise...

9. You board the bus. The only seat available is occupied by some parcels belonging to a nurse who is sitting alone. You want her to move the parcels so that you can sit...

10. Your friend calls to tell you that her dog has just been killed by a passing car...

11. Your teacher/lecturer asks you to come and help him with a task related to a project the whole class has been working on. The problem, however, is that she/he always singles you out. This time you are not prepared to help...

12. Walking out of the post office, you bump into an elderly gentleman, shaking him a bit. It was clearly your fault...

13. You are doing temporary work in a department store. You need to go and see the doctor. You approach the manager of the store to request the next day off...

14. You are in a bus. As the bus approaches a busy intersection, the lady sitting next to you suddenly remarks that she does not like that intersection because that is where her son was killed in a car accident only two weeks before...

15. One of your friends asks you to join them for a picnic. You know that your parents do not approve of their company and so you are not prepared to go with them...

16. Reversing the car out of a parking lot, you smash into the car behind you. The owner jumps out and comes over to you, shouting angrily that you have ruined his car...

17. You are working as the secretary to the manager of a large company. Someone calls asking to talk to the manager. You want to find out who the caller is before you relay the message to the manager...

18. A man walking close to you trips on a jutting brick on the pavement and falls...

19. You call your classmate to find out why she/he was not in class that day. She/he tells you her/his father died the previous night...

20. Running up the stairs in a public library you bump into an elderly lady, knocking her spectacles down. It is clearly not your fault, she was standing in the way...

21. While trying to park the car on the pavement before the house, you smash into your neighbour's gate. Your neighbour comes out to look at the damage...

22. You are waiting to be interviewed for a job that you have applied for. The air conditioner in the manager's office has been set too high and you are freezing. You want to ask the manager to turn the air conditioner down a little...

APPENDIX C1

APOLOGY	SPEECH	ACT:	EL2						Totals
SUBJECTS	S1 Lady	S5 Customer	S8 Friend	S12 Gentleman	S16 Driver	S20 Lady	S21 Neighbour	Totals	
A	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	8	
B	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	10	
C	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	13	
D	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	12	
E	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	10	
F	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	8	
G	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	5	
H	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	7	
I	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	
J	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	9	
K	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
L	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	6	
M	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	9	
N	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	7	
O	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	
P	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	11	
Q	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	5	
R	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	7	
S	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	12	
T	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
U	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	5	
							TOTAL	198	
							MEAN	9.429	
							S.D	3.075	

APPENDIX C2

REQUEST SPEECH ACT: EL2

SUBJECTS	S2 Friend	S7 Lecturer	S9 Nurse	S13 Manager	S17 Caller	S22 Manager	Totals
A	2	1	2	2	1	0	8
B	2	1	2	2	1	2	10
C	2	0	1	2	1	2	8
D	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
E	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
F	1	1	2	1	1	2	8
G	2	0	0	2	0	0	4
H	2	2	2	1	0	2	9
I	1	0	0	2	0	2	5
J	2	2	2	1	1	2	10
K	2	0	0	2	2	0	6
L	2	2	2	2	0	2	10
M	2	2	0	2	2	2	10
N	2	2	2	2	1	2	11
O	0	2	0	0	2	2	6
P	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Q	2	2	2	2	1	1	10
R	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
S	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
T	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
U	2	2	0	2	2	2	10

TOTAL 178

MEAN 8.47

S.D 2.82

APPENDIX C3

CONDOLENCE SPEECH ACT : EL2

SUBJECTS	S3 Friend	S10 Friend	S14 Passenger	S18 Stranger	S19 Classmate	Totals
A	2	2	2	0	2	8
B	2	2	2	1	2	9
C	2	2	2	1	2	9
D	2	2	1	2	1	8
E	2	2	2	0	2	8
F	2	1	2	0	0	5
G	2	2	0	2	2	8
H	2	0	1	1	2	6
I	2	1	0	0	2	5
J	2	0	2	2	0	6
K	2	2	2	1	2	9
L	1	1	2	2	2	8
M	2	0	1	1	1	5
N	2	1	0	0	1	4
O	2	0	2	1	2	7
P	2	1	2	1	2	8
Q	1	1	0	0	0	2
R	0	0	1	0	2	3
S	2	2	2	1	1	8
T	2	2	2	1	2	9
U	2	0	2	0	1	5

TOTAL 140

MEAN 6.66

S.D 2.1

APPENDIX C4

APOLOGY	SPEECH	ACT:	EL1						Totals
SUBJECTS	S1 Lady	S5 Customer	S8 Friend	S12 Gentleman	S16 Driver	S20 Lady	S21 Neighbour		
A	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	8	
B	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	10	
C	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	13	
D	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	12	
E	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	10	
F	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	8	
G	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	5	
H	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	7	
I	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	
J	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	9	
K	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
L	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	6	
M	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	9	
N	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	7	
O	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	
P	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	11	
Q	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	5	
R	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	7	
S	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	12	
T	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
U	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	5	
							TOTAL	198	
							MEAN	9.429	

APPENDIX C5

REQUEST	SPEECH	ACT:	EL1				Totals
SUBJECTS	S2 Friend	S7 Lecturer	S9 Nurse	S13 Manager	S17 Caller	S22 Manager	
A	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
B	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
C	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
D	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
E	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
F	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
G	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
H	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
I	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
J	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
K	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
L	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
M	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
N	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
O	2	2	2	2	2	0	10
P	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Q	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
R	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
S	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
T	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
U	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
						TOTAL	242
						MEAN	11.52
						S.D	0.872

APPENDIX C6

CONDOLENCE SPEECH ACT: EL1

SUBJECTS	S3 Friend	S10 Friend	S14 Passange	S18 Stranger	S19 Classmate	Totals
A	2	2	2	0	2	8
B	2	2	2	1	2	9
C	2	2	2	1	2	9
D	2	2	1	2	1	8
E	2	2	2	0	2	8
F	2	1	2	0	0	5
G	2	2	0	2	2	8
H	2	0	1	1	2	6
I	2	1	0	0	2	5
J	2	0	2	2	0	6
K	2	2	2	1	2	9
L	1	1	2	2	2	8
M	2	0	1	1	1	5
N	2	1	0	0	1	4
O	2	0	2	1	2	7
P	2	1	2	1	2	8
Q	1	1	0	0	0	2
R	0	0	1	0	2	3
S	2	2	2	1	1	8
T	2	2	2	1	2	9
U	2	0	2	0	1	5
					TOTAL	140
					MEAN	6.666
					S.D	2.1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AKMAJIAN, A., DEMERS, R.A. & HARNISH, R.M. 1979. *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- ASKES, H. 1989. Some Techniques in Language Testing. *Journal for Language Teaching*: 25 (i) 36-63.
- BACH, K. & HARNISH, R.M. 1984. *Linguistics, Communication and Speech Acts*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- BACHMAN, L.F. 1990. *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BARTSCH, R. 1987. *Norms of Language: Theoretical and Practical Aspects*. London: Longman.
- BELL, R.T. 1976. *Sociolinguistics: Goals, Approaches and Problems*. London: Batsford.
- BELL, R.T. 1981. *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics: Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. London: Batsford.
- BLAKEMORE, D. 1992. *Understanding Utterances: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Massachusetts: Blackwell.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. 1983. Interpreting and Performing Speech Acts in a Second Language: A Cross-Cultural Study of Hebrew and English. In WOLFSON, N. & JUDD, E., eds. 1983. *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- BLUM-KULKA, S. & OLSHTAIN, E. 1984. Requests and Apologies: A Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns. *Applied Linguistics* 5 (3):196-213.

BLUM-KULKA, S., HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G., eds. 1989. Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies. Vol. 31. Norwood: Ablex.

BLUM-KULKA, S., HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G. 1989. Investigating Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: An Introductory Overview. In BLUM-KULKA, S., HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G., eds. 1989. Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies. Vol. 31. Norwood: Ablex.

BOSTROM, R., ed. 1984. Competence in Communication. A Multidisciplinary Approach. London: Sage.

BROWN, P. & LEVINSON, S. 1978. Universals of Language Use: Politeness Phenomena. In GOODY, E., ed. 1978. Questions and Politeness. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BROWN, H.D. 1987. Principles of Language Learning. 2nd Ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

BRUMFIT, C.J. & JOHNSON, K. 1979. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BUTHELEZI, Q. 1989. South African Black English: Myth or Reality? (In VAN DER WALT, J., ed. 1989. **South African Studies in Applied Linguistics**: 38-68. Potchefstroom: SAALA.

CANALE, M. 1983. From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy. In RICHARDS, J.C. & SCHMIDT, R.W., eds. 1983. Language and Communication. London: Longman.

CANALE, M. & SWAIN, M. 1980. Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. **Applied Linguistics** 1: 1-47.

CARROLL, B.J. 1980. Testing Communicative Performance. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

- CHOMSKY, N. 1965. Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. London: Longman.
- COHEN, A.D & OLSHTAIN, E. 1981. Developing a Measure of Sociocultural Competence: The Case of Apology. **Language Learning**. 31 (1):113-134.
- COHEN, J. 1988. Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioural Sciences. 2nd. Ed. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- COLLINGE, G.N., ed. 1985. An Encyclopedia of Language. London: Routledge.
- COOLEY, R.E & ROACH, D.A. 1984. Theoretical Approaches to Communicative Competence: A Conceptual Framework. In BOSTROM, R., ed. 1984. Competence in Communication: A Multidisciplinary Approach. London: Sage.
- COULMAS, F., ed. 1981. Conversational Routine. The Hague: Mouton.
- COULTHARD, M. 1985. An Introduction to Discourse Analysis. London: Longman.
- CRYSTAL, D. 1991. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. 2nd. Ed. New York: Basil Blackwell & Andre Deutsch.
- DITTMAR, N. 1976. Sociolinguistics: A Critical Survey of Theory and Application. Frankfurt: Edward Arnold.
- DREYER, C. 1992. Learner Variables as Predictors of ESL Proficiency. (Thesis (Ph.D.) - Potchefstroom University for CHE).
- ELLIS, R. 1981. Learning to Communicate in the Classroom: A Study of Two Language Learner's Requests. **Studies in Second Language Acquisition** 14:1-23.

- FASOLD, R. 1990. *The Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- FISHMAN, J.A., ed. 1976. *Advances in the Sociology of Language*. Vol. 1. The Hague: Mouton.
- GOODY, E., ed. 1978. *Questions and Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GRIMSHAW, A.D. 1976. Sociolinguistics. In FISHMAN, J.A., ed. 1976. *Advances in the Sociology of Language*. Vol. 1. The Hague: Mouton.
- GUMPERZ, J.J. & HYMES. D., eds. 1972. *Directions in Sociolinguistics*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- HATCH, E. & FARHARDY, H. 1982. *Research Design and Statistics for Applied Linguistics*. London: Newbury House.
- HATCH, E. 1983. Preface. In WOLFSON, N. & JUDD, E., eds. 1983. *Sociolinguistics and Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- HODGE, F.K. 1990. Cross-Cultural Study of Request Realization Patterns Across Two Groups of Native Speakers of English. *South African Journal of Linguistics*, 8 (3):121-128.
- HYMES, D. 1972. On Communicative Competence. In PRIDE, J.B. & HOLMES, J., eds. 1972. *Sociolinguistics*. New York: Penguin.
- HYMES, D. 1974. *Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. London: Travistock.
- KELLER, C. 1981. Gambits: Conversational Strategy Signals. (In COULMAS, F., ed. *Conversational Routine*. The Hague: Mouton.)

- LEECH, G.N. 1983. Principles of Pragmatics. London: Longman.
- LEECH, G.N. & THOMAS, J. 1985. Pragmatics. In COLLINGE, G.N., ed. 1985. An Encyclopedia of Language. London: Routledge.
- MCCROSKEY, J.C. 1984. Communication Competence: The Elusive Construct. In BOSTROM, R.N., ed. 1984. Competence in Communication. A Multidisciplinary Approach. London: Sage.
- OLLER, J.W. 1979. Language Testing at School. London: Longman.
- OLSHTAIN, E. 1983. Sociocultural Competence and Language Transfer: The Case of Apology. In GASS, S. & SELINKER, L., eds. 1983. Language Transfer in Language Learning. Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- OLSHTAIN, E. & COHEN, A.D. 1983. Apology: A Speech Act Set. In WOLFSON, N. & JUDD, E., eds. 1983. Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition. Rowley: Newbury House.
- PHILLIPSON, R. 1992. Linguistic Imperialism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- PRIDE, J.B. & HOLMES, J., eds. 1972. Sociolinguistics. New Jersey: Penguin.
- RIBBENS, I.R. 1990. Multiculturalism and Communicative Interference. **The NESLATT Journal** 5:40-50.
- RICHARDS, J.C. & SCHMIDT, R.W., eds. 1983. Language and Communication. London: Longman.
- RICHARDS, J.C. & RODGERS, T.S. 1986. Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

RINTELL, E.L. & MITCHELL, C.J. 1989. Studying Requests: An Inquiry into Method. In BLUM-KULKA, S., HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G., eds. Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies. Vol. 31. Norwood: Ablex.

ROULET, E. 1979. Linguistic Theory, Linguistic Description and Language Teaching. London: Longman.

SAVIGNON, S.J. 1983. Communicative Competence and Classroom Practice: Texts and Contexts in Second Language Learning. Reading: Addison Wesley.

SAVILLE-TROIKE, M. 1982. The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

SEARLE, J.R. 1969. Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SEARLE, J.R., ed. 1971. The Philosophy of Language. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SEARLE, J.R. 1979. Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SEARLE, J.R. & VANDERVEKEN, D. 1985. Foundations of Illocutionary Logic. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SELIGER, H.W. & SHOHAMY, E. 1989. Second Language Research Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SMITH, K. 1986. The Distribution of Talk: A Preliminary Needs Assessment of Turn-taking Skills in an ESL College Level Discussion Group. (Dissertation (M.A.) - University of Minnesota).

SPOLSKY, B. 1989. Conditions for Second Language Learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- STERN, H.H. 1983. *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- TARONE, E. & YULE, G. 1989. *Focus on the Language Learner*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- THOMAS, H.H. 1983. Cross-cultural Pragmatic Failure. **Applied Linguistics** 4 (2): 91-112.
- TRIM, J.L.M, RICHTER, R., VAN EK, J.A & WILKINS, D.A., eds. 1980. *Systems Development in Adult Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- TRUDGILL, P. 1983. *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and society*. New York: Penguin.
- VAN EK, J.A. 1980. The Linguistic and Situational Content of the Common Core in a Unit/Credit System. In TRIM, J.L.M., RICHTER, R., VAN EK, J.A. & WILKINS, D.A., eds. 1980. *Systems Development in Adult Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- WEIDEMANN, A.J. 1988. *Linguistics: A Crash Course for Students*. Bloemfontein: Patmos.
- WOLFSON, N. & JUDD, E., eds. 1983. *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- WOLFSON, N. 1983. Introduction. In WOLFSON, N. & JUDD, E., eds. 1983. *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- WOLFSON, N. 1983. Rules of Speaking. In RICHARDS, J.C. & SCHMIDT, R.W., eds. 1983. *Language and Communication*. London: Longman.

WOLFSON, N., MARMOR, T. & JONES, S. 1989. Problems in the Comparison of Speech Acts Across Cultures. In BLUM-KULKA, S., HOUSE, J. & KASPER, G., eds. 1989. Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies. Vol. 31. Norwood: Ablex.

SUMMARY

There is general agreement amongst linguistic theorists and language practitioners that the second language learner's proficiency has to be understood in terms of communicative competence. Such proficiency is generally regarded as a multidimensional construct comprised of several distinct, but interrelated and interacting, abilities or competencies. One such ability relates to the sociolinguistic dimension of language use. The purpose of this study was to investigate the sociolinguistic competence in English of a group of first-year students of English at Vista University (Soweto), focusing on performance of the apology, request and condolence speech acts.

The investigation entailed a study of the relevant literature as well as an empirical study. In the former, the various theoretical developments tied to the notion of communicative competence were outlined, and the different abilities, subsumed under such competence, were then distinguished and defined with reference to the relevant literature.

The empirical component of the study involved administering a questionnaire-type test to two groups of first-year university students of English: 21 ESL students from Vista University (Soweto) and 21 first language (L1) speakers of English from the Rand Afrikaans University. The latter served as a the norm for first language speaker patterns. The data were analyzed using the analytical frameworks employed in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) project. A modified version of the same framework was adapted for analysis of the condolence speech act responses. A three-point scale was used to score the responses, and the practical significance of the differences observed was also detected by means of statistical processing of the scores.

The results indicated that there were deviations from L1 speaker norms in the speech act performance of the ESL subjects. The observed deviations were in the main ascribable to sociolinguistic violations although there were cases where grammatical inadequacies contributed to deviant utterances. As a result of these deviations and violations the level of performance of the ESL group was lower than that of the L1 group. There were indications, therefore, that some of the subjects in the ESL speaker group did not have adequate proficiency in respect of certain aspects of the sociolinguistic dimension of language use. The differences in speech act performance between the L1 and the ESL speakers were also found to be practically significant.

OPSOMMING

Daar bestaan 'n algemene opvatting onder linguïste en taalpraktisyne dat tweedetaalvaardigheid in terme van kommunikasievaardigheid beoordeel behoort te word. Die taalbedreweheid van 'n tweedetaalspreker word normaalweg beskou as 'n multidimensionele vaardigheid, want dit behels verskeie vaardighede wat onderling met mekaar verband hou en 'n wisselwerking op mekaar uitoefen. Een van die vaardighede ter sprake hou verband met die sosiolinguïstiese dimensie van taalgebruik. Die doel van hierdie studie is om ondersoek in te stel na die taalgebruiksvaardigheid van die tweedetaalspreker van Engels. Die studie fokus op die uitvoer van die taalhandelinge van verskoning vra, versoek en betuiging van meegevoel, en het spesifiek betrekking op die taalgebruik van 'n groep eerstejaarstudente wat ingeskrewe studente van Engels is aan die Universiteit Vista se Sowetokampus.

Die ondersoek behels teoretiese en empiriese navorsing. Die verskillende teorieë wat met kommunikatiewe vaardigheid verband hou, is eers uiteengesit, en toe is die verskillende vaardighede wat by kommunikatiewe vaardigheid inbegryp word, met betrekking tot die relevante literatuur bepaal.

Die empiriese komponent van die studie behels die invul van 'n vraelys deur twee groepe universiteitstudente wat Engels op eerstejaarsvlak neem: 21 tweedetaalsprekers van Engels van die Universiteit Vista se Sowetokampus en 21 moedertaalsprekers (T1-sprekers) van Engels van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit. Die taalgebruik van die RAU-studente word as die normstandaard vir moedertaalsprekerpatrone beskou. Die analitiese raamwerk wat in die "Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns" -projek gebruik is, is aangewend om die data te analiseer. 'n Aangepaste weergawe van dieselfde raamwerk is gebruik om die

response van die taalhandeling van meegevoelbetuiging te analiseer. 'n Driepuntskaal is gebruik om die response te bepunt, en die praktiese beduidenis van die verskille wat waargeneem is, is vasgestel deur middel van 'n statistiese verwerking van die puntetelling.

Die resultate toon aan dat die tweedetaalsprekers afwykings toon van T1-taalnorme met betrekking tot die uitvoering van die betrokke taalhandelinge. Die afwykings wat waargeneem is, kan hoofsaaklik toegeskryf word aan die oortreding van sekere gespreksreëls as gevolg van sosiolinguistiese verskille tussen die respondente, alhoewel daar ook gevalle is waar grammatiese ontoereikendheid bygedra het tot die afwykende uitings. As gevolg van hierdie afwykings en oortredings is die taalgebruiksvlak van die tweedetaalspreker laer as die T1-sprekers s'n. Daar is dus aanduidings dat sommige respondente in die tweedetaalgroep nie voldoende sosio-kulturele vaardigheid het met betrekking tot sekere aspekte van taalgebruik nie. Die verskille tussen T1-sprekers en tweedetaalsprekers met betrekking tot die uitvoering van die genoemde taalhandelinge is ook statisties beduidend.