

**İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN ARADİLİNDE İLTİFAT  
YANITLARI: BİR DURUM SAPTAMASI**

**AN INTERLANGUAGE STUDY OF COMPLIMENT  
RESPONSES: A CASE OF TURKISH  
LEARNERS OF ENGLISH**

**İLKNUR İSTİFÇİ  
(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)  
Eskişehir, 1998**

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**İlknur İSTİFÇİ**

**THESIS OF MASTER OF ARTS  
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Anadolu Üniversitesi  
Merkez Kütüphane

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## YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÖZÜ

İlknur İstifçi

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Gül Durmuşoğlu Köse

### ÖZET

Bu çalışma İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin aradilde iltifatlara verdikleri yanıtları incelemektedir. Öğrencilerin başarılarını belirlemek için, kullanmış oldukları stratejiler İngilizce’yi anadili olarak kullanan kişilerin kullanmış oldukları stratejilerle karşılaştırılmıştır.

Araştırmaya Anadolu Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi’nde okumakta olan 100 “Upper-Intermediate” düzeyinde öğrenci, Edebiyat Fakültesi’nde okuyan 50 Türk öğrenci ve Leeds ve Oxford Üniversitelerinde okumakta olan 25 İngiliz öğrenci katılmıştır. Bu öğrencilere 15 farklı iltifat durumu içeren ve bu iltifatlara yanıt gerektiren Söylem Tamamlama Testi (Discourse Completion Test) uygulanmıştır ve öğrencilerden uygun bir yanıt yazmaları istenmiştir. Bu durumlar günlük hayatta her zaman karşılaşılabilecekleri durumlardır ve dış görünüş, sahiplik ve yetenek/performans konuları ile ilgilidir.

Araştırmada üç çeşit veri toplanmıştır. Bunlar: (1) anadili Türkçe olan deneklerin verdikleri yanıtlardan oluşan Türkçe Veri Tabanı, (2) anadili İngilizce olan deneklerin verdikleri yanıtlardan oluşan İngilizce Veri Tabanı, ve (3) İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin verdikleri yanıtlardan oluşan Deneysel İngilizce Veri Grubudur.

Verilerin değerlendirilmesinden elde edilen sonuca göre anadili Türkçe olan deneklerin verdikleri yanıtlar ile anadili İngilizce olan deneklerin verdikleri yanıtlar arasında benzerlik ve farklılıklar vardır. Anadili Türkçe olan denekler daha çok “Deflecting” (saptırmak), “Returning” (karşılık verme) ve “Rejecting” (reddetme) stratejilerini kullanırken, anadili İngilizce olan denekler daha çok “Accepting” (kabul etme) stratejisini kullanmışlardır. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin sonuçlarına bakıldığında ise “Deflecting”, “Returning” ve “Accepting” stratejilerinin daha çok kullanıldığı görülmektedir. İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin

“Accepting” stratejisini çok kullanmaları açısından anadili İngilizce olan kişilere yaklaştıkları ancak diğer stratejileri de sıklıkla kullanmaları yönünden birinci dilleri olan Türkçe’den transfer yaptıkları görülmüştür. Öğrenciler bazı durumlara verdikleri yanıtlarda doğrudan Türkçe’den çeviri yapmak yoluna gitmişlerdir ve Türkçe’de sıklıkla kullanılan deyimleri, şakaları ve klişeleri İngilizce anketi yanıtlarken kullanmışlardır.

Bu çalışmadan elde edilen en önemli sonuç iltifat olgusunun hem İngilizce hem de Türkçe’de evrensel olması ve o dilleri konuşan kişiler tarafından sıklıkla kullanılmalarıdır. İngilizce’de iltifatlar ve bunlara verilen yanıtlar formül şeklinde olup, çeşitlilik göstermemektedir. Türkçe’de ise iltifatlar ve yanıtları çeşitlilik göstermekte, deyimler ve klişe sözlerle süslenmektedir. İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin kendi anadillerinde kullandıkları iltifat yanıtlarını İngilizce’yi anadili olarak konuşan kişilerle olan iletişimlerinde kullanmaya çalışmaları yanlış anlamalara sebep olabilmektedir. İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilere sözeylemlerin derste açıkça anlatılması, öğrencilerin diller arasındaki kültür farklılıkları konusunda bilgilendirilmeleri ve onlara anadili İngilizce olan kişilerin sıklıkla kullandıkları örneklerin gösterilmesi öğrencilerin hedef dili öğrenme süreçlerini hızlandıracak ve onların dil öğreniminde önemli bir yeri olan sosyo-kültürel kuralları daha çabuk kavramalarına yardımcı olacaktır.

### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interlanguage of Turkish EFL learners in using compliment responses. In order to determine their success, the compliment response strategies they used were compared to the responses of native speakers of English.

Participants in this study were 100 Turkish EFL learners who are attending Anadolu University, Education Faculty and who are at the upper-intermediate level of proficiency, 50 native speakers of Turkish who are attending Anadolu University, Literature Faculty and 25 native speakers of English who are attending the universities of Leeds and Oxford. These participants were given a discourse completion test which consisted of fifteen different compliment situations, all of which required compliment responses. They were to write suitable compliment responses. These situations were the situations they could encounter in their everyday lives and they were related to appearance/attire, possession and performance/ability.

Three types of data were gathered. These were: (1) Turkish L1 Baseline Data formed by the responses of Turkish native speakers, (2) English L1 Baseline Data formed by the responses of native English speakers and (3) EFL Experimental Data formed by the responses of Turkish EFL learners.

After analyzing the data, it was found that there are some similarities and differences between the responses of Turkish L1 speakers and native English speakers. Turkish learners mostly employed 'Deflecting', 'Returning' and 'Rejecting' strategies whereas native English speakers used 'Accepting' strategy. When the results of EFL learners are taken into account, it was seen that they mainly used 'Deflecting', 'Returning' and 'Accepting' strategies. Thus, it can be said that EFL learners approach the native speaker norms in terms of using 'Accepting' strategy but in terms of using other strategies they employ transfer from their L1, Turkish. Students translated some items directly from Turkish in some situations and they used some formulaic expressions, jokes and clichés they use in their English responses. The most important result of this study is that compliments are universal in both English and Turkish and they are frequently used by native people. Compliments and compliment responses in English are formulaic and they lack originality. In Turkish, on the other hand, they are various and decorated with idioms and cliché expressions. Turkish EFL learners' attempts to use the responses they use in

Turkish when they communicate with native English speakers may cause misunderstandings. Supplying formal instruction on the use of speech acts in lessons, giving information about socio-cultural differences and providing examples of the mostly used patterns by native English speakers may speed up the learning process and may help learners comprehend socio-cultural rules which are important in learning a language and achieving communicative competence in the target language.

**JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI****İmza**

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**İlknur İSTİFÇİ'nin "An Interlanguage Study of Compliment Responses: A Case of Turkish Learners of English (İngilizce Öğrenen Türk Öğrencilerin Aradilinde İltifat Yanıtları: Bir Durum Saptaması)"** başlıklı tezi **13 Kasım 1998** tarihinde, yukarıdaki jüri tarafından Lisansüstü Eğitim Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliğinin ilgili maddeleri uyarınca, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalında yüksek lisans tezi olarak değerlendirilerek kabul edilmiştir.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

##### **1.1.1 Background**

Learning a language has always been a concern for people and learning a foreign / second language differs from learning a first language. In the field of Applied Linguistics, researchers generally focus on two terms in learning a language; Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Foreign Language Learning (FLL).

As is well-known, there are important contextual differences between these two terms. In a second language acquisition context, the language is spoken in the immediate environment of the learner who has good opportunities to use the language for participation in natural communication situations. In a foreign language learning situation, the language is not spoken in the immediate environment of the learner and there is little or no opportunity for the learner to use the language in natural communicative situations.

Ringbom (1987) states that second language learners generally achieve at least some basic communicative competence since the success or failure of acquisition may have considerable social consequences. He points out that mastery of basic vocabulary for essential communicative purposes is more

important than grammatical correctness, and the adult learner's use of grammar and vocabulary may deviate considerably from the language used by native speakers.

On the other hand, Scarcella (1990) claims that many adult learners never master the conversational skills of the second language because of not receiving enough exposure to the second language and not having enough direct experience conversing with native speakers to develop their conversational competence.

Research has revealed that perfect mastery of a language includes not only knowing syntax, phonology, grammar and vocabulary but also using the language appropriately in actual communication, that is, learning a variety of sociolinguistic and social interactional rules. Thus, foreign language learners face many problems in acquiring sociolinguistic rules naturally.

As Ranney (1990) states sociolinguistic skills include the ability to perform various speech acts, the ability to manage conversational turns and topics, sensitivity to variation in register and politeness, and an understanding of how these aspects of language vary according to social roles and settings. Learners, who are not aware of the usage of speech acts, violate speech act rules, make wrong attributions in inter-cultural communication and transfer some of their first language rules into English so they fail to communicate successfully in second/foreign language and this failure causes misunderstandings.

According to the studies carried out by Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984) and Olshtain & Cohen (1989 & 1993), second language speakers might fail to communicate effectively (commit pragmatic failures), even when they have an excellent grammatical and lexical command of the target language and their failure can be due to cross-linguistic differences in speech act realization rules that learners are just liable to transfer 'rules of use' and 'usage'. The complexity of speech act strategies also makes special demands of the speaker because they are conditioned by a host of social, cultural, situational and personal factors.

Even though the students in the Education Faculty study English intensively, the input they get is limited to their books and their teachers and they do not have the opportunity to interact with native speakers to practice what they learn in class. This study aims to investigate compliment response strategies used by the students in the Education Faculty. This study will give an insight into the usage of compliment responses of native English speakers, native Turkish speakers and Turkish EFL learners (from now on EFL learners) by comparing their responses both in Turkish and English and it aims to contribute to research in this area.

### **1.1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

There has been various pragmatic and sociolinguistic research in literature. Some of these studies have investigated only one language and some others have investigated two languages comparatively. The relevant literature shows that cross-cultural pragmatic or sociolinguistic studies have been mostly carried out in ESL situations. There are few studies conducted in an EFL situation. This study will be carried out in an EFL situation in order to see IL development of Turkish students in using compliment responses and in order to see if their first language has an effect on their English..

A number of studies about compliments and compliment responses ( Wolfson, 1983, 1986; Manes, 1983; Manes and Wolfson, 1981; Johnson, 1992; Holmes and Brown, 1987; Knapp, Hopper and Bell, 1984; Ylanne-McEwen, 1993; Chen, 1993; Holmes, 1988; Ernawati, 1996; Nelson, Al-Batal and Echols, 1996) have been carried out. Some of the studies have investigated compliments and compliment responses cross-culturally, and some studies have placed emphasis on a single culture. Research to date has examined compliment behaviour in a variety of western cultures and languages, except for the following:

the studies conducted by Chen (1993) which investigated compliment responses cross-culturally between Chinese and American speakers;

Ye (1995) which described compliment behaviour in Mandarin Chinese;

Ernawati (1996) which investigated compliment response strategies of Indonesian non-native speakers of English and how they are different from the native norm of either Indonesian or Australian;

and the study of Nelson, Al-Batal and Echols (1996) which investigated Syrian Arabic speakers' and American English speakers' verbal responses to compliments.

There are very few studies investigating interlanguage compliments and compliment responses made by learners of English.

Compliment responses were selected for cross-cultural study for three reasons. First, although a body of knowledge exists on the speech act of complimenting (Wolfson 1981, 1983; Manes 1983; Knapp, Hopper and Bell 1984; Holmes and Brown 1987; Herbert 1989), less research has been conducted on responses to compliments. As Nelson, Al-Batal and Echols (1996) state for non-native English speaking (NNES) students, knowing how to compliment is important, but it is equally important to know how to respond to a compliment.

A second reason is that, although a few studies have been conducted on compliment responses in English-speaking countries, no study has investigated compliment responses in a Turkish-speaking country.

The third reason is that, compliment responses are useful for learners to know about and they serve as important social strategies in creating or affirming social relationships. Learning to compliment and give responses to compliments appropriately and effectively may assist learners in creating their own opportunities to engage in meaningful social interaction with native speakers.

As Soenarso (1988; cited in Ernawati, 1996:3) states, compliment behaviour is a reflection of culture. Therefore, it is likely that Turkish students have different ways of complimenting and responding to compliments compared

to English students. This study will also give an insight into how Turkish people give responses to compliments, how Turkish non-native learners of English respond to compliments in English and how their first language effects their foreign language.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions of this study will be:

1. What are the compliment response strategies used by native Turkish speakers and native English speakers?
2. What are the compliment response strategies of Turkish EFL learners when they use English?
3. Are there similarities and differences between English native speakers' and EFL learners' responses to compliments?
4. Is there L1 transfer in English responses of Turkish EFL learners?

## **1.3 Significance**

This study hopes to draw attention to the use of speech acts, give a comparison basis to researchers who have carried out studies on compliment responses and raise consciousness about the use of compliment response strategies.

## **1.4 Aim and Scope**

This research aims to compare compliment response strategies of native English speakers and Turkish EFL learners. The aim is to see whether there are any differences in the use of compliment responses between the three groups of students and whether there is transfer from their first language.

The study was carried out with students enrolled in the Literature and Education Faculties of Anadolu University in the 1997-1998 academic year and

students at Oxford and Leeds Universities. The level of EFL subjects was determined by the Michigan Placement Test. All the subjects were given a Discourse Completion Test which consisted of 15 situations and they were asked to write suitable responses in the blanks. Gender difference was not taken into consideration during the study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research on interlanguage, communicative, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence and summarize arguments about the universality of communicative competence, states the ideas about speech acts and speech acts in interlanguage, presents some research on politeness, compliments and compliment responses, examines the notion of transfer and some transfer studies.

#### 2.2 Interlanguage

The term 'interlanguage' has been used in a number of ways, but in the last twenty years it has become especially common in studies of second language acquisition. There are at least three linguistic varieties to be considered in all second language settings: a native language (NL), a target language (TL), and the learner's developing second language, i.e. the interlanguage (IL). The term 'interlanguage' means two things: (1) the learner's system at a single point in time and (2) the range of interlocking systems that characterizes the development of learners over time (McLaughlin, 1987).

According to Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics ( Richards et.al, 1985) interlanguage is the type of language produced by second and foreign language learners who are in the process of learning a language. As Ellis (1985) states, interlanguage is the systematic knowledge of language which is independent of both the learner's L1 and L2 system he is trying to learn.

Selinker is the first researcher to use the term interlanguage. Various alternative terms have been used by different researchers to refer to the same

phenomenon; Nemser (1971) refers to *approximative systems*, and Corder (1971) to *idiosyncratic dialects* or *transitional competence*.

According to Selinker (1972) the interlanguage system is a unique grammar that does not belong to either the source language or the target language and that contains rules found only in systems resulting from a second language learning context. He also notes that many L2 learners fail to reach target language competence, that is, they do not reach the end of the interlanguage continuum and they constantly adjust their L1 systems to approximate the L2 more closely, in a “restructuring” continuum. On the other hand, Corder (1978) states that interlanguage features of all learners cannot always be linked to the L1 and the interlanguage frequently exhibits features derived from simplification processes. He describes interlanguage development as a “developmental continuum”.

Selinker (1972) accepts five cognitive processes central to second language learning:

1. Language transfer: some items, rules, and some subsystems of the interlanguage may result from transfer from the first language.
2. Transfer of training: some elements of the interlanguage may result from specific features of the training process used to teach the second language.
3. Strategies of second language learning: some elements of the interlanguage may result from a specific approach to the material to be learned.
4. Strategies of second language communication: some elements of the interlanguage may result from specific ways people learn to communicate with native speakers of the target language.
5. Overgeneralization of target language linguistic material: some elements of the interlanguage may be the product of

overgeneralization of the rules and semantic features of the target language.

Selinker (1972) argues that these processes constitute the ways in which the learner tries to internalize the L2 system and he also claims the systematicity of interlanguage which can be predicted by recognizable cognitive strategies.

In contrast to Selinker's cognitive emphasis, Adjemian (1976) claims that the systematicity of the interlanguage should be analysed linguistically as rule-governed behaviour and he accepts interlanguage as a natural language.

As Ellis (1985) states, the L2 learner's interlanguage system is permeable in the sense that rules that constitute the learner's knowledge at any one stage are not fixed, but are open to amendment. He also points out that the L2 learner's interlanguage is constantly changing and the learner slowly revises the interim systems to accommodate new hypotheses about the target language system. Corder (1978) points out that second language learning is a process of both restructuring and complexification and that there is indeed a starting point other than zero, the learner starts from 'some basic simple grammar'. It is also claimed in literature that the mother tongue may effect the speed of development at certain points other than the sequence of development.

In general it has to be admitted that 'context' is a notion which has not been given enough attention in studies of interlanguage. According to Tarone (1979), interlanguage can be seen as analysable into a set of styles that are dependent on the context of use and learner utterances are systematically variable in at least two senses: (1) linguistic context, and (2) situational context. Tarone (1983) represents the effects of situational context as a continuum of IL styles ( See Figure 2.1). The contexts range along a continuum of styles from formal to vernacular. At one end of the continuum is the vernacular style which is both most natural and systematic. At the other end of the continuum is the careful style, which is clearly evident in tasks that require the learner to make a grammatical judgement. She points out that the

variability seen in interlanguage production reveals a complex language system which is difficult to characterize without considering sociolinguistic factors external to grammatical system and individual language capabilities of the learner. For Tarone, interlanguage is not a single system, but a set of styles that can be used in different social contexts.

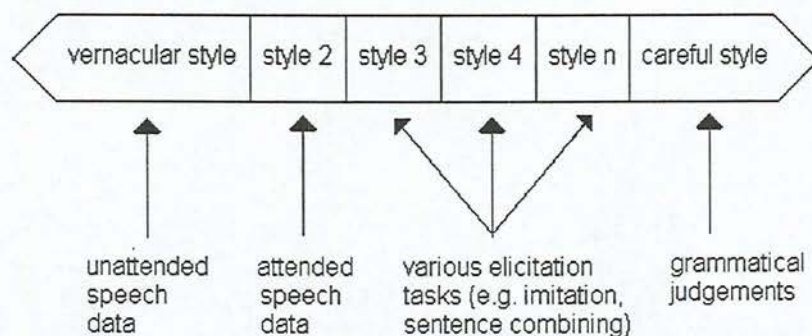


Figure 2.1 The Interlanguage Continuum (Tarone 1983).

Ellis (1982) also explains the continuing development of IL socio-linguistically. As he states, the learner carries on the learning process until his communicative needs in the L2 have been met to his satisfaction and at that point his IL fossilizes. According to McLaughlin (1987), fossilization is the state of affairs that exists when the learner ceases to elaborate the interlanguage in some respect, no matter how long there is exposure, new data, or new teaching and Selinker (1972) points out that fossilization results especially from language transfer.

A great number of morpheme studies were carried out in 1960s in order to see interlanguage development of second language learners. These studies supported the notion that second language learners passed through stages in the acquisition of grammatical features. As Richards (1985) states, much of the second language acquisition (SLA) research of the 1970s reflected an impoverished view of the

nature of language proficiency which was viewed as mastery of grammar and communicative aspects of language development were ignored.

As communicative competence theory assumed a more central role in applied linguistics in the 1960s and 1970s, interlanguage studies have included not only the nature and development of second language (L2) linguistic systems (phonology, morphology, syntax) but also the interactional and communicative dynamics of L2 performance. Many studies have been carried out on functional, pragmatic and social dimensions of second language use and the effects of non-native communicative behaviors on native speaker-non-native speaker communication. Among issues that have been studied from this perspective are: (1) disfluency phenomena, which include studies of hesitations, corrections, repairs, repetitions, pausing, and other aspects of speech execution in L2 performance and their effects on native speaker- nonnative speaker communication and L2 discourse, and (2) speech acts and rules of speaking, which includes studies of acquisition and use of such speech acts as apologies, requests, promises, complaints, compliments, and disagreements by L2 learners, and studies of turn taking, topic selection, openings and closings, gambits, presentation of self and other aspects of conversational discourse. The focus of such studies has been on the discourse features and the tactics used by L2 learners to achieve particular communicative and illocutionary effects, and also on the pragmatic consequences of the use of nontarget-language communicative norms, which may result in misinterpretation and communication breakdown in cross-cultural settings (Richards, 1985:67).

### **2.3 Communicative, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence**

It has been proved by sociolinguistic research that learners must not only acquire syntax, phonology, grammar and vocabulary, but they must also acquire the rules of language use. One of the approaches to sociolinguistics; communicative

competence has gained importance since the emergence of communicative language teaching in 1970s and it has been the goal of foreign language teaching since then.

According to Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics ( Richards et al., 1985), “communicative competence includes:

- (1) knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the language;
- (2) knowledge of the rules of speaking ( knowing how to begin and end conversations, what topics may be talked about in different types of speech events, which address forms should be used with different persons in different situations, etc.);
- (3) knowing how to use and respond to different types of speech acts, such as requests, apologies, thanks and invitations; and
- (4) knowing how to use language appropriately”.

Hymes (1971) states that communicative competence is not simply what is done with language; it also involves abstract knowledge about social and functional rules of language. He is accepted as a mentor in communicative competence approach and he views language behavior in terms of its appropriateness and correctness. In his framework, communicative competence includes both knowledge of linguistic rules and the ability to apply these rules to use language appropriately.

As Loveday (1982) points out, communicative competence involves much more than the traditionally taught areas of language: grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and it entails knowing how to incorporate contextual determinants into linguistic constituents when producing meaning and it is the knowledge and ability to construct meaning in a way that is socioculturally appropriate in all contexts of communication (See Figure 2.2 for the construction of contextual meaning). He adds that communicative competence should be a goal of L2 teaching because without such knowledge and ability varying degrees of dissatisfaction and frustration in transactions for both native and non-native are bound to arise and the

purpose of teaching communicative competence is to avoid and overcome this potential dissatisfaction and frustration.

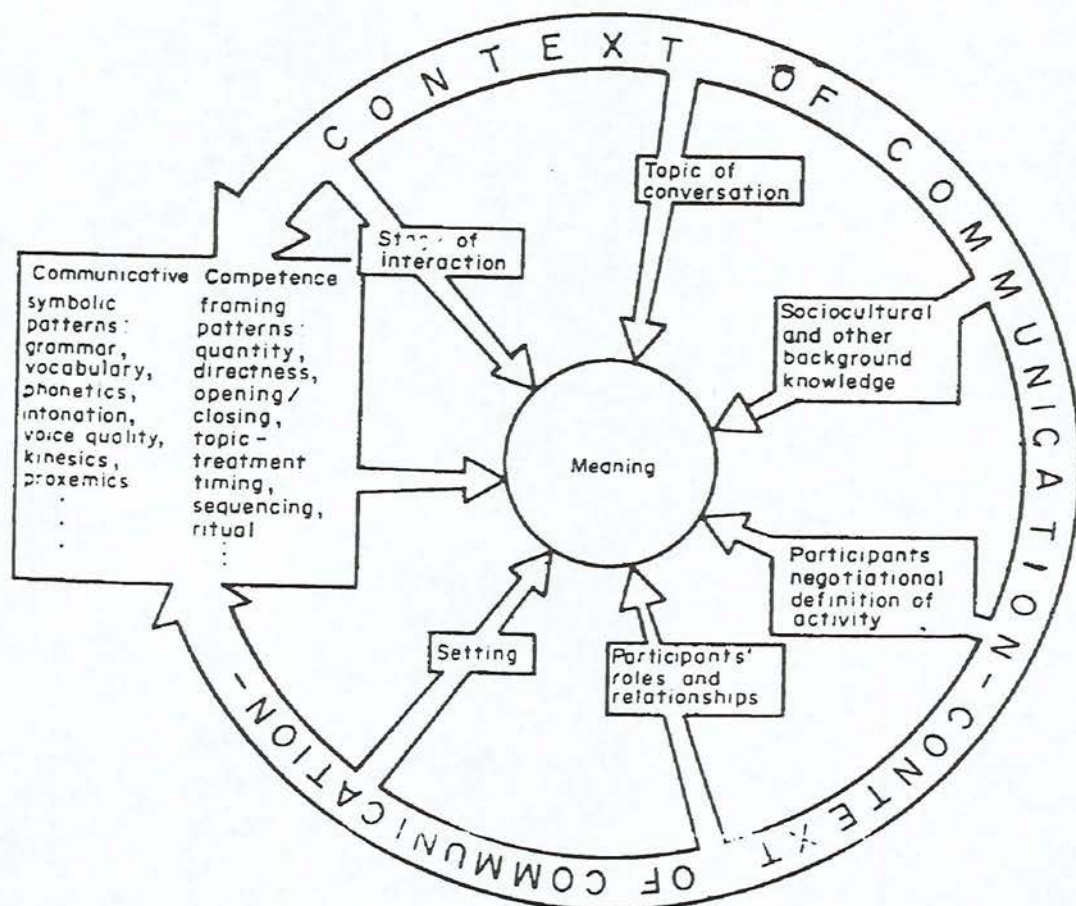


Figure 2.2 The construction of contextual meaning : the sociolinguistic constituents of communicative competence and some of their contextual determinants producing meaning (Loveday, 1982 : 63)

“Communicative competence is that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts; and it is a dynamic interpersonal construct that can only be examined by means of the overt performance of two or more individuals in the process of negotiating meaning” (Brown, 1994:227) (See Figure 2.3 for the components of communicative language ability in communicative language use).



Figure 2.3 Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use (Bachman, 1990 : 85; cited in Brown, 1994 : 230).

As Canale (1983) states, proficiency in a language means not only knowing its phonology, syntax, vocabulary and semantics but also being able to make use of this knowledge appropriately in actual communication. Canale (1983) and Canale and Swain (1980) have proposed a theoretical basis for communicative language teaching and state that a theory of communicative competence is:

one in which there is a synthesis of how language is used in social contexts to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse (Canale and Swain, 1980, p.20).

They have also pointed out that four different components make up the construct of communicative competence: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

According to their framework, grammatical competence refers to knowledge of the rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, lexical items, and phonology “to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances”. Discourse competence, on the other hand, encompasses both productive and interpretive abilities. This type of competence concerns mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres so coherence and cohesion are the focus of this type of competence. Strategic competence includes the mastery of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that can either be used to compensate for deficiencies in other areas of competence or to increase communicative effectiveness in general. It is the competence underlying our ability to make repairs, to cope with imperfect knowledge, and to sustain communication through “paraphrase, circumlocution, repetition, hesitation, avoidance and guessing as well as shifts in register and style (Brown, 1994:228).

According to Canale (1983) sociolinguistic competence refers to the appropriateness with which speakers produce and understand language within a particular social context. Brown (1994) claims that this type of competence requires 'an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction'. Bachman (1990 cited in Shaw, 1992: 11) has broken down sociolinguistic competence into two separate pragmatic categories: functional aspects of language (illocutionary competence, or pertaining to sending and receiving intended meanings) and sociolinguistic aspects (which deal with such considerations as politeness, formality, metaphor, register, and culturally related aspects of language) (See Figure 2.4 for the components of language competence).

Rivers (1983, cited in Tarone and Yule, 1989) states that learners need to understand how language is used in relation to the structure of society and its patterns of inner and outer relationships, if they are to avoid clashes, misunderstandings, and hurt. The process of acquiring sociolinguistic competence is gradual for an individual living in his native speech community. As for the second language learner, it is difficult to acquire sociolinguistic rules naturally.

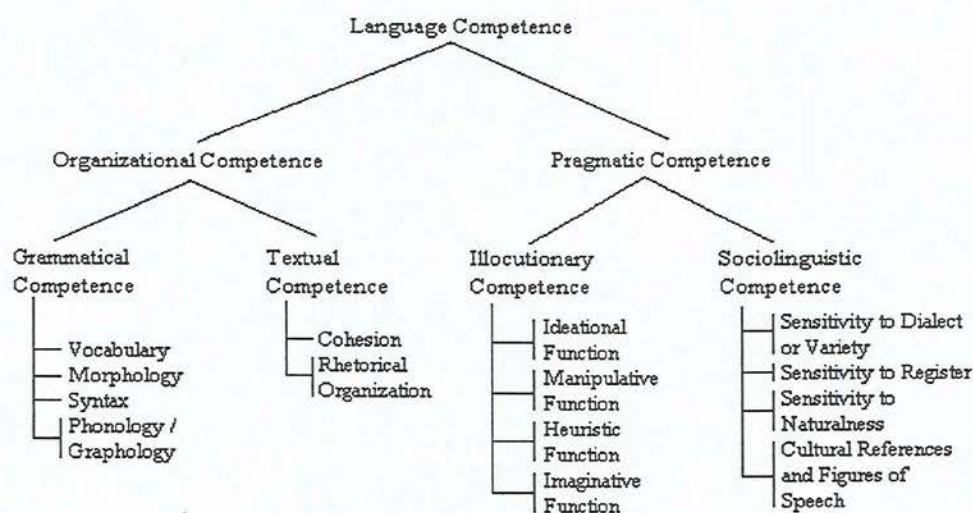


Figure 2.4 Components of language competence (Bachman, 1990)

According to Tarone and Yule (1989), 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.

As Shaw (1992) states, sociolinguistic competence includes appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form; lack of knowledge appears in native speakers who cannot say the right thing in an unfamiliar context since they do not know the relevant rules and for nonnative speakers every situation is potentially unfamiliar, because of having sociolinguistic conventions that are unknown. Acquiring sociolinguistic competence in another language may be a slow and difficult process, since it involves understanding the social values that underlie the community's ways of using language (Holmes, 1992: 490).

Blum-Kulka (1980, cited in Canale, 1983) states that 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, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction. She also points out three types of rules in determining the efficiency of a given communicative function: pragmatic rules, social-appropriateness rules and linguistic realization rules. Pragmatic rules refer to the situational preconditions that must be satisfied to carry out a given communicative function; social-appropriateness rules deal with whether or not a given function would normally be conveyed at all and if so, with how much directness; linguistic-realization rules involve a number of considerations, such as the frequency with which a given grammatical form is used to convey a given function, the number and structural range of forms associated with each function, the generality of forms across functions and situations, and the means of modulating the attitudinal tone of a given function. Her statement expresses very well the importance of sociolinguistic competence for second language pedagogy: "It is quite clear that as long as we do not know more about the ways in which communicative functions are being

achieved in different languages, [second language] learners will often fail to achieve their communicative ends in the target language, and neither they nor their teachers will really understand why (Blum-Kulka 1980, cited in Canale, 1983:8).

Some researchers deal with pragmatic competence and sociopragmatic competence as parts of sociolinguistic competence. According to Koike (1989), pragmatic competence is the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts. Harlow (1990) points out that sociopragmatic competence in a language comprises more than linguistic and lexical knowledge; the speaker knows how to vary speech act strategies according to the situational or social variables present in the act of communication. According to her, sociolinguistic rules are often found below the level of conscious awareness. For example, a series of studies on complimenting behavior revealed that compliments in American English are formulaic in nature but are not recognized as such by members of the speech community.

As Ranney (1992) states, sociolinguistic skills (such as the ability to perform various speech acts, manage conversational turns and topics, sensitivity to variation in register and politeness, and an understanding of how these aspects of language vary according to social roles and settings) which are aspects of sociolinguistic competence are important and they can only be put to use within a background of broader cultural knowledge.

## **2.4 Universality of Communicative Competence**

Shaw (1992) claims the universality of communicative competence and states that not all elements of communicative competence are equally available to all native speakers of a language and this is true on the level of universals as well. He adds that there are elements of communicative competence which are aspects of general cognitive ability, innate or acquired, hence available for use in any language

known to the speaker. According to him, some elements of communicative competence are universal, in that whoever has them can apply them in any language, some are applicable only to a specific language, and some are available only to members of a certain community or cultural group. The distinction between the specific-language and the cultural level in sociolinguistic competence corresponds to one made by Thomas (1983).

Thomas (1983) accepts two types of pragmatic error: pragmalinguistic failure, where communication fails because the sociolinguistic function of a language item from L1 is wrongly transferred to its L2 translation equivalent and sociopragmatic failure, where a situation is wrongly evaluated, as L2 speakers appear "too polite" because the situation demands greater politeness in their own culture than the one in which they find themselves. According to her, a chief source of pragmalinguistic error is pragmalinguistic transfer, where speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from first language to second and sociopragmatic failure refers to the social conditions placed on language in use- the sociological interface of pragmatics. She adds that in pragmalinguistic failure the problem is on the linguistic level, in sociopragmatic failure it is on the cultural. Thomas (1983) also maintains that sociopragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior. She advocates sensitizing students to expect cross-cultural differences in linguistic realizations of such phenomena as politeness truthfulness and value judgments.

According to Coseriu (1980; cited in Shaw, 1992:20) communicative competence cover both knowledge and ability-for-use and this competence determines our ability to speak coherently, cogently, logically, i.e. our effectiveness as speakers or writers in general. He accepts the universality of communicative competence and claims that our aim at this level is to be congruent to be clear and coherent, to conform to the facts, to use schemata for coherence, to structure the telling of a joke, to use strategies to enhance communication effectively.

Having worked on the universality of communicative competence, Cumming (1989) has found out that someone who is a good speaker, writer, reader, or listener in one language is likely to have the basis for a good performance in another, given the knowledge of code and text necessary for its instantiation.

## 2.5 Speech acts

A speech act is defined as 'an utterance as a functional unit in communication' (Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985). The speech act is the simplest and the most troublesome level; it is the simplest because it is the 'minimal term of the set', it is troublesome because it has a slightly different meaning in the study of the ethnography of communication from the meaning given to the term in linguistic pragmatics and in philosophy, and it is not quite 'minimal' after all (Hymes 1972; cited in Fasold, 1990). According to Hymes, a speech act is to be distinguished from the sentence and is not to be identified with any unit at any level of grammar.

As Schmidt & Richards (1980) state that speech acts occur within discourse, and the interpretation and negotiation of speech act force is often dependent on the discourse or transactional context.

Austin (1962; cited in Leech, 1983) makes between three kinds of speech act: a Locutionary act (performing the act of saying something), an Illocutionary act (performing an act in saying something), and a Perlocutionary act (performing an act by saying something). Locutionary acts are also known to convey propositional meaning and illocutionary acts have the effect the speaker wants the utterance to have on the listener. For example, in 'I am thirsty' the propositional meaning is the speaker's physical state, but its illocutionary force is a request for something to drink.

Searle (1976) presents another taxonomy which accepts 'illocutionary point' or purpose of the act from the speaker's perspective as the basis for classification. For Searle (1976), speech acts can be grouped into a small number of basic types

based on speaker intentions: representatives (their purpose is to commit the speaker in varying degrees to the truth of something), directives (they include all speech acts whose primary point is to get the hearer to do something), commissives (their purpose is to commit the speaker to do something), expressives (their point is to express feelings and attitudes about states of affairs), declarations (the point is that the performance brings about the correspondence between the words and the world).

Several taxonomies have been proposed in addition to that of Searle. Fraser (1975) adds a few categories such as acts of asserting, evaluating, suggesting and stipulating.

Speech acts are also classified as 'indirect speech acts' which are often felt to be more polite ways of performing certain kinds of speech act, such as requests and refusals (Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985). As Searle (1976) points out in indirect speech acts one speech act is brought about indirectly by performing another one; thus a statement like 'the food smells delicious' may in one instance serve as an expression of the speaker's hope that dinner will soon be ready, and in another as just a compliment for the hostess.

Second language research has generally focused on the acquisition of particular speech acts and it has been noted that speech acts differ cross-culturally in their distribution, function and frequency of occurrence (Cohen and Olshtain 1981; Wolfson 1981; Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz 1990; Schmidt and Richards 1980; Blum-Kulka 1982).

Some researchers (Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984) have proposed the notion of a "speech act set" which consists of all the major linguistic and/or pragmatic strategies and aims at encompassing the maximal potential set of strategies available to the speaker for each speech act. There have been various speech act studies in ESL (English as a Second Language) settings such as apologies, requests, expressions of gratitude, complaints, offers and compliments. Evidence in research has shown that first language learners acquire the

social rules of use very early in childhood whereas second language learner faces more difficulties than the first language learner and the use of an inappropriate semantic formula may cause him or her to fail to communicate in terms of social appropriateness and effectiveness. It has also been proved by research that sociolinguistic rules are below the level of conscious awareness and are not recognized by members of the speech community.

The universality of speech act strategies, particularly indirect speech acts, have also been discussed in the literature. As Fraser (1978) (cited in Schmidt & Richards, 1980) claims the strategies for performing illocutionary acts are essentially the same across languages. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) most speech acts are threatening to either the speaker or the hearer and speakers compute the level of threat involved, considering such factors as social distance, degree of power that one party may have over the other and the ranking of impositions within a particular culture, and then select a strategy for doing the act. They distinguish between two types of politeness: positive and negative. Positive politeness minimizes the threatening action by reassuring the hearer that he or she is valued by the speaker and negative politeness is characterized by self-effacement, formality and restraint.

There is sufficient evidence in literature that speech act strategies will be universal only if they are phrased in general terms. Schmidt & Richards (1980) state that speech act strategies are to a certain extent universal, therefore, learners of new languages still need to learn several important things; they need to learn the particular conventionalized forms in the new language, particular applications of general principles which vary systematically among cultures and groups. They need to learn the general 'ethos' of the new speech community, whether the interactional style in general is stiff and formal or relaxed and open. They need to learn which speech acts are particularly threatening in a particular culture. One culture might place particular emphasis on modesty and circumspection in the expression of

speaker beliefs whereas in another community requests might be especially threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1987:152).

Candlin (1978) (cited in Richards, 1985) argues that interethnic and intercultural variation mother tongues, domains of language use, interlanguage attitudes, and language-learning purposes lead to misunderstanding, and that misunderstanding can be understood through the study of discourse patterning. He stresses that the performance of speech acts depends on “culturally specific appropriateness criteria”.

Clyne (1975) (cited in Richards, 1985) discusses communication breakdown (where an intention is misunderstood) and communication conflict (where a misunderstanding leads to friction between speakers) and suggests that both can often be attributed to cross-cultural (interlingual or dialectal), social (sociolectal), or individual (idiolectal) differences in communicative competence rules, for example, different rules for the realization of particular speech acts.

## **2.6 Descriptive ESL/EFL Research on Speech Acts**

Several studies of speech acts and pragmatics have been carried out in adult interlanguage. Most of them examine the cross-cultural differences between the two languages and the potential for misunderstanding, i.e. they cite evidence obtained largely from experiments involving written responses to speech act stimuli that, despite an excellent command of the L2 grammar and lexicon, learners may fail to convey pragmatically appropriate expressions, in part because they transfer L1 pragmatic rules in their L2 production (Koike, 1989: 280).

As Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) state, diversity in the realization of speech acts in context may stem from at least three different types of variability: (a) intra-cultural, situational variability; (b) cross-cultural variability; (c) individual variability.

Blum-Kulka (1982) claims that learners seem to develop an interlanguage of

speech act performance which can differ from both first language (L1) and second language (L2) usage in linguistic form and/or procedure or strategy and the interlanguage of speech act performance is manifested in the following ways: (1) usages similar to those of native speakers in all ways, (2) usages that differ from those of native speakers on a scale of directness (violating social appropriateness norms), (3) usages that differ from those of native speakers in linguistic realization and/or procedures. For Blum-Kulka, these similarities and differences can be explained by viewing the rules that govern speech-act performance and interpretation across languages as ranging on a continuum from the cross-culturally shared, possibly universal rules to the language- and culture-specific ones and second language learners' performance seems to approximate native usage where the rules are cross-culturally shared and to deviate from native usage where the rules are language- and culture-specific. She adds that learners activate a non-language-specific pragmatic competence in attempting to communicate in the L2 and they will transfer their speech act knowledge and expect to find equivalent grammatical means and pragmatic rules in the L2, but they may misuse the L2 structures.

Having compared apologies by Danish learners of English in the L2 as well as in the L1, Trosberg (1987) states that pragmatic strategies are transferred from the L1 to the L2 and there is a gradual increase in the use of certain grammatical markers for politeness relative to an increase in competence, similar to that noted in L1 acquisition by children.

Fraser (1978) (cited in Koike, 1989) claims that becoming socially competent in another language does not involve new concepts concerning how language is organized and what types of devices or strategies serve a particular social function; he suggests that what must be learned is the grammar of the language to encode the speech act.

Blum-Kulka (1983) argues against his proposal, saying that the interdependence of pragmatic, linguistic, and social factors involved in speech acts

varies from one language to another, as a result L2 learners often fail in effectiveness and appropriateness in their speech act attempts.

After carrying out a comparative study between Hebrew and English on apologies, Cohen and Olshtain (1981) have found that Israeli ESL students are less likely to offer repair, to acknowledge responsibility and expressed less intensity of regret than do American native speakers of English and their patterns often reflect sociocultural transfer of native Hebrew patterns.

Olshtain (1983) reports on a related study of apologies in Israel by collecting data from 63 subjects and she has found that the five semantic formulas are universal in all three languages (English, Hebrew, Russian) studied.

Wolfson (1989) has studied compliments, invitations, greetings, partings and judgments. Based on a corpus of 686 compliments, she discovered the repetitive and formulaic nature of compliments. According to Wolfson (1989) a serious potential for communicative breakdown exists when second language learners are involved in such interactions since compliments are reflective of the value system of the speech community.

Expressions of gratitude have also been studied. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) have looked at both native and nonnative thank you's on questionnaires asking subjects to write what they would say when they receive a gift, favor, reward or service. They have found that nonnative English speakers have considerable difficulty in expressing gratitude in the target language. As the researchers claim, some problems are pragmalinguistic in nature, exhibiting divergence from native use on lexical and syntactic levels and learners are often unable to approximate native idioms and routines.

According to Cohen and Olshtain (1993) speech acts are complex and problematic for some ESL/EFL learners and they are conditioned by a host of social, cultural, situational and personal factors. Since norms differ greatly from one society to another, it is obviously not enough for nonnative speakers to learn the

formulas or routines in the target language. They must also learn which formulas are appropriate to which situations. For Cohen and Olshtain, the actual realizations of speech acts are strongly conditioned by culture-specific rules.

Having carried out a study of Hebrew and English on requests, Blum-Kulka (1982) has commented on second language learners' use of speech acts:

1. Second language learners seem to realize their speech act in the target language successfully in cases which are governed by cross-culturally shared rules and in cases where the specific choice of speech-act strategy is also cross-culturally shared.
2. Second language learners seem to violate social-appropriateness norms in the target language in ways that indicate a transfer of social norms from the native language.
3. Second language learners might fail to realize their speech acts effectively by either extending or overgeneralizing the potential illocutionary force of shared and nonshared strategies to inappropriate contexts or by failing to follow target language conventions of usage in the realization of language-specific strategies (Blum-Kulka, 1982: 52).

## 2.7 Politeness

Politeness is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider others' feeling, establish a level of mutual comfort and promote rapport ( Hill et.al, 1986:349). As Brown and Levinson (1987) state there are two types politeness: positive and negative. Positive politeness anoints the face of the addressee by indicating that in some respects Speaker (S) wants Hearer (H)'s face. Positive politeness strategies, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), emphasize common ground between speaker and hearer, make use of in-group markers, presuppose cooperation, and are less concerned with minimizing imposition on the

hearer. Negative politeness, on the other hand, is oriented mainly towards partially satisfying H's negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination, and it reflects a desire to maintain social distance, unhindered freedom of action, and lack of imposition. As a result, negative politeness is more conventionally indirect, with more hedging and avoidance.

According to Olshtain and Cohen (1989), the Brown and Levinson politeness taxonomy would appear to make a contribution to cross-linguistic studies by helping to characterize different cultures as well as subcultures within societies. For Cohen and Olshtain positive politeness cultures may show a tendency toward placing high value on directness, matter-of-factness, friendly back-slapping, and the like, negative politeness cultures, on the other hand, may value the maintenance of social distance and face-saving.

In expressing politeness, speakers may use verbal and non verbal devices to do what is intended in communication. These devices are called 'acts'. In social interaction, we come across situations in which we have to do some acts which intrinsically threaten 'face' (Ernawati, 1996:9). Brown and Levinson (1987) call these acts as 'face threatening acts' (FTAs) and they propose that all acts are inherently face threatening to the speaker (S), hearer (H), or to both; they divide them into two kinds: FTAs that threaten negative face, by wanting their own actions to be unimpeded by others, and FTAs that threaten positive face, by wanting to be desirable to at least some others.

According to Ernawati (1996), the central idea of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness is that since all acts are intrinsically threatening to the face and face is vulnerable to FTAs, it is politeness that anoints their performance to reduce their sharpness, so that face is made less vulnerable; to reduce the threat, each community develops a set of specific linguistic strategies and utilises them to govern the relationship among the members of community. These linguistic strategies are called 'politeness strategies'.

In contrast to Brown and Levinson, Leech (1983) (cited in Chen, 1993) is concerned with normative aspects of politeness and his Politeness Principle has 6 maxims: Tact Maxim (a. Minimize cost to other, b. Maximize benefit to other), Agreement Maxim (a. Minimize disagreement between self and other, b. Maximize agreement between self and other), Approbation Maxim (a. Minimize dispraise of other, b. Maximize praise of other), Modesty Maxim (a. Minimize praise of self, b. Maximize dispraise of self), Generosity Maxim (a. Minimize benefit to self, b. Maximize cost to self) and Sympathy Maxim (a. Minimize antipathy between self and other, b. Maximize sympathy between self and other).

Having compared Brown and Levinson's and Leech's Politeness Principles, Chen (1993) states that Leech's Politeness Principle maxims offer an adequate theoretical framework for accounting for differences of compliment responses across the two cultures and Pomerantz's (1978) conditions for compliment responses, 'agree with the speaker' and 'avoid self-praise' which have been widely cited and proven to be largely correct (Wolfson 1983, 1989, Wolfson and Manes 1980, Manes 1983, Manes and Wolfson 1981, Holmes 1987, Herbert 1989) are equivalent to Leech's Agreement Maxim and Modesty Maxim respectively.

Many rules for polite interaction depend on an understanding of the social distance norms of the community. Being polite in another language is not just a matter using a perfect native accent and correct grammar. It also involves knowing the relative weight that the community puts on different kinds of social relationships, and how this is appropriately expressed (Holmes, 1992).

## **2.8 Compliments and compliment responses**

A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to

someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer (Holmes, 1988:446).

Giving compliments is a language function that has important social value in American English. American people use compliments frequently in a wide range of interpersonal relationships; among intimates, friends, strangers, and with superiors and subordinates. Compliments reinforce solidarity when they are used appropriately and their absence can cause misunderstandings. Non-native speakers of English often face difficulty in using compliments when they are interacting with native speakers of English.

Many empirical studies have been carried out in American English (Wolfson, 1983, 1986; Manes 1983; Manes & Wolfson 1981) and it has been found out that compliments in American English are formulas like greetings, thanks, and apologies and they represent a social strategy in that the speaker attempts to create or maintain rapport with the addressee by expressing admiration or approval and compliments are typically addressed directly to the person being complimented.

According to Wolfson and Manes (1981) the overwhelming majority of compliments in American English contain highly restricted adjectives such as 'nice, good, pretty, beautiful, great' and verbs such as 'like and love' because they carry positive evaluation.

According to Knapp, Hopper and Bell (1984), a compliment is a speech act worthy of study because it is ubiquitous, valued and problematic and compliments in American English mostly focus on the contents of performance, appearance/attire, personality/whole person, possessions and helping/service. The ability to give and respond to compliments seems to be an integral part of occupational success, but praise, like criticism, is an evaluation or judgment of another person, and compliments thus can be threatening. Because the act of judgment is often associated with persons of unequal status, compliments can create distance between

people. Making an 'appropriate' response to a compliment can be difficult and can contribute to the perceived problems associated with receiving compliments. Since females compliment females more than males compliment females, it appears that females are as responsible as males for perpetuating a preoccupation with their appearance and attire (Knapp, Hopper and Bell, 1984:13).

Wolfson (1983) states that compliments fall into two major categories in terms of topic: those having to do with appearance and those which comment on ability. She adds that appearance compliments are those dealing with apparel and possessions and ability compliments are of two types: general and act-specific and compliments can occur at virtually any point in a speech event and may even be independent of the utterances that immediately precede them.

Researchers have adapted different ideas in terms of the function of compliments. Some have stated that most complimenting act is to please the hearer (Holmes, 1988; Herbert, 1990), others have stated that the function of a compliment is to establish solidarity with the listener by praising some features of the listener (Wolfson and Manes 1981). In doing so, the speaker expresses a commonality of taste or interest with the addressee, thus reinforcing, or in the case of strangers, creating at least a minimal amount of solidarity. This reinforcement and/or creation of solidarity appears to be a basic function of compliments in American society. Compliments also carry a set of general cultural assumptions which underlie them. Most members of the speech community agree in placing positive value upon 'newness' and so strong is the expectation of a compliment in such cases that its absence may be perceived as a sign of disapproval (Manes and Wolfson, 1981:130).

As Holmes and Brown (1987) point out different cultures have different perceptions of appropriate topics for compliments; weight loss is considered to be a cause for concern for some cultures whereas in others it is a cause for congratulation. Thus misunderstandings occur much more frequently and systematically between members of different cultural groups. Paying compliments is

a troublesome aspect of English for learners from different cultural backgrounds. Some learners find it difficult to understand why Americans use compliments so frequently (Holmes and Brown, 1987:530).

Studies on compliment responses indicate that compliment responses may serve different functions. As Herbert (1989) states compliments and compliment responses fulfil a similar solidarity-negotiating function and they are an interesting object for study since there is relatively strong agreement within the speech community as to what form constitutes a 'correct response' and virtually all speakers of English, when questioned on this matter in general or particular terms, agree that the correct response is 'thank you' as suggested in etiquette books:

"When you are complimented, the only response necessary is 'Thank you'. Don't disparage yourself. If someone admires your dress, don't say 'This old thing, I got it at a bargain basement sale'. A simple thank you is sufficient" (Johnson, 1979:43) (cited in Herbert, 1989:6).

On the basis of the above, according to Herbert (1989), one would expect that competent speakers of English should say thank you when complimented but many speakers still claim to be embarrassed by compliments and to feel discomfort when they respond to compliments; speakers know that the correct response is thank you, but on the other hand, they don't know what to say.

Knapp, Hopper and Bell (1984) have stated that people have a need for congruent evaluations, compliments are more likely to be accepted if they fit people's own self-evaluation. "As feedback deviates from initial expectancies, it is less likely to be accurately recalled, perceived as a credible and valid assessment, or accepted as resulting from any enduring aspect of oneself (Schrauger, 1975; cited in Knapp, Hopper and Bell, 1984:13). According to their taxonomy, there are nine categories along which compliment responses vary: ritualistic acceptance, pleased

acceptance, embarrassed, tempered acceptance, return compliment, magnified acceptance, not acknowledged, soliciting confirmation and denial.

In discussing compliments and compliment response strategies used by learners of English, it is necessary to include theory of Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) in the review. Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) is defined as the study of Non-native speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in Second Language (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993) ( cited in Ernawati, 1996). ILP belongs to two different disciplines: as a branch of Second Language Acquisition Research focusing on interlanguage studies and as a subset of pragmatics and ILP places an emphasis on the pragmatics study that focuses on people's comprehension and production of linguistic action in context ( Ernawati 1996:8).

## **2.9 Previous Research on Compliments and Compliment Responses**

In her study of compliment responses, Pomerantz (1978) takes note of a different sort of cultural value at work in the compliment response sequence. Thus, although the preferred behavior is for the recipient of a compliment to accept it with an appreciation 'thanks', this conflicts with another norms, 'the self-praise avoidance' constraint. For this reason, she says, it frequently happens that speakers will downgrade the compliment by praising the same referent in weaker terms or by shifting the credit away from themselves (Billmyer, 1990:35). For Wolfson (1989), one solution to Pomerantz's dilemma is to downgrade the compliment by referring to another characteristic of the object, in this way, the recipient mitigates the force of the compliment without disagreeing with the speaker and also without praising him/herself.

Cross-cultural studies have examined the patterning of compliments and compliment responses, their frequency of occurrence, their function and topics in

different languages. Researchers studying compliments in American English and in other cultures have found out different compliment response strategies. As Herbert (1990) (cited in Ernawati, 1996) states American people use accepting, such as thank you, in most of the situations. On the other hand, studying on Chinese compliment responses, Chen (1993) has found out that Chinese speakers use a 'Rejecting' strategy more often than 'Accepting'.

Having carried out a study of compliments and compliment responses between American English speakers and Japanese ESL students, Billmyer (1990) stated that Japanese compliment less frequently than Americans, use a more restricted adjectival repertoire and deny or politely accept compliments more frequently than Americans. According to Barnlund and Araki (1985) the topic of compliments is similar in both languages, but Japanese is less direct in offering compliments and more modest in expressing them verbally; Americans use compliments more often in close relationships whereas Japanese use them in distant relations.

Ylanne-McEwen (1993) carried out a linguistic study of complimenting in British English, Finnish and the interlanguage of Finnish learners of English by eliciting oral data. It was found that English and Finnish seemed to share a wide range of forms in terms of syntactic patterning. In using compliment responses, subjects in all three groups used more agreement type than nonagreement types such as thanking, commenting, praising, returning and explaining. As 'thank you' is the prescribed text-book response to compliments in English, for Ylanne-McEwen, the Finnish learners' use of this form demonstrated their 'transfer of learning'.

Wolfson (1981) carried out a study on compliments in New Zealand and found that compliments are relatively rare in Indonesian culture and are used among members of the educated class; New Zealanders feel that Americans pay far too many compliments and they are often insincere.

In a study of complimenting behavior in Arabic, Farsi and English, Wolfson

(1981) found that when spontaneously occurring native speaker data were gathered from conversations in Arabic and in Farsi, a large number of proverbs and other ritualized expressions, not transferred into the English used by the same speakers, were a common feature of conversational interactions containing compliments. As Wolfson (1981) states although some of the values and attitudes ritualized precoded verbs and expressions express are so different from one society to another, advanced learners have been found to avoid direct translation or transfer of the corresponding responses from their own first languages.

After carrying out an ethnographic research on compliments in American English, Wolfson (1983) stated that the major function of compliments is to create or to maintain solidarity between interlocutors. For Wolfson, from the point of view of the nonnative speaker who wishes to establish social relationships with members of the target language speech community, it is useful to know that the giving of a compliment is an excellent and much used prelude to opening a conversation in American English. As far as the relationship of the status of the interlocutors are considered, Wolfson states that the overwhelming majority of all compliments are given to people of the same age and status of the speaker, but in interactions between status unequals compliments are found to be given by the person in the higher position and women appear both to give and receive compliments much more frequently than men do.

For Manes (1983) compliments are of particular interest in regard to the reflection and expression of cultural values because of their nature as judgments, overt expressions of approval or admiration of another's work, appearance or taste and this means that compliments express certain cultural values more or less explicitly and the expression of approval may function as a form of positive reinforcement. According to her, compliments represent one means whereby an individual or society as a whole can encourage certain desired behaviors; positive reinforcement through compliments may itself be seen as valued in American

society as people all learned as children, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all" (Manes, 1983:102).

A contrastive study of politeness strategies between American English and Chinese speakers in responding to compliments was carried out by Rong Chen (1993). According to Chen, compliment response strategies of a particular culture can be accounted for by the relative weightings of the Agreement and Modesty Maxims (see 2.6). Following Leech's politeness theory, Chen (1993) categorized compliment response types as four super strategies; accepting, returning, deflecting, and rejecting. He divided these four super strategies into ten: thanking, agreeing, expressing gladness, joking, returning compliment, offering object of compliment, encouraging, explaining, doubting, rejecting and denigrating. Chen found some differences between American English speakers' and Chinese speakers' use of compliment responding strategies and stated that they reflect differences of social values between the two cultures. "In American society, the social norm seems to be to receive the compliment 'gracefully', i.e. to accept it. It has been found that in English-speaking cultures, a speaker will make every effort to agree with the hearer, she will try to avoid showing her disagreement. Therefore, when faced with a compliment, she seldom humbles herself. The norm of Chinese society, on the other hand, is to be modest and modesty is one of the most important constituents of self-image. As a result, the Chinese speaker chooses to lower herself when responding to compliments, believing that doing so will by no means damage her self-esteem. Thus, cultures can be categorized according to how each culture views humbleness and modesty" (Chen, 1993:68).

Research has shown that, on the one hand, there are cultures which treat humbleness as an important part of self-image, like Urdu, Japanese, Polynesian, Malaysian and Chinese. On the other hand, there are cultures in which "no self-humbling strategies will be appropriate, and series of self-elevating challenges..... characterize interaction" such as Kwakiutl and Antigua (Brown and Levinson,

1987:247).

Ernawati (1996) conducted a study which investigated compliment responses of Indonesian non-native speakers of English, native Indonesian speakers and Australian speakers of English. He has collected data in three different methods: natural observation, semi-controlled elicitation and a Discourse Completion Task. He used Chen's categorisation for all his data but he made some adaptations such as replacing 'doubting' by 'questioning' and dividing the super strategy of 'Rejecting' into two as 'disagreement' and 'denigrating' (see 3.4). According to his findings, all three groups employed all four super strategies with a similar pattern where 'Accepting' was found to be the highest rank in all three groups.

Nelson, Al-Batal and Echols (1996) carried out a study comparing Syrian and American compliment responses by collecting naturally occurring data and found some similarities and differences. As they point out, both Syrians and Americans were much more likely to accept or mitigate the force of the compliment than to reject it and members of both groups used similar response types, but Americans were much more likely than Syrians to use 'thanks' because 'thank you' by itself is not a sufficient response to an Arabic compliment for Arabic students and needs to be supplemented by additional words since by itself it may sound flat and awkward and it appears to signal the end of the conversation. Another difference in compliment responses, is the Syrians' frequent use of formulaic expression in accepting a compliment and the length of Arabic responses. Arabic sequences are longer than the English, they contain more words, for them the longer the interaction, the greater the sincerity (Nelson, Al-Batal and Echols, 1996:429). As Blum-Kulka and Olsain (1986) state if Arabic speaking ESL/EFL students use more words than a native English speaker, pragmatic failure might result from overindulgence in words, causing native speakers to sense a lack of appropriateness.

A study on women's use of compliments in Turkish was carried out by Durmuşoğlu (1990) by collecting 100 naturally occurring data. In terms of the

content, of 100 compliments, 55 of them were about appearance such as hairdo, haircolour, make-up and clothing, 25 of them were about possession, 10 of them were about ability, 8 of them were about human possessions such as children and 2 of them were related to academic or work success. In terms of compliment responses, it was found that Turkish women not only accepted compliments, but also downgraded or deflected them such as:

- (1) – Bu elbise sana çok yakışmış! (*Your dress fits you very well!*)  
 - Sağol, ama ucuzluktan aldım. (*Thank you, but I bought it in sale.*)
- (2) – Ne kadar zayıflamışsın, aferin. (*You've lost lots of weight*)  
 - Yok canım, o kadar da değil, bir, iki kilo. (*No, it is not that much, just one or two kilos*) (Durmuşoğlu, 1990: 171).

## 2.10 Language Transfer

Schachter (1983) claims that language transfer is not a process at all, but rather a constraint on the acquisition process and a learner's previous knowledge constrains the hypotheses that he or she can make about the L2. For Schachter, previous knowledge includes not only knowledge of native language or other languages known, but is cumulative in that whatever is acquired of the target language is also part of one's previous knowledge and is thus available for use in further L2 learning. For most researchers, the notion of language transfer involves the use of native language information in the acquisition of a second language.

Language transfer involves items and rules in the learner's version of the new language being directly traceable to the native language (Takashima, 1992).

According to Faerch & Kasper (1987) language transfer can be described as a psycholinguistic procedure if it activates knowledge of L1 in an L2 learner's attempt to use or develop the IL, and transfer procedures can be used in production, reception and learning. As a production procedure, transfer refers to the activation of L1 knowledge in the establishment of an IL plan by means of which the learner

seeks to realize a communicative intention. As a reception procedure, transfer implies that the learner attempts to interpret incoming L2 utterances on the basis of his or her L1 knowledge. As a learning procedure, transfer is used in the learner's attempt to establish hypotheses about L2 rules and items (Faerch & Kasper; 1987:174).

For Irujo (1986) the concept of transfer is based on the idea that previous learning affects subsequent learning; when the forms and patterns are identical in the two languages and the learner uses the first language in producing the second, positive transfer occurs. The result is a correct second language form or pattern. When they are different, using those of the native language to produce the equivalent form or pattern in the second language causes negative transfer. The errors that result are called interference errors (Irujo, 1986: 289). After carrying out a study in the acquisition of idioms in a second language, Irujo claims that the use of first and second language strategies in producing idioms varies according to proficiency level of the student, and in all cases, the less proficient learners used more first language strategies, while the more proficient learners used more second language strategies. The results of her study support the notion that advanced learners of a second language whose first language is related to the second can use their knowledge of idioms in their first language to comprehend and produce idioms in the second. There is also support for the notion that structures which are very similar in the first and second languages will produce more interference than structures which are different.

Whereas the literature on language transfer pays a good deal of attention to the transfer of structures (e.g. Dechert & Raupach, 1989; Gass & Selinker, 1983; Ringbom 1987 ), little attention has been paid to the shift in language of thought between and among languages (in the case of trilinguals) during the process of assessing, planning or executing a given utterance (Cohen & Olshtain, 1993). There exists a large body of research that claims that transfer (i.e. negative transfer or

interference) plays an important role in shaping IL (Gass & Selinker;1983).

Some researchers such as Richards and Sukwiwat (1983), Schmidt & Richards (1980), Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), Blum-Kulka (1982), Eisenstein and Bodman (1986), Scarcella (1983) have argued that transfer at the pragmatic level does exist (Beebe, Takahashi and Weltz; 1990).

Beebe (1990) argues that language transfer is not only a psychological process but “often a sociolinguistic process, frequently of cultural identity assertion” (1990:4).

Sociolinguistic transfer is classified into three types: (1) transfer of a native language sociolinguistic variable rule; (2) transfer of native, discourse-level, sociocultural competence; and (3) socially motivated transfer where the transferred pattern may not be sociolinguistic in itself, but is transferred in order to fulfill a social psychological function. Beebe views pragmatic transfer primarily as the second of these three types of sociolinguistic transfer, i.e., is transfer of L1 sociocultural communicative competence in performing L2 speech acts or any other aspects of L2 conversation, where the speaker is trying to achieve a particular function of language.

Having compared refusals of Americans and Japanese who speak English, Beebe, Takahashi and Ullis-Weltz (1985) state that refusals, like other speech acts, reflect fundamental cultural values and incomplete knowledge of target language sociolinguistic patterns is one impetus for transfer. They have also found that deeply held cultural values are not easily given up and nonnative speakers are likely to engage in sociocultural transfer in just those speech acts that involve delicate interpersonal negotiation.

According to Blum-Kulka (1982) the performance of L2 learners comes closest to native speaker usage when the rules are shared across the two cultures, when the rules are language-specific, the most deviation from native speaker usage occurs. After carrying out a comparative study of Hebrew and English on requests,

Blum-Kulka (1982) claims that there is a general tendency on the part of the learners to be less direct than native speakers in their choice of speech act form, probably to some extent because of transfer of social norms and second language learners violate norms of social appropriateness in the target language to some extent in predictable ways.

According to Olshtain and Cohen (1989) the term transfer in L2 acquisition refers to the learner's strategy of incorporating native language-based elements in target language production and behaviour. As James (1980; cited in Olshtain & Cohen, 1989:) states, the assumption underlying the notion of transfer is that L2 learners will tend to employ L1 forms in their L2 utterances when called upon to produce L2 forms not yet acquired. Kellerman (1977) (cited in Olshtain & Cohen, 1989) characterizes the strategy of transfer in L2 learning as the set of predictions made on the basis of L1 about L2 and as a result of such predictions, the learner will tend to transfer L2 forms and features wherever he/she feels that these can be employed successfully in L2. Such transfer, according to Kellerman, is likely to occur for one or two reasons: (a) to fill a perceived gap in L2 knowledge and/or (b) because the learner believes that L1 and L2 are identical with respect to some language feature.

Clyne (1975) (cited in Schmidt & Richards, 1985) states that pragmatic transfer, based on transfer of speech act rules from one language to another, can lead to communication breakdown or communication conflict and transfer may operate with respect to a number of dimensions:

- (a) Difference in opening or closing formulas for speech events.
- (b) Formulas used to realize a speech act have different meanings in two languages.
- (c) Different social conventions associated with realizations of speech acts (such as appropriateness of topic, and degrees of directness of realization of a speech act).

Clyne (1975) claims that transference of routines from one culture to the other may lead to the interpretation that the speaker is aggressive, impolite, uncouth and so forth .

Investigating the role of transfer from L1 to L2 of beginning Spanish speakers, Koike (1989) has revealed that although L1 pragmatic knowledge of politeness in speech acts is present in many learners' consciousness, this knowledge may not always be manifested in L2 nor in L1 production; instead a speech-act interlanguage is often used, in which getting the message across in the clearest way takes priority over concerns for politeness.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In order to obtain data for this study of compliment responses from native Turkish subjects, native English subjects and Turkish EFL learners one data collection method was applied. The 'Discourse Completion Test' (DCT) which was used in earlier studies by some researchers (Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Blum - Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Koike, 1989; Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz, 1985) is employed. Before employing data from Turkish EFL learners, they are given a Michigan Placement Test to see their level of proficiency in English.

The Discourse Completion Test consists of 15 situations; 5 of them are about appearance/attire, 5 of them are about possession and 5 of them are about performance/ability. It is given to 25 native speakers of English to obtain English data, 50 native speakers of Turkish to obtain Turkish data and 100 upper-intermediate level learners of English to obtain EFL data. The aim is to find similarities and differences between the two languages, to find whether EFL learners approach native English speaker norms in using compliment responses and whether there is transfer from Turkish in their English compliment responses.

#### **3.2 Subjects**

The subjects for this study are 25 native speakers of English (students at Leeds and Oxford Universities in England), 50 native speakers of Turkish (students at the Literature Faculty of Anadolu University, Eskişehir) and 100 upper-

intermediate level EFL learners of English who are attending Anadolu University, Education Faculty, English Department.

Native speakers of English, native speakers of Turkish and EFL learners are asked to fill out a short background questionnaire before they are given discourse completion test.

Native English speaker data is collected from 25 university students (aged 17-25, mean age being 18.45) in England, native Turkish speaker data is collected from 50 students (aged 17-25, mean age being 18.32) at Anadolu University, Literature Faculty and EFL data is collected from 100 students (aged 17-25, mean age being 18.76) at Anadolu University, Education Faculty. The selection of university students as subjects is based on the contrastive nature of the study since the three sets of subjects are very comparable in age and educational background.

### **3.3 Instrument and Data Collection method**

The instrument is a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which was originally developed for comparing the speech act realization patterns of native speakers and learners. The Discourse Completion Test is used because it can gather a large amount of data in a short time and the data can be used to identify the types of compliment responses used by the learners.

In both English and Turkish versions of the test, informants are given a short description of the situation, the setting, the social distance between the interlocutors and their status relative to each other and they are given a discourse sequence which includes a compliment. They are then asked to write a response to the compliment (see Appendix A and B).

This test is adapted from Ernawati (1996) and then developed by the researcher. In Ernawati's test there were four situations used to elicit compliment responses in terms of appearance, possessions and work achievement. The test in

this study is prepared in terms of three dimensions such as appearance/attire, performance/ability and possession which are found to be used mostly in everyday interaction by Wolfson, 1983, 1986. In each situation, contextual factors such as status of the complimenter and details of where the events take place are provided. For each dimension five different situations are written, so the test included 15 situations which require compliment responses.

Before the preparation of Turkish DCT, a pilot study on the use of compliments in Turkish was carried out with 50 Turkish students at the Literature Faculty and the Turkish version of the questionnaire was designed according to the results of a pilot study. The English version of the test was not translated into Turkish because there are differences between English and Turkish on the use of compliments and compliment responses. There are lots of formulaic expressions in Turkish, but English does not have any of them and each language has different rules on the use of particular speech acts. Thus, in order not to cause misunderstandings, Turkish DCT was prepared using the compliments which were obtained from the pilot study. Then, it was checked by 5 Turkish specialists in terms of appropriateness and approved by them.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

In two versions of the test, compliment response strategies are analyzed in terms of Ernawati's (1996) categorisation which was originally developed by Chen (1993) and adapted by Ernawati in 1996. According to his categorisation, there are four super strategies; *accepting, returning, deflecting and rejecting*. These four super strategies were then divided into eleven subcategories:

#### A. Super Strategy 1: Accepting

1. Thanking (only): A verbal acceptance of the compliment such as 'Thanks', 'Thank you'.

2. Agreeing: Addressee accepts the compliment by expressing a statement such as 'Thanks, I love it myself, too'.
3. Expressing gladness: Addressee accepts the compliment by expressing gladness that the object is liked, e.g. 'Well, I'm glad you like it'.
4. Joking: Addressee accepts the compliment by using a 'joke' as a means of responding to compliments (e.g., Hey, I make everything look good, don't I?).

#### B. Super Strategy 2: Returning

5. Returning the compliment: The addressee agrees with the compliment and the praise is returned to the first speaker (e.g. So is yours; You look good too).
6. Offering the object of the compliment: The complimentee accepts the compliment and in return he/she offers the object of the compliment or offers help (e.g., You may wear it sometime; I can help you sometime).
7. Encouraging: Addressee returns the compliment by encouraging the first speaker that he/she could manage to get or do the same thing (e.g., Well, you can get one too if you want).

#### C. Super Strategy 3: Deflecting

8. Explaining: The addressee deflects the compliment by giving some sort of explanation of the object of the compliment, or the complimentary force is transferred to a third person (e.g., My brother gave it to me; Thanks, I've worked hard for it).
9. Questioning: Instead of agreeing or rejecting, the addressee questions the sincerity of the compliment (e.g., Do you really think so?, Do I really look that great?).

#### D. Super Strategy 4: Rejecting

10. Disagreement: The addressee asserts that the object of the compliment is not worthy of praise (e.g., I hate it, No, it's old).
11. Denigrating: The addressee qualifies the original assertion but tries to scale-down or minimize the compliment (e.g., It's all right, but it's too expensive) (Ernawati, 1996:12).

As there are lots of formulaic expressions and routines in Turkish, it is necessary to include another category which is described as the compliment + formula as 12<sup>th</sup> category. The distribution of the responses in terms of the above mentioned 12 categories is calculated for all the data and their frequencies are found in order to draw conclusions. In data analysis, every category is coded (e.g. Thanking is coded as strategy 1) and transferred to the computer data base in SPSS. In order to compare all the three groups Kruskal-Wallis Test and each two group (native Turkish-native English data, native English-EFL learner data) Mann-Whitney Test are used. The presentation of the results in the next section includes the findings of native Turkish, native English and EFL learners' compliment response strategies, the similarities and differences between native Turkish speakers and native English speakers and the similarities and differences between native English speakers and EFL learners.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of statistical analysis of discourse completion test which was given to native speakers of Turkish, native speakers of English and EFL learners. First, compliment response types of native Turkish speakers, native English speakers and EFL learners will be revealed and the differences and similarities of all the data on the use of compliment responses will be explained, then the differences and similarities between native Turkish speaker data and native English speaker data will be revealed and finally native English speaker data and EFL learner data will be compared in order to find whether EFL learners use the same strategies with native English speakers in responding to compliments and whether there is transfer from Turkish on their use of English compliment responses.

#### **4.2 Compliment Response Types and An Overall Comparison of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learner Data in Terms of Three Dimensions (appearance/attire, possession and performance/ability)**

In order to make an overall comparison of all the data Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. According to the statistical computations, some statistically significant differences ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $df=2$ ) (see Appendix C for test statistics) were found among the three groups and these differences occurred in situations 1 and 14 which contained compliments about appearance, 4 and 7 which contained compliments about ability, 5 and 15 which contained compliments about possession (see Appendix A and B for the situations).

As it was mentioned earlier in Chapter III, DCT consisted of 15 situations which are about appearance/attire, possession and performance/ability. Situations 1, 6, 9, 12, 14 were about appearance/attire and they included compliments about physical appearance, hairdo and beauty.

For situation 1 there are differences on the use of compliment responses among the groups. The most preferred strategy by native English subjects was 'Thanking' strategy (52%) whereas it was 'Returning the compliment' strategy for native Turkish subjects (42%). EFL subjects preferred 'Thanking' (24%), 'Returning the compliment' (28%) and 'Explaining' (22%).

**TABLE 1. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 1.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	8	16	13	52	24	24
2	1	2			2	2
3	4	8	2	8	14	14
4	3	6				
5	21	42	6	24	28	28
6						
7						
8	5	10	2	8	22	22
9	2	4	2	8	4	4
10	5	10			4	4
11	1	2			2	2
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

For situation 6 the responses of the three groups were nearly similar. They mostly used strategy 8 (explaining). EFL learners used all the strategies but native English and native Turkish subjects used some of them. Native English subjects also used strategy 3 (expressing gladness) more than native Turkish subjects and EFL learners (24%) (see Table 2).

The results of the three groups were consistent for situation 9 which is about hairdo. All the subjects preferred strategy 1 (thanking) and 8 (explaining) and their percentages were nearly the same. Typical responses included responses such as “Teşekkür ederim”, “Thanks”, “My hairdresser decided to change my hairstyle”, “Kuaförümle birlikte karar verdik” (see Table 3).

**TABLE 2. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners’ Compliment Response Types for situation 6.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	4	8	1	4	7	7
2	3	6	2	8	1	1
3	2	4	6	24	7	7
4	4	8	1	4	2	2
5	2	4			5	5
6					1	1
7	3	6			7	7
8	27	54	11	44	52	52
9	2	4			10	10
10	1	2	2	8	4	4
11	2	4	2	8	4	4
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

There is also no striking difference among the groups in situation 12 which is about having a good suntan. All the subjects preferred strategy 1 and 8. Typical responses were “I was in Antalya”, “Bu hale gelebilmek için çok uğraşım. It is interesting to find that strategy 10 (disagreement) was only used by native Turkish subjects. 4 subjects disagreed with the complimenter using responses such as “Yok canım o kadar da değil”, “Sana katılmıyorum” (see Table 4).

**TABLE 3. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 9.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	11	22	5	20	22	22
2	1	2	3	12	7	7
3	3	6	3	12	18	18
4	5	10			1	1
5	1	2			3	3
6						
7	1	2			3	3
8	21	42	9	36	36	36
9	3	6	2	8	7	7
10	3	6	2	8	1	1
11	1	2	1	4	2	2
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

There are differences among the groups in responses to situation 14. Native English subjects used strategy 10 (disagreement) (40%) and strategy 8 (explaining) (24%) mostly, native Turkish subjects used strategy 5 (returning the compliment) (32%) and 8 (explaining) (30%) and EFL learners used strategy 1 (thanking) (19%), 5 (returning the compliment) (13%) and 8 (explaining) (29%) (see Table 5).

**TABLE 4. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 12.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	5	10	7	28	13	13
2					4	4
3	1	2			3	3
4	4	8	3	12	3	3
5	1	2				
6					1	1
7	3	6			2	2
8	26	52	13	52	55	55
9	2	4	1	4	11	11
10	4	8				
11	4	8	1	4	8	8
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The situations 3, 5, 8, 10, 15 are about possessions of objects or a person. There are differences among the groups in situation 3. Strategy 1 (thanking) is the most preferred strategy by native English subjects (44%) and strategy 8 (explaining) is mostly preferred by native Turkish subjects (24%) and EFL learners (29%). Strategy 2 (agreeing) is also another preferred strategy by all the groups. Strategy 6 (offering the object of the compliment) is chosen by EFL learners (16%) but it is preferred by only one native Turkish subject and it is not preferred by native English subjects (see Table 6).

**TABLE 5. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 14.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	5	10	10	40	19	19
2	2	4			6	6
3	1	2	3	12	6	6
4	3	6	1	4	4	4
5	16	32	3	12	13	13
6						
7						
8	15	30	6	24	29	29
9	2	4			8	8
10	5	10	2	8	11	11
11	1	2			4	4
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In situation 5 which contained a compliment about possession there are some similarities and differences at 0,05 significance level ( $p=.037$ ,  $df=2$ ). According to the statistics, native Turkish subjects (40%), native English subjects (44%) and EFL learners (21%) employed the same strategy, 'Thanking'. But EFL subjects preferred 'Explaining' strategy mostly (29%) which is a strategy used by Turkish subjects in most of the situations in discourse completion test. Both native Turkish subjects and EFL learners employed strategy 4 (joking). Native English subjects' and EFL learners' use of strategy 8 (explaining) shows

resemblances. It is interesting to see that no groups used strategy 10 (disagreement). Strategy 11 (denigrating) is only used by 1 native Turkish subject and 3 EFL learners (see Table 7).

Situation 8 is about the possession of a watch. The subjects in the three groups mostly employed strategy 8 (explaining). The use of strategy 7 (encouraging) by native English subjects and EFL learners is nearly similar (see Table 8).

**TABLE 6. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 3.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	11	22	11	44	18	18
2	10	20	6	24	12	12
3	7	14			4	4
4	1	2			2	2
5					2	2
6	1	2			16	16
7	3	6			8	8
8	12	24	5	20	29	29
9	2	4			3	3
10						
11	3	6	3	12	6	6
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

For situation 10 native Turkish subjects mostly used strategy 7 (encouraging) (50%). They encouraged the complimentee to rent or buy a new flat or an apartment and they used some formulas in their responses such as "Allah sana daha iyilerini versin", "İnşallah senin de böyle bir evin olur". Both native English subjects and EFL learners employed strategy 8 (explaining).

**TABLE 7. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 5.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	20	40	11	44	21	21
2	2	4			10	10
3	3	6	1	4	10	10
4	10	20	2	8	11	11
5	5	10	1	4	3	3
6	2	4			7	7
7	1	2			1	1
8	5	10	8	32	29	29
9	1	2	2	8	5	5
10						
11	1	2			3	3
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Although strategy 2 (agreeing) is another preferred strategy by native English subjects (24%), it was not chosen by any native Turkish subjects. Another interesting finding is that 17 EFL learners used strategy 6 (offering the object of the compliment), they offered to stay together in their flat. 19 EFL learners used strategy 11 (denigrating) using responses such as: "It is too small", "It is an old flat" (see Table 9).

**TABLE 8. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 8.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	6	12	2	8	3	3
5	4	8	1	4		
3	5	10	1	4	1	1
4	3	6			3	3
5						
6	1	2	2	8	24	24
7	3	6	6	24	33	33
8	20	40	12	48	32	32
9	1	2	1	4	2	2
10	2	4				
11	5	10			2	2
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE 9. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 10.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	9	18	5	20	16	16
2			6	24	12	12
3	3	6	3	12	3	3
4	2	4			1	1
5						
6	3	6			17	17
7	25	50			4	4
8	6	12	10	40	25	25
9					2	2
10	1	2			1	1
11	1	2	1	4	19	19
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Situation 15 is about possession of a person (brother/sister). While native Turkish subjects employed strategy 8 mostly (58%), native English subjects preferred strategy 1 (40%). EFL learners used strategy 8 (37%) and strategy 2 (20%). Native Turkish subjects used jokes such as: "Kimin kardeşi", "Ne de olsa kardeşiz" and the same jokes are seen in EFL learners' responses: "Whose brother/sister is he/she?" (see Table 10).

**TABLE 10. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 15.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	5	10	10	40	10	10
2	2	4	2	8	20	20
3	4	8	4	16	6	6
4	6	12	1	4	3	3
5					4	4
6						
7						
8	29	58	5	20	37	37
9	1	2	3	12	7	7
10	3	6			9	9
11					4	4
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The situations 2, 4, 7, 11, 13 are about performance/ability. Situation 2 is about a presentation in class. Strategies 8 and 1 are the most preferred strategies by all the groups. Neither native Turkish nor native English subjects used strategy 2, but 3 EFL learners chose it. The percentage of native English subjects and EFL learners is same in using strategy 3 (24%). 1 native Turkish subject used strategy 6 (offering the object of the compliment or help) and offered help using a response such as: “İstersen senin sunuşunda sana yardımcı olabilirim” (see Table 11).

**TABLE 11. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners’ Compliment Response Types for situation 2.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	14	28	10	40	20	20
2					3	3
3	4	8	6	24	24	24
4	4	8	1	4		
5	2	4			1	1
6	1	2				
7	1	2			4	4
8	17	34	8	32	37	37
9	2	4			2	2
10					2	2
11	5	10			7	7
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Situation 4 is about preparing some food for friends and the most striking difference occurred in this situation 4 ( $\chi^2 = 46,285$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ,  $df = 2$ ). In English version of the discourse completion test, the compliment was: “You are a very good cook. The meal was delicious”. But this compliment was not translated into Turkish when Turkish version of the test was prepared. As it was mentioned in section 3.2, Turkish compliments were collected via a pilot test and the compliment mostly used for this situation was: “Yemek nefisti, ellerine sağlık”. Thus, compliment responses of native Turkish speakers and native English speakers were completely different. Native English speakers preferred

‘Thanking’ and ‘Expressing Gladness’ strategies mostly (32%) whereas native Turkish speakers mostly used ‘Compliment + formula’ strategy (52%). EFL learners, on the other hand, employed ‘Explaining’ strategy mostly (40%) which completely differs from native Turkish and native English data (see Table 12).

**TABLE 12. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners’ Compliment Response Types for situation 4.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1			8	32	8	8
2						
3	6	12	8	32	25	25
4	3	6			3	3
5					2	2
6	2	4	1	4	10	10
7					3	3
8	8	16	7	28	40	40
9	1	2			2	2
10					1	1
11	4	8	1	4	4	4
12	26	52			2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

For situation 7 native English subjects used strategy 1 (thanking) (36%) and strategy 2 (agreeing) mostly whereas native Turkish subjects and EFL learners used strategy 8 (explaining) mostly (see Table 13).

Situation 11 is about an assignment and the complimenter is a teacher. Both native Turkish and native English subjects employed strategy 1 with the same percentage (28%). Subjects in all groups used strategy 8 (explaining) (native Turkish subjects 44%, native English subjects 32%, EFL learners 55%) and strategy 3 (expressing gladness) (native Turkish subjects 14%, native English subjects 20%, EFL learners 23%). When the results of the responses to situations 11 and 7 is compared, it is seen that the results are completely different.

**TABLE 13. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 7.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	8	16	9	36	20	20
2	4	8	7	28	19	19
3	3	6			1	1
4	5	10	2	8	7	7
5	1	2	1	4	14	14
6						
7	2	4			3	3
8	19	38	2	8	24	24
9	1	2			1	1
10	3	6			2	2
11	4	8	4	16	9	9
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Although the two situations are about performance, in situation 7 the person who pays the compliment is a friend and in situation 7 the complimenter is a teacher. When a friend pays a compliment, native Turkish subjects and EFL learners explain and disagree with the complimenter but in situation 11 when a teacher pays the compliment, they mostly accept, explain and express their gladness.

**TABLE 14. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 11.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	14	28	7	28	13	13
2	1	2	1	4		
3	7	14	5	20	23	23
4	2	4			1	1
5	2	4	3	12	5	5
6						
7						
8	22	44	8	32	55	55
9	1	2	1	4	3	3
10						
11	1	2				
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Situation 13 is about an ability to dance. Strategy 8 (explaining), 1 (thanking) and 5 (returning) are the most preferred strategies by native Turkish and native English subjects while strategies 8 (explaining) and 2 (agreeing) are mostly employed by EFL learners. Native English subjects also used strategy 2 (16%), but they did not employ strategy 10 (disagreement) whereas native Turkish subjects and EFL learners used that strategy.

**TABLE 15. Frequency Distribution of Native Turkish, Native English and EFL Learners' Compliment Response Types for situation 13.**

Categories	Native Turkish		Native English		EFL Learners	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	7	14	5	20	5	5
2	1	2	4	16	19	19
3					3	3
4	6	12	2	8	10	10
5	5	10	3	12	6	6
6	2	4				
7	2	4			3	3
8	16	32	10	40	45	45
9					1	1
10	6	12			6	6
11	5	10	1	4	2	2
12						
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.3 Compliment Response Types: Native Turkish and Native English Data

Native English subjects provided a total of 375 and native Turkish subjects provided a total of 750 responses. In order to compare native Turkish and native English speakers' responses, Mann-Whitney Test was used. According to the findings, there are statistically significant differences between the two groups at 0,05 level ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $df=2$ ) (see Appendix D for test statistics).

For situation 1 which is about appearance  $p=.022$  and there is a significant difference between the groups. Turkish subjects preferred using the 5<sup>th</sup> strategy (returning the compliment) and it accounted for 42% of native Turkish data (see

Table 1). Typical responses were “Sen de harika görünüyorsun, her zamanki gibi”, “Sen de hiç değişmemişsin”. However, native English subjects used the 1<sup>st</sup> strategy (thanking) mostly and it accounted for 52% of native English speaker data. Typical responses included responses such as: “Thank you”, “Thanks”. Neither native English nor native Turkish speakers used strategies 6 (offering the object of the compliment) and 7 (encouraging) and native English speakers did not use strategies 2 (agreeing), 4 (joking), 10 (disagreement) and 11 (denigrating) whereas Turkish subjects used them.

In situation 2 there is a significant difference between the groups ( $p=.035$ ). The 8<sup>th</sup> strategy (explaining) accounted for 34% of Turkish data while the 1<sup>st</sup> strategy (thanking) accounted for 40% of native English data (see Table 11). Turkish subjects tried to use most of the strategies except strategies 2 and 12 but English subjects did not employ strategies 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12. In terms of super strategies, ‘Returning’ and ‘Deflecting’ super strategies were not preferred by native English subjects. Typical responses in Turkish data included responses such as “Çok çalışmıştım”, “Teşekkürler, günlerdir çalışıyorum”.

In situation 3 there is also a significant difference ( $p=.036$ ). Native Turkish subjects employed most of the strategies (except strategies 5, 10, 12) and ‘Explaining’ strategy accounted for 24% of the data whereas native English subjects used strategies 1, 2, 8 and 5 and mostly used strategy was 1<sup>st</sup> (thanking) strategy (44%) (see Table 6).

For situation 4  $p=.007$  and it is significant at 0,05 level. Native Turkish speakers employed 12<sup>th</sup> (compliment + formula) strategy mostly (52%) and native English subjects employed again 1<sup>st</sup> (thanking) strategy (32%). It is interesting to see that native Turkish subjects did not employ ‘Thanking’ strategy at all, but they used 4<sup>th</sup> (joking) and 9<sup>th</sup> (questioning) strategies which native English subjects did not use. There are some similarities between the groups. Neither Turkish nor English subjects chose strategies 2 (agreeing), 5 (returning the compliment), 7 (encouraging) and 10 (disagreement) (see Table 12).

For situation 11  $p=.048$  and it is significant. 'Explaining' is the mostly used strategy for both groups (44% for native Turkish data, 32% for native English data). The percentage for 1<sup>st</sup> (thanking) strategy is same for both data (28%). Native English subjects did not use strategies 4 (joking) and 11 (denigrating) whereas native Turkish subjects used them. Both groups showed resemblances because they did not employ strategies 6 (offering the object of the compliment), 7 (encouraging), 10 (disagreement) and 12 (compliment + formula) (see Table 14).

For situation 14  $p=.024$ . The strategy preferred by native Turkish subjects is strategy 5 (returning the compliment) which accounts for 32% of the data while for native English speakers it is strategy 1 (thanking) again. The percentages of native English and native Turkish data on the use of strategies 2 (agreeing), 9 (questioning) and 11 (denigrating) are also different (see Table 5).

For situation 15  $p=.006$ . Turkish subjects employed strategy 8 (explaining) mostly (58%) whereas native English subjects employed strategy 1 (thanking) (40%). Another difference is Turkish subjects' use of strategy 10 (disagreement) and native English subjects' not using this strategy. Neither Turkish nor English subjects used strategies 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12 (see Table 10).

#### **4.4 Comparison of Native Turkish and Native English Data**

The results of test statistics suggest some similarities and differences between native Turkish and native English data. Similarities include the overall manner of responding - both Turkish and English subjects are much more likely to accept the force of the compliment than to reject it but frequencies and percentages are different. In native English speaker data the most frequently occurring super strategy type is 'Accepting' (thanking, agreeing, expressing gladness, joking) and among these sub-strategies 'Thanking' is the strategy which is chosen by most of the English subjects. For native speakers of English 'Thank you' is an enough response to a compliment and they do not need to supplement it by additional words and it is the strategy which is suggested in

etiquette books (see section 2.1.7). Native Turkish subjects, on the other hand, did not use 'Accepting' type especially 'Thanking' strategy as much as native English speakers did. Because the utterance 'Teşekkür ederim' by itself is not a sufficient response and needs to be supplemented by additional words since by itself it may sound flat and awkward and it appears to signal the end of the conversation. Instead native Turkish subjects employed 'Explaining' strategy a lot and they explained about their physical appearance, possessions, achievements or they shifted credit to another person. Pomerantz (1978) states that these types of responses are solution types to the dilemma of avoiding self-praise without disagreeing with the complimenter.

In terms of 'Joking' strategy, native Turkish speakers used jokes more than English speakers. Joking is often used to "stress that shared background or those shared values" and to put the hearer 'at ease' (Brown and Levinson, 1987:124). It's an indication of familiarity between the complimenter and the complimentee and it establishes a better relationship in the sense that the complimentee is sure that the complimenter is not offended (Ernawati, 1996:17).

Turkish native speakers offered the object of the compliment or help and encouraged the complimenter more than native English speakers in situations 2, 3, 6. Turkish subjects seemed to be generous when they were complimented about their possessions. They offered the object of the compliment by saying 'Al senin olsun', 'İstersen sana verebilirim' or they offered help 'İstersen sana tarifini verebilirim', 'Sana öğretebilirim, 'Sana yardımcı olabilirim'. In 'Encouraging' strategy, native Turkish speakers used routines which are mostly used in Turkish such as 'Allah sana daha iyisini versin', 'Daha iyisini inşallah sen alırsın', 'Darısı senin başına' in response to a compliment about a new jacket. As Doğançay (1990) states, the Turkish language is rich in the range of formulaic expressions and routines. There are many standardized communication situations which trigger automatic responses such as 'Güle güle giy' (wear it laughingly), 'EStağfurullah' (I ask pardon of God or Don't mention it), 'İnşallah' (if God permits). The responses used by native Turkish speakers in 'Encouraging'

strategy are formulaic, prefabricated expressions in Turkish which serve to fulfill certain functions during the course of interactions and the routines which involve the word 'Allah (God)' appeal to the good will of God by expressing his power or by asking for his aid. For situation 4 Turkish subjects used one formula in their responses, that is "Afiyet Olsun" which is an automatic specific formula and it fulfills a particular social function.

While Turkish subjects have available a wide range of strategies to choose from, native English subjects chose super strategy 'Accepting' mostly, after that they chose 'Explaining', they rarely chose 'Returning' and 'Rejecting' strategies. However, Turkish subjects used the above mentioned categories. As mentioned in section 2.1.8, compliment response strategies reflect differences of social values. In an English-speaking culture the social norm is to accept the compliment but in Turkish culture modesty is very important and Turkish speakers try to lower themselves when they respond to compliments. Thus, Turkish subjects' use of 'Rejecting' and 'Deflecting' strategies can be explained as a cultural behavior. However, English subjects used 'Rejecting' strategy rarely because rejecting compliments decreases the solidarity to such a degree since compliments function as 'social lubricants' and 'increase or consolidate the solidarity between the speaker and the addressee' (Holmes, 1988:486).

In situation 14 Turkish subjects overused 'Returning the compliment' strategy (32%) but English subjects used it less (12%). The situation was about appearance and Turkish subjects responded the compliment by praising the person who pays the compliment using responses such as 'Sen de öyle', 'Senin gözlerinin güzelliğidir bana yansıyan güzellik'.

After analysing all the data, it was also found that Turkish compliment responses are much longer than the ones in English and they contain more words.

#### **4.5 Compliment Response Types: Native English and EFL Learner Data**

EFL learners provided a total of 1500 responses. In order to compare native English and EFL learners' responses, Mann-Whitney Test was used.

According to the findings, there are statistically significant differences between the groups at 0,05 level ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $df=2$ ) (see Appendix E for test statistics).

For situation 1 which is about appearance  $p=.008$  and there is a significant difference between the groups. Native English subjects used 1<sup>st</sup> (thanking) strategy mostly (52%) whereas EFL subjects preferred using 5<sup>th</sup> (returning the compliment) strategy and it accounted for 28% of EFL learner data (see Table 1 in section 4.2). However, EFL learners also used 'Thanking' (24%) and 'Explaining' (22%) strategies. Although native English subjects did not use strategies 10 (disagreement) and 11 (denigrating), EFL learners used them. EFL learners used the same strategy types as native Turkish subjects did except strategy 1.

For situation 4  $p=.000$  and it is significant at 0,05 level. Native English subjects employed strategy 1 (thanking) and 3 (expressing gladness) mostly (32% each) while EFL subjects employed strategy 8 (explaining) (40%) and strategy 3 (expressing gladness) (25%) mostly. It was interesting to see that EFL subjects used all strategies (including compliment + formula) except strategy 2 (agreeing). 2 EFL subjects used formulas, one of them used 'Afiyet olsun' in Turkish, one of them used 'Bon Appetite' in French (see Table 12 in section 4.2).

For situation 7 which is about performance  $p=.018$  and it is significant. Native English subjects employed 'Thanking' (36%) and 'Agreeing' (28%) mostly while EFL subjects used 'Explaining' (24%), 'Thanking' (20%) and 'Agreeing' (19%) (see Table 13).

The percentage of strategy 5 (returning the compliment) in EFL data is higher than native English data (14%, 4%). EFL subjects also used strategies 3 (expressing gladness), 7 (encouraging), 9 (questioning), 10 (disagreement) although native English subjects did not use them. It is interesting to see that native English subjects used strategy 11 (denigrating) and it accounted for 16% of the data. It is the strategy which is rarely used by native English speakers. But the statistics for situation 7 is against the general findings about compliment response usage in English.

For situation 14 which is about appearance  $p=.015$  and it is significant at 0,05 level. Native English subjects used strategies 1 (thanking) (40%) and 8 (explaining) (24%) mostly whereas EFL subjects used strategy 8 (explaining) (29%) mostly which is similar to native Turkish data. They also used 'Thanking' (19%) and 'Returning the compliment' (13%) strategies which show resemblances with native English data. As a difference from native English data, EFL subjects used strategies 2 (agreeing), 9 (questioning) and 11 (denigrating) (see Table 5 in section 4.2).

For situation 15  $p=.004$  and it is significant. The situation is about possession of a person (brother/sister). Native English subjects preferred using strategy 1 (thanking) mostly (40%) but EFL subjects preferred strategy 8 (explaining) like native Turkish subjects. EFL subjects also used strategy 2 (agreeing)(20%) which completely differs from native English subjects (8%) and they used strategies 10 (disagreement) and 11 (denigrating) which native English subjects did not use (see Table 10 in section 4.2).

#### 4.6 Comparison of Native English and EFL Learner Data

The results of the two groups suggest similarities and differences on the use of compliment response strategies. It was seen that super strategies 'Accepting' and 'Deflecting' were the strategies which were commonly used by the subjects in two groups even though the percentages differed in sub-strategies. Native English subjects employed 'Thanking' strategy mostly and this finding is roughly similar to Holmes' (1988a) findings of New Zealand English speakers' compliment responses. Native English speakers, being culturally bound to Western Culture, are likely to accept compliments. As Chen (1993) states, complimenting is largely a positive politeness strategy which addresses the positive face of the complimentee, the complimentee is forced to accept such favour and express his/her gratitude for it. Among the four sub-types of 'Accepting', 'Thanking' outweighs the other strategies more in native English speaker data than EFL data. The use of thanking indicates that the complimentee

wants to avoid the conflict (Pomerantz, 1978). The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Chen (1993) who compared American English Speakers' compliment responses. He found out that the most frequently occurring strategy was 'Thanking' in American English Speakers' responses and Leech's Agreement Maxim was the overriding motivation for them.

According to Leech's Politeness Principle, 'Deflecting' is a compromising strategy between the needs to adhere to the Agreement Maxim and the Modesty Maxim. By using strategy 8 'Explaining', the responder offers explanations to shift the credit or to lightly downplay the object of compliment. She also expresses doubts about the praiseworthiness of the object of compliment, indicating that 'I agree with you, but I don't want to praise myself' (Chen, 1993:63).

The results of EFL learners are consistent with the results of native Turkish speakers' responses, Thus, it can be said that EFL learners' L1, i.e. Turkish, has an influence on their production of responses in English since 'Deflecting' is a strategy which is used frequently by Turkish people. Having carried out a study with a group of Turkish women, Durmuşoğlu (1990) states that 'Explaining' is an overriding strategy of compliment responses in Turkish. Turkish people tend to downplay the object of the compliment or seem to ignore it. The EFL data confirms these findings and it is the strategy that is used mostly by EFL learners. Thus, there is transfer from Turkish on the usage and frequency of this type.

There are some differences between the groups in terms of 'Returning' super strategy. EFL subjects employed strategy 5 (returning the compliment) more than native English speakers and the percentages of EFL data approach the percentages of native Turkish data. Native Turkish subjects also employed strategy 5 more than native English subjects because it can be seen as a direct result of the indebted nature of compliment. It helps the responder to get out of the debt by returning the verbal gift to the complimenter and it is motivated by the Approbation Maxim 'maximize praise of other' (Chen, 1993:58). Strategy 6

is a clear indication that the responder interprets the compliment as an expression of envy or want, therefore she offers the complimenter the object of the compliment. When the object of the compliment cannot be offered to the complimenter, the responder offers to help the complimenter to obtain it or offers encouragement to satisfy the complimenter's envy. The percentages of the two groups in strategies 6 and 7 show some slight differences. Thus, it can be said that EFL learners seem to approach the native speaker norms in these strategies but they are effected by their first language.

EFL subjects' use of 'Rejecting' strategy type (strategies 10 and 11) has some similarities with native Turkish subjects' use. Native English subjects did not use strategies 10 and 11 as often as native Turkish subjects did and EFL learners employ the same strategies they use in their first language. These findings are in harmony with the findings of Chen (1993) who found out striking statistical differences between American English speakers and Chinese speakers' use of Rejecting strategy. His study revealed that Chinese speakers used Rejecting strategy more than American English speakers. He pointed out that 'Rejecting' is a clear case of a Modesty Maxim application, the responder gives no weight to the Agreement Maxim.

#### **4.7 Discussion**

As it was stated before, there are some similarities and differences among the three groups. The results suggest that native Turkish subjects and EFL subjects tried to use a wide range of strategies but native English subjects insisted on using some strategies more than others because of the formulaic nature of compliments and compliment responses in English. Among all strategies, all subjects used strategy 1 (thanking) but the percentage of native English data was higher than other data. Because for native speakers of English 'Thank you' is an enough response to a compliment. It can be said that Leech's Agreement Maxim is the overriding motivation for native English speakers. As Leech (1983) states cultural differences affect the use of politeness; some cultures give 'Agreement

Maxim' more weight, some others to 'Modesty Maxim' and some cultures give equal weight to both of them.

Turkish EFL Learners' less use of 'Thanking' strategy can be explained by the differences of social values between the two cultures. The norm of English society is to receive the compliment 'gracefully', however the norm of Turkish society is to be modest. When Turkish people are offered compliments, they try to appear humble and they generally lower themselves in responding to compliments. Thus, Turkish EFL learners who are effected by their social values of their culture use 'Thanking' strategy less than English speakers, but surprisingly more than native Turkish speakers. It can be said that they know how to answer a compliment in their target language since they are upper-intermediate learners of English. This finding support the idea of Wolfson who found that advanced learners of English avoid direct translation or transfer of the corresponding responses from their own first languages. Although this idea is true for 'Thanking' strategy, EFL subjects seemed to translate some jokes and expressions they use in their first language. They translated the jokes they use in Turkish into English such as 'Who chose it?' (for situation 3), 'Whose student did it?' (for situation 11), 'Whose sister/brother is she/he?' (for situation 15), 'What am I? Am I a Kasparov?' (for situation 7) which were commonly used jokes among Turkish people and may surprise native speakers of English and may even cause misunderstandings.

Native Turkish speakers' and EFL learners' overuse of super strategy 3, 'Deflecting' proves that the complimentees try to avoid accepting compliments by explaining or by questioning. These results are consistent with the results of Durmuşoğlu (1990) who found out that Turkish people mostly shift credit to someone else or give explanation. For situation 2, for example, most Turkish speakers' response were 'Evet, bu sunuş için çok çalıştım' where for native speakers of English 'Thank you' was an enough response. It was seen that EFL Learners' responses were effected by their L1, Turkish and most responses for situation 2 were explained by them such as 'I studied hard for it'.

It was also found out that some responses of EFL Learners were more like the responses given by English native speakers. This indicates that the learners applied the native patterns of the target language. In other words, they avoided the negative transfer of sociocultural patterns used in their native language.

A striking difference between native English speakers and EFL Learners in the use of responses is that EFL Learners used some formulas they use in Turkish. As mentioned before, Turkish people use formulas and routines which serve to fulfill certain functions during the course of interactions. Among the routines, routines which involve the word 'God' are frequently used by Turkish people. After analyzing the EFL data, it was seen that some EFL Learners responded the compliments by translating some routines from Turkish such as 'I hope God will give you one in future, God will help you buy a flat like my flat in future'.

In terms of Super strategies 2 (returning) and 4 (rejecting), EFL learners seemed to accept Turkish norms in their responses because they used all the sub-strategies. They used strategy 5 (returning the compliment) more than native English subjects because praising the other person and being modest are important features of Turkish culture. The same is true for strategies 10 (disagreement) and 11 (denigrating). Turkish people try to lower themselves or the object being complimented and reject the compliments. For example; in response to a compliment about a flat (situation 10) 19 subjects chose strategy 11 (denigrating) by either mentioning how expensive the flat is or by mentioning how noisy, small or uncomfortable it is. For native speakers of English it is unnecessary to talk about the qualities of the flat and in the case of responses like the ones mentioned above, they may be shocked. As an example of the use of 'Returning' super strategy by EFL learners for situation 3 which is about a new jacket, 16 subjects used 'Offering the object of the compliment' strategy which was not chosen by native English speakers. They offered to give their jackets by saying: 'You can wear it if you like', 'I can give it to you'.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, implications for language teaching and suggestions for further research.

This study aimed to investigate compliment response strategies used by EFL learners. In order to find out those strategies, data was collected from native Turkish speakers, native English speakers and EFL learners. In data analysis, Ernawati's categorization (1996) which was adapted from Chen (1993) was used. According to this categorization, there are four super strategies, Accepting, Returning, Deflecting and Rejecting and these strategies have 11 sub-types. Apart from these strategies, it was necessary to put another category in analyzing native Turkish and EFL learners' responses which is described as compliment + formula (see section 3.3).

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

This study tried to answer the following questions:

1. What are the compliment response strategies used by native Turkish speakers and native English speakers?
2. What are the compliment response strategies of EFL learners when they use English?

3. Are there similarities and differences between English native speakers' and EFL learners' responses to compliments?
4. Is there L1 transfer in English responses of Turkish EFL learners?

In order to answer these questions, the similarities and differences between native speakers of English and native speakers of Turkish in using compliment responses were revealed. It was seen that 'Accepting' is the strategy which was used frequently by the subjects in the two groups, but there is a striking difference in the 'Thanking' strategy. It was employed more in native English speaker data than native Turkish speaker data because thanking only is a sufficient response to a compliment in English whereas it may sound awkward for a Turkish person.

Another major difference is Turkish people's frequent use of formulaic expressions and routines which supply something to say "at a time like this". The same expression is used by everyone in that culture in the appropriate situation, no one in that culture would use any other expression and the failure to use it socially marked. Happy events are always occasions for formulas which acknowledge good fortune, although there is also an awareness that luck may change, so there are formulas to protect the good from evil forces. The concept of evil eye is very powerful in Turkey, thus mention of a good event or state almost never passes without the use of some accompanying formula (e.g. *Allah nazardan saklasın, May God protect from the evil eye, güle güle kullan, use laughingly, eline sağlık, afiyet olsun, health to your hand, bon appetit*) (Tannen and Öztek, 1981).

Another major difference is that Turkish speakers employed 'Deflecting' strategy more frequently than English speakers. For Turkish people it is important to be seen as modest and humble, therefore in the case of a compliment they prefer shifting the credit to someone else or explaining.

The length of response sequences are also important. Turkish compliment responses are much longer than the English; they contain more words and more likely to continue beyond the initial compliment and corresponding response.

When native English speaker and EFL learner data are compared, it is seen that EFL learners approached native English speaker norms in terms of an 'Accepting' strategy but their responses differed from native English norms in the 'Thanking' and 'Expressing gladness' sub-types. Since a simple 'Thank you' is not a sufficient response for a Turkish speaker and needs to be supplemented by other words or expressions, it can be said that they employed L1 rules in responding to compliments in English especially in 'Returning, Deflecting and Rejecting' strategies.

It is known that compliments are highly routinized occurrences in English. As Manes and Wolfson (1981) claim, English compliments lack originality and it is also true for compliment responses. But the Turkish language is rich in the range of formulaic expressions which reveal themselves in the body of proverbs, idiomatic expressions, situational formulae and they like to decorate both the spoken and the written channels. In Turkish there are many standardized communication situations which trigger automatic responses.

This study revealed that native Turkish speakers use compliment responses differently from native English speakers. The responses they gave are more original than English compliment responses; they contained formulaic expressions, metaphors and the responses conveyed a good sense of humour in most of the situations. It was also found that native Turkish speakers used almost all strategies but native English speakers only used some of them. The originality of compliment responses were also observed in the responses of EFL learners. Like native Turkish speakers, they used most of the strategies and their responses resembled the responses of native Turkish speakers (see Tables 1, 5, 7). In some situations, the strategies they chose to respond to compliments were more like the responses given by native English speakers (see Tables 2, 4, 6) and in some situations they used neither Turkish nor English norms (see Table 3 where there is overuse of strategy 6). They used the 'Thanking' strategy in most of the situations so it can be said that they approached native English speaker norms in using this strategy. However, in some situations EFL learners

translated some jokes and cliché expressions they used in Turkish into English which may astonish native English speakers and cause misunderstandings (e.g. Who chose it?, Your words made me so happy). As Ernawati (1996) points out translations from the L1 indicate negative transfer as lack of facility in the expressions in the target language.

### 5.3 Implications for Language Teaching

As Tarone and Yule (1989) state sociolinguistic competence cannot be taught as a 'discrete-point'. Rather, a knowledge of appropriate conditions for language use must involve an understanding of the way in which such factors as the roles of the speaker, hearer, and overhearer interact with the communicative setting, the topic of discourse, and the purposes of the participants. The approach used to teach sociolinguistic competence must then be integrative in nature. In helping language students to attain sociolinguistic competence, the language teacher should not follow a structured, discrete-point syllabus. Much more appropriate would be the use of a problem-solving, task-based approach similar to the interactive learning approach. In the foreign language-learning situation, where there may be extremely limited opportunities to take part in everyday interactional events characteristic of the target culture, the use of task-based, problem-solving activities will nevertheless create opportunities to develop the organizing and negotiating aspects of interactional language use (Tarone and Yule, 1989:95).

Olshtain and Cohen (1989) also support formal instruction and state that it can be of some benefit in speeding up the process of acquiring the target language. They further claim that the first step toward acquiring sociocultural rules is a program aimed at sensitizing learners to cultural differences in speech act behavior across languages and making the learner aware of overall patterns of behavior in the target culture. An awareness of available choices for speech act realization may

well help learners become better users of input in L2, and they need to be exposed to patterns used most commonly by native speakers of the L2.

Holmes and Brown (1976) claim that an adult second language learner is by no means sociolinguistically naive since he/she has already acquired the complex sociolinguistic system used in his native speech community. In learning how to use and interpret the sociolinguistic rules of English he/she must develop an awareness of areas where the sociolinguistic system of his/her native language differs from that of English, and where “misperception and misanalysis” are most likely to occur (Hymes, 1972:287). In some situations the rules of use of the two languages may appear similar enough to develop a false sense of security in the learners, and teachers must therefore supply feedback on appropriate and inappropriate responses since often the students will be unaware of their errors. Some exercises such as matching situations and utterances, role playing, implications, and initiating conversations help learners understand and interpret the sociolinguistic norms of situations correctly (Holmes and Brown, 1976:425).

In another article, Holmes and Brown (1987) state that the ESL teacher must provide information to learners so that they may choose how to express themselves and do so without unintentionally giving offense. Thomas (1983) expresses this point well:

It is the teacher's job to equip the student to express her/himself in exactly the way she/he chooses to do so – rudely, tactfully, or in an elaborate polite manner. What we want to prevent is her/his being unintentionally rude or subservient (Thomas, 1983:96).

According to Osborne (1994) students should be given simulations to supplement the published material and in teaching social English trainers and teachers should also check whether the students need formal or informal social English, use the students' own personal experiences as a resource, keep the simulations short and record wherever possible.

Billmyer (1990) suggests that formal instruction concerning the social rules of language use given in the classroom can assist learners in communicating more

appropriately with native speakers of the target language in meaningful social interaction outside of the classroom.

Thomas (1983) points out that teachers should develop students' metapragmatic ability – the ability to analyse language use in a conscious manner - a process which is generally termed as 'consciousness-raising'. This might be achieved by discussing language use in the light of the pragmatic parameters (positions, properties, relations, functions). She adds that it is important to sensitize learners to expect cross-cultural differences in the linguistic realizations of politeness, truthfulness, etc. So the teaching of language goes beyond mere training and becomes truly educational. Helping students to understand the way pragmatic principles operate in other cultures, encouraging them to look for the different pragmatic or discorsal norms which may underlie national and ethnic stereotyping, is to go some way towards eliminating simplistic and ungenerous interpretations of people whose linguistic behavior is superficially different from their own. Students should be warned that 'speaking good English' does not necessarily mean conforming to the norms of the culturally hegemonic strata (Thomas, 1983:110).

White (1993) claims that language training should focus not only on the form of the language, but also on its communicative use and that successful communication involves an inter-cultural understanding which means avoiding making wrong attributions.

According to Wolfson (1983b) the formulaic nature of compliments should make this topic particularly amenable to explicit presentation and it should be pointed out that because compliments are expressions of approval, they necessarily contain valuable information concerning the underlying cultural assumptions of speakers; so learners should be encouraged to take notice of what it is that forms the topics of the compliments they hear. For her, it is important for the learner to understand that the status and the relationship between speaker and addressee has a crucial bearing on both the compliment and the response type.

Moreover, EFL teachers and text-book writers should be careful about the distinction between their own system of values and students' own system of beliefs. Text-books and course materials should consequently be prepared for non-Western learners regarding the differences between cultures.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

This research was carried out with 25 native English speakers, 50 native Turkish speakers and 100 EFL learners. The same research might also be carried out by increasing the number of native Turkish and English informants and EFL learners to reach more reliable results.

A further study can be carried out by men and women from different age groups to find out sex differences on the use compliment responses.

This study can be replicated by collecting data from students with different proficiency levels in order to find out how they respond to compliments as their level of proficiency increases.

This study used the 'Discourse Completion Test' in collecting data. Other studies can be carried out by collecting data through natural observation and semi-controlled elicitation techniques.

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## APPENDIX A.

(The questionnaire given to native Turkish speakers which formed the Turkish L1 Baseline Data.)

### İLTİFAT YANITLARI İLE İLGİLİ ANKET FORMU

#### KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

1. a) Bayan:                      b) Erkek:                      2. Yaş:

Yönerge: Aşağıdaki durumlarda olduğunuzu düşünerek her birine vereceğiniz cevabı lütfen yazın.

1. Yıllardır görmediğiniz bir arkadaşınızla bir toplantıda karşılaştınız. Karşılıklı selamlaşmalardan sonra size, “Harika görünüyorsun, hiç değişmemişsin,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:  

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2. Derslerinizden birinde bir sunuş yaptınız. Sunuştan sonra sınıf arkadaşlarınızdan birisi yanınıza geldi, “Aferin, ne güzel sundun, iyi hazırlanmışsın,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:  

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3. Yeni aldığınız ceketinizi giyerek okula gittiniz. Sınıf arkadaşlarınızdan bir tanesi, “Ceketin çok güzel, yeni mi?” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:  

---
4. Arkadaşlarınızdan birini yemeğe davet ettiniz. Arkadaşınız yemekleri beğendi, “Yemek nefisti, ellerine sağlık,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:  

---
5. Yeni bir tişört giydiniz. Sabah üniversiteden bir arkadaşınızla karşılaştınız, “Ne güzel bir tişört, sana yakışmış,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:

14. Uzun süredir görmediğiniz bir arkadaşınızla markette karşılaştınız. Size, “Çok güzelleşmişsin,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:

---

15. Kardeşinizle birlikte kantinde oturuyorsunuz. Kardeşinizi tanıştırdığınız bir arkadaşınız, “ Kardeşinin gözleri çok güzel, seninkilere benziyor,” dedi. Siz ne yanıt verirdiniz:

---

## APPENDIX B

(The questionnaire given to native English speakers which formed the English L1 Baseline Data and to EFL learners which formed EFL Experimental Data.)

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMPLIMENT RESPONSES

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

1.     a. Male       b. Female           2. Age:

#### Directions:

You are in the following situations. Please write down your response to each one of them.

1. You met a friend you hadn't seen for a long time at a seminar. After an exchange of greetings, he said: 'You look great. Even better than when I saw you last time'.

You would reply:

---

2. You gave a presentation in one of your classes. After the presentation, one of your classmates came to you and he said: 'That was really an excellent presentation, I enjoyed it very much. You were so well-prepared'. You would reply:

---

3. You went to school with your new jacket. One of your classmates said: 'Your jacket is nice, is it new?'. You would say:

---

4. You invited one of your friends to dinner. After dinner, he liked the food and said: 'You are a very good cook. The meal was delicious'. You would reply:

---

5. You wore a new shirt. One of your friends, at university, met you in the morning and he said: 'What a nice shirt! You look nice in it'. You would reply:

---

6. You have been going to aerobics classes for the two months. You see one of your friends at a party. He says: 'You are looking very fit'. You would say:

---

7. You were the winner of chess tournament at your school. Your close friend came near you and said: 'Congratulations, you played well'. You would reply:

---

8. You wore a new wrist watch. A friend of yours saw it and he said to you: 'Wow, what a nice watch'. You would reply:

---

9. You have recently had your hair cut. When you meet a friend at school, he said: 'Your hair looks great'. You would say:

---

10. You invited your friends from school to your apartment. They liked it and one of them said: 'Wow, you've got a great apartment!' You would reply:

---

11. You gave in an assignment in one of your courses. After two days, your lecturer said: 'That was good. Not only the theory was well presented but also the examples were good'. You would reply:

---

12. You have just returned from a holiday and you have a good suntan. One of your friends at school sees you and says: 'You look very brown!'. You would reply:

---

13. You went to disco with your friends. One of your friends who watched your dancing said: 'You dance very well'. You would say:

---

14. You meet a friend you haven't seen for a long time at a supermarket. He says: 'You look very beautiful'. You would say:

---

15. You are at the canteen with your brother/sister. One of your friends you introduced your brother/sister said: 'Your sister/brother's eyes are beautiful, and look like yours'. You would say:

---

## APPENDIX C

## TEST STATISTICS OF NATIVE TURKISH, NATIVE ENGLISH AND EFL

## DATA

Test Statistics<sup>a,b</sup>

	SORU1	SORU10	SORU11	SORU12	SORU13	SORU14	SORU15	SORU2	SORU3
Chi-Square	7,143	3,064	4,761	3,604	3,589	6,146	8,983	4,728	5,211
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,028	,216	,093	,165	,166	,046	,011	,094	,074

Test Statistics<sup>a,b</sup>

	SORU4	SORU5	SORU6	SORU7	SORU8	SORU9
Chi-Square	46,285	6,619	1,944	6,793	,633	1,628
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000	,037	,378	,033	,729	,443

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: VAR00001

## APPENDIX D

## TEST STATISTICS OF NATIVE TURKISH AND NATIVE ENGLISH DATA

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	SORU1	SORU10	SORU11	SORU12	SORU13	SORU14	SORU15	SORU2	SORU3
Mann-Whitney U	888,000	1006,000	954,000	988,000	1038,500	892,500	817,500	921,000	916,500
Wilcoxon W	1213,00	1331,000	1279,000	1313,000	1363,500	1217,500	1142,500	1246,00	1241,50
Z	-2,299	-1,534	-1,974	-1,771	-1,371	-2,250	-2,737	-2,111	-2,099
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,022	,125	,048	,077	,170	,024	,006	,035	,036

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	SORU4	SORU5	SORU6	SORU7	SORU8	SORU9
Mann-Whitney U	832,000	1107,00	1103,50	971,500	1110,50	1125,50
Wilcoxon W	1157,00	1432,00	1428,50	1296,50	6160,50	6175,50
Z	-2,682	-,903	-,970	-1,749	-,899	-,794
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,007	,366	,332	,080	,369	,427

a. Grouping Variable: VAR00001

## APPENDIX E

## TEST STATISTICS OF NATIVE ENGLISH AND EFL LEARNER DATA

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	SORU1	SORU10	SORU11	SORU12	SORU13	SORU14	SORU15	SORU2	SORU3
Mann-Whitney U	398,000	607,500	575,500	481,500	476,500	414,000	384,000	462,000	497,000
Wilcoxon W	723,000	932,500	900,500	806,500	801,500	739,000	709,000	787,000	822,000
Z	-2,646	-.202	-.583	-1,745	-1,712	-2,429	-2,861	-1,902	-1,474
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.840	.560	.081	.087	.015	.004	.057	.140

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	SORU4	SORU5	SORU6	SORU7	SORU8	SORU9
Mann-Whitney U	161,000	558,000	611,500	418,500	613,000	621,500
Wilcoxon W	486,000	1833,00	936,500	743,500	938,000	1896,50
Z	<b>-5,372</b>	-.785	-.163	-2,367	-.141	-.041
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.432	.871	.018	.888	.967

a. Grouping Variable: VAR00001