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***The Effect of Explicit Instruction on EFL Learners' Appropriate Requests Production :***  
**the case of third year pupils at Ibn Hedjer El Asskalani Middle School, Ouargla.**

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## **Dedication**

To the soul of my beloved dad

To my dearest kind-hearted beloved mom

To my supervisor Dr. Touria

To my dearest husband

To my sweetheart: Younes and Mohamed Ashref

To my coming child

To all my beloved sisters and brothers

To my dearest friend Fadila

To all my teachers

To all my friends and classmates

I would like to dedicate this work.

*Kelthoum*

## **Dedication**

First of all I dedicate this study to our **Almighty Allah** who gave me strength for  
my whole life

To

My father

A strong and gentle soul who taught me to trust in Allah

My mother

For supporting and encouraging me to believe in myself

My husband

For being my guardian during my education career

My children

For being overwhelming moral support

My brothers and my dearest sister

For their eternal love

My friends and my teachers

For instilling in me the virtues of perseverance and commitment

**Faty**

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To all those who have always been there for us, when we were in need .

## Abstract

This study aims at investigating the way explicit instruction can motivate EFL learners' production of appropriate requests, an aspect which we hypothesized that receives a great deal of focus among researchers for a quite some time now. With the current research, we aim to contribute to this topic by investigating the different strategies followed during requests production to achieve pragmatic appropriateness. Through adopting a quasi-experimental research on two groups, data were collected by means of Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) in the form of tests which were distributed to 60 pupils. Participants in this study are distributed into: an experimental group and a control group who did not receive any instruction. The experimental group was exposed to an authentic input where it experienced more focused tasks before they entered practice phase. Both groups received a pre-test and a post-test, each of which included a written discourse completion task (WDCT) and a multiple-choice discourse completion task (MCDCT). They were given right before and after the intervention, but to a slight degree of difficulty. The findings show that the scores of the post-test are higher than the ones of the pre-test. Therefore, these results revealed the effectiveness of the use of explicit instruction in spite of the limited allocated time of the intervention. To make sure that those results did not occur by chance, a t-test was conducted using both types: paired and independent. The data gathered by comparing learners' scores through the latter confirm the suggested hypothesis which states that explicit instruction develops the learners' appropriate requests production.

**Key terms:** Explicit instruction, requests, pragmatic appropriateness.

## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>CC</b>	Communicative Competence
<b>Cont G</b>	Control Group
<b>DCT</b>	Discourse Completion Task
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>Exp G</b>	Experimental Group
<b>IL</b>	Inter-language
<b>ILP</b>	Inter-language Pragmatics
<b>L2</b>	Second/Foreign Language
<b>MDCT</b>	Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Task
<b>N</b>	Number of Students
<b>NSs</b>	Native Speakers of a Language
<b>PC</b>	Pragmatic Competence
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>SD</b>	Standard Deviation
<b>WDCT</b>	Written Discourse Completion Task

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**GENERAL  
INTRODUCTION**

## General Introduction

### 1. Background

It is commonly recognized that to communicate efficiently in a foreign language, one's linguistic knowledge (grammar and vocabulary) is not enough. Hence, one is in need of sociolinguistic knowledge. On the one hand, much more important for a language learner is to know and use the socio-cultural rules of the society whose language he/she is learning. On the other hand, awareness of pragmatically appropriate language use is a necessary part of successful language learning. In this vein, the goal of teaching a foreign language is to develop learners' ability to communicate appropriately through providing them with appropriate input. That is, the aim of language pedagogy is to teach learners how a language should be appropriately used in different interactional settings. It is important to raise learners' pragmatic awareness as well as furnishing them with some beneficial strategies they can utilize to sustain successful communication. For the case of learners of English as foreign language (EFL), pragmatic awareness is a crucial issue as pedagogical materials and classroom environment are often their basic sources of pragmatically appropriate input (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). This means that teaching practices should give more importance not only to the key features of the linguistic system of English, but also to its pragmatic norms. Thus, the limited input to pragmatic knowledge may impede communication.

### 2. Statement of the Problem

Language learners have to display competence in using various speech acts, the speech act of request particularly is an indispensable part of pragmatic competence. The recent inter-language and cross-cultural research findings have approved the effectiveness of integrating pragmatics through explicit instruction in raising Second Language (L2) learners' awareness of rules and strategies to produce appropriate requests. Relatively, the speech act of requesting is one of the most difficult speech acts as it requires high levels of appropriateness and acceptable cultural and linguistic proficiency on the part of the learners (Blum-Kulka & Olsain, 1984). In this vein, raising the foreign language learners' awareness about different ways of expressing request is a crucial issue which demands lots of efforts on the target language learners' part as well teachers. Accordingly, a personal experience in teaching and the complaints of professionals or students about the

challenging aspect of performing appropriate speech act of request triggered the query of this research.

### 3. Objectives of the Research

The effect and status of pragmatic competence has gradually augmented in educational circles. In this sense, the ability of having a good command of the conventions (social norms and rules) allows the speaker to establish and maintain effective and appropriate communication as well as comprehending each other clearly. The current study endeavours to investigate the effect of explicit instruction of requesting strategies to EFL learners. It also intends to shed light on various strategies which can be used to perform pragma-linguistically appropriate requests. Precisely, it seeks to demonstrate the significance of the target language input in Algerian middle schools where little emphasis is given to the integration of more adequate pragmatic input. Through an experimental study conducted on 3<sup>rd</sup> year Middle school pupils in Ouargla, we aim at demonstrating the benefits of explicit instruction in pragmatics and provide more evidence to this issue.

### 4. Research Questions:

**Q1:** Does explicit instruction promote learners' appropriate requests production?

**Q2 :** What strategies are used by EFL learners to produce appropriate requests?

### 5. Research Hypotheses

To answer the main research questions, two distinct hypotheses are put forward:

#### **The Null Hypothesis (H0)**

Explicit instruction may not develop the 3<sup>rd</sup> year middle school pupils appropriate requests production .

#### **The Alternative Hypothesis (H1)**

Explicit instruction may develop the 3<sup>rd</sup> year middle school pupils appropriate requests production .

### 6. Research Methods

For the goal of testing our hypotheses a quasi-experimental design is adopted. Thus, data are gathered by means of Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs). The latter are assigned to Third year Middle school pupils in Ouargla in both pre- test and post -test to reveal the

changes in the requests production as a result of receiving explicit instruction of requesting appropriately.

### 7. Structure of the Dissertation

The current dissertation includes two parts. The theoretical part is composed of one main chapter. It sheds light on the explicit instruction of appropriate requests production, particularly, those which contribute to more polite and indirect requests. It also discusses the input issue. The practical part, however, discusses the methodology adopted, along with the analysis and the interpretation of the data.

### 8. Definition of Key Terms

**Appropriateness:** As mentioned in Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989), appropriateness has been equated with NSs' use and/or production in ELT pedagogy. .

**Requests:** Trosborg (1995) defines request as a directive speech act in which the addresser asks the addressee to perform an action which is for the benefit of the speaker.

**Explicit Instruction:** It is a structured, systematic, and effective methodology for teaching academic skills. Rosenshine (1987) defines this type of instruction as "a systematic method of teaching with emphasis on proceeding in small steps, checking for student understanding, and achieving active and successful participation by all students" (p. 34).

# **CHAPTER ONE**

**The Effect of Explicit Instruction on Appropriate Requests  
Production**



**CHAPTER One: The Effect of Explicit instruction on Appropriate Requests****Production****Introduction**

It is through language that people can communicate with a number of interlocutors in a variety of settings. However, during interactions, language users need to do things with words. They need to know how to say something as well as when, where and to whom to say it. Besides, language instructors are supposed to provide and make their learners exposed to some conventions of the target language according to which their conversation will be not only meaningful but also appropriate. Directives, for instance requests, are the general category of speech acts that the scope of this study falls within. This chapter presents a review of the literature of research in pragmatics and Second Language (SL) classroom in English Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, with little attention to ESL contexts. The review restricts itself to explicit instruction in Pragmatics (interventional studies) and the speech act of request. While, there are very few inter-language and cross-cultural studies that investigate L2 learners' pragmatic competence development; they will be reviewed concisely because they are closely related to our discussion.

**1.1. Definition of Pragmatics**

The analysis of how to say things in appropriate ways and places is basically called pragmatics. This term was originally adopted within philosophy of language (Morris, 1938). Stalnaker (1972), for instance, defines pragmatics as the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which these acts are performed. Whereas, Crystal (1997) defines it from the language user's angle: "the study of the language from the point of view of users, especially of the choice they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p.301).

**1.2. Definition of Pragmatic Competence**

Pragmatic competence is widely used in the field of Second and Foreign Language Acquisition (SLA & FLA) and teaching especially in reference to pragmatic competence as one of the abilities included in the central concept of communicative competence. The notion of pragmatic competence is identified as sociolinguistic competence and defined as the knowledge of contextually appropriate language use (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983).

Later on Canale (1988) added new expansion to this definition and stated that pragmatic competence includes „„*illocutionary competence* or the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence for performing language functions appropriately in a given context““ ( p.90). In this sense, Thomas (1983) views pragmatic competence as the ability to use language effectively in order to reach a particular purpose and to understand language in context. Barron (2003) sees it as the knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for performing specific illocutions, knowledge of the sequential features of speech acts and knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages“ linguistic resources.

### **1.3 The Importance of Pragmatics in EFL Learning .**

There has been a special interest devoted to pragmatics within language teaching for many years, and this has been reflected in the growing body of academic research. This interest seems to have grown from a belief that the linguistic knowledge is insufficient to permit learners to become competent users of English. Thus, what is important to language teaching professionals is to enable learners to be capable to produce pragmatically correct language in the right context (Close & Wilkinson, 2011). Having a good command of the conventions enables the speaker to establish and maintain effective and appropriate communication as well as understanding each other clearly (Yule, 1996). Moreover, following the shift in which the focus in language pedagogy changed from the Linguistic-based to communicative-based purposes, the impact and status of pragmatic competence has gradually grown in educational circles and the need for instruction in pragmatics is increasingly emphasized. Considering pragmatic competence as a crucial component of the target language teaching, the value and the significance of this ability in EFL and SL contexts have to be the educators“ primary focus. However, it is recently very difficult for educators to tackle the area of pragmatics in the classroom in an informed and confident pedagogical manner (Birner, 2003).

### **1.4. Teachability of Pragmatic Competence**

The teachability of pragmatic competence is a debatable topic. Many researchers share the opinion of Gass (1991) who views that pragmatic competence cannot be taught. While others believe that it is possible to develop some of its aspects.

Kasper (1997) states that in spite of this fact, competence cannot be taught, learners should be given the chance to be trained to develop their pragmatic competence. "Competence is a type of knowledge that learners" possess, develop, acquire, use or lose. The challenge for foreign or second language teaching is whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that they benefit the development of pragmatic competence in L2" (Kasper 1997, p.1). The necessity of instructing pragmatics was stressed by Morgan and Reynolds (1991). They state that teaching pragmatics allows students to experience and experiment with the language at a deeper level, and by doing so they participate in the purpose of language-communication, instead of using only words. Olshtain & Cohen (1990), Bardovi-Harlig (2001) and Rose (2005) support pragmatic instruction in the classroom since it plays a key role in acquiring some aspects of L2 pragmatics. However, Kasper (1997) and Kasper & Rose (2001) think that there is no need for instruction in building pragmatic accuracy, and adult learners acquire a considerable amount of L2 pragmatic information without instruction because some pragmatic features are universal and others may be successfully transferred from their first language. Yet, learners sometimes do not use the knowledge they already have. Kasper and Rose (2001) claim that instruction may be necessary for the acquisition of L2 pragmatic proficiency as their studies seen by Kasper and Roever (2005) suggest that most aspects of L2 pragmatics are indeed amenable to instruction, that instruction intervention is more beneficial than no instructional arrangements specifically targeted to pragmatic learning " (p. 322). Other researchers also realize the importance of teaching pragmatics in second language learning.

In conclusion, different opinions do exist in the teachability of pragmatics. Instruction is essential to pragmatic development. Apparently, learners who receive instruction in pragmatics perform better than those who do not (Rose, 2005).

### **1.5. Types of Instructional Methods**

Providing adequate input and opportunities to practice during instruction has proved to be of great importance to EFL learners. There are two types of instruction: explicit and implicit. Explicit instruction implies providing learners with language input that has pragmatic information taught and highlighted. Whereas implicit instruction implies providing learners with input without meta-pragmatic information and gradually acquiring pragmatic rules through practice (Ishihara , 2010d). In this vein, Alcón Soler (2002) and Schmidt (1993) believe that with explicit instruction, the teacher provides

suggestions and explanations to the class while implicit instruction makes no overt reference to the rules. Therefore, implicit instruction is a learner-centered style of learning since the teacher is simply a facilitator who provides context without explaining or discussing rules. Accordingly, Kasper (2001) explicit instruction involves carried out with practice tasks; but implicit instruction involves no meta-pragmatic explanation. In addition, implicit instruction entails developing the learners' understanding of the target language features and aspects using input flood, input enhancement techniques, implicit feedback and consciousness" raising. It sheds light on the learners' induction and their self-discovery of target pragmatic features from the input.( Jeon &Kaya ,2006).

### **1.6. The Effect of Explicit Instruction on Raising EFL Learners Awareness**

In fact, assisted performance in both explicit and implicit instructions in the EFL context helps students to acquire and practice pragmatic aspects. However, many researchers approve that explicit instruction is more effective and beneficial in enhancing students' pragmatic competence because it can direct EFL learners' attention toward the target speech forms and raise their pragmatic awareness. Moreover, what characterizes the explicit instruction is the presence of meta-pragmatic information as a part of the instructional input (Alcon-Soler & Martinez Flor, 2008).Schmidt (1993) emphasizes that explicit instruction has its role in second language pragmatic instruction for it is more efficient and an explicit approach entails the solving of problems consciously. When solving problems, the brain attempts to search related memory. Students learn well when they are required to learn from logical relationships rather than perceptual similarity, and the goal of explicit instruction is to help focus on the forms and meaning in the input (Schmidt, 1990). In addition, Kasper and Roever (2005) state that several studies by House & Kasper (1981); Pearson (1998), and Tateyama et al. (1997) have compared meta-pragmatic instruction with input and practice. All of these studies found an advantage for explicit meta-pragmatic teaching. Furthermore, research has revealed that some pragmatic aspects cannot be easily acquired by the learners only if their focus is drawn to the pragmatic instruction ( Gholamia, &Aghaib ,2012). Similarly, most studies to date covering EFL/ESL learners have adopted an explicit teaching approach (Taguchi, 2015) which is often characterized by teacher-led introduction of the pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatics goals of the target language. Activities to promote learning in explicit treatments include awareness-raising tasks and activities providing communicative practice such as role plays (Kasper, 1996; Safont Jorda, 2004).

Overall, findings do show students having benefited from explicit instruction ( Bouton, Cohen & Tarone, Wishnoff). For example, in the study of Nguyen, Pham, Pham (2012), the findings proposed that explicit instruction has a greater effect on learners' pragmatic development. Nguyen, Pham, Pham (2012) investigated the effect of explicit and implicit instruction on 69 English learners who were developing in criticism speech acts. Post- test findings showed the superiority of the explicit group over the implicit group and control group. In addition, in another study, Salemi, Rabiee & Ketabi (2012) found that explicit instruction is more advantageous over implicit instruction. They concluded that participants in explicit groups outperformed implicit groups in which students' attention was directed to specific features during explicit instruction.

To sum up, the majority of recent empirical studies suggest that explicit instruction tends to be more effective than implicit instruction in terms of learning outcomes in L2 pragmatics (Schmidt, 1993; Rose, 2005; Rose & Kasper, 2002; Shively, 2012; Salemi, Rabiee & Ketabi, 2012; Cohen, 2008, Alcón Soler, 2002). As a result, explicit pragmatic instruction is more effective in both raising EFL learners' pragmatic awareness and enhancing their pragmatic performance. As Alcón Solar (2007) stated, explicit instruction may trigger a higher level of awareness and increase retention rate.

### **1.7. Input Significance in SLA**

Learning is explicitly described as a conscious process of retention of new information or skill, acquired usually through formal instruction. There are internal as well as external aspects that influence SLA. Among them, language input which is considered to be a fundamental factor that plays a crucial role in L2 learning. Before going further in discussing the language input, issue, we should make its meaning clear. Corder (1967) has defined it as all what is available to be used by language learners for SLA which should be separated from intake. This latter is the part of the input which is comprehended by language learners.

While reviewing the literature on language input and SLA, it is noticed that much work in this field of research has emphasized the Paramount role of linguistic input. Traditionally, the role of input has been advocated by diverse of learning theories such as behaviourist (Lightbown and Spada, 1999), innativist (Krashen, 1982), interactionist (M.Long,1983). Some theories attribute a great significance to the importance of input in SLA whereas other theories attribute no role to language input for SLA progress

(Straskova, 2007). However, SLA have been focused by many specialists like Gass (1988), White (1987), Gass and Selinker (1997), Swain (1985), Ellis (1994), Romeo (2000). Gass, for example, claims that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is shaped by the input one receives (1997). The SLA-oriented interventional studies are based on three interrelated hypotheses: Schmidt's *noticing hypothesis* (Schmidt, 1993, 1995), Swain's *output hypothesis* (Swain, 1996), and Long's *interaction hypothesis* (Long, 1996). In the *noticing hypothesis*, for instance, Schmidt argues that conscious awareness (noticing) of grammar plays a paramount role in the process of learning. The input has to be manipulated by teachers to make it simpler through clarifying interaction, process and taking Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis into consideration, we can summarize that some types (*modified input, inter-actionally modified input and modified output*) of language input repeat the main points in language aspects. Therefore, the learners will be able to perceive and notice the input (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Recently, classroom studies showed that through sustained input and collaborative interaction, students acquire pragmatic ability to make significant gains in pragmatic ability in FL classroom.

To conclude, EFL learners need to be furnished with the required prama-linguistic and the socio-linguistic input to show awareness in maintaining communicative exchanges and cooperative interactions in different contexts.

### 1.8.1. Speech Act Theory

The *Speech Act Theory* is an approach that emphasizes the functions of units of language. It is one of the paramount domains of pragmatics. It was developed by the British philosopher J. L. Austin in his book *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). Later on, a number of other specialists, notably the British philosopher John Searle (1969), expanded the theory.

### 1.8.2. Speech Acts

According to Schmidt and Richards (1989) „„Speech act theory has to do with functions and uses of language, in the broadest sense we might say that speech acts are all acts we perform through speaking, all the things we do when we speak““ ( p.129). Austin, for instance, views that the functions of speech is not merely „assert“ facts. Speech is used to invite, suggest, to make a request, to prohibit, giving an order, to offer a help or an apology, and so on. It is used to accomplish an affair in a given context. Utterances are

considered as „acts“, as actions that we „do“. The speech act is an utterance intended to transmit communicative force which is a part of social interaction. In other words, it is a communicative activity that is much related to the intentions of language users as they speak or write and the impact they have on listeners or readers. In language teaching circles, speech acts are generally named Functions of language.

### **1.8.2. a. Levels of Speech Acts**

Thomas (1995) points that Austin made three distinctions regarding a speech act: (i) *locution*, which refers to the actual words spoken, (ii) *illocution*, which is the force or intention behind the words, and (iii) *perlocution*, which is the effect of the illocution on the hearer. The term “speech act” refers specifically to the illocutionary act. Another crucial distinction made is between direct speech acts, “where the speaker says what he or she means”, and indirect speech acts, “where he or she means more than, or something other than, what he or she actually says” (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989,p.2).

### **1.8.2. b. Classification of Speech Acts**

Speech acts are often classified according to the illocutionary meaning stated either explicitly or implicitly in verbs. J. Searle(1979) classified speech acts into five part classification :(i) *representatives*, such as asserting, claiming, reporting, describing, predicting, swearing,...(ii) *expressive*, for example, apologizing, congratulating, thanking, condoling, welcoming, greeting,...(iii) *directives*, for instance, commanding, requesting, inviting, pleading,...(iv) *commissives*, for example, promising, threatening, vowing,...(v) *declarative*, such as baptizing, arresting, marrying, sentencing, nominating, naming, etc.,. Illocutionary acts depend mainly on the external factors that affect their form and interpretation which differ from speech community to another and from speech event to another.

It is the production of indirect speech acts which tends to be challenging to the second language speaker. Speech acts production has manifested a great deal of interest among researchers for quite some time.

### **1.8. 3.The Speech Act of Requesting**

The importance of behaving in an appropriate way while using a diversity of pragmatic aspects lies in achieving full and successful communication in the English language and culture. The speech act of requesting is one among those pragmatic aspects where learners need a great deal of expertise to avoid communication break downs.



Requests have been defined as directive speech acts in which the speaker asks the hearer to perform an action for the benefit of the speaker (Trosborg, 1995). These speech acts can be realized through using three major types of production strategies:

**Table 1**  
Directness Scale in English for Request Categories with Examples  
(Blum-Kulka, 1987)

Direct Strategies	Less-direct Strategies	More indirect Strategies	Least direct Strategies
<p><b>1. Mood derivable</b> -Clean up the room.</p> <p><b>2. Performatives</b> -I would like to ask you move your car.</p> <p><b>3. Hedged performatives</b> -I would like to ask move your car.</p>	<p><b>1. Obligation Statement</b> -You,,ll have to move your car.</p> <p><b>2. Want Statement</b> -I would like you clean the room.</p>	<p><b>1. Suggesty formulae</b> -How about cleaning up?</p> <p><b>2. Query preparatory</b> Could you clean up?</p>	<p><b>1. Strong hints</b> -Would you mind moving your car?</p> <p><b>2. Mild hints</b> -You"ve left the room in a mess.</p>

### 1.8.3.a .Types of Request Strategies

Requests can be classified into three types

- 1- *Direct request*: For instance, „Give me some salt“
- 2- *Conventionally indirect*: For example, „Could you give me some salt?“
- 3- *Indirect strategies*: For example, „I need to make a telephone call“. The three of them have the function of requesting and can stand by themselves, which is why they have been referred as the head act of the requesting. In other words a request consists of two parts: head and modifier. The head act is the main utterance which conveys a complete request without any modifier and which is followed or preceded by modifier .This latter mitigates or aggravates the impact of the addressee"s face that every party intends to claim for himself which can be maintained, lost or enhanced and must be constantly present in interaction( Reiter, 2000). Requests have been considered as one of the most *Face-Threatening speech Acts* in Brown and Levinson"s (1987) politeness theory. Since, requests are potentially intrusive and demanding; there will be a need for the requester



(speaker) to minimize the imposition involved in the request. In order to minimize the imposition, the speaker is expected to employ indirect strategies rather than direct ones.

For instance the strategies illustrated in Table 2 are the most frequently used to in the three levels of direct requests to minimize the imposition in request production.

**Table 2**  
Request Strategies (Blum-Kulka, 1987,p.133)

Direct Levels	Strategies
Level 1:	Mood directives
Direct strategies (implosives)	Performatives
	Obligation statement
	Want statement
	Suggestory formula
Level 2:	Suggestory formula
Conventionally indirect strategies	Query preparatory
Level	Strong hint
Non-Conventionally indirect strategies	Mild hint

The mitigating devices to the face-threatening nature of requests can be reached by using the two main types, namely *internal* and *external*. The former refers to those devices that appear within the request head act itself, whereas the latter involves the use of devices that occur in the immediate linguistic context surrounding the request head act. This classification is founded on empirical investigations carried out in the fields of inter-language pragmatics (Trosborg 1995; Nikula 1996; Achiba 2003) and cross-cultural pragmatics (House and Kasper 1981; Sifianou 1999).

Firstly, the *internal mitigating devices* have three subtypes:

- (i) *Openers*: i.e. expressions that introduce the intended request, for example, „Gentlemen, would you mind leaving us, please?“
- (ii) *Softeners*: i.e. items that soften the impositive force of the request for example, „Listen, can I talk to you for a second?“; „If you could possibly return this to Fred“s for me, please.“
- (iii) *Fillers*: i.e. items, such as hesitators ,for example, „er“, „erm“, cajolers for example, „you know, you see, I mean“, appealers (for example, „OK?“, „right?“) or attention-getters (for 4 example, „excuse me“, „hello“, „Mr. Smith?“), that fill

in gaps in the interaction ,for example, „Excuse me, can you tell me how to get to Boston?“; „Olga, lower it a bit, would you?“

Secondly, regarding the *external mitigating* devices, five subtypes have been identified:

- (i) *Preparators*: i.e. devices that prepare the addressee for the subsequent request, for example, „Colonel, I do have to ask you a couple of questions about the incident“s night?“
- (ii) *Grounders*: i.e. devices that give reasons that justify the request, for example, „Call my family, I“d like them to have dinner with me tonight.“
- (iii) *Disarmers*: i.e. devices that are employed to avoid the possibility of a refusal, for example, „Colonel John, if it“s not too much trouble, I“d like a copy of the transfer order, Sir.“
- (iv) *Expanders*: i.e. devices related to repetition that are used to indicate tentativeness, for example, „Can you take him to the airport in the morning? ... Can you pick him up at 7.30?“
- (v) *Promise of a reward*: i.e. devices that are used by the requester so that his/her request may be accomplished, for example, „...she wants a bottle of milk ... I would promise to send you the money.“

In addition, according to Brown & Levinson (1987), native speakers use a variety of politeness strategies. Some of these are obvious, like „please“ can also be considered as another type of mitigating device, which is used to signal politeness or a conventional (Blum-Kulka, 1987), for example, „would you hang up please and I“ll call her in few minutes?“. All the above mentioned mitigating devices can be used to minimize the impact a request may have on the hearer.

Thus, learners“ knowledge of these mitigating devices is crucial to help them to perform appropriate requests for meaningful and successful communication. However, a number of mitigating devices can be chosen for the same sort of situations; learners need to know how interactional and contextual factors affect the choice of a particular pragma-linguistic form for these devices.

#### **1.8.4. Appropriateness in Requests Production**

Since requests are more frequent in interpersonal relationships between language users, successful performance of which may lead to positive results, whereas failure in their realisation may bring about unacceptable ones. Precisely, attention is to be drawn to interactional and contextual factors identified in Brown and Yule“s (1983) discourse interaction .They differentiate between two types of interaction that influence an

appropriate request, namely *transactional* and *interactional*. The former is related to the kind of request which transmits information and thus it does not need to be softened (for instance, a teacher requests learners to open their books during a class). The latter refers to a sort of interaction in which the request is realized to maintain relationships and therefore it is generally mitigated as the speaker may exert an imposition over the hearer (for example, a conversation between friends). Moreover, the three socio-pragmatic factors illustrated by Brown and Levinson (1983) are of great importance to produce an appropriate request. These parameters include *power* which involves to the social status of the speaker with reference to the hearer (for instance, teacher-student, employer-employee), *social distance* which is reflected through the degree of familiarity of interactants (for example, relatives versus strangers) and the *rank of imposition*, which refers to the type of imposition the speaker places on the hearer (for example, asking for a lift versus asking for a big sum of money).

Consequently, learners need to be aware of those factors in order to overcome miscommunication and misinterpretation in EFL instructional settings whereas; language teachers should provide learners with the necessary tools to solve communication difficulties.

### **1.9. Indirectness and Politeness**

According to Searle(1975) indirectness can happen when one illocutionary act is realized indirectly via the realization of another .Politeness is the primary motive while performing indirect speech act and saving the hearer's face as well( Goffman, 1959).Moreover, close parties avoid conflict and clash through articulating more polite speech acts. Thus, it is of great importance for every language user to possess this interaction skill in order to maintain harmony in any speech community. Traditionally, several experiments were designed to tap native speakers' perceptions of politeness and indirectness in Hebrew and English (the study was conducted as part of a project known as the *Cross-cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP)*). The results indicate that the two notions are perceived as different from each other: The most *indirect* request strategies were not judged as the most polite. The strategies rated as the most polite, on a scale of politeness, were *conventional* indirect requests; the strategies rated as the most indirect, on a scale of indirectness, were *hints* (strong and mild) used forms of requests.

### 1.10. Inter-language Pragmatics

Inter-language pragmatics (ILP) is a branch of second language acquisition which examines second language learners' knowledge, use, and development in performing socio-cultural functions. The original definition of ILP was introduced by Kasper and Dahl (1991) "inter-language pragmatics will be defined in a narrow sense, referring to nonnative speakers' (NNSs) comprehension and production of speech acts, and how their L2-related speech act knowledge is acquired" (p.216). Moreover, Kasper and Rose (2003) state that ILP examines how nonnative speakers comprehend and produce actions in a target language and how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform actions in a target language.

Instructional studies in ILP are concerned with change and factors affecting the change. They also focus on changes in pragmatic knowledge from pre-to post-test. Quasi-experimental studies are adopted in which comparison is held between learners who received instruction to those who did not. According to Taguchi (2017) "studies in the 1990, revealed that most pragmatic features are teachable which means that instruction helps boost learners' pragmatic development" (p. 18). While the next studies targeted the instructional methods and their efficacy in which they compared between explicit and implicit instruction like Fordyce's (2014) work. The findings of many equivalent research works have generally confirmed the superiority of the explicit over implicit method (Taguchi 2017).

To conclude, as Bardovi-Harlig (2010) claims "pragmatics bridges the gap between the system side of language, and the use side and relates both of them at the same time where inter-language pragmatics brings the study of acquisition to this mix of structure and use" (p. 219).

### Conclusion

In summary, instruction in pragmatics is important to foster well-formed speech acts which can contribute to some extent to appropriate requests production. As directing the learners' attention to target language forms and features (input) in order to raise their awareness which pave the way to employing appropriate strategy to minimise the illocutionary force of an utterance. In other words, instructional intervention may furnish EFL learners with the required pragma-linguistic and the socio-linguistic input to be careful to choose the suitable strategy to realise the appropriate requests in a variety of settings.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

**Methodology and Findings Analysis and Interpretation**

## **Chapter Two: Methodology and Findings Analysis and Interpretation**

### **Introduction**

In order to achieve the current study's aim which is investigating the effect of explicit instruction on the EFL learners' appropriate requests production. This chapter tries to shed light first on the methodology adopted in this research. Second, it describes clearly the participants, the instrument used to collect data as well the procedures used to analyze the results. Finally, the chapter presents the discussion and the interpretation of the findings.

### **2.1. Methodology**

To find out the answer of the research questions, a quasi-experimental design is adopted. A quasi-experiment is an empirical interventional study used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on target population. Thus it is a research that resembles experimental research but it is not true experimental research. In spite of the fact that the independent variable is manipulated, participants are without random assignment to conditions or orders of conditions (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Moreover, in order to collect data, discourse completion task is used since it is the suitable method. Discourse completion tasks or tests are widely used in language teaching and learning research as well as in researching the pragmatic competence of language learners. According to Loewen and Plonsky : "Discourse completion task is a data collection instrument that elicits responses to previous segments of discourse. Often DCTs are used to collect data concerning pragmatic knowledge." (2016). Pragmatic knowledge encompasses: speech acts as politeness, apology, request, invitation, etc. Tasks take the form of scenarios. It starts with describing a situation in which the speech act will be enacted, and then learners are asked to fill in the gaps with appropriate language forms.

### **2.2. Methods**

The experiment is conducted by means of pre-test, six training sessions and post test. First, the pre-test aimed to check how knowledgeable are the learners about request structure and the various strategies used to form appropriate requests.

Second, six training sessions were delivered to raise the learners' knowledge and ability to produce requests and to ensure that they receive sufficient amount of instruction. Finally, the post-test's objective was to investigate whether pupils' level has been improved. The participants were divided into two groups: the first one is a control group that receives no instruction and the second group receives explicit instruction. The data collected from the pre-test and the post-test were treated by system of SPSS. Statistical Package for the Social sciences, version 25, then they are compared through using the types of the t-test: paired i.e., comparing the scores of the pre-test and post-test for the same group. Whereas, the independent t- test that means comparing the scores of pre-test and post-test for both groups.

### **2.2.1. Description of the tool**

In this experiment the data are collected by discourse completion tasks which are appropriate in pragmatic field; both pre-test and post test were designed in order to measure the effectiveness of explicit instruction received in six sessions. The tests were carefully designed and chosen. They contain three sections each.

#### **Section One**

It includes a multiple-choice discourse completion task (MCDCT) with ten sentences/situations. It seeks to measure pupils' ability to select appropriate modal verbs used in forming polite formal and informal requests. It was scored out of eight in the pre- test and out of ten in the post-test.

#### **Section two**

A written discourse completion task which consists of a description of a group of situations and participants are asked to formulate the appropriate request form. The objective of this task is to test the pupils' ability to form well-structured requests. This task was scored out of eight in the pre- test and out of six in the post-test.

#### **Section Three**

It involves gap filling task. Pupils are provided with a set of lexical items and they are asked to fill in the gaps with the appropriate word. The objective of the task is to test them on the use of specific language items. It was scored out of four in both pre-test and post- test.

**2.2.1.1. The Pre-Test**

To begin with, the pre-test was administered to Third Year Middle School pupils because the lesson of requests is included in their programme. This test helps to grasp a general idea of learners understanding and knowledge as well as to measure pupils' ability to form appropriate formal and informal requests before receiving explicit instruction. It includes three tasks: the first task takes the form of ten sentences with options of modal verbs. In the second task, learners are provided with eight situations and they are asked to form requests which express appropriately these situations; while the third task is a gap filling in which the participants choose the right item from the list to fill in the gaps (see Appendix A).

**2.2.1.2 Training Sessions**

The training sessions were delivered after administrating the pre-test and conducting the analysis of the results obtained. Six sessions were scheduled: two sessions per week; and the majority of the sessions took place in the morning.

In fact it was not an easy task to prepare the lessons and the lesson plans as it needed simplification of the language in order to meet the level of the pupils; however the real difficulty was in finding appropriate authentic materials: videos and listening conversations. These materials should be simple, easy and meet the learning objectives of the lesson and most important they ought to motivate the learners. Firstly, in the first training session, learners were asked to watch a video where native speakers exchange a conversation and pupils were asked to fill in the gaps then have a chance to practice in role-play tasks. The second session, participants were exposed to listen to a conversation of native speakers and they were provided with samples of listening scripts then participants were asked to classify them into formal or informal requests. In addition, the third session was devoted to written practices while the fourth one was devoted to more written practice but with specific structures with more indirect strategies such as Query preparatory and strong hints: "can" "could" and "would you mind". Moreover, in the fifth session participants had some dialogues with gap filling tasks in order to practice the use of some specific language forms. The last session aimed at enabling the learners identify the different functions of the requests forms such as asking for permission, asking for help, asking for favours, etc.



### **2.2.1. 3. The Post-Test**

After learners had been instructed for six sessions, they were tested so as to measure the learning progress achieved through comparing the results obtained with their performance in both the pre-test and post-test. This comparison helps in assessing the effectiveness of explicit instruction on the participants' appropriate requests production. The post-test is the corner stone of our experiment since it helps us to draw an inference about our main research question. This one- hour test was delivered to the learners in the form of three sections :the first one is composed of a group of situations and learners are asked to choose from multiple discourse completion options;while the second section was a written task in which learners are provided with a scenario and they are asked to write appropriate requests that go with these scenarios. Third section was a gap- filling task in which learners choose from a list of words and fill in the gaps (see Appendix B).

### **2.2.2. Administration of the tool**

The participants were informed about the whole experiment and the tests; they volunteered and were very helpful. They were tested in morning sessions with full explanation of the questions' structures. Time allocated for each test was one hour. Pupils had enough time to think and copy down the answers and they were permitted to ask about any question that was not understood and they were provided with simplified explanation of the question.

### **2.3. Population**

The participants for this study were pupils enrolled in third year classes Ibn Hadjer El Asskalani middle school. There were two classes so 60 pupils between 13- 16 including 34 females and 26 males .These pupils were mixed abilities learners. They were selected to represent the whole population of third year middle school pupils. This population meets the characteristics that serve the purpose of the study since they are EFL learners and the lesson of requests is included in their programme of English language. The pretest –posttest non- equivalent control design technique was used because it serves in selecting the readily accessible individuals for the study. The participants were grouped into two groups: a control group that receives no instruction and a group which receives explicit instruction.

## **2.4. Data Analysis Procedure**

So as to analyze the collected data, three main procedures are followed: scoring, analysis by means of SPSS and comparison of pre-test and post-test findings by means of paired sample t-test.

### **2.4.1. Step 1: Scoring**

In order to analyze the results, the two tests were scored out of 20 and both tests composed of three parts in which section one was scored out of eight in pre- test and out of ten in the post- test. The second section was scored out of eight in the pre- test and out of six in the post-test; while the third section was scored out of four in both.

### **2.4.2. Step 2: Analysis**

As data was collected, the next essential step is the analysis. Statistical package for Social Sciences „SPSS“, version 25, is used

### **2.4.3. Step 3: Comparison between the Pre-test and the Post-test Results**

In applied linguistic research, one of the mostly used procedures is the „t-test“, and the „paired sample t-test“ or „matched-paired t-test“ is one type of it. The latter is applied for the process of examining and comparing two different results obtained from the same group where the same participants are measured more than once, i.e., before and after the treatment. Moreover, the use of t-test denotes if there is significant or non-significant difference between the findings of the two tests. In order to ensure that the difference found in between the results of students in the pr-test and post-test was the result of treatment, this type of test is employed.

## **2.5. Results and Discussion**

The following findings and interpretation are the result of the data analysis procedures presented in the previous sections.

### **2.5.1. Step 1: Scoring**

After collecting the data from the pre- test and post- test, each test has been scored out of twenty. They have been divided into two main categories: The first consists of

those who have got ten and more while the second involves those who have got less than ten. Relatively, concerning the pre- test in both experimental and control group, it has been revealed that only 5 participants out of sixty were able to reach the average in which the highest score was 13.5. Concerning the post- test, 22 learners succeeded to obtain the average where 17 was the highest score. However in the control group only 5 participants were able to get the average in which 11.5 was the highest score.

**2.5.2. Step 2: Analysis**

**2.5.2.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Pre-test Results**

The analysis of the scores obtained from the pre-test revealed that in both control and experimental group 16.66% of the pupils succeeded to perform well in the pre-test whereas the majority of them 83.33% could not reach the average as it is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

The Percentage of the Pre- test Scores

Score/20	Above average	Below average	Total
Number of pupils (N) in			
Experimental group (Exp G)	05	25	30
Number of pupils in			
Control group (Cont G)	05	25	30
Percentage (%)	16.66	83.33	100%

In the coming section a detailed analysis of three tasks of the pre-test are presented separately

**Task One**

This task is composed of ten multiple-choice discourse completion situations, which aim at testing the learners’ ability in choosing the most appropriate modal needed to form requests. Concerning the experimental group 18 pupils out of 30 reached the average i.e., 60% whereas 12 students failed to get the average i.e., 40%. However, the control group, only 14 pupils out of 30 obtained the average that equals 46.66%; while

16 learners' scores below the average: 53.33 %. The findings of task one are summarized in table 4 below:

**Table 4**

The Results of Task One

Score/08	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp G	18	12	30
(%)	60	40	100
N in Cont G	14	16	30
(%)	46.66	53.33	100

**Task Two**

In order to investigate pupils' capacity to structure well-formed requests task two was designed in the frame of eight discourse completion scenarios. In this regard, in the experimental group only 10% got the average while 90% have failed. Unlike the control group only one pupil reached the average; while the majority of the participants did not succeed to get the average. These results revealed that participants face a real difficulty in forming well-structured (grammatical) requests. Table 5 illustrates pupils' findings.

**Table 5**

The Results of Task Two

Score/08	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp G	03	27	30
(%)	10	90	100%
N in Cont G	01	29	30
(%)	3.33	96.66	100%

**Task Three**

The last task is framed of gap filling task which targets investigating pupils' ability to select the special items used in requests .Unfortunately, the majority of students in experimental group have failed to obtain the average which represents 73.33% but

26.66% got the average. By contrast, in the control group 46.66% succeeded to get the average and 53.33% did not. Table 6 summarizes the results of task three.

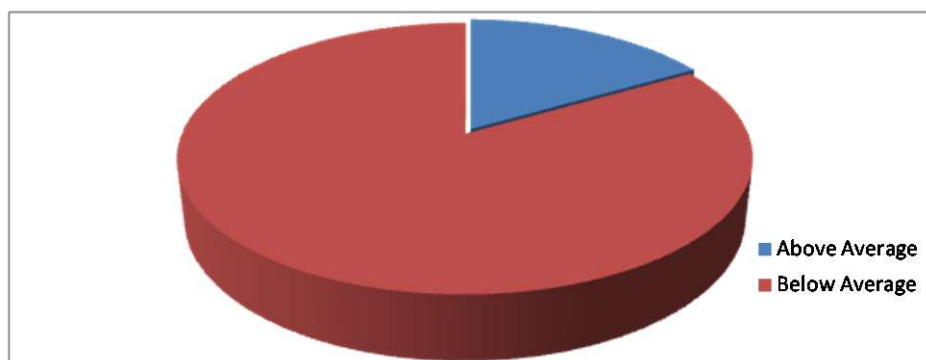
**Table 6**

The Results of Task Three

Score/08	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp G	08	22	30
(%)	26.66	73.33	100%
N in Cont G	14	16	30
(%)	46.66	53.33	100%

**Interpretation**

According to the findings gathered explained above, it can be interpreted that participants have deficiency in choosing appropriate items and forming well structured requests. **Figure 1** illustrates the results of the pre-test. However what is worth noticing is that the pupils lack knowledge of using appropriate items needed in request production as well as they have low level of understanding of how well-structured requests are formed.



**Figure 1** The Results of the pre-test

**2.5.2.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Post-test Results**

The post-test which contained three tasks and was administered after six training sessions, was scored out of twenty and has aimed to investigate the development appeared in the level of the participants. The analysis of the scores revealed the following: In the experimental group 83.33% of the participants have succeeded to do the tasks correctly while 16.66% have failed to reach the average .Whereas, the control group only 13.33% have reached the average but the majority of learners 86.66% have not. The following table displays the results:

**Table 7**

The Percentage of Scores of the Post-test			
Score/20	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp G	25	05	30
(%)	83.33	16.66	100%
N in Cont G	04	26	30
(%)	13.33	86.66	100%

For more details, each task is discussed separately following the same steps used in the pre-test.

**Task One**

This task included ten multiple-choice discourse completion situations in which participants are asked to choose the appropriate request form. This task was scored out of 10 and the results were as follows: The majority of pupils in experimental group 96.66% got the average yet 3.33% have not succeeded to get the average. In comparison to the control group 73.33% of the pupils have obtained the average while 26.66% have failed. The following chart illustrates the findings:

**Table 8**

The Results of Task One			
Score/10	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp. G	29	01	30
(%)	96.66	3.33	100
N in Cont. G	22	18	30
(%)	73.33	26.66	100

**Task Two**

The second task involved six written discourse completion situations in which scenarios are explained and participants are challenged to form well-structured appropriate requests. This task was scored out of six.

The following chart summarizes the results:

**Table 9**

The Results of Task Two

Score/06	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp. G	15	15	30
(%)	50	50	100%
N in Cont. G	02	28	30
(%)	6.66	93.33	100%

**Task Three**

The third task is a gap-filling task, which was designed to find out participants' ability to select the appropriate, special items used in forming requests. In the experimental group half of the learners have got the average and the second half have not. However, the control group 43.33% have reached the average and 56.66% have not.

**Table 10**

The Results of Task Three

Score/04	Above average	Below average	Total
N in Exp. G	15	15	30
(%)	50	50	100%
N in Cont. G	13	17	30
(%)	43.33	56.66	100%

## Interpretation

The gathered data proves that the pupils' ability to produce and form appropriate and well-structured requests has increased to a great extent. This was noticed through the improvements in their performance in the three tasks of the post-test where the majority of the participants succeeded to reach the level and only few participants have failed.

### 3.5.3. Step Three: Comparison Between The Pre-test and Post-test Results

This experiment which is an essential part of our dissertation necessitates conducting comparison between the results of the pre-test and the results of the post-test for both groups experimental and control, to find out the effectiveness of explicit instruction that the experimental group have received. The following table (11) displays the findings.

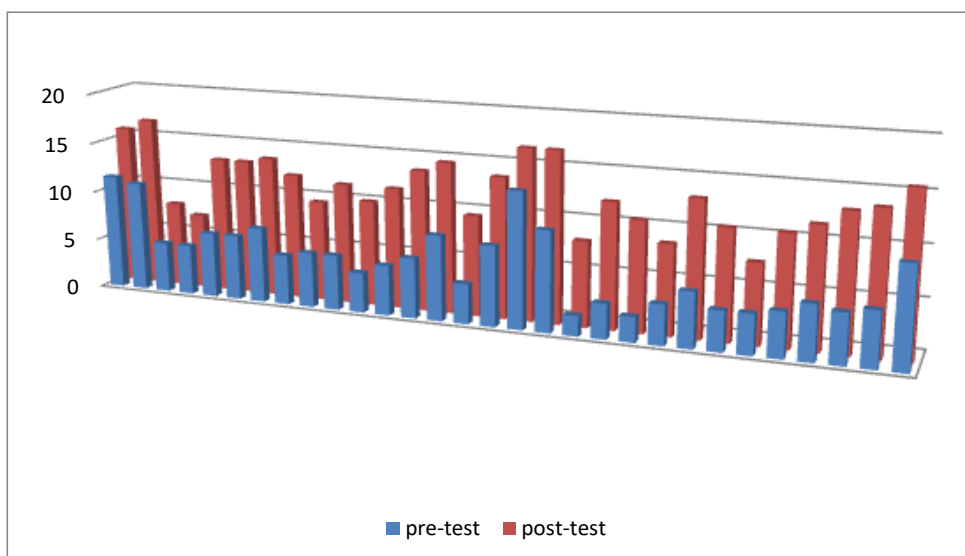
**Table 11**

Comparison Between The Pre-test And Post-test Results

Tasks	Pre-test	Post-test
	Above Average	Above Average
<b>Task 1</b>	Exp. G 60 %	96.66%
	Cont. G 46.66%	73.33%
<b>Task 2</b>	Exp. G 10%	50%
	Cont. G 3.33%	6.66%
<b>Task 3</b>	Exp. G 26.66%	50%
	Cont. G 46.66%	43.33%

The figure below shows the difference between the scores of the pre-test and post-test in the Exp. G:





**Figure 2:** Students’ Scores of the Pre-test and Post- test in Exp G

We can notice evidently from figure 2 that the results of pupils in the post-test has highly developed except for the third task where the result were approximately similar.

**3.5.3.2 Comparison between the Pre-test and Post-test Results by Means of the t-test**

To confirm the findings obtained earlier, a programme called SPSS, version 25 was used to analyse the results of the pre-test and post-test for both groups control and experimental through a paired-sample t-test and independent t-test, which are used to determine whether there is significant or non-significant differences between the means of the two tests. The following table summarizes the results:

**Table 12**

Paired- Sample Statistics			
	Mean	N	SD
Pre-test(Cont.)	6.333	30	3.0635
Pre-test (Exp.)	6.133	30	2.7478
Post-test (Cont.)	6.600	30	2.872
Post-test (Exp.)	12.467	30	2.7415

For better understanding, some terms should be clarified before discussing the results of the table. „Mean“ means the average. This value can be calculated by adding up all the scores and dividing them by the number of the subjects. The formula that is generally used to calculate the mean is as follows:

$$M = \sum x / N$$

N: the number of subjects

$\sum x$ : the total score of the test

$\Sigma x$ : the total score of the test

M1 (a): the mean of the pre-test of control group

M1 (b): the mean of the pre-test of experimental group

M2 (a): the mean of the post-test of control group

M2 (b): the mean of the post-test of experimental group

$$M_1 = \frac{\sum x_1}{N}$$

$\sum x_1$ : the total score of the pre-test

$$M_2 = \frac{\sum x_2}{N}$$

$\sum x_2$ : the total score of the post-test

After the calculating, we have found that: M1 (a) = 6.333 and M2 (a) = 6.6600 while, M1 (b) = 6.133 and M2 (b) = 12.467

Besides, the standard deviation (SD) is another value that should be regarded. Since Mackey and Gass (2005) believe that it is a means to measure variability and it is defined as :“ ...the standard deviation is a number that shows how scores are spread around the mean specifically, it is the square root of the average spread distance of the score from the mean “ (p. 259). In this regard, Brown & Rodgers (2002) claim that the calculation of the standard deviation needs the subtraction of the mean from each value and squaring the difference of each student, then summing those squared values. The final step is dividing the differences squared by the number of pupils and taking the squared root of the result of that division. The full equation of SD is as follows:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - M)^2}{N - 1}}$$

SD: Standard deviation

X: the score of each student

M1 (a): the mean of the pre-test of control group

M1 (b): the mean of the pre-test of experimental group

M2 (a): the mean of the post-test of control group

M2 (b): the mean of the post-test of experimental group

N: number of students

$\sum(X - M)^2$ : the sum of the distances from the mean squared for each student

The standard deviation  $SD_1$  of the pre-test

$$SD_1 = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X_1 - M_1)^2}{N - 1}}$$

The standard deviation  $SD_2$  of the post-test

$$SD_2 = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X_2 - M_2)^2}{N - 1}}$$

SD1 (a) =3.0635

SD1 (b) =2.7478

SD2 (a) =2.8720

SD2 (b) =2.7415

The findings gained from Table (13) display that the means of both the pre-test and post- test in the experimental group were greatly different, where the post-test mean in higher than the pre-test. This revealed that there is a considerable improvement in the pupils' performance. Compared with the control group, there is no big difference between means of the pre-test and post-test. Besides, it has been remarked that the SDs of both groups in both scores of tests are low which means that the participants are homogenous in terms of their request production abilities. The latter confirms that the tests were valid.

### The t-test

Graham Hole (2009) presents two versions of the t-test :( a) *dependent-means t-test* (also known as the *matched pairs* or *repeated measures* t-test) which is used when

the same subjects participate in both conditions of the experiment. (b) *independent-means t-test* (also known as an *independent measures t-test*) this is used when one has two different groups of subjects, one group performing one condition in the experiment, and the other group performing the other condition. In both cases, we have one independent variable (the thing we manipulate in our experiment), with two levels (the two different conditions of our experiment). We have one dependent variable.

To confirm the significance or non-significance of the difference between the two means, a t-test was conducted, where a t-value was calculated as follows: (Brown & Rodgers, 2002, p. 206).

The paired sample test:

$$t = \frac{M1 - M2}{\sqrt{\frac{SD1^2}{N1} + \frac{SD2^2}{N2} - 2r \frac{SD1}{\sqrt{N1}} \times \frac{SD2}{\sqrt{N2}}}}$$

The independent sample test

$$t = \frac{M1 - M2}{\sqrt{\frac{SD1^2}{N1} + \frac{SD2^2}{N2}}}$$

After the calculation, we found that t of (Exp G) t = -21.475. In addition to that, other values have resulted to confirm the difference.

Degree of freedom: df (Exp G)=29

Sig. (2- tailed) = 0.000

Concerning the control group, t = -0.900

df = 29

Sig.(2- tailed)=0.375

**Table 13**

Independent Samples Test

	<b>t-test for Equality of Means</b>		
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test	0.266	58	0.791
Post-test	-8.093	58	0.000

**Table14**

## Paired Samples Test

	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Cont G	-0.900	29	0.375
Exp G	-21.475	29	0.000

**Interpretation**

Since this experiment has adopted two groups, two types of t-test were applied. To begin with, an independent sample test was conducted to compare the scores of pre-test of both groups: control and experimental as shown in Table 14. The results revealed the fact that the t-value is 0.266 at degree of freedom = 58 and the significance (2-tailed) is  $p = 0,791$ . Since this latter is greater than 0,05 ,  $p > 0.05$  ,this can be interpreted that there is no difference between the results of the pre-test scores for both groups and this indicates that participants have the same level before the experiment. But after the training sessions, another independent sample test was conducted to compare the scores of post-test of both groups. The findings showed the fact that the t-value is - 8.093 at  $df = 58$  and the significance (2-tailed) is  $p = 0,000$ . Since this latter is less than 0,05 ,  $p < 0.05$ . This indicates that there is significant difference between the results of the post-test scores of both groups and this entails that participants do not have the same level after the experiment. Moreover, the second type of t-test, i.e. paired sample was conducted so as to compare the scores of both tests for the same group as it is shown in Table 15. Concerning the control group, the scores obtained imply the fact that the t-value is -0.900 at  $df = 29$  and the significance (2-tailed) is  $p = 0,375$ . Since this latter is greater than 0,05 ,  $p > 0.05$ . This can be interpreted that there is no difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group and this indicates that participants have the same level since they did not receive any training. Whereas, the experimental group' scores denote the fact that the t-value is - 21.475 and the significance (2-tailed) is  $p = 0,000$ . Since this latter is less than 0,05 ,  $p < 0.05$ . This can be interpreted that there is significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) which states that explicit instruction may not improve pupils' ability to produce

appropriate requests is rejected. Thus, the other hypothesis (H1) which implies that explicit instruction is effective to promote pupils' ability to produce appropriate requests.

### **3.6. Recapitulation**

This chapter is designed in order to present the description of the methodology and the tools adopted. The findings obtained from pre-test and post-test were analysed and interpretation was provided in an attempt to investigate the efficiency of explicit instruction on pupils' production of requests. The pre-test scores for both groups revealed that participants lack both knowledge and ability to produce appropriate requests. After receiving training, the participants' knowledge was greatly improved and they were able to produce well-structured and appropriate requests and this was proved through the t-test findings. As a conclusion, explicit instruction is effective in developing third year middle school pupils' ability to produce appropriate requests.

### **3.7. Recommendations**

Departing from the results of this study, a set of recommendations should be taken into consideration. Firstly, professionals and experts who designed the syllabus are strongly advised to include explicit intervention in teaching pragmatic aspects: making requests, asking for permission, apologizing, etc. Secondly, middle school pupils should be given the opportunity to be exposed to authentic input within contextualized tasks and the chance to practise a variety of indirect strategies needed to produce more appropriate requests, as well. In this regard, pupils may demonstrate intuitive awareness of some common indirect strategies in the target language, but they may not be aware or fail to recognize the most conventionally indirect requests: “ I wonder if” and “ Would you mind if” as appropriate which may point at the fact that Middle school pupils are not familiar with authentic forms. In this case, we may suggest the need to include those indirect request strategies for L2 learners. Hence, it is a necessity that EFL teachers incorporate explicit instruction of those authentic forms into their classroom activities.

### **Conclusion**

Investigating the effectiveness of explicit instruction on the learners' appropriate production of requests is the core of our study so a quasi experimental study was implemented on third year pupils of Ibn Hedjer El-Asskalani middle school, Ouargla. It has been revealed that the participants have benefited from the training and this proves that explicit instruction is really efficient in improving the learners' knowledge and ability to produce appropriate requests.

# **GENERAL CONCLUSION**



## General Conclusion

The objective in this research was to highlight the importance of achieving appropriateness in request production through explicit instruction. The findings in the current research not only emphasize the improvement of producing appropriate request , but also promote the vital role that explicit instruction played in language classrooms (EFL) as a requisite for successful communication. Thus, some request strategies were implemented with a communicative objective in the target language to be introduced and practiced by 3<sup>rd</sup> year Middle school pupils in their English programme. It was concluded that explicit instruction of request speech acts had a positive impact so that the experimental group reached a higher rate in appropriateness in using indirect request strategies.

The effectiveness of teaching diverse levels of participants is undisputable in terms of an instructional intervention for pragmatic development in EFL context. Learners' attention therefore should be focused not only to grammatical and lexical aspects of the language although this latter is important. Since English text books are often packed with de-contextualized instances of language; the pragmatic aspects of the language cannot reach its targeted level to be learnt (Usó-Juan, 2007). The findings in this research, consequently, suggest that explicit instruction in teaching L2 speech acts in the form of awareness raising activities can facilitate and accelerate EFL learners' pace of learning to produce appropriate requests. .

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### PRE-TEST

TASK ONE : Choose the most suitable answer for expressing the idea specified in parentheses.

1. .... open the window, please? It is hot in here. ( polite request)
  - a. Could you
  - b. Couldn't you
  - c. Won't you
  - d. Wouldn't you
2. .... buying two loaves of bread on your way home. ( polite request)
  - a. Could you
  - b. Will you
  - c. Would you
  - d. Would you mind
3. Betty, .....help me with this grammar exercise, please? ( informal request)
  - a. can you
  - b. can't you
  - c. won't you
  - d. do you mind
4. .... I speak to Mr. Smith , please? ( Formal polite request)
  - a. Can
  - b. Could
  - c. May
  - d. I wonder if I can
5. .... you take a message, please?( polite request)
  - a. can
  - b. will
  - c. should
  - d. could
6. .... you carry this for me, please?( polite request)
  - a. can
  - b. could
  - c. will
  - d. would
7. .... I come in? ( informal request)



- a. can
  - b. could
  - c. may
  - d. should
8. .... you turn the heating up a bit, please?( polite request)
- a. Could
  - b. Can
  - c. May
  - d. Will
9. .... I sit here please?( polite request)
- a. Will
  - b. Can
  - c. shall
  - d. May
10. .... I use your phone charger, please?( Formal polite request)
- a. Can
  - b. Will
  - c. Would
  - d. Would you mind if

**TASK TWO:** Form requests that express appropriately the following situations

1. You want to borrow a book from your classmate.  
.....
2. You want to borrow a pen from your teacher.  
.....
3. Ask your friend to help you in doing a project.  
.....
4. Ask your friend about time  
.....
5. Ask your teacher permission to leave the classroom  
.....
6. Ask the librarian to borrow you a dictionary  
.....
7. Ask your teacher about test date  
.....
8. Ask your teacher to explain a difficult word for you  
.....
9. Ask a policeman about the direction to hospital  
.....
10. Ask your parents for permission to go to your friend's birthday party  
.....

TASK THREE:

Read the two dialogues and fill in the gaps with words in the box

Problem – course – can – mind – could – sure – sorry – pardon.
--

**Nicole:** Mark , would you..... sending those mails again?

**Mark:** of .....yes. I will go and do it now

**Nicole:** Thank you. See you later.

**Mark:** Oh not Ben, are you busy?

**Ben:** No, not at the moment.

**Mark:** .....you help me?

**Ben:** sure, no..... ... How can I help?

**Mark:** Nicole wants me to send those emails again and I can find them anywhere.

**Ben:** I still have them. I will email them to you now.

**Mark:** thanks.

## Appendix B

### POST-TEST

#### **TASK ONE:**

- **Situation One:**

Imagine that you are the headmaster. You need a ride home. The teacher you usually go home with is absent. As you come out of your office, you see an assistant teacher who lives near your house. You decide to ask him to give you a lift. What would you say?

- I want to ask you if you could give me a ride home today.
- I really wish you could give me a lift.
- My usual ride is home with the flu. Can you give me a ride home, today?
- My usual ride is sick today. You have a car right?

- **Situation Two :**

You have just started in a new project. There's a lot to do and you don't have the time to finish the report because you have to go to the dentist. You decide to ask one of your friends to finish the report for you. How would you ask him/her?

- I have to go to the dentist. Do you think you could finish the report?
- I have to run to the dentist, you'll have to finish the report for me.
- Would you finish the report for me, please? I don't have the time.
- The report has to be in by the end of today and I don't have the time.

- **Situation Three:**

You are at you school when you discover that there's something wrong with your computer. You have to finish your project. One of the teachers is very skilful in fixing computers. You don't know him/her. However, you want to ask him/her to fix your computer. What would you say?

- I want to ask you something. Could have a look at my computer?
- It seems there's something wrong with my computer.
- Do you think you're able to fix mycomputer?
- You have to take a look at my computer.

- **Situation Four:**

You're the leader of the school magazine. The premiere is in two weeks, but you have to go away for a couple of days. So, you decide to ask one of the other students, who also is a close friend, to be in charge while you're away. How would you ask your friend?

- I want to ask you if you can take over for me while I'm away.
- You need to be in charge the two weeks I'm away.
- Could you be in charge while I'm away?
- How would you like to be in charge while I'm away?

- **Situation Five:**

You and one of your classmates are trying to study in his/her room and hear loud music coming from his/her older brother's room. You don't know the brother, but you decide to ask him to turn the music down. What would you say?

- I would like to ask you to turn down the music.
- You need to turn down the music.
- Could you turn down the music, please?
- It's really hard to concentrate when the music is so loud.

- **Situation Six:**

You have a test in one of the subjects (Maths, Physics, English....etc) next week. But, you will be very busy this week and don't have any time to revise. Besides, you don't know the teacher; you go to him/her to ask for more time the revision. How do you ask for an extension?

- I would like to ask to give us an extension on our test.
- You need to give me an extension on our test.
- Are you able to give us an extension on our test?
- I don't think we will be able to finish revision in time.

- **Situation Seven**

You have been invited to go to the stadium with some of your friends, but you don't have the money for your ticket. You decide to ask your mom for the money. What would you ask her to persuade her to give you the money?

Do you think you could give me some money for a football match ticket?

I really want to go to this match, you have to give me the money.

Can you give me so some money, please?

Please, give me some money to go to this match.

- **Situation Eight**

You are watching a film on TV but you can't hear because the volume is very low. Your grand- father is near the remote control. What would you say to ask him to give it to you in order that you can make the sound louder?

Do you mind if you pass me the remote control, please?

Could you turn the TV's sound up, grandpa?

Is it OK if I ask you to pass me the remote control?

Can you bring the remote control to me, please?

- **Situation nine**

You are in class; your classmate behind you is talking all the time during the lesson. What would you say to ask him/her to stop speaking a lot during the lesson?

Would you mind please stop talking during the lesson?

Can you stop talking during the lesson, please?

Could you please stop talking while the teacher is explaining the lesson?

I wonder if you can stop talking a little during the lesson, please.

- **Situation ten**

You are having lunch in a restaurant with your friends. The waiter is very slow in service. You and your friend are very hungry .What would you say to him to make him faster and serve you immediately.

Could you serve us please we are very hungry?

Please, be quick and serve us lunch.

Can you serve us lunch a little faster, please?

Would you mind serve us now, please we are so hungry?

**TASK TWO** : Form requests that express appropriately the following situations:

1. It is very hot in the room and you would like to open the window.

.....

2. You need to borrow some money from a friend because you have lost your wallet.

.....

3. Someone's mobile phone is always ringing during meetings.

.....

4. You didn't understand the address someone gave you and you would like to go to this person's house.

.....

**TASK THREE**: Read the conversation below and complete the gaps with the words and expressions from the following list:

Do you mind if I	is it OK if I	could you turn	what's the problem
Here you are	go ahead	thanks	Can I borrow

**Dialogue 1:**

A: Yeah?

B: Hello .....turn the music down, please?

A: Oh, sorry. Is that better?

B: Yes, .....Perhaps I can get some sleep now. Good night.

**Dialogue 2:**

A: I'm sorry, .....leave early today? I'm going to take my dog to the vet.

B: You are going to take your dog to the vet? What's the matter with him?

A: I don't know. That's why I'm going to check at the vet's.

B: Oh, I see . Sure,..... .

**Dialogue 3:**

A: Ahmed , do you have your mobile phone with you ?

B:Um ...Yes. Why ?

A:.....it, please ?I need to make a quick call to my mother.

B:OK,..... .

**Dialogue 4:**

A: .....change seats?

B: Yes, all right. ....?

A: I can't see because of the sun.

B: OK, then . Why don't you sit there, next to Samir.

## Appendix C

### THE PRE-TEST SCORES

#### 1) The Control Group

Number	Task one 8pts	Task two 8 pts	Task three 4pts	Scores /20
01	05.5	00	00	05.5
02	04.5	03.5	00	08
03	05.5	01	01	07.5
04	03	05.5	01	04.5
05	03	00	01	04
06	04.5	00	02	06.5
07	02.5	01	04	07.5
08	03.5	0.5	01	05
09	03	01	00	04
10	02.5	00	00	02.5
11	01.5	00	00	01.5
12	02.5	01	00	03.5
13	02	00	00	02
14	02.5	00	00	02.5
15	03.5	00	00	03.5
16	07	00	02	09
17	02.5	0.5	00	03
18	04	04	03	11
19	04	00	02	06
20	03.5	01.5	04	09
21	02.5	03	00	05.5
22	03	01	04	08
23	03	01	04	08
24	04.5	02	04	10.5
25	08	01	04	13
26	04	03.5	04	11.5
27	06	01	03	10
28	05	00	02	07
29	05.5	0.5	00	06
30	04.5	00	01	05.5
<b>Above Av.</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	46.66	06.66	43.33	16.66
<b>Below Av.</b>	16	28	17	25
<b>Percentage</b>	53.33	93.33	56.66	83.33



## 2) The Experimental Group

Number	Task one 8pts	Task two 8 pts	Task three 4pts	Scores /20
01	05.5	03	03	11.5
02	05	02	04	11
03	04	01	00	05
04	04	00	01	05
05	05.5	01	00	06.5
06	04.5	02	00	06.5
07	5.5	02	00	07.5
08	04	01	00	05
09	04.5	01	00	05.5
10	04.5	01	00	05.5
11	04	00	00	04
12	05	00	00	05
13	05	00	01	06
14	06.5	01	01	08.5
15	04	00	00	04
16	07	01	00	08
17	05.5	04	04	13.5
18	04	03	03	10
19	02	00	00	02
20	02.5	00	01	03.5
21	02.5	00	00	02.5
22	02.5	0.5	01	00
23	03.5	01	01	05.5
24	02.5	05	01	04
25	03.5	0.5	00	04
26	03.5	01	00	04.5
27	03.5	00	02	05.5
28	03	00	02	05
29	03.5	00	02	05.5
30	03.5	02.5	04	10

<b>Above Av.</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	60	06.66	26.66	16.66
<b>Below Av.</b>	12	28	22	25
<b>Percentage</b>	40	93.33	73.33	83.33

## Appendix D

### THE POST-TEST SCORES

#### 1) Control Group

Numbers	Task 1(10pts)	Task 2(06)	Task 3(04)	Scores/ 20
1	04	1.5	2.5	08
2	06	00	02	08
3	06	00	2.5	8.5
4	04	1.5	0.5	06
5	08	1	0.5	9.5
6	08	00	00	08
7	07	1.5	1.5	10
8	06	00	2.5	8.5
9	04	00	2.5	6.5
10	07	00	1.5	8.5
11	07	00	0.5	7.5
12	05	00	02	07
13	06	1.5	01	8.5
14	08	00	00	08
15	05	01	02	08
16	05	0.5	0.5	06
17	03	02	1.5	6.5
18	03	1.5	02	6.5
19	07	1.5	1.5	10
20	05	03	3.5	11.5
21	09	00	1.5	10.5
22	06	00	2.5	8.5
23	05	2.5	1.5	09
24	05	01	03	09
25	07	01	01	09
26	06	1.5	01	8.5
27	04	03	03	10
28	02	00	00	02
29	04	02	03	09
30	04	02	01	07

<b>AboveAv.</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	73.33	6.66	43.33	16.66
<b>Below Av.</b>	18	28	17	25
<b>Percentage</b>	26.66	93.33	56.66	83.33

## 2) Experimental Group

Numbers	Task 1(10pts)	Task 2(06pts)	Task 3(04pts)	Scores/ 20
1	08	3.5	3.5	15
2	05	4.5	04	13.5
3	06	4.5	04	14.5
4	07	06	04	17
5	05	4.5	2.5	12
6	06	03	02	11
7	09	05	03	17
8	09	03	02	14
9	04	05	03	12
10	06	4.5	3.5	14
11	07	05	04	16
12	05	0.5	2.5	08
13	08	1.5	04	13.5
14	08	00	01	09
15	09	00	01	10
16	07	01	03	11
17	09	01	0.5	10.5
18	08	0.5	02	10.5
19	07	0.5	01	8.5
20	07	00	0.5	7.5
21	09	1.5	02	12.5
22	10	2.5	3.5	16
23	08	03	01	12

<b>24</b>	08	02	2.5	12.5
<b>25</b>	05	05	3.5	13.5
<b>26</b>	05	1.5	01	7.5
<b>27</b>	10	03	04	17
<b>28</b>	07	03	04	14
<b>29</b>	4.5	2.5	03	9.5
<b>30</b>	07	1.5	1.5	10

<b>Above Av.</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	96.66	50	50	83.33
<b>Below Av.</b>	01	15	15	05
<b>Percentage</b>	3.33	50	50	16.66

## Résumé

Cette étude / recherche quasi-experimental vise à vérifier le taux d'influence et l'efficacité d'instruction directe et explicite sur la capacité des élèves de construire et produire une demande d'une manière convenable sur les élèves de la langue anglaise comme une langue étrangère (A. L. E). Cette expérimentation a été appliquée sur deux groupes des élèves du C.E.M d'Ibn Hadjer El-Askkalani à Ouargla, chaque groupe se compose de 30 élèves dont un groupe a reçu un entraînement et une instruction explicite et l'autre groupe n'a pas reçu une explication / entraînement. Les résultats obtenus apparaissent que les notes du premier groupe qui a reçu l'instruction explicite étaient beaucoup mieux dans le post test par rapport aux notes du pré-test, contrairement au deuxième groupe. On peut arriver à dire que le niveau des élèves pour produire une demande d'une manière convenable est amélioré d'une façon remarquable après l'entraînement du premier groupe uniquement. Les résultats n'ont pas apparus au hasard, en basant sur ça, on a affirmé l'hypothèse qui dit que l'instruction explicite est efficace dans l'amélioration du niveau des étudiants dans la production de la demande d'une façon convenable et polie.

**Les mots clés:** Instruction explicite, produire, convenance pragmatic .

## ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة شبه التجريبية الى التحقق من مدى تاثير و فعالية التوجيه الصريح او المباشر (عكس الضمني) على قدرة التلاميذ لبناء و انتاج طلب محترم و لبق بالطريقة المناسبة للبقة لتلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية تم تطبيق هذه التجربة على مجموعتين من تلاميذ متوسطة ابن الحجر العسقلاني ورقلة تتكون كل مجموعة على 30 تلميذ حيث تلقت مجموعة تدريبا و شرحا بطريقة صريحة و مجموعة لم تتلقى اي شرح او تفسير. اظهرت النتائج المتحصل عليها ان علامات المجموعة الاولى التي تلقت التدريب كانت افضل بكثير في الاختبار النهائي مقارنة بعلامات الاختبار الاولى عكس المجموعة الثانية اوبعبارة اخرى يمكن القول ان مستوى التلاميذ لانتاج و بناء طلب بطريقة ملائمة و لبقة تحسن بشكل ملحوظ بعد التدريب في المجموعة الاولى فقط . هذه النتائج عكست فعالية الشرح بطريقة صريحة . كما اكد الاختبار الاحصائي ان هذه النتائج لم تظهر بالصدفة و بناءا على هذا تم التحقق من صحة الفرضية القائلة ان التوجيه الصريح (المباشر) فعال في تحسين مستوى الطلبة في انتاج و بناء طلب بطريقة ملائمة .

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الملائمة البرغماتية , التوجيه الصريح او المباشر ، انتاج او بناء