

**A STUDY ON THE USE OF COMPLAINTS IN THE INTERLANGUAGE OF
TURKISH EFL LEARNERS**

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY ON THE USE OF COMPLAINTS IN THE INTERLANGUAGE OF TURKISH EFL LEARNERS

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the complaint speech act set used by Turkish EFL learners speaking to a commiserating and contradicting teacher. For this purpose, four kinds of data sources were used: twenty native English speakers' role-plays, twenty five Turkish native speakers' role-plays, forty students' role-plays and two native speakers' judgments on the students' production. The subjects were given two different situations. Their role-plays were audio taped and transcribed. The subjects' complaint speech act sets were analyzed, using a coding scheme from a previous study in the literature. The baseline and the interlanguage data were compared using SPSS to see to what extent they were similar and different, and to see whether or not the Turkish EFL learners made positive and negative transfer, and whether there were any features unique to the interlanguage of the learners.

The findings of the study revealed that Turkish EFL learners produced a complaint speech act set when speaking to a commiserating and contradicting teacher. The components of the complaint speech act set realized by the learners were ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, ‘candidate solution: request’, ‘candidate solution: demand’, and ‘explanation of purpose’. When speaking to the commiserating teacher, the students made positive transfer in using the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, and ‘request’. They made negative transfer in using ‘demand’.

The students speaking to the contradicting teacher made positive transfer in their use of the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’ and ‘justification’. The component ‘demand’ was subject to negative transfer.

Keywords: speech acts, complaint, interlanguage, pragmatic transfer.

ÖZ

İNGİLİZCE'Yİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN ARADİLLERİNDEKİ ŞİKAYET EDİMİ ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin, rahatlatıcı ve sert öğretmenlerle konuşurken kullandıkları şikayet söylemini incelemektir. Veriler anadili İngilizce olan 20 yabancı, 25 Türk, 20 İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrenci ile yapılan rol-yapma veri toplama yöntemiyle toplanmıştır. Ayrıca, iki Amerikalı öğrencilerin sözü edilen söylemi kullanımına ilişkin kabul edilebilirlik anketi doldurmuşlardır. Deneklere iki tür rol-yapma durumu verilmiş ve tüm rol-yapma durumları kaydedilerek yazıya dökülmüştür. Deneklerin şikayet söylem setleri, alinyazıdan bir ölçek ile değerlendirilmiş ve üç grup arasında SPSS kullanılarak karşılaştırma yapılmıştır. Edimbilimsel aktarım

olasılığı ise Türklerin, anadili İngilizce olan yabancıların ve İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin normları karşılaştırılarak yapılmıştır.

Sonuçlar, her üç gruptaki deneklerin hak edilmediği düşünülen bir not ile ilgili gerek rahatlatıcı gerekse sert öğretmenle konuşurken şikayet söylemi kullandıklarını göstermiştir. Bu söylemin öğeleri ‘şikayet’, ‘açıklama’, ‘rica’, ‘talep’, ve ‘niyet belirtme’ olmuştur. Rahatlatıcı öğretmen ile konuşurken ‘niyet belirtme’, ‘şikayet’, ‘açıklama’, ve ‘rica’ öğelerinin kullanımında olumlu aktarımda bulunmuşlardır. ‘Talep’ ediminin kullanımında ise olumsuz aktarım gözlemlenmiştir.

Sert öğretmenle konuşan öğrenciler ‘niyet belirtme’, ‘şikayet’ ve ‘açıklama’ öğelerinin kullanımında olumlu aktarımda bulunurken, ‘talep’ edimini kullanımında olumsuz aktarımda bulunmuşlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: söylem, şikayet, aradıl, edimbilimsel aktarım.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Date:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BUSEL	Bilkent University School of English Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ENS(s)	English native speaker(s)
IL	Interlanguage
L1	Mother tongue, native language
L2	Target language
METU	Middle East Technical University
NS(s)	Native speaker(s)
NNS(s)	Non-native speaker(s)
TNS(s)	Turkish native speaker(s)
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Presentation

In this chapter, first, general background to the study will be given. Then, the research questions of the study will be stated. Following this, the aim and the significance of the study will be clarified. The chapter will be concluded with a discussion of scope and limitations of the study.

1.1 General Background to the Study

The well-known concept of ‘communicative competence’ has been a favorite topic for analysis both in first language and second language learning since Dell Hymes (1972) elaborated Chomsky’s competence-performance model, and asserted that speakers of a language need to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language. Hymes added that speakers of a language need to know how a language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes. Therefore, it can be justifiably suggested that speakers of a language need to use their language in both linguistically and socially appropriate ways.

Even though the linguistic appropriateness can be context free, social appropriateness of the language depends on the social context in which the language is used. Since 1970s, there has been a spate of research into the realization of sociolinguistic rules as well as linguistic rules of a language.

Searle (1990: 16) claimed that speaking a language is performing speech acts. By performing a speech act, people produce certain actions such as thanking, requesting, apologizing and complaining. Therefore, speech acts are important elements of communicative competence, and speakers of a language need to know how to carry out speech acts to function in communicatively appropriate ways. This significance of speech acts has generated interest in research in certain aspects of speech acts in both first language and second language learning.

This study is concerned with one of the aspects of communicative competence: the performance of the speech act of complaints in the interlanguage of Turkish learners of English.

1.2 The Research Questions

The research questions of this study are:

- 1- Given the context of expressing disapproval to a teacher who is commiserating¹, which components of the complaint speech act set will Turkish non-native speakers of English produce in their interlanguage? And what are the topics of these sets?
- 2- Given the context of expressing disapproval to a teacher who is contradicting, which components of the complaint speech act set will Turkish non-native speakers of English produce in their interlanguage? And what are the topics of these sets?
- 3- Do Turkish non-native speakers of English make pragmatic transfer in their use of the complaint speech act set when expressing disapproval to a teacher who is commiserating?
- 4- Do Turkish non-native speakers of English make pragmatic transfer in their use of the complaint speech act set when expressing disapproval to a teacher who is contradicting?

¹ According to Boxer (1993), the term 'commiserating' refers to the kinds of responses which offer agreement or reassurance to make the speaker feel better, and the term 'contradicting' describes the kind of interlocutor who does not accept or approve the complaint, or who provides some kind of defense for the thing being complained about.

1.3 Aim and the Significance of the Study

The aim of the present study is to reveal the ways in which the face-threatening act of complaint is used in the interlanguage of Turkish speakers of English, and to reveal whether or not they make any negative and/or positive pragmatic transfer from their L1.

The speech act of complaining has had relatively less interest from researchers compared to the interest shown in the other speech acts such as apologizing, thanking, refusing. Nevertheless, there have been a few studies (e.g. Murphy & Neu, 1996, Boxer, 1993; Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Boxer, 1996) carried out on complaining. However, the speech act of complaint has not been studied taking the interlocutor's attitude towards the complainer, which is the first reason why it has been chosen to investigate in this study.

In our informal conversations with native teachers of English, we have heard a frequent complaint: "The students do not know how to put things through!", by which they meant that their students did not pay attention to the sociolinguistic aspects of English and ended up irritating their teachers. We have the feeling that this could be attributed to our students' lack of chance to be involved in authentic situations in which complaints are made, which results in inadequate strategies of complaining, an idea which is also supported by Boxer and Pickering (1995). We also have the feeling that our students might not be aware of the cross-cultural differences of this speech act. The lack of emphasis on complaints in the textbooks

that they study in their English courses may also serve this inadequacy, which has also been found to be the case by Boxer and Pickering (1995).

The literature review for the study has shown that the main instrument employed to gather data has been discourse completion tasks. Although Murphy and Neu (1996) report that they used a role-play as a data gathering instrument, in their study the respondents read their roles and were asked to imagine that they were speaking to an interlocutor, who was not present at all. Therefore, the respondents were not able to interact with anybody, which, we believe, could put the reliability of the data at stake. We also feel that the commiserating and contradicting attitude of an interlocutor towards the subjects might change the way the dialogue develops. Since the data gathering method of this study adopts such an outlook, it is hoped to shed new lights on the realization of complaint speech act sets in the interlanguage of Turkish native speakers.

Literature review has also shown that the attitude of teachers in the Turkish data has not been studied yet, which was another reason for this study to be carried out.

In order to form the baseline data against which the interlanguage data will be compared, we included native speakers of Turkish and native speakers of English in the study. This is hoped to reveal how native speakers of Turkish and native speakers of English realize the speech act of complaint in their L1. Consequently, this study is hoped to illuminate the L1 effect on the production of complaints (if any) made by Turkish EFL learners.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The subjects to provide the Turkish and interlanguage data were selected among the students of English preparatory school of Bilkent University, which is an English medium school. Since it is a private university and the students are mostly of a certain socio-economic class, the data to be collected from these students is limited to this socio-economic class, which is seen as the primary limitation of the study.

Since all the data were collected from an English medium university, inevitably the subjects who provided the Turkish baseline data were bilingual, which could be argued to put the reliability of this data at stake.

Another limitation of the study lies in the fact that the number of the subjects whose native tongue was English was limited, which makes it difficult to generalize the data gathered from this group to the native speakers of English at large. However, this is not among the aims of this study.

A further limitation of this study stems from the instrument used. Although role-plays tend to elicit more authentic data compared to discourse completion tasks, the authenticity of the data could still be open to discussion. Since we find collecting data in authentic discourse highly difficult and even in our context almost impossible, a role-play was adopted. Semi authentic feature of this data collection method could be seen another limitation.

One more limitation stems from the fact that the subjects who provided the English baseline data were older than both the subjects to provide the Turkish baseline data and the subjects who provided the data for the interlanguage data.

Another limitation is that in encoding the components of the speech act set only one coder was used.

In this study, gender is not seen as a primary concern. Therefore, we did not look at the different aspects of complaint strategy set of different sexes. However, in order to eliminate the effect of the interlocutors' sex on the respondents' realization of the target speech act, the interlocutors were chosen among female subjects.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Presentation

In this chapter the terms interlanguage, pragmatic transfer and speech act theory is examined, and the studies carried out on complaints are presented.

2.1 Interlanguage:

Since our primary goal is to reveal the ways Turkish learners of English as a second language realize the speech act of complaint in their interlanguage, we need to make it clear what we mean by the term ‘interlanguage’.

Second language learners constantly form some rules while learning the target language. However, their end product may not match the target language entirely, and it may have flaws in it. Yet, the learner does not see these flaws as errors since he perceives them as grammatical in his own terms. This idea has become known as ‘interlanguage’, a term coined by Selinker, and could be defined as “the systematic knowledge of the language being learned (L2) which is independent

of both these learner's native language (L1) and the target language" (Ellis, 1994: 710).

Selinker (1972) argues that there are five basic processes in which a learner creates his interlanguage:

1- Language transfer: Language transfer occurs when the learner uses his own L1 as a resource, which is seen especially at the early stages of the language learning.

2- Transfer of training: The ways that the learner is taught the target language are seen as the reason for some of the interlanguage features.

3- Strategies of second language learning: The approaches in which the learner is trying to learn the language could bring about certain interlanguage elements.

4- Strategies of second language communication: The way in which the learner communicates with native speakers of the target language causes certain interlanguage elements.

5- Overgeneralization of target language linguistic material: The learner might use some rules of the target language in situations in which a native speaker would not. This could happen at the phonetic, grammatical, lexical or discourse level.

Lakshmanan and Selinker (2001: 393) say that interlanguage competence of learners can be evaluated only in indirect ways through collecting data in

spontaneous speech, and experimentally elicited data. Lakshmanan and Selinker (2001: 401) further state that

When conducting interlanguage analysis ... it is important not to judge language learner speech utterances as ungrammatical from the standpoint of the target grammar without first having compared the relevant interlanguage utterances with the related speech utterances in adult native-speaker spoken discourse (401).

The interlanguage theory has also been taken up by some linguists (e.g. Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993) who study pragmatics and they called it 'interlanguage pragmatics'. Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993: 3) define the term interlanguage pragmatics as 'the study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action pattern in a second language'. They are cautious to define the term only from the side of language learners. They give the example of American immigrants to Israel who are competent in two languages but exhibit a distinct style of interlanguage. They opt to include intercultural styles and the communicative effectiveness of these styles in their definition of interlanguage pragmatics. They also base interlanguage pragmatics on the theoretical and empirical foundations of pragmatics in general and cross-cultural pragmatics in particular. Among the domains of interlanguage pragmatics, they involve pragmatic comprehension, production for linguistic action, pragmatic transfer and communicative effect.

2.2 Pragmatic Transfer

The term transfer is generally used to refer to the effect of the existing knowledge on the acquisition of new knowledge. The notion of transfer was first studied by the contrastive analysts, who were greatly affected by behaviorist theories of language learning. Later on, Ellis (1994: 341) took a more general approach to transfer and stated that ‘the study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use’.

With the attention given to pragmatics and pragmatic competence, pragmatic transfer gained more interest. In its crudest sense, pragmatic transfer can be described as ‘the transfer of pragmatic knowledge in situations of intercultural communications’ (Zegarac & Pennington, 2000: 167).

Similarly, Kasper (1992: 207) states that pragmatic transfer refers to the influence of previous pragmatic knowledge on the use of L2 pragmatic knowledge.

According to Kasper (1992), there are two types of pragmatic transfer:

(a) Pragmalinguistic transfer: Illocutionary force and politeness values are seen as the key elements in pragmalinguistic transfer.

(b) Sociopragmatic transfer: Context-external factors such as participants’ role relationships, and context-internal factors which are intrinsic to a particular speech event are dealt with in sociopragmatic transfer.

Kasper (1992: 223) claims that when identifying pragmatic transfer, looking at only the percentages by which a particular category occurs in the L1, L2, and IL data is not enough. She accepts that these figures do tell us something meaningful about pragmatic transfer, but cautions us that we need to employ procedures which allow us to make claims with reasonable confidence. She states that an adequate method for identifying pragmatic competence is to determine whether the differences between the interlanguage and the learner's native language on a particular pragmatic feature are statistically significant and how these differences relate to the target language. She explains that lack of statistically significant differences in the frequencies of a pragmatic feature in L1, L2 and IL can be operationally defined as positive transfer. On the other hand, statistically significant differences in the frequencies of a pragmatic feature between IL-L2 and L1-L2 and lack of statistically significant differences between IL and L1 can be defined as negative transfer.

Zegarac and Pennington (2000: 169) say that negative transfer occurs when the L2 learners mistakenly generalize pragmatic knowledge of L1 to an L2. However, they point out that negative transfer does not necessarily have an adverse affect on communicative success despite the fact that it involves an unwarranted generalization from L1 pragmatic knowledge to a communicative situation in L2, which does not always bring about communicative failure. They also point out that positive transfer does not improve the communicative success in cases where L2 learners tries to behave like a native speaker but their L2 pragmatic competence is flawed in many other aspects, which may puzzle the hearer.

Franch (1998) draws attention to *transferability constraints*, which promote or inhibit transfer. She states that sociolinguistic factors such as social distance between the speakers are one of the constraints. They state that speakers' perception of their own language and language distance between L1 and L2 can affect pragmatic transfer. They also identify linguistic proficiency, cultural information and length of stay in the L2 community as factors that explain transferability constraints.

2.3 Speech Act Theory

Since this study attempts to describe how the act of complaint is realized in the interlanguage of Turkish Learners of English, we find it necessary to clarify what is meant by the term 'speech act' first. This clarification is to help us see where complaints fit in the speech act theory.

A speech act can be defined as 'an utterance as a functional unit in communication' (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985). It is an act that a speaker performs when he makes an utterance. We perform speech acts when we offer an apology, greeting, complaint, invitation, compliment, or refusal.

The concept of Speech Acts was first introduced by the philosopher John L. Austin (1962) in his book called "How to Do Things with Words" in which he starts off making a distinction between what he calls '*constative utterances*' and '*performative utterances*'. According to Austin, constatives are utterances in which something is said and they can be evaluated along a dimension of truth while

performatives are utterances in which something is done which cannot be evaluated along a dimension of truth but '*felicity*'.

Austin listed the general characteristics of performatives as follows:

- They do not describe, report, or constate anything at all,
- They are not true or false,
- They can't be checked by looking at world,
- Uttering a performative is part of doing an action (an action not normally described as "just saying something")

As it has been mentioned earlier, performatives cannot be true or false. However, Austin suggested that they can go wrong and become 'unhappy' as he calls it. For performatives to be happy, he asserted that certain conditions need to be met, which he called '*felicity conditions*', which can be described as a set of conditions that must be satisfied if a speech act is to be correctly and honestly performed. These conditions are:

- A. (i) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect
- (ii) The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate
- B. The procedure must be executed by all participants

- (i) correctly and
 - (ii) completely
- C.
 - (i) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use of persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts and feelings, and the participant must intend so to conduct themselves, and
 - (ii) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

Levinson (1989) notes that Austin made a distinction among these violations. For him, violations of A and B conditions bring about ‘misfires’. That is to say that the intended actions fail to come off. On the other hand, he called violations of C conditions ‘abuses’, which are not so easily detected at the time of the utterance but have the consequence that the action is performed infelicitously or insincerely.

Austin emphasized that when a person utters sentences, he performs actions. He isolated three basic senses in which in saying something one is doing something, and performs three kinds of acts:

- (i) locutionary act: the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference

- (ii) illocutionary force (act): the making of a statement, offer, promise, etc. in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it.
- (iii) perlocutionary act: the bringing about of effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of utterance.

Austin's main interest was in illocutionary act, which has come to refer to the term Speech Act.

Yule (1999: 49) cautions us that the same utterance can have different illocutionary forces such as promising, warning, etc. In order to be clear about the intended force, felicity conditions and Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFID) can be made use of.

2.4 The Speech Act of Complaint

Olshain and Weinbach (1993: 108) asserted "in the speech act of complaining, the speaker (S) expresses displeasure or annoyance –censure- as a reaction to a past or going action, the consequences of which are perceived by S as affecting her unfavorably".

Olshain and Weinbach (1993: 108) listed certain necessary preconditions for the speech act of complaining to take place:

- (1) Hearer (H) performs a socially unacceptable act (SUA) that is contrary to a social code of behavioral norms shared by S and H.
- (2) S perceives the SUA as having unfavorable consequences of herself, and/or for the general public.
- (3) The verbal expression of S relates post facto directly or indirectly to the SUA, thus having the illocutionary force of censure.
- (4) S perceives the SUA as: (a) freeing S (at least partially) from the implicit understanding of a social commiserating relationship with H; S therefore chooses to express her frustration or annoyance...; and (b) giving S the legitimate right to ask for repair in order to undo the SUA, either for her benefit or for the public benefit. It is the latter perception that leads to instrumental complaint aimed at “changing thing” that do not meet with our standards or expectations. The main goal of such instrumental complaint is to ensure that H performs some action of repair as a result of the complaint.

In the light of the preconditions mentioned above, the functions of complaints can be listed as follows:

- to express displeasure, disapproval, annoyance, censure, threats, or reprimand as a reaction to a perceived offense/ violation of social rules (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993),
- to hold the hearer accountable for the offensive action and possibly suggest/request a repair (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993),
- to confront a problem with an intention to improve the situation (Brown & Levinson, 1978),
- to share a specific negative evaluation, obtain agreement, and establish a common bond between the speaker and addressee. For example:

A. "I really think his grading is unfair. I worked so hard for this exam."

B. "Same here. He wouldn't be satisfied even if we copied the whole book." (Boxer, 1993)

- to allow ourselves to vent/let off steam (Boxer, 1993),
- to open and sustain conversations (Boxer, 1993).

Because of the face-threatening nature of complaints, people may decide to either perform this act or opt out bearing in mind the social consequences. Therefore, we can say that such a decision is a social one before it is a linguistic one. It is also argued that in some societies people are more willing to tolerate what they consider to be personal injustice. However, in some societies people can be much more assertive. It seems that Turkish native speakers in general seem to fall into the first category. However, it cannot be denied that there are always who are not very tolerant towards personal injustice, and express their dissatisfaction.

2.4.1 Encoding of Complaints

Murphy and Neu (1996: 199-203) identified the strategies used by Americans, and encoded them into categories accordingly:

- Explanation of Purpose / Warning for the Forthcoming Complaint

I just came by to see if I could talk about my paper.

Uh, I got my paper back here and after looking through it...

Well, look, I might as well start right out.

Look, I don't want to be horrible about it.

- Complaint

I think maybe the grade was a little too low.

- Justification

I put a lot of time and effort in this...

- Candidate solution: request

I would appreciate it if you would reconsider my grade.

2.4.2 Characteristics of American Complaints:

Murphy and Neu (1996: 203-204) also drew up the linguistic features of American complaints.

- Use of pronoun "we"

1. to indicate that both parties share the blame
 2. as a way of negotiating the problem
- Use of questioning
 1. to ask for advice, for permission to explain oneself
 2. to get the listener to reconsider or discuss the problem
 - Depersonalization of the problem to transfer blame from the interlocutor to the problem

I feel this grade may reflect a difference of opinion.

- Use of mitigators to soften the complaint ("downgraders") (e.g., *kind of, perhaps, possibly, a little bit, a second, somehow, I suppose, I'm afraid, you know, I mean, right, don't you think?*)

I think uh it's just in my opinion maybe the grade was a little low.

I'm a bit annoyed that...

- Acceptance of partial responsibilities for the problem

...and uh, perhaps it wasn't quite as polished as both of us would have liked, but the content was there, and I think I deserve a better grade.

2.4.3 Responses to Complaints:

Boxer (1993: 286-287) identified six types of indirect complaint responses among native speakers of American English:

(1) Joke/teasing: It is frequent among strangers and in service encounters serving as self-presentation, and intended to make light of the situation. They can also function to bring the interlocutors closer to each other.

A: How are ya doing B?

B: Oh, not so great. I can't find S. Maybe she told me she was doing something this morning and I don't remember.

A: You are getting old!

(2) Nosubstantive Reply: They function to either minimize or terminate an exchange. The addressee may be tired of listening to a chronicle complainer. There may be either intimacy or a high degree of social distance coupled with status inequality. Minimal responses or indications of listening often terminate a complaint exchange. Insufficient or discouraging backchanneling moves can also be incorporated to indicate that the addressee is not interested.

A: They keep tearing down those historical buildings. If one supermarket went up in that location, who's to say ... maybe if it were something else altogether, but when they replace it with the same thing ...

B: Hmn (nods head repeatedly).

A: So you have the summer off?

(3) Question: Questions are asked in order to clarify what has been said. They can be in the form of requests or challenge questions that express doubts about the validity of the complaints. Boxer reported that the women in her study never asked challenge questions, but employed the type of question that encouraged the speaker to continue talking. Their question responses were in the form of clarification questions or questions seeking elaboration. For example;

A: I was up all night with C.

B: What's wrong?

A: She's had this hacking cough, it's gotten worse. So I'm gonna take her to the doctor.

B: You know, M is home sick today too.

A: Why?

B: I'm not sure, she's still sleeping. She's either exhausted or caught a chill or both.

However, male questions were sometimes the challenge type. For example;

A: It takes me a while to commute.

B: Why? Why does it take you longer than it takes me?

A: How do you go?

B: Cause it only take me fifteen minutes. S Street bridge up L Street.

A: You drive.

B: Yeah.

(4) Advice/lecture: Advice could be offered in retrospect or before solving a problem. Both advice and lecture are likely to be given by people who are of higher social status than the speaker.

A: This vacuum doesn't pick up the little pieces.

B: You probably have to put more pressure on it.

(5) Contradiction: In contradicting, the hearer does not accept or approve the complaint or provides some kind of defense for the object being complained about.

A: This doesn't follow your basic economic theories.

B: It has to!

(6) Commiseration: This has been found to be the most common response to a complaint. This kind of responses offers agreement or reassurance to make the speaker feel better. They include straightforward agreement with the speaker, elaboration of the speaker's complaint, or confirmation of the validity of the complaint. Some take the form of exclamations signaling commiseration; some even finish the speaker's sentence.

A: My husband is in Greece this week, so I'm packing myself. Most of it is books and manuscripts.

B: Oh, that's the worst.

From the data she gathered, Boxer (1993: 286) suggested that

the manner in which the addressee responds to an indirect complaint can significantly promote further interaction. That is to say, depending on the type of response elicited, the complaint sequence can affirm or reaffirm solidarity among the interlocutors or alienate them from each other. The implication . . . is that if one wishes to accomplish the former –that is, establish some commonality with the speaker – the addressee will need to know how to respond to indirect complaints when they are used as conversational openers and supporters.

2.5 Empirical Studies on Complaint

Boxer (1993) investigated indirect complaint and commiseration in conversations between Japanese learners of English as an L2 and their U.S. peers. She used spontaneous speech or field notes. 295 interlocutors were recorded in spontaneous conversation (195 women and 100 men). The issue that emerged was that of how to respond to an indirect complaint. She identified six types of responses: none or a topic switch, a question, a contradiction, a joke or teasing, advice or a lecture, or commiseration. Natives used joking/teasing, nonsubstantive reply ("hmn"), question, advice/lecture, contradiction, and commiseration. With NSs most responses were commiseration with some questioning. For NNSs, the major category was nonsubstantive, then with some questioning and some commiseration. While

women were found to commiserate with indirect complaints, men were more likely to contradict them or to give advice.

Another study conducted by Du (1995) included thirty students (male and female) from Beijing Normal University ranging from 19 to 30 years old. Du explored three speech acts (complaining, giving bad news, and disagreeing) using a 19-item questionnaire that described face-threatening situations and asked each subject to contemplate the situation and write his/her response. The results showed that strategy choice varied according to the referential goal and the nature of the interlocutor relationship, but a general pattern could be noted: face-threatening acts in Chinese tend to be performed in a commiserating rather than confrontational manner.

Another study is that of Murphy and Neu (1996) who compared components of the speech act set of complaining produced by U.S. American native speakers and Korean non-native speakers of English, and ascertained how these speech act sets were judged by native speakers based on a number of factors (such as whether the act is aggressive, respectful, credible, appropriate, and similar to what a native would use). For the productive part of the study, the subjects were 14 male U.S. American and 14 male Korean graduate students from Penn State University. Twenty-three undergraduate and 4 graduate students (for a total of 27) participated in the receptive part of the study, judging the acceptability of the speech act sets. The speech act data were collected via an oral discourse completion task. A hypothetical situation was presented in which the subject was placed in the position of a student whose paper had been unfairly marked and the subjects were directed to "go speak to the

professor." The subjects' response was recorded by tape recorder. The instrument in the acceptability judgment part of the study was a questionnaire with 10 yes-no questions and one open-ended question. Five of the yes-no questions were "distracter items" and the other 5 were designed to measure the native speakers' perceptions about the speech act acceptability. The open-ended question asked, "If you were the student in this situation, would your approach be different from the student you've just heard? Please explain your answer for both speaker-student 1 and speaker-student 2." The results showed that when expressing disapproval about a grade received on a paper to a professor, most U.S. American native speakers would produce a complaint speech act set, while most Korean non-native speakers (11 out of 14) would not. Both native and non-native speakers used an "explanation of purpose" to begin the speech act set in similar ways. The native speakers then produced a complaint only after the explanation of purpose. This complaint appeared to be what most of these native speakers felt was the most socially appropriate option for expressing disapproval. The act involved: acceptance of responsibility, depersonalization of the problem, questioning techniques that used modals "would" and/or "could," use of mitigators, and use of the pronoun "we." The 11 non-native speakers who did not use a complaint form employed what was perceived by native speakers as a form of criticism instead which: served to abdicate responsibility, personalized the problem (placed blame), and involved using the modal "should." This represented a serious deviation from the native speakers' speech data. Both the native and non-native speakers then used similar types of "justifications" in their speech act sets, referring to amount of time, effort, and/or work put into the paper.

Finally, all of the native and most (12 out of 14) of the non-native speakers included a candidate solution: a request form in the speech act set in order to propose an option that would politely remedy the situation (such as reconsidering the grade, discussing the paper, or editing the paper further for an improved grade). As a result of the "criticism" form used by the many of the Korean non-native speakers, native speakers judged the non-native speakers' speech act sets to be more aggressive, less respectful, less credible, and less appropriate than the common "complaint" speech act sets offered by native speakers.

Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) also investigated the factors that distinguish native from nonnative realizations of complaints in Hebrew. They had 35 native speakers of Hebrew and 35 learners of Hebrew. They found that nonnative speakers produced longer utterances to express the speech act of complaining than native speakers did. The nonnative speakers also used more intensifiers. In this study, they also wanted to see how social distance affected the length and the severity of the respondents' utterances. The results revealed that the length of utterance was higher for learners, but both native and nonnative speakers used more words with acquaintances. They suggested that this indicates that when speakers are less certain about roles and relationships with their interlocutors they negotiate more and accordingly use more words. Social factor was also found to be significant for length of utterance and strategy selection on the severity scale for both native and nonnative speakers. They found that when the speaker was of higher status than the interlocutor, nonnative speakers used longer sentences.

McKay and Hornberger (1996) refer to some other studies done (Piatrowska, 1987; DeCapua, 1988; Boxer, 1989) on speech act of complaining. Piatrowska collected written data using a discourse completion task. He had one group of native speakers and another group of EFL learners in Hong Kong. The data gathered fell into the following categories: an opener, an orientation statement, an act statement, a justification of the speaker or addressee, a remedy or threat, a closing, a valuation statement about the addressee or the wrong committed, societal justification, a request for an explanation, blame, resignation, conciliation, persuasion, indirect disagreement, and a request for agreement.

Another study cited by McKay and Hornberger was done in the States by DeCapua in 1988. The respondents were fifty native speakers of German and fifty American college students. In the discourse completion task, German respondents opted for a statement of the problem and a request or demand for repair. They also used threat for more serious problems. Female respondents made requests for repairs. There were occasional transformational errors from German into English.

Bonikowska (1988), who took an alternative approach to study complaints, analyzed the 'opting out' choice, which he defined as the speaker's decision not to perform a speech act when confronted with a situation that has the potential to evoke a face-threatening act of complaint. The subjects of the study were native-speakers of English studying at a university. The researcher used discourse completion questionnaire comprising situations that could realistically happen to university students, which were thought to elicit more reliable responses from the subjects. The data gathered led him to four categories explaining the reasons for opting out: (a)

reasons related to conditions for the act of complaining, (b) reasons related to the relationship of the act to speaker's goals, (c) reasons related to the relationship of the act to the social goal, and (d) reasons related to contextual factors.

More recent research carried out by Geluyken and Kraft (2002) investigated complaints in English, French and German L1, and German-French and German-English interlanguage. They could not find significant differences with regard to the use of different complaining strategies between the three L1s. However, the results indicated that L2 complaints tended to be longer, which was caused by use of more than one strategy. The results also revealed that male speakers had the tendency to employ slightly more confrontational strategies than female speakers.

In his study on complaint in Turkish, Akıncı (1999) came to the conclusion that severity of the complaint differed depending on the situation, presence or absence of the person being complained about, and the formality degree of the person being interacted. Interestingly, unlike the male subjects, the female respondents of the study turned out not to be using any politeness strategies when they complained. The researcher made a distinction between young (19-25) and adult (over 25) subjects in the study, and found that neither the young nor the adults complained using direct forms to the father, the director or the professor in the discourse completion task, who were considered to be formal.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF RESEARCH

3.0 Presentation

This chapter will explain the subjects, the research instruments and the procedures.

3.1 Subjects

The subjects of this study were comprised of 20 Turkish learners of English (IL speakers), 22 native speakers of English, 27 native speakers of Turkish, and 2 judges who were native speakers of English.

3.1.1 Learners of English (IL Speakers)

20 native Turkish speakers learning English participated in the study as respondents to a commiserating and contradicting teacher were included. The respondents were chosen among upper-intermediate level learners of English at the School of English Language (BUSEL), Bilkent University. The mean age of the students was 18. The mean of their exam results from the previous course was 82,18

out of 100. This exam is called End of Course Assessment, and it is given by BUSEL. The researcher had an interview with the learners and asked how long they had been learning English. The students' answers varied from 6 months and 3 years. They had studied mainly through highly controlled formal education in Turkey. Only 3 of the students had been abroad for about 3 weeks for holiday,

In order to have more reliable data, Sasaki (1998) argues that the respondents in such studies need to be from similar backgrounds in terms of mother tongue, age, previous education, and cultural background. Otherwise, the results of such a study could be biased. In order to avoid this Sasaki suggests using the same respondents in collecting different kinds of data to be compared. She argues that otherwise the data collected from different participants would not be comparable. Therefore, in this study, Sasaki's suggestion was adopted in collecting the interlanguage data. The participants responded to the same role-play situation when speaking to the contradicting teacher after two weeks, which was done to avoid possible transfer from one role to another.

The same procedure was not followed when collecting the baseline data because of the fact that some of the respondents either did not want to carry on with the study or left the school.

3.1.2 Native Speakers of English

20 native speakers of English participated in the study as respondents to a commiserating and contradicting teacher. 10 of these spoke to a commiserating teacher. They were from England, Canada, and America. Seven of the respondents were female and three of them were male. Their ages ranged from 30 to 49 with the mean age 37. The other 10 of them spoke to a contradicting teacher. They were from America and England. Nine of the respondents were female and one of them was male. Their ages ranged from 30 to 55, with the mean age 39,5.

The native speakers of English were chosen among the teaching staff at the School of English Language (BUSEL), Bilkent University. The reason for including different respondents for the English baseline data was that some of them did not carry on with the study, and some others left the school.

3.1.3 Native Speakers of Turkish

25 native speakers of Turkish participated in the study as respondents to a commiserating and a contradicting teacher. 13 of the respondents, the mean age of whom was 20 spoke to the commiserating teacher. The other 12 respondents spoke to the contradicting teacher, and their mean age was 20. All the Turkish native speakers were chosen among the students studying at BUSEL. Since some of the students did not carry on with the study, in the two groups different subjects were used.

3.1.4 Interviews Held with Some Turkish Speakers

In order to have a clearer idea whether or not Turkish speakers would really complain to their teacher about an undeserved grade, or opt out, 50 students at BUSEL, 50 students at Ankara University, and 50 students at some private language schools in town were given the role-play situation in Turkish and asked whether or not they would opt out. Out of the 150 students, 7 students stated that they would not go to speak to the teacher, which suggests that Turkish speakers tend to complain to a teacher about an undeserved mark.

Before the role-plays took place all the subjects of the study were interviewed and asked whether or not they would opt out if they were in such a situation in real life. Two out of 20 Turkish subjects who spoke to the commiserating teacher in Turkish stated that they would avoid complaining to the teacher. However, all the students who provided the interlanguage data responded that they would go and speak to the teacher about the matter. The native speakers of English also stated that they would not opt out at all.

3.1.5 Interlocutors

4 interlocutors participated in the study. 2 of them were native speakers of English and the other 2 of them were native speakers of Turkish. All of the interlocutors were female in order to eliminate the effect of the interlocutor's sex on the respondents' realization of the target speech act.

3.1.5.1 English Interlocutors

The two interlocutors who were the native speakers of English talked to both native speakers of English and the learners of English. One of the interlocutors, who was from America and at the age of 30, adopted the role of the commiserating teacher, and the other one, who was also from America and at the age of 36, adopted the role of the contradicting teacher.

3.1.5.2 Turkish Interlocutors

The two Turkish interlocutors talked to the Turkish subjects to provide the Turkish baseline data. One of them adopted the role of the commiserating teacher, and the other one adopted the role of the contradicting teacher.

3.1.6 Orientation of the Interlocutors

Standardization sessions were held with all the interlocutors. The sessions that the commiserating and the contradicting teachers attended were held separately. In the sessions, first of all, the interlocutors were given the role-play, and asked what kind of things they would say to the student. The possible utterances were written on the board. Following this, the responses to complaints found by Boxer (1996) were shared with the interlocutors who were asked which ones they would utter when speaking to the student. The ones they agreed on were put on the board. In the standardization session held together with the native speakers of English and the

native speakers of Turkish, it was decided that neither of the native speakers would openly agree with a student who is complaining to a teacher. Therefore, this aspect of a commiserating teacher was eliminated. Also, a sample role-play was done together with the interlocutors.

3.1.7 Judges

In order to determine whether or not the Turkish speakers of English language had achieved their communication aims, 2 American judges participated in the study.

The judges were chosen among the native speakers of English who were living in Turkey. The native speakers of English were included in the study in order to determine whether or not the utterances of non-native speakers of English were socially appropriate according to the sociolinguistic rules of the language they were learning. This was also important to decide whether or not desired communicative intention had been achieved. As Murphy and Neu (1996: 194) argue, native speaker's acceptability judgment can help us gain insight into how and when non-native speakers fail to communicate effectively.

3.2 Instruments

The speech act data were collected via two sets of role-play tasks (see appendix 1 and 2), one of which was in English and the other one was in Turkish.

In one of the tasks, the interlocutor adopted the role of a teacher who was commiserating. In the other task, the interlocutor adopted the role of a contradicting teacher. Such a role-play, in which parties can interact with each other and can alter what they want to say or the way they want to say according to the attitude of the interlocutor and the emerging features of the dialogue, is believed to reflect the way people interact in everyday discourse.

Some sample sentences that a commiserating and a contradicting teacher could utter (see appendix 1 and 2) were written on the role-play cards in order to let the interlocutors refer to in case they needed to do so.

In order to make sure that the role play tasks in Turkish and English correspond to each other, two colleagues of the researcher were asked to translate the role-plays back to English and Turkish, and after comparing the different versions, necessary changes were made.

The instrument used to find out the judgments of native speakers of English towards the Turkish non-native speakers' production of complaint speech act in English was adapted from the instrument developed by Murphy & Neu (1996) (see appendix 3).

The judges were of the same nationality owing to the fact that different people from different nationalities might judge the same utterance differently, and this would cause inadequacies for the data analysis.

3.3 Procedures

In this study, the roles of the interlocutors were based on Boxer's (1993) findings about the responses to indirect complaints. The commiserating teachers were instructed to ask encouraging questions to the student complaining. As for the contradicting teachers, they were instructed to ask challenging questions and not to provide substantive replies.

After the interlocutors had been assigned their roles, the students were asked to put themselves in the shoes of the person in the hypothetical situations in the role-play task. They were given sometime to think over what they would say to the teacher. Then, they were admitted into the room in which the role-play was to take place. Their responses were audio-recorded, and the respondents were informed about this.

3.3.1 Encoding of the Complaint Speech Act Set

After all the recordings had been done, the dialogues were transcribed by the researcher himself. The encoding was done according to Murphy and Neu's (1996) complaint strategy categories for complaints:

- Explanation of Purpose
- Complaint
- Criticism

- Justification
- Candidate solution: request
- Candidate solution: demand

Murphy and Neu (1996: 204) state that complaint and criticism are two different speech acts, which have different characteristics. They say that a complaint serves the function of assuming some of the responsibility of the perceived mistake, and may contain any of the following characteristics.

(a) Use of pronoun “we” in two different ways: 1) to indicate that both parties share the blame: e.g. , “We can have disagreements” 2) as a way of negotiating the problem.

(b) Use of questioning to ask for advice, for permission to explain oneself, or to get the listener to reconsider or discuss the problem

(c) Depersonalization of the problem, transferring the blame from the hearer onto the paper: e.g., “I’m really concerned with this *paper*”.

(d) Use of mitigators to soften the complaint: e.g. “I think the mark is a *little* bit low”.

A criticism, on the other hand, abdicates responsibility for the problem and places the blame on the hearer. It may contain the following characteristics.

(a) Use of second person + modal 'should' that indicates that the speaker is in a position to dictate the behaviour of the listener: e.g. , "You should not have given this low grade'.

(b) Personalization of the problem, placing the blame on the hearer: e.g., "I worked very hard but you gave me a low mark".

(c) Refusal to accept responsibility for the problem. : e.g. , "I don't deserve this low mark'.

In this study, when deciding what was complaint and what was criticism the linguistic features of the two speech acts were taken into consideration.

Request and demand are also two different speech acts. In deciding whether the students requested or demanded a solution, the linguistic features of these speech acts found by Murphy and Neu (1996) were taken into consideration. The linguistic features of the speech act of demand are:

(a) The use of first person singular + the locutionary verbs 'want' and 'demand': e.g. , "I want you to read it again", 'I demand some other teachers read it too".

(b) The use of second person + the modals 'should' and 'must'.

The linguistic features of the speech act of request are:

(a) Use of the modal *would* and *could*, which indicates politeness: e.g., “If I *could* maybe come another time, and we can go through the paper”.

(b) Use of modal “can” in their question to request a solution, which indicated politeness. For example; “*Can* I write this again”.

Following this, the transcriptions of the role-play in which the interlocutor was commiserating, and the role-play in which the interlocutor was contradicting were analysed separately in order to identify the components of the responses of native speakers of English, and the Turkish subjects’ responses in English and Turkish.

Transcription conventions were used only for the interlanguage data since it was the main focus of the study. The conventions drawn up by the CHILDES were used in transcribing the interlanguage data.

3.3.2. Statistical Analyses Done

The components of both American and Turkish complaints made to the commiserating interlocutor and contradicting interlocutors were drawn up separately and compared. In order to determine whether or not there were statistically significant differences between the data sets, a paired sample t-test was conducted. T-test was chosen for the statistical analyses owing to the fact that the number of the subjects were lower than 30.

The same procedure was followed with the interlanguage data, which was compared to the baseline data in order to identify any pragmatic transfer made by the Turkish EFL learners.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Presentation

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the role-plays done with the TNSs, ENSs and EFL learners speaking to a commiserating and a contradicting teacher. The focus will be on the semantic components of the speech act of complaint and the topic of these components. Also, the data collected from the native English speaker judges will be analyzed.

4.1 Data Analysis

In this part, the data gathered from the subject will be presented, a comparison between the data sets will be made.

4.1.1 Data from TNSs and ENSs

In this part, first the semantic components and the topics of the semantic components of the speech act set of complaint emerged in the analysis of the data obtained from the TNSs and ENSs speaking to a commiserating and a contradicting

teacher will be presented, and results will be compared. In the analyses, the order in which the components occurred in Murphy and Neu's study (1996) was not taken into consideration. The similarities and the differences between the Turkish and English components will also be examined in the upcoming sections.

4.1.1.1 Data from TNSs in the Presence of the Commiserating Teacher

The analysis of the Turkish data yielded a complaint speech act set which includes the components 'justification', 'candidate solution: request and/or demand', 'complaint', and 'explanation of purpose'. Unlike what Murphy and Neu (1996) found in the native English data set, the analysis of our data revealed that certain number of speakers produced 'criticism' along with complaint, which is regarded as a separate speech act. Also, the type of the candidate solution seemed to differ in that Turkish speakers came up with both a request and a demand.

Table 1 presents a summary of the complaint speech act set produced by TNSs. The components in the table are ordered from 'the most frequent' to 'the least frequent'.

Table 1. Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the TNSs Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

Component	Total N=13	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Justification	12	92,31	Çünkü bu kompozisyon için çok araştırma yaptım ve çok zaman harcadım. 'Because I did a lot of research for this composition and spent a lot of time on it'
Candidate solution: Request	11	76,92	Acaba yani bir daha gözden geçirebilme imkanınız olur mu? 'I wonder I mean if you could have the chance to go over it again'
Complaint	10	76,92	Birazcık yani düşük not aldığımı zannediyorum da. 'I think, I mean, I got a little bit of a low mark'
Explanation of purpose	7	53,85	Hocam, ben şey için gelmiştim. Kompozisyon hazırlamıştım. 'Teacher, I came for something. I had prepared a composition'
Candidate solution: Demand	3	23,08	Niye böyle bir not aldığımı öğrenmek istiyorum. 'I want to learn why I got such a mark'
Criticism	3	23,08	Bu kadar düşük bir not vermemeliydiniz. 'You shouldn't have given me such a low mark'

As Table 1 suggests, the most frequently used component was justification, which occurred in the responses of 12 respondents (92,31 %). It was also noted that one of the students avoided giving any kind of justification for her complaint. By justifying their answers, the students tried to show that they could explain the reasons

why they were complaining or criticizing. The topic of the students' justification was the effort put into the work, and the time spent doing the work. Some of sentences uttered by students to give justification are:

(a) Bir haftadır uğraşıyordum. Yani her şeyi gece gündüz ona yönelik çalışmışım. İşte internetten olsun her yerden ona yönelik bir sürü çalışma yaptım.

'I worked on it for a week. I mean, I studied for it day and night. I did a lot of work for it both from the internet and from every where'

(b) Çünkü bu kompozisyon için çok araştırma yaptım ve çok zaman harcadım.

'Because I did a lot of research for this composition and spent a lot of time'

A *candidate solution* appeared in each of the Turkish native speakers. The candidate solution was actualized by two specific components: *request* and *demand*. Majority of the students, 11 of them (76,92 %), employed *request* as candidate solution as the second most frequently used component. The requests included reconsidering and/or discussing the paper, and having another teacher read the paper. Some of the sentences uttered by the students to request a solution are:

(c) Tekrar okumayı düşünürseniz...

'If you consider reading it again...'

(d) Acaba yani bir daha gözden geçirebilme imkanınız olur mu?

‘I wonder, I mean, if you could have the chance to go over it again’

(e) Belki başka bir öğretmene de okutabilirsiniz.

‘If you have another teacher read it, too’

Complaint was the third most frequently used component. Ten TNSs out of 13 (76,92 %) produced a complaint. The topic of all the students’ complaint was the low grade of their papers, For example;

(c) Hocam verdiğiniz notun düşük olduğunu düşünüyorum.

‘Teacher, I think the mark you have given is low’

(d) Umduğum sonucu alamadım.

‘ I couldn’t get the result I was expecting’

(e) Birazcık yani düşük not aldığımı zannediyorum da.

‘I mean, I think I have got a little bit of a low mark’

The fourth most frequently used component in the set was the *explanation of purpose*, which was provided by a total of seven Turkish students (53,85 %). The students who provided an explanation of purpose set the stage and gave cause for their presence. Their topic was the assignment they had written. Some common examples from the students’ responses are:

(f) Ben size bir konu için gelmişim. Bir ödev hazırlamıştım vermişim geçen gün size. Onunla ilgili bir sorunum var.

‘I came to you for something. I had done some homework and given it to you the other day. I have got a problem with it’

(g) Hocam ben şey için gelmişim kompozisyon hazırlamıştım.

‘Teacher, I came for something. I had written a composition’

Demand as the candidate solution is seen as one of the least frequently used component in Table 1. It occurred in the responses of three students (23,08 %). They mainly demanded to know the reason for the low mark. The utterances made by these students are shown in samples (h), (i), and (j).

(h) Niye böyle bir not aldığımı öğrenmek istiyorum.

‘I want to learn why I got such a mark’

(i) Bunun nedeni (.)² ben şey . istiyorum böyle düşük not aldım.

‘I want to know what the reason for this is, and why I got such a low mark’

(j) Hiç hak etmediğim bir not bence. Sebebini de öğrenmek istiyorum.

‘In my opinion, it’s a mark I don’t deserve at all. And I want to learn the reason’

² (.) indicates a short interval

Criticism appeared in the utterances of three TNSs (23,07 %), which was the second least frequently used component. The respondents held the teacher when criticizing the teacher. Some utterances made by these students are:

(r) Biraz düşük not vermişsiniz.

‘You have given me a little bit of a low mark’

(s) Bana göre çok düşük not vermişsiniz.

‘In my opinion, you have given me a very low mark’

4.1.1.2 Data from TNSs in the Presence of the Contradicting Teacher

The TNSs produced a complaint speech act set when speaking to a contradicting teacher including the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘justification’, complaint’, ‘candidate solution: request and/or demand’, and ‘criticism’. These components differed from the data produced by those speaking to a commiserating teacher in the use of ‘explanation of purpose’ and ‘candidate solution: request’. These will be discussed in more details in the next section.

Table 2 presents a summary of the complaint speech act set produced by TNSs. The components in the table are presented in the order of ‘the most frequent’ to ‘the least frequent’.

Table 2. Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the TNSs Speaking to a Contradicting Teacher

Component	Total N=12	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Explanation of Purpose	12	100	Biraz konuşabilir miyiz? Geçen yazdığım kompozisyon hakkında. 'Can we talk a little bit? About the composition I wrote the other day'
Justification	12	100	Kütüphaneye gittim, araştırma yaptım. Çok çalıştım. 'I went to the library, did research. I studied a lot'
Complaint	7	58,33	Açıkçası benim beklediğimden düşük geldi. 'Frankly, it was lower than what I was expecting'
Criticism	5	41,67	Siz biraz kişisel düşünüyorsunuz. 'You are thinking a bit personal'
Candidate solution: Request	5	41,67	Yanlışlıklarımı öğrenebilirsem iyi olur? 'It would be good if I could learn my mistakes'
Candidate solution: Demand	4	33,33	Başka hocaların da okumasını talep ediyorum. 'I demand some other teachers read it as well.'

According to Table 2, the most frequently used components were *explanation of purpose* and *justification*, which were employed by all the TNSs.

An explanation of purpose was provided by each of the Turkish respondents. Through the explanation of purpose, they set the stage and gave cause for their presence. Common examples from the students include samples (a) and (b).

(a) Biraz konuşabilir miyiz? Geçen yazdığım kompozisyon hakkında.

‘Can we talk a little bit? About the composition I wrote the other day’

(b) Ben kompozisyon ödevi hakkında konuşmak istiyordum hocam.

‘Teacher, I wanted to talk about the composition homework’

Another frequent component was justification. In general, the topic of their justifications was the time and effort put in the work. Some students claimed that there were no mistakes in their papers while some other students explained that they had even showed their paper to some other teachers before handing it in. Some examples of these sentences are:

(c) Kütüphaneye gittim, araştırma yaptım. Çok çalıştım.

‘I went to the library, did research. I studied a lot’

(d) Çünkü her şeyim çok iyiydi.

‘Because everything I wrote was very good’

(e) Ben çok çalıştım. Başka hocaya da gösterdim.

‘I studied a lot. I also showed it to another teacher’

The third frequently used component was the speech act of *complaint*. By complaining, the Turkish speakers tried to show that they were treated unfairly by

the teacher. The topic of their complaints concerned the grade of the paper/test, as shown in samples (f) and (g).

(f) Çok düşük bir not geldi.

‘I got a very low mark’

(g) Açıkçası benim beklediğimden düşük geldi.

‘To be frank, it was lower than what I was expecting’.

Criticism was used less frequently than the other components. Five of the Turkish respondents (41,67 %) produced criticism. The topic of their criticism was the mark given by the teacher. Examples of the criticism produced are shown in samples (i) and (j).

(i) Çok düşük not vermişsiniz hocam.

‘You have given a very low mark, teacher’

(j) Bence sizin not kırmanızın tek sebebi benim düşüncelerimle sizin düşüncelerinizin farklı olması.

‘In my opinion, the only reason you lowered my mark is that my ideas and your ideas are different’

Another less frequently used component was the *candidate solution: request*. The requests made by the Turkish students included reconsidering and/or discussing

the paper, and having another teacher read the paper. Some of the sentences uttered by the students to request a solution are:

(k) Acaba “yani” bir daha gözden geçirebilme imkanınız olur mu?

‘I wonder, I mean, if you could have the chance to go over it again’

(l) Belki başka bir öğretmene de okutabilirsiniz.

‘Perhaps you can have another teacher read it, too?’

The least frequently used component was the *candidate solution: demand*, which occurred in the utterances of 33,33 % of the TNSs. They mainly demanded to know the reason for the low mark. The utterances made by these students are shown in samples (m), (n), and (o).

(m) Niye böyle bir not aldığımı öğrenmek istiyorum.

‘I want to learn why I got such a mark.’

(n) Bunun nedeni “ne diye ben şey istiyorum” böyle düşük not aldım.

‘I want to know what the reason of this is, and why I got such a low mark.’

(o) Hiç hak etmediğim bir not bence. Sebebini de öğrenmek istiyorum.

‘In my opinion it’s a mark I don’t deserve at all. And I want to learn the reason.’

To summarize, the analysis of the data gathered from the TNSs speaking to a contradicting teacher revealed a speech act set of complaint which included the components found by Murphy and Neu (1996). Unlike their finding, 41.67 % of the respondents opted for the speech act of criticism. Murphy and Neu found that English native speakers in their study produced a complaint, and Korean non-native speakers of English produced criticism in their interlanguage. Explanation of purpose and justification were used with a high frequency. On the other hand, candidate solution: request (41,67 %) and demand (33,33 %) were produced with a relatively low frequency.

4.1.1.3 The Discussion of the Similarities and Differences between the Components of the Complaint Speech Act Set Realized by the TNSs in the Presence of a Commiserating and a Contradicting Teacher

In order to determine whether there was a significant difference between the components of the speech act sets produced by TNSs speaking to a commiserating teacher and a contradicting teacher, a paired sample t-test was conducted. The test results revealed statistically significant similarities as well as some differences, which can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of the Components of the Speech Act Set Produced by the TNSs Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher and a Contradicting Teacher

	Commiserating Teacher	Frequency of use	Contradicting Teacher	Frequency of use	p=0,05	t
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=13	(%)	N=12	(%)		
Complaint	10	76,92	7	58,33	0,411	1
Criticism	3	23,08	5	41,67	0,411	-1
Justification	12	92,31	12	100	1	-1
Candidate solution: demand	3	23,08	4	33,33	0,673	-0,55
Explanation of purpose	7	53,85	12	100	0,015	-2,72
Candidate solution: request	11	76,92	5	41,67	0,041	1,84

According to Table 3, the most significant similarity was the *complaint* speech act in the two data sets. While 76,92 % of the respondents who spoke to a commiserating teacher complained, 58,33 % of those who spoke to a contradicting teacher complained.

A second noteworthy similarity was the realization of the speech act of *criticism* by both groups of respondents. 23,08 % of those speaking to the commiserating teacher issued a criticism. And 41,67 % of the respondents issued a criticism to the contradicting teacher.

The groups also provided *justification* with similar frequencies. While 92,31 % of the students who spoke to the commiserating teacher provided a justification for their complaint or criticism, 100 % of those speaking to the contradicting teacher provided justification.

The responses also paralleled each other as far as the candidate solution: demand was concerned. 23,08 % of the respondents who spoke to the commiserating teacher demanded a solution for the problem, and 33,33 % of those speaking to the contradicting teacher made a demand in order to solve the perceived problem.

Despite the similarities listed above, there were also some differences, the most significant of which was the component '*explanation of purpose*'. While 53,85 % of the respondents who spoke to the commiserating teacher explained the reason for their presence, all of the respondents speaking to the contradicting teacher explained the reason for their presence, which posed statistical difference between the components in the two data sets. ($p=0,015 < 0,05$).

The second notable difference was *the candidate solution: request*. The 76,92 % of the respondents who spoke to the contradicting teacher requested a solution. However, only 41,67 % of the respondents who spoke to the commiserating teacher made a request to solve the perceived problem.

To sum up, Table 3 suggests that the components of speech act of complaint in the two data sets seem to parallel each other in terms of 'complaint', 'criticism', 'justification', and 'candidate solution: request'. However, in terms of providing 'an explanation of purpose' and 'request as a candidate solution' there is statistical

difference in the two sets. This suggests that the TNSs were more likely to explain the reason for their presence to a non-commiserating teacher, and they seem to have a tendency to request a solution for an undeserved mark when they speak to a commiserating teacher.

4.1.1.4 Data from ENSs in the Presence of the Commiserating Teacher

The ENSs speaking to a commiserating data produced a complaint speech act set including the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, and ‘candidate solution’, and ‘criticism’.

Table 4 presents a summary of the complaint speech act set produced by the ENSs. The components in the table are presented in the order of ‘the most frequent to the least frequent’.

According to Table 4, the most striking point about the ENSs’ utterances is that they all employed the components ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, and ‘candidate solution: request’.

A *complaint* was provided by all of the native speakers of English. The topic of their complaints concerned the grade of the paper as shown in samples (a) and (b):

(a) I’m very surprised at the grade you gave. It’s really low.

(b) To be honest, I’m really disappointed with the mark. I feel like it was really low.

Table 4.Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the ENSs Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

Component	Total N=10	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Complaint	10	100	I think the mark is a little bit low.
Justification	10	100	I really put a lot of work into it.
Candidate solution: Request	10	100	I was wondering if you could help me by explaining why this mark is so low.
Explanation of Purpose	9	90	I just wanted to talk to you about the composition and the mark you gave me on it
Criticism	2	20	I think you should not grade me very low just because of that.

Justification also occurred in all the responses, which showed that the respondents could support their claims, and explain why they were complaining. Just like in the Turkish data, the topic of the justifications focused on the effort put in the work and time spent on it, as shown in samples (c) and (d):

(c) I put a lot of work into it and I spent a lot of time, you know, trying to make it a good essay.

(d) To be honest, I really put a lot of work into it.

A *candidate solution: request* was present in the complaint speech act set of each ENSs. Through their requests, they tried to resolve the problem. Representative examples are shown in samples (e) and (f).

(e) I was wondering if you could help me by explaining why this mark is so low, whether there is anything you can help me with that?

(f) Would you consider, like you know, read it again or just check it over just to be sure that, you know, you understand my beliefs as well.

Another very frequent component was *explanation of purpose*, which was produced by nine of the native speakers of English (90 %). Their responses paralleled those of the TNSs in that the topic was the composition and/or the mark. Some examples from their responses include the sample (g):

(g) I just wanted to talk to you about the composition and you know, the mark you gave me on it.

The least frequent component was *criticism*, which was produced by two of the ENSs (20 %). By issuing a criticism, they seemed to ignore the asymmetrical situation with the teacher³. They uttered the sentences below:

(h) I think you should not you know grade me very low just because of that.

³ An asymmetrical situation exhibits the features such as 1) acceptance of partial responsibility, 2) depersonalization of the problem, 3) use of questions, 4) use of mitigators, and 5) use of the pronoun “we” (Murphy & Neu, 1996, p. 205).

- (i) Well really you didn't agree with my opinions and that's the reason why you hadn't given me a better mark.

4.1.1.5 Data from ENSs in the Presence of the Contradicting Teacher

The speech act set produced by the ENSs included the components 'explanation of purpose', 'complaint', 'candidate solution: request', 'justification', and 'criticism', which are presented in Table 5. The components in the table are presented in the order of 'the most frequent to the least frequent'.

Table 5. Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the ENSs Speaking to Contradicting Teacher

Component	Total N=10	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Explanation of Purpose	10	100	I came to talk to you about my composition that I submitted to you last week.
Complaint	1 10	100	I'm not very happy with the grade.
Candidate solution: Request	10	100	Can you explain why it was so low?
Justification	9	90	I really worked hard on it.
Criticism	2	20	You've blocked my marks purely because you don't agree with what I've said.

The most noteworthy result was the frequency of ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘candidate solution: request’, which were realized by all the respondents, and ‘justification’, which was realized by 90 % of the ENSs.

By producing *the explanation of purpose*, the respondents provided a reason for their presence to the teacher. Sample utterances are:

(a) I came to talk to you about my composition that I submitted to you last week.

(b) I wanted to talk to you about my composition.

Complaint was another frequently realized component. The topic of the respondents’ complaints concerned the grade of the paper as shown in samples (c) and (d):

(c) I really think I should have got a higher mark.

(d) I should’ve had a higher grade on it.

The data suggest that native English speakers propose the candidate solution in the form of a *request* rather than as *demand* as opposed to Turkish native speakers. The solutions involved requesting the teacher to explain why the grade was low, to reread the paper, and to have another teacher read the paper, which seemed to be quite similar to what the Turkish native speakers said. Representative examples are shown in samples (e) and (f).

(e) I'd like to have my essay remarked by another teacher.

(f) Can you explain why it was so low?

A further frequently used component was *justification*, which was provided by 90 % of the ENSs. By giving a justification, they tried to show that they could support their claims, and that they could explain why they were complaining or criticizing. The topic of their justifications focused on the effort put in the work and time spent on it, as shown in samples (g) and (h):

(g) I really worked hard on it.

(h) I spent days writing it. I hardly had any sleep. I spent so much time doing it.

As it is seen in Table 5, *criticism* was produced by two of the ENSs, who held the teacher responsible for the low mark. Some of the sentences uttered are:

(i) You've blocked my marks on purely because you don't agree with what I've said.

(j) You didn't give me as higher grade as I was expecting on it.

4.1.1.6 The Discussion of the Similarities and Differences between the Components of the Complaint Speech Act Set Realized by the ENSs in the Presence of a Commiserating and a Contradicting Teacher

The results of the paired sample t-test conducted to determine any similarities and/or differences between the two data sets can be seen in Table 6.

The most prominent point about the comparison between the two sets is that the frequency of use of the components in the two separate sets is mostly the same.

The components that are strikingly similar are ‘*complaint*’, ‘*candidate solution request*’, and ‘*criticism*’. Since they occurred with the same frequency, a statistical analysis was not needed for these components.

Table 6. Comparison of the Components of the Speech Act Set Produced by the ENSs Speaking to a Commiserating and a Contradicting Teacher

	Commiserating Teacher	Frequency of use	Contradicting Teacher	Frequency of use	p=0,05	t
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N	(%)	N	(%)		
Complaint	10	100	10	100	-	-
Candidate Solution: Request	10	100	10	100	-	-
Criticism	2	20	2	20	-	-
Justification	10	100	9	90	1	1,025
Explanation of purpose	9	90	10	100	1	-1,025

Another area where the ENSs paralleled each other in the two sets was the frequent occurrence of justification. Each of the ENSs speaking to a commiserating

teacher provided a justification, and 90 % of the ENSs speaking to a contradicting teacher provided a justification. The statistical analysis, also, revealed there was no statistically significant difference between the justifications in the two sets. ($t = 1.025 < 2,101$, $p = 1 > 0.05$).

The explanation of purpose was also produced with a high frequency. 90 % of those speaking to commiserating teacher produced an explanation of purpose. In a similar way, all of the ENSs who spoke to the contradicting teacher provided an explanation of purpose, and there was not statistically significant difference between them. ($Z = -1,025 > -2,101$, $p = 1 > 0.05$).

4.1.1.7 The Discussion of the Similarities and the Differences between the Components of the Complaint Speech Act Set Realized by the TNSs and the ENSs Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

In order to identify whether the TNSs and the ENSs speaking to a commiserating teacher resemble or differ in their use of the complaint speech act set, the data gathered from each group were compared.

The comparison of the data revealed both similarities and differences in the use of the complaint speech act set.

The most notable similarity was the use of similar components in the complaint speech act sets in Turkish and English. Both groups made use of ‘purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, ‘candidate solution’, and ‘criticism’ despite

the differences in the frequency. Table 7 shows the results of the t-test done to compare the two native languages in order to determine whether or not the differences were statistically significant. The components are presented in order of ‘more similar’ to ‘less similar’.

Table 7. Comparison of the Complaint Speech Act Set in Turkish and English Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

	Turkish	Frequency of use	English	Frequency of use	p=0,05	Turkish vs English
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=13	(%)	N=10	(%)		t
Explanation of purpose	7	53,85	9	90	0,089	-1,87
Complaint	10	76,52	10	100	0,229	-1,63
Candidate Solution: request	11	76,92	10	100	0,486	-1,95
Justification	12	92,31	10	100	1	-0,897
Criticism	3	23,08	2	20	1	0,18
Candidate Solution: demand	3	23,08	-	-	-	-

The most noteworthy similarity between the two speech act sets in the two languages is the use of the component ‘*explanation of purpose*’. Even though there was a difference between the frequency of emergence of the component in the two languages, there was no statistically significant difference between the Turkish native

speakers and the native speakers of English in terms of use of 'explanation of purpose' ($t = -1,87 > -2,080$, $p = 0.089 > 0.05$).

The second remarkable similarity was '*the speech act of complaint*'. 76,52 % of the TNSs and all of the ENSs employed a complaint. The statistical analysis of the component complaint did not reveal any significant difference between the two languages. ($t = -1,63 > -2,080$, $p = 0.229 > 0.05$).

The use of '*the candidate solution: request*' was another obvious similarity. The majority of the TNSs (76,92 %), employed request as candidate solution, and all of the ENSs made use of the component of request in their complaint strategy set. The statistical analysis between the Turkish and English data supported the similarity ($p = 0.486 > 0.05$).

Similarly, '*justification*' which occurred in 92,31 % of the TNSs' responses, occurred in all the responses of the native speakers of English, revealing no statistically significant difference from the Turkish data. ($t = -0.897 < -2,080$, $p = 1 > 0.05$).

The last significant similarity between the two sets was '*the speech act of criticism*'. While 23,08 % of the TNSs produced a criticism, 20 % of the ENSs realized the act of criticism. ($t = 0,18 < 2,080$, $p = 1 > 0.05$). However, this component was relatively infrequent in both data sets.

The most striking difference was the realization of '*the speech act of demand*' as a candidate solution, which occurred only in the utterances of TNSs (23,08 %), and not in the ENSs' responses.

4.1.1.8 The Discussion of the Similarities and the Differences between the Components of the Complaint Speech Act Set Realized by the TNSs and the ENSs Speaking to a Contradicting Teacher

The comparison of the data gathered from the groups revealed both similarities and differences in the use of the complaint speech act set in presence of a contradicting teacher. Table 8 presents a summary of the similarities and differences.

The most striking similarity between the two speech act sets in the two languages was *the explanation of purpose*. All respondents provided an explanation of purpose. Therefore, a statistical analysis was not necessary between these two components.

Another obvious similarity occurred regarding '*justification*', which was provided by all the TNSs and 90 % of the ENSs. The statistical analysis also showed that there was a similarity between the Turkish and the English data. ($t = 1.12 < 2,086$, $p = 0.455 > 0.05$).

Table 8. Comparison of the Complaint Speech Act Set in Turkish and English Speaking to Contradicting Teacher

	Turkish	Frequency of use (%)	English	Frequency of use (%)	Turkish vs. English t	p=0,05
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=12		N=10			
Explanation of purpose	12	100	10	100	-	-
Justification	12	100	9	90	1,12	0,455
Criticism	5	41,67	2	25	0,84	0,381
Candidate Solution:						
Request	5	41,67	10	100	-2,92	0,005
Complaint	7	58,33	10	100	-2,32	0,04
Candidate Solution:						
Demand	4	33,33	-	-	-	-

The occurrence of the speech act of *criticism* was a further noteworthy similarity. Criticism was present in the 41,67 % of the responses of the TNSs while 20 % of the ENSs provided criticism. As it can be seen in Table 6, the Z test result suggested that these two usages in Turkish and English were similar to each other. ($t = 0,84 < 2,086$, $p = 0.381 > 0.05$).

Despite the similarities listed above, there were also differences in the use of ‘candidate solution: demand’, ‘candidate solution: request’, ‘complaint’, and ‘justification’.

The most striking differences were pertaining to the candidate solution. The first difference was the occurrence of the component *demand* as the candidate solution only in the Turkish data (33,33 %). The second difference was the component of *request* as the candidate solution. While 41,67 % of the TNSs produced a request, all of the ENSs provided a request as a solution to the perceived problem. The statistical analysis revealed a significant difference between the component 'request' in the two data sets. ($t = -2,92 > -2,080$, $p = 0.005 < 0.05$).

The third noteworthy difference was the component set of the complaint between the Turkish data and English data. 58,33 % of the TNSs produced a complaint. On the other hand, complaint was present in the responses of each ENS. There was statistically significant difference. ($t = -2.32 > -2,086$, $p = 0.04 < 0.05$).

4.1.2 Analysis of the Interlanguage Data

4.1.2.1 Interlanguage Data Collected through a Role-Play with a Commiserating Teacher

The answer to the first research question for this study, which was whether or not Turkish non-native speakers of English will produce a complaint speech act set in their language when they are given the context of expressing disapproval to a teacher who is commiserating, seems to be positive. However, the type of the candidate solution produced by EFL learners seemed to vary in that they produced 'candidate solution: request' as well as 'demand'.

Table 9. Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the EFL Students Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

Component	Total N=20	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Complaint	20	100	I don't think that I deserve this note.
Justification	19	95	I spent my a lot of time to er write that (.) essay.
Candidate solution: Request	18	90	Can you look at it again?
Explanation of Purpose	17	85	I want to talk about my last assignment.
Candidate solution: Demand	4	20	I want you to look at it again.

Table 9 presents a summary of the complaint speech act set produced by the TNSs. The components in the table are presented in the order of 'the most frequent' to 'the least frequent'.

According to Table 9, the most frequently used component in the set was the speech act of *complaint*, which was provided by each EFL learner. The topic of their complaint concerned the grade of the paper as shown in samples (a) and (b).

(a) I think I didn't deserve my last mark from composition.

(b) I get lower mark than I expected.

The second most frequently used component was justification, which occurred in the responses of 19 students (95 %). Through justification, they demonstrated that they could support their claims, and explain the reasons why they were complaining. The topic of their justifications was the time spent studying, research done on the topic, the attempt to use a variety of structures and vocabulary items, as shown in samples (c) and (d).

(c) I believe I work a lot. I do many research.

(d) I didn't sleep for this composition for perfecting this.

A candidate solution: request was another frequently used component. 18 of the EFL learners (90 %) produced the component 'request'. Their requests involved asking the teacher to reread the paper or provide help to make it better and asking for another chance to rewrite the essay. Representative examples are shown in samples (e) and (f).

(e) We can think about it, we can read it again, and we can put another decision

(f) Maybe we work together for this composition (.) for perfecting all the things.

Explanation of purpose was provided by 17 out of 20 EFL learners, and it was the fourth most frequently used component. In doing so, they explained the reason for their visit to the teacher. Through the explanation of purpose, the students set the stage and gave cause for their presence. Common examples from the non-native speakers' responses include samples (g) and (h).

(g) I want to talk about the mark that you have given to me after composition

(h) I want to talk about my last grade.

Demand was the least frequently used component, which was employed by four of the students (20 %) who asked the teacher to reread the paper. Two of these students also made use of a request as a solution as well as a demand. They uttered the sentences in (i), (j), (k) and (l).

(i) I want you to read my composition (.) by thinking about the time I spent
and the effort I made

(j) I mean I want you er to take a look at my paper again.

(k) I think you should make higher.

(l) I want you to look at it again.

To sum up, the Turkish EFL learners produced all the components of complaint speech act: ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, and ‘candidate solution: request and/or demand’. Also, they avoided issuing a ‘criticism’ in their responses to the teacher.

4.1.2.2 Interlanguage Data Collected through a Role-Play with a Contradicting Teacher

The answer to the second research question, which was whether or not Turkish non-native speakers of English will produce a complaint speech act set in their interlanguage when they are given the context of expressing disapproval to a teacher who is contradicting, is answered affirmatively.

The speech act set produced by the Turkish non-native speakers speaking to a contradicting teacher contained the components in Murphy and Neu’s (1996) complaint speech act set. However, the component ‘candidate solution’ differed in that the Turkish EFL learners produced both the components ‘request’ and ‘demand’.

Table 10 presents a summary of the complaint speech act set produced by the Turkish EFL learners. The components in the table are presented in the order of ‘the most frequent’ to ‘the least frequent’.

Table 10. Complaint Speech Act Set Produced by the EFL Learners - Contradicting Teacher

Component	Total N=20	Frequency of use (%)	Example
Justification	19	95	I did researches and I know that I don't have any grammar mistake and I made researches and I know this subject and I wrote what I learnt
Explanation of Purpose	16	80	I want to talk about my composition
Complaint	16	80	I think that I don't deserve this note.
Candidate solution: Request	9	45	Can you read it again?
Candidate solution: Demand	5	25	I just want er some explanation together.

The most frequently used component was justification, which occurred in the responses of 19 students (95 %). They provided a justification to show that they could actually support their claims, and explain the reasons why they were complaining. The topic of their justifications was the time spent studying, research done on the topic, the sleepless nights spent and the good use of grammar and vocabulary, as shown in samples (a) and (b).

(a) I worked a lot in this composition. Er I passed a lot of nights with sleepless.

(b) I er spent too much time on it. Er And I spent so much time and I spent so much time on it researches

Explanation of purpose and the speech act of *complaint* were the second most frequently used components in the interlanguage set. Explanation of purpose was provided by 16 out of 20 students (80 %). Through the explanation of purpose, the students set the stage and gave cause for their presence. Common examples from the non-native speakers' responses include samples (c) and (d).

(c) I want to speak about my composition

(d) If you have anytime, I want to mention about my composition

Complaint was produced by 16 out of 20 students (80 %) as well. In general, the topic of their complaint concerned the grade of the paper as shown in sample (e).

(e) I think this grade is not enough for me.

The component 'candidate solution: request' was produced relatively less frequently. Nine (45 %) students produced a request. In their requests, they asked the teacher to reread the paper, let the student rewrite the essay, and reread the paper together, as shown in (f).

(f) Can I write this (.) again and can I get a high point a high grade.

The least frequently used component in the set was the speech act of demand as a solution to the perceived problem. It was provided by produced by five students. By issuing a demand, these students asked the teacher to reread the paper and go over the paper together, as shown in (g).

(g) I just want er some explanation together.

4.1.2.3 The Discussion of the Similarities and Differences between the Components of the Complaint Speech Act Set Realized by the EFL Learners in the Presence of a Commiserating and a Contradicting Teacher

In order to identify whether or not the Turkish EFL learners employed similar features in their complaint speech act set, the data collected from these students speaking to a commiserating and contradicting teacher was compared using statistical methods.

Table 11. Comparison of the Complaint Speech Act Set by the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to a Commiserating and a Contradicting Teacher

<i>Semantic Component</i>	Commiserating Teacher N=20	Frequency of use (%)	Contradicting Teacher N=20	Frequency of use (%)	p=0,05	t
Justification	19	95	19	95	-	0
Explanation of purpose	17	85	16	80	1	0,42
Demand	4	20	5	25	1	-0,38
Candidate Solution: Request	18	90	9	45	0,006	3,04
Complaint	20	100	16	80	0,04	2,11

The comparison of the data revealed both similarities and differences in the use of the complaint speech act set. Table 11 shows the results of the t-test done to compare the two sets in order to determine whether or not the differences were statistically significant. The relationship between the components was tested with 95 % confidence. The components are in order of 'more similar' to 'less similar'.

The most striking similarity between the interlanguage data sets was the realization of the component *justification*, which was produced with the same frequency in both groups. Therefore, a statistical analysis was not needed to confirm the similarity.

The second notable resemblance was in the use of component *explanation of purpose*. The component in each set was produced with a high frequency. The statistical analysis also revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the usages in the two sets. ($t = 0,42 < 2,021$, $p = 1 > 0.05$).

The third noteworthy similarity was the occurrence of *the candidate solution: demand*, which occurred with a low frequency in both data sets. The statistical analysis done on the use of demand in the two data sets revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between them. ($t = -0,38 > -2,021$, $p = 1 > 0.05$).

Despite the similarities discussed above, there were some differences as well. To begin with, the most obvious difference was about the use of the component *request* as a candidate solution to the perceived problem. While those who spoke to the commiserating teacher requested a solution with a high frequency (90 %), the ones who spoke to the contradicting teacher made use of this speech act less

frequently (45 %). The statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference. ($t = 3,04 > 2,021$, $p = 0.006 > 0.05$).

The second striking difference was about the use of the *complaint* speech act, which was produced by all (100 %) the students speaking to the commiserating teacher. However, 80 % of those speaking to the contradicting teacher made use to this speech act. Despite the high frequencies of use, the statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the complaint speech acts in the two data sets. ($t = 2,11 > 2,021$).

To summarize, the data gathered from the Turkish EFL learners and the statistical analysis done showed that when complaining to a commiserating and a contradicting teacher, the following components in the complaint speech act ‘providing justification’, ‘explanation of purpose’, candidate solution: demand’ are similar to each other while others, i.e. ‘candidate solution: request’ and ‘complaint’ differed. That is, Turkish EFL students seemed to make use of the component ‘request’ much more frequently when speaking to a commiserating teacher. It also appeared that 30 % of the learners avoided asking for a solution when speaking to the contradicting teacher.

4.1.3 Pragmatic Transfer Made by the Turkish EFL Learners

In order to answer the third and fourth research questions, which asked to whether or not the Turkish EFL learners made pragmatic transfer when speaking to a

commiserating and contradicting teacher, the interlanguage data was compared to the Turkish and English baseline data. First of all, the interlanguage data collected from the EFL learners speaking to the commiserating teacher was compared to the English baseline data collected through the role-plays done with the commiserating teacher. This was done in order to see to what extent the EFL students' responses were similar to the English baseline data. Then, the interlanguage data was compared to the Turkish data so as to identify how much the EFL students were affected by their L1. The same procedure was followed with the data collected through the role-plays done with the contradicting teacher.

In deciding whether or not there was pragmatic transfer, Kasper's (1992) model has been adopted, which was aforementioned in the literature review.

4.1.3.1 Pragmatic Transfer Made By the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to the Commiserating Teacher

The interlanguage data collected from the EFL students who produced the complaint speech act set was first compared to the data gathered from the TNSs and ENSs.

In order to find out whether or not the difference is statistically significant, Z values for each group were compared. The results revealed positive transfer in terms of the components 'explanation of purpose', 'complaint', 'justification', and 'candidate solution: request' and negative transfer in terms of the component 'candidate solution: demand'. Also, the students were found to avoid the speech act of 'criticism'.

Positive Transfer

Table 12 presents the summary of the areas where positive transferred occurred in the interlanguage of the Turkish EFL learners.

The first area where positive transfer was detected was *explanation of purpose*. According to Table 12, there was no statistically significant difference between the Turkish and English baseline data ($t = -1,87 > -2,080$, $p = 0.089 > 0.05$). Similarly, no statistically significant difference between the interlanguage and English was found. ($p = 1 > 0.05$). In just the same way, the Turkish data and interlanguage data did not reveal any significant difference ($p = 0.107 > 0.05$), which suggests that the students' L1 positively affected their use of explanation of purpose in their interlanguage, and helped to develop towards the target language.

Table 12. Positive Pragmatic Transfer Made by the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

	Turkish		English		IL		Turkish vs. English	IL vs English	IL vs. Turkish
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=13	%	N=10	%	N=20	%	t	t	t
Explanation of purpose	7	53,85	9	90	17	85	-1,87	0,38	-1,96
Complaint	10	76,92	10	100	20	100	-1,63	-	-2,25
Justification	12	92,31	10	100	19	95	-0,897	0,72	-0,32
Candidate Solution: Request	11	76,92	10	100	18	90	-1,95	1,035	-1,125

The second positive transfer was noted regarding *complaint*. The Turkish and English baseline data did not have significant differences. A statistical analysis was not necessary between the English baseline data and the interlanguage data owing to the fact that 100 % of the respondents in each group produced a complaint. The native speakers of Turkish produced a complaint in their L1 (76,92 %) as well, and the difference between the students' L1 and the interlanguage was not found significant. ($p = 0.052 > 0.05$). This suggests that the students transferred the component complaint from Turkish to English, and this transfer is regarded as positive owing to the fact that the ENSs also used the component with the same frequency with the EFL learners.

The third area where positive transfer emerged was *justification*. The difference between the Turkish and English baseline data was not found statistically significant. ($t = - 0.897 > - 2,080, p=1 > 0.05$). Similarly, there was no statistically significant difference between the English baseline data and the interlanguage data. ($t = 0.72 < 2,048, p = 1 > 0.05$). As expected, no statistically significant difference was detected between the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage, either. ($p = 1 > 0.05$). By making use of justification in their L1 and interlanguage, the students made positive transfer because the same component was made use of by the ENSs with a similar frequency.

The final positive transfer was noted in the use of *candidate solution: request*. Both native speakers of English and Turkish produced a request as the candidate solution and there was no statistically significant difference between them ($p = 0.486 > 0.05$). The difference between the interlanguage and the Turkish data was not

statistically significant, either. ($t = -1,125 > -2,042$). As a corollary to this, the statistical analysis between the English baseline and the interlanguage data did not reveal significant difference. ($t = 1,035 < 2,048$, $p = 0.540$).

Negative Transfer

According to Table 13, the only negative transfer occurred in the production of *candidate solution: demand*. While there was no statistically significant difference between the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage data ($t = 0.21 < 2,042$, $p = 1 > 0.05$), native speakers of English did not make use of demand at all, which suggests that Turkish EFL learners transferred this usage from Turkish to their interlanguage.

Table 13. Negative Pragmatic Transfer Made by the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to a Commiserating Teacher

	Turkish		English		IL		Turkish vs. English	IL vs. English	IL vs. Turkish
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=13	%	N=10	%	N=20	%	t	t	t
Candidate Solution: Demand	3	23,08	-	-	4	20	-	-	0,21

Another noteworthy result was that both the TNSs and the ENSs produced *criticism*; there was no statistically significant difference between them ($p = 1 > 0.05$), but the EFL learners avoided producing criticism. Brown and Levinson (1978)

state that the speaker has a choice of *not* performing the act when it is perceived as a highly face-threatening act, which is named as ‘opting-out strategy’. By opting out, the speaker avoids causing offence to the hearer. An explanation for the Turkish EFL learners’ avoidance of criticism could be that by avoiding the face-threatening act, the EFL students in this study seemed to save face when speaking to their teacher in English.

To sum up, the comparison of the two native languages, and the comparison of the interlanguage to the native languages revealed that the Turkish EFL learners made positive transfer as well as negative transfer. As far as the data analysis suggests, the students appeared to make positive transfer from their L1 to their interlanguage in using the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, ‘justification’, and ‘candidate solution: request’. On the other hand, they made negative transfer from Turkish to their interlanguage in using the component ‘demand’, which did not occur in the target language at all. Also, they avoided producing criticism, which was present in both the Turkish and the English baseline data.

4.1.3.2 Pragmatic Transfer Made By the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to the Contradicting Teacher

The interlanguage data collected from the EFL students speaking to the contradicting teacher was compared to the data gathered from the TNSs and ENSs.

Positive Transfer

Table 14 shows the components which were subject to positive transfer in the utterances of the Turkish EFL learners speaking to a contradicting teacher.

Table 14. Positive Pragmatic Transfer Made by the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to a Contradicting Teacher

	Turkish		Eng.		IL		Turkish vs. English	IL vs. English	IL vs. Turkish
<i>Semantic</i>									
<i>Component</i>	N=12	%	N=10	%	N=20	%	t	t	T
Explanation of purpose	12	100	10	100	16	80	-	1,52	1,66
Complaint	7	58,33	10	100	16	80	-2,32	1,52	-1,32
Justification	12	100	9	90	19	95	1,12	-0,52	0,79

To begin with, both Turkish and English native speakers employed *explanation of purpose*, and there was no statistically significant difference between the two native languages. In the same way, the difference between the interlanguage data and English data was not significant. ($t = 1,52 < 2,048$, $p = 0.272 > 0.05$). The same was true for the interlanguage and Turkish. ($t = 1,66 < 2,042$, $p = 0.625 > 0.05$). This suggests that the students transferred this component from Turkish to their interlanguage, which was highly similar to the target language.

The second area where positive transfer occurred is *complaint*, which was present in all three data sets. 58.33 % of the TNSs produced a complaint, and 80 % of the EFL students produced a complaint. There was no statistically significant difference between them. ($t = -1,32 > -2,042$). All the ENSs produced a complaint, and there was no statistically significant difference between the interlanguage and the English data. ($t = 1,52 < 2,048$, $p = 0.272 > 0.05$). This suggests that the students' existing knowledge in their L1 had a positive effect on the use of this component in their interlanguage, which was close to the target language, and therefore it was a sign of development towards the target language.

The third noteworthy transfer was made in terms of *justification*. All the TNSs produced this component in their speech act set. Quite similarly 90 % of the ENSs produced justification, and there was no statistically significant difference between the two baseline data sets ($p = 0,381 > 0,05$). Also, there was no statistically significant difference between the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage. ($p = 1 > 0.05$). As a corollary to this, there was no statistically significant difference between the interlanguage and the English data. ($t = -0.52 > -2,042$, $p = 1 > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be suggested that the production of the component justification in the students' L1 seemed to have a positive the effect on the production of the same component in their interlanguage.

Negative Transfer

Table 15 presents the summary of the areas where negative transferred occurred in the interlanguage of the Turkish EFL learners.

Table 15. Negative Pragmatic Transfer Made by the Turkish EFL Learners Speaking to a Contradicting Teacher

	Turkish		English		IL		Turkish vs. English	IL vs. English	IL vs. Turkish
<i>Semantic Component</i>	N=12	%	N=10	%	N=20	%		t	t
Candidate Solution: Demand	4	33,33	-	-	5	25	-	-	0,51
Candidate Solution: Request	4	33,33	-	-	5	25	-	-	0,51

The most striking negative transfer occurred in terms of *candidate solution: demand*, which did not emerge in the English baseline data, but it did in the Turkish one (33,33 %). It was also found in the interlanguage data (25 %). The statistical analysis between the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage data showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the component ‘demand’ in the two data sets. ($t = 0,51 < 2,042$). The non-occurrence of this component in the target language and presence in the interlanguage was a sign of negative transfer.

The second negative transfer was detected in *candidate solution: request*. There was a statistically significant difference between the English baseline data and the interlanguage data ($p = 0.004 < 0.05$). The fact that there was no significant difference between the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage ($p = 1 > 0.05$) suggests that the Turkish non-native speakers of English tended to transfer this component from L1 (Turkish) to their interlanguage.

A notable result was the nonoccurrence of the speech act of *criticism* in the interlanguage, which was present in both the Turkish and the English baseline data. Just like it was the case with the students speaking to the commiserating teacher, the students who spoke to the contradicting teacher avoided producing this speech act.

4.1.4 Sociolinguistic Acceptability Judgments

This section presents the results of the English native speakers' acceptability judgments of the complaint strategy set produced by the Turkish EFL learners speaking to a commiserating and a contradicting teacher. The acceptability judgments were included in the study to determine whether or not the Turkish EFL learners were able to achieve their communication aims. It was also considered that the native speaker judges could help gain insight into how and when the Turkish EFL learners failed to communicate effectively. The two judges, both of whom were American English native speakers, listened to the two data set separately evaluating the utterances of the EFL learners in terms of aggressiveness, respectfulness, credibility, appropriateness, and differences in their approach to the situation if any.

They rated each of these features saying ‘yes’, ‘no’, and ‘maybe’. For the ease of interpretation of the data, the answers ‘maybe’ were considered as ‘yes’.

4.1.4.1 Acceptability Judgments for the EFL Learners Speaking to the Commiserating Teacher

The two judges listened to the EFL learners speaking to the commiserating teacher in order to evaluate the sociolinguistic acceptability of the students’ utterances. In order to identify whether or not the judges’ responds corresponded to each other, inter-rater reliability test was conducted for each of the feature. The results of the test are seen below.

Table 16. Inter-rater Reliability Test Results – Commiserating Teacher

<i>The feature</i>	<i>Inter-rater reliability</i>
Aggressiveness	,6937
Respectfulness	,6937
Credibility	,5220
Appropriateness	,8550
Difference in the Approach	,6412
Overall Assessment	,9426

Table 17 presents the percentages of the answers given by the two judges.

Table 17. The Responses of the Judges to the Acceptability Judgment Questionnaire – Commiserating Teacher

<i>The Feature</i>	<i>Judge 1</i>			<i>Judge 2</i>		
	Yes (%)	Maybe (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	Maybe (%)	No (%)
Different Approach	65	20	15	65	5	30
Appropriateness	35	15	50	55	10	35
Respectfulness	45	25	30	75	15	10
Aggressiveness	40	20	40	20	25	55
Credibility	20	45	35	45	25	30

The most striking point in the questionnaire was that both judges stated that their approach would be different from most of the students. The first judge said that his approach would be different from that of 85 % of the students, and the other judge stated that her approach would be different from 70 % of the students. Also, the first judge thought that only 50 % of the students' utterances were appropriate. Similarly, the second judge indicated that only 65 % of the students' utterance was proper. When they were asked to explain why they would have a different approach from that of the students, they indicated that that was because of the inappropriate approach of the students. The most common point raised was that the students were too direct in their complaints. Also, they stated that some of the students were critical of the teacher and accusatory by saying that the teacher was not right, and by not accepting responsibility for the low grade. They also found that some students had an abrupt beginning, and they were a bit pushy. One of the judges said he would ask more questions to the teacher. He also pointed out that he would not demand a solution saying 'You should make it higher.'

Another noteworthy result was regarding the respectfulness of the students. The first judge indicated that 70 % of the students were respectful. Similarly, the other judge thought that 90 % of the students could be considered respectful. Despite the difference in the percentage, the inter-rater reliability test indicated that the two judges were standardized.

A further significant result was concerning the aggressiveness of the students. The answers to the question whether or not the judges thought the students were aggressive or pushy, the judges' answers varied in percentage. While one of the judges tended to consider 60 % of the students aggressive, the other one thought 45 % of them were aggressive.

As far as credibility was concerned, one of the judges thought that 65 % of the students presented a credible case for obtaining their goals while the other one thought 70 % of them presented a credible case for obtaining their goals.

To summarize, the American English speakers' judgment of the EFL students' talk to a commiserating teacher about an undeserved mark seemed to suggest that the EFL students did not fully comply with the rules of the target language's sociolinguistic rules. Despite the fact that the EFL learners were thought to be respectful to a good extent (70 % - 90 %), they were thought to be quite aggressive as well (45 % - 60 %). Also, their responses were found to be inappropriate to a certain extent (35 % - 50 %). The most important result of the analysis was the judges' answers to question 5, which asked whether or not their approach would be different from the students they heard. The percentage of the

affirmative answers to this question was quite high (70 % -85 %). The judges stated that they would not be so pushy towards the teacher, and they would ask more questions. All of this suggests that the responses of the students were not very appropriate in sociolinguistic terms.

4.1.4.2 Acceptability Judgments for the EFL Learners Speaking to the Contradicting Teacher

The judges also listened to the EFL learners speaking to the contradicting teacher in order to evaluate the sociolinguistic acceptability of the students' utterances. In order to identify whether or not the judges' responds corresponded to each other, inter-rater reliability test was conducted for each of the feature. The results of the test are seen in table 18.

Table 18. Inter-rater Reliability Test Results – Commiserating Teacher

<i>The feature</i>	<i>Inter-rater reliability</i>
Aggressiveness	,6289
Respectfulness	,6163
Credibility	,7562
Appropriateness	,6646
Difference in the Approach	,6905
Overall Assessment	,8615

The percentages of the answers given by the judges can be seen in Table 19.

Table 19. The Responses of the Judges to the Acceptability Judgment Questionnaire – Contradicting Teacher

<i>The Feature</i>	<i>Judge 1</i>			<i>Judge 2</i>		
	Yes (%)	Maybe (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	Maybe (%)	No (%)
Appropriateness	50	30	20	80	10	10
Aggressiveness	20	10	70	10	20	70
Respectfulness	40	35	25	75	10	15
Different Approach	55	15	70	60	25	15
Credibility	15	40	45	10	25	65

The most significant answer was as regards appropriateness. The judges stated that most of the students' talk to the contradicting teacher was appropriate. While one of the judges found 90 % of the students' talk appropriate, the other one found 80 % of the students' talk appropriate.

Another significant result was that the judges believed that most of the students were not aggressive or pushy. Both of the judges stated that only 30 % of the students could be considered as aggressive. They thought 70 % of the students were not pushy or aggressive.

Similarly, most of the students were found to be respectful. One of the judges indicated that 85 % of the students were respectful, and the other judge stated that 75 % of them were respectful. Despite the slight difference in the percentages, the inter-reliability test indicated that the answers of the judges corresponded to each other.

In spite the above positive thoughts of the judges, they pointed out that their approach would still be different from that of some of the students. One of the judges said her approach would differ from 85 % of the students. Likewise, the other judge

replied that his attitude would be different from 70 % of the students. This difference in the percentages, however, did not have an affect on the inter-rater reliability (see Table 18). When asked to explain why they would have a different approach, they gave several causes. The most frequently stated reason was that the students were accusatory and critical. One of the judges said he would not say ‘ Your explanation isn’t good’, or ‘You’re wrong’. Another frequent reason was that the students were too direct. The judges stated that the students should ask more questions, and be more diplomatic. Also, they stated that the students were sometimes too pushy and demanding. One of the judges indicated that instead of demanding a solution he would say ‘Would you be willing to let me write it again’. Another point raised was that the students should take more responsibility for the low mark.

A final result was about the credibility of the cases presented by the students. One of the judges said that 55 % of the students presented a credible case for obtaining their aim. However, the other judge stated that only 35 % of them presented a credible case. As it can be seen in Table 18, this difference in the percentage, however, did not affect the inter-rater reliability.

To sum up, the sociolinguistic acceptability judgments of the American native speakers of English seemed to suggest that the Turkish EFL students speaking to a contradicting teacher were also found to be respectful to a great extent (75 % - 85 %). The judges also tended to feel that quite a lot of students presented a credible case for obtaining their goals. However, the judges indicated that their approach

would be different from 70 % -80 % of the students since they thought the students could be more respectful and less aggressive or pushy.

4.1.4.3 Comparison of the Acceptability Judgments of the American Judges for the Commiserating and Contradicting Teacher

In order to examine the similarities and difference between the acceptability judgments for the students speaking to the commiserating teacher and the contradicting teacher, each of the judges' answers to the questions in the questionnaire was compared. In order to do this, a paired samples t-test was conducted. The results of the test for the first judge can be seen in Table 20, and the results of the test for the second judge can be seen in Table 21.

Table 20. Comparison of the Acceptability Judgments for the Commiserating and Contradicting Teacher – Judge 1

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Aggressiveness	,2000	,6959	,1556	-,1257	,5257	1,285	19	0,214
Respectfulness	,2000	,6959	,1556	-,1257	,5257	1,285	19	0,214
Credibility	,0000	1,0761	,2406	-,5036	,5036	,000	19	1,000
Appropriateness	,0000	,7255	,1622	-,3395	,3395	,000	19	1,000
Different Approach	,1500	1,1821	,2643	-,4032	,7032	0,567	19	0,577

Table 21. Comparison of the Acceptability Judgments for the Commiserating and Contradicting Teacher – Judge 2

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Aggressiveness	,3000	1,1286	,2524	-,8282	,2282	1,189	19	,249
Respectfulness	,3500	,9881	,2209	-,8124	,1124	1,584	19	,130
Credibility	,2500	1,0699	,2392	-,2507	,7507	1,045	19	,309
Appropriateness	-5,E-02	,9455	,2112	-,4920	,3920	-,237	19	,815
Different Approach	- ,1500	,5871	,1313	-,4248	,1248	1,143	19	,267

According to Table 16 and 17, there were no statistically significant differences between any of the components in the two data sets since $p > 0.05$ in all the cases. That is, the judges had similar ideas about each component in the two data sets. To illustrate, the first judge believed that both in the presence of the commiserating teacher and the contradicting teacher, similar number of students were aggressive ($p = ,214 > 0.05$). Similarly, the second judge thought that similar number of students presented a credible case for obtaining their goals ($p = ,309 > 0.05$). This suggests that the two judges felt that the manners of the Turkish EFL students did not change significantly when talking to a teacher who was commiserating or contradicting. Despite this, the judges made the remark that they felt the students were relatively more assertive towards the commiserating teacher.

An important point raised by the judges was that they felt that a lot of the students were too direct, pushy, demanding, and unwilling to accept responsibility. The statistical analysis done in order to identify positive and negative transfer had revealed that the students made negative transfer in the use of the component 'demand', which was present in the Turkish baseline data and the interlanguage data. In this sense, the judges' evaluation, which said the students were demanding and pushy, matched the statistical analysis. The TNSs and the EFL students made use of the component 'request' less frequently than the ENSs, which was considered as negative transfer. The judges stated that their approach would be different from the majority of the students, and the students should have been more diplomatic and ask more questions in presence of both commiserating and contradicting teachers. This answer of the judges also matched the statistical findings.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.0 Presentation

In this chapter, first, the summary of the study will be given. Then, implications of the study for ELT will be discussed. Finally, some suggestions will be provided for future research.

5.1 Summary

This descriptive study focused on the Turkish EFL learners' production of complaint speech act set speaking to a commiserating and a contradicting teacher. In order to identify any possible features unique to the learners' interlanguage, positive and/or negative pragmatic transfer made by the students, first of all the complaint speech act set in Turkish and English languages was studied. Second, the complaint speech act set was examined in the learners' interlanguage. For this purpose, two sets of role-play were adopted. The students were given enough time to read the role-play situation and think over what they would say to the teacher. They were not made aware of the type of the teacher (commiserating or contradicting) they were to speak to. When they were ready, they went to the teacher's office and did the role-play. All the role-plays were audio taped and transcribed in order to examine the components

of the complaint speech act set produced by the TNSs, the ENSs, and the EFL learners. The identified components were analyzed and interpreted, using a coding scheme from a previous study in the literature (Murphy & Neu, 1996). The comparison between the data sets were done and analyzed through SPSS. In addition, two American judges evaluated the acceptability of the EFL learners' talk to the commiserating and contradicting teacher. Their responses were analyzed using SPSS, too.

Turkish and English Baseline Data

The analysis of the Turkish baseline data showed that when in the position of expressing disapproval to a teacher about a grade, both the TNSs and the ENSs produced a complaint speech act set, regardless of the attitude of the teacher. However, we found that 23,08 % of the TNSs and 20 % of the ENSs speaking to the commiserating teacher produced the speech act of criticism either on its own or together with a complaint. Similarly, 41,67 % of the TNSs and 20 % of the ENSs speaking to the contradicting teacher employed a criticism. This finding was contrary to the findings of Murphy and Neu's (1996) study, which revealed that English native speakers did not produce the speech act of criticism when complaining to a professor. Note that their study did not have students interacting with an interlocutor. Therefore, the finding of the presents study could be attributed to the interaction with the teacher. Akıncı (1999) also found that presence or absence of the person complained to had an effect on the severity of the complaint.

Another similarity we found between the two native languages was that the frequency of the components in the complaint speech act set and the topics of these components were similar to each other. To illustrate, the students speaking to the contradicting teacher in both groups employed the components ‘complaint’, ‘request’, and ‘criticism’ with the same frequencies. They also employed the components ‘justification’ and ‘explanation of purpose’ with a very high frequency.

A major difference was that while all the ENSs speaking to the commiserating and contradicting teacher made use of ‘request’ as a solution to the problem, only 41,67 % of the TNSs speaking to contradicting teacher, and 76,92 % of the TNSs speaking to the commiserating teacher opted for a request. The relatively higher frequency of the speech act of request in the commiserating teacher data set could be because of the attitude of the teacher. The fact that the Turkish native speaker, in general, could be more intimidated by a contradicting teacher might have had an effect on the use of the component request with lower frequency.

The finding that all ENSs produced request as the candidate solution was parallel to what Murphy and Neu (1996) found. DeCapua (cited in McKay & Hornberger, 1996) had found that German native speaker employed both demand and request as a candidate solution, which is parallel to the findings of this present study.

We found that the component ‘demand’ in the English baseline data was absent. This is a further difference from the Turkish data. 23,08 % of the TNSs speaking to the commiserating teacher and 33,33 % of the TNSs speaking to the

contradicting teacher produced a demand as the candidate solution, while none of the ENSs produced it.

In short, our study revealed that Turkish native speakers also produced demand and request for repair.

Interlanguage Data

The analyses of the IL data revealed the presence of a complaint speech act set when in the position of expressing disapproval about a grade to a commiserating and/or a contradicting teacher.

We found the use of ‘complaint’ by the EFL learners speaking to the non-commiserating teacher with a comparatively lower frequency (80 %) as apposed to the students speaking to the commiserating teacher (100 %). This, again, could be related to the way the student might have felt with such a teacher.⁴ Seeing that the teacher was not welcoming, they might have opted out.

Most of the components and the topic of these components in the two data sets were comparable. For instance, ‘justification’ and ‘explanation of purpose’ were made use of with a high frequency by both the students speaking to the commiserating teacher and the students speaking to the contradicting teacher.

⁴ After the role-plays, some students made the remark that they wanted to leave the room as soon as possible to escape the non-commiserating teacher. This attitude of the students might have stopped them from complaining to the teacher.

The students who talked to the commiserating teacher and those who talked to the contradicting teacher produced the component ‘demand’ as a solution to their problems, which was also present in the Turkish baseline data collected from the role-play done with the contradicting teacher, but absent in the English data sets. Murphy and Neu (1996) also found that Korean non-native speakers of English tended to make use of the component ‘demand’ as a solution to the perceived problem.

We found the speech act of request being used with a low frequency (45 %) in the contradicting teacher data set compared to that in the commiserating data set (90 %). 30 % of those speaking to the contradicting teacher avoided any kind of candidate solution whereas all the students who spoke to the commiserating teacher came up with a solution. This might be related to the fact that the Turkish EFL learners might feel unsettled in presence of a contradicting teacher.⁵

Pragmatic Transfer

The interlanguage data was compared to the target language and the L1 of the students in order to find out any negative and/or positive transfer, and any features that were unique to the interlanguage. It was considered that when there was no statistically significant difference between the L1, the target language and the interlanguage, positive transfer occurred. If there were any statistically significant

⁵ After the role-plays, when asked how they felt, some students said they felt uneasy, and they would not have gone and spoken to such a non-commiserating teacher if they had known it beforehand.

differences between the interlanguage, the target language and the L1, negative transfer occurred. In case of any data that did not fit in the L1 or the target language, it was considered that that was unique to the interlanguage.

To date, the studies (e.g. Bergman & Kasper, 1992; Erçetin, 1995), which actually did not study the attitude of the interlocutors, have found that the kind of pragmatic transfer made by EFL learners was negative. However, in this study both positive and negative transfer were found in the commiserating and contradicting data sets. Actually, most of the transfer was positive.

The first positive transfer was made from Turkish to the interlanguage using the components ‘explanation of purpose’, ‘complaint’, and ‘justification’. The component ‘candidate solution: request’ in the commiserating data set was also subject to positive transfer.

As for negative transfer, the most significant one was that the students in both groups transferred the act of demand from Turkish to their interlanguage. This was because the component ‘demand’ as the candidate solution was present only in TNSs and the interlanguage data sets. The ENSs did not make use of the speech act of demand in their complaint strategy set at all.

There was also negative transfer about the use of ‘candidate solution: request’, which was used with much lower frequency by the TNSs and the Turkish EFL learners compared to the ENSs.

Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper and Ross (1996) studied pragmatic transfer regarding the speech act of apologies produced by Japanese learners of English, and found that positive transfer had a pervasive effect while negative transfer was infrequently at work in the learners' apology performance. This finding is parallel to the findings of the current study.

Our findings also revealed that besides pragmatic transfer, there was an instance of deviation from TL norms even when norms of L1 and TL were parallel. To be more precise, the learners avoided producing a criticism regardless of the attitude of the teacher. This manner of the learners was different from that of the TNSs and ENSs, who produced criticism with a certain frequency. The avoidance of criticism by the interlanguage speakers could be related to perceived social distance between the EFL learners and a teacher who was a foreigner. Another possible explanation might be that learners follow their own IL rules, rather than relying on transfer all the time. This finding of the study was also noted in the research conducted by Bonikowska (1988) who studied complaints and the opting-out choice, and found that one reason for opting out could be contextual factors such as the relationship of the speaker and the hearer.

Native Speakers' Acceptability Judgments

We had two judges who evaluated the interlanguage speakers in terms of aggressiveness, respectfulness, credibility, and appropriateness. They were also asked whether or not their approach would be different from that of the EFL learners.

Their responses about both of the groups seemed to match each other. For instance, the first judge stated that a similar number of students speaking to the commiserating and the contradicting teacher presented a credible case (65 % - 55 %). In the same way, the second judge stated that similar number of students in both groups were respectful (90 % - 85 %).

The statistical analysis of the judges' answers to our questionnaire matched the analysis of the interlanguage data. Recall that we had found that the students' use of the component 'demand' was subject to negative transfer from L1 to the interlanguage. The judges also found the students demanding.

5.2 Implications for ELT

This study offers some implications for the improvement of pragmatic competence in ELT settings.

This study has provided data on the pragmatic competence of Turkish learners concerning complaints. Owing to the fact that many learners may not know the cultural norms of the language they are learning, they might have difficulty in learning and performing speech acts in the target language, and tend to transfer the rules of their L1 to the target language. This particular study showed that this was true for the Turkish EFL learners, who transferred certain components of the complaint speech act set in their L1 to their interlanguage.

Note again that the American judges evaluated the Turkish EFL learners' performance in the presence of a commiserating and contradicting teacher as "partially successful". They indicated that their approach would be different from the majority of the learners, and gave causes for this. Therefore, it can be suggested that speech acts need to be taught to EFL learners, and research (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991; Atay, D, 1996) has revealed that classroom instruction on speech acts can help learners to improve their performance of speech acts and therefore their interactions with native speakers. Even though speech acts are taught in some second language classrooms, most materials have been written based on the intuitions of the textbook writer, which could sometimes be unreliable. Therefore, more authentic language should be used in teaching speech acts. The data gathered in this study can help material developers base their future materials to teach the speech act of complaint in presence of a commiserating and contradicting teacher. In this way, what their learners are learning will be more authentic in terms of real language and real interactions with native speakers.

We suggest that if native and/or non-native teachers of English resort to the data gathered from the native speakers of English in this study, they can become more aware of the sociocultural use of the language that they are teaching, and take the sociolinguistic rules of the language into consideration when they are teaching. This is because even native speakers of English may not be completely aware of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic rules of their language, and fail to answer the questions about the use of certain speech acts asked by their learners.

The data gathered from the Turkish baseline data can help language teachers and learners become more aware of the ways in which Turkish native speakers realize the face-threatening act of complaint in their own language. And if native teachers of English are also aware of the sociolinguistic applications of their Turkish learners, they can be more tolerant towards their learners when they fail to communicate appropriately.

When learning a certain speech act, we suggest that EFL learners should be made aware of the ways they realize this act in their own language. They should also be presented with the ways native speakers of English realize it. By comparing the use of the act in the two languages, they can be helped to avoid any probable negative transfer. Students also need to become aware of the preferred sociolinguistic forms in variety of contexts, and consider the similarities and differences carefully, which could especially be important in contexts of complaining to a teacher of a higher status.

Cohen (1996: 413) suggests the following steps to teach speech acts.

1. Diagnose the students' level of awareness of speech acts in general and of the particular speech act to be taught, which could be done through acceptability ratings, discourse completion tasks, or role-plays.

2. Use model dialogues, which are short and natural sounding, to present students with examples of the speech act in use. The students listen and identify the speech act(s) of concern. After this, they are given the dialogues without the information concerning the particular situation, and they guess whether the people

speaking know each other, if they are of the same age, and whether the matter of concern constituted a serious offense. In this way, they can become aware of the sociocultural factors that affect speech acts.

3. Have students evaluate the situation. This reinforces the learners' awareness of the factors affecting the choice of semantic formulas. Give students a set of complaint situations. Ask them to decide whether the violation requiring the complaint is mild or severe, whether the complainer needs to intensify the complaint, whether the hearer is likely to provide a remedy to the complaint, and whether a certain situation-specific strategy is needed.

4. Employ role-plays. Supply the learners with ample information about the interlocutors who are going to interact in the conversation and about the situation. The students may receive a card or see a video clip of a situation in which one role is that of a neighbor who is having a party and playing loud music late at night and the other is that of the person in an adjacent apartment who needs to get to sleep because she or he must take an important exam the next morning.

5. Hold feedback and discussion sessions. The students need to talk about their perceptions, expectations, and awareness of similarities and differences between speech act behavior in the target language and in their first culture. Further discussion will help learners become more aware of speech act behavior and help them recognize areas of negative transfer where communication failure may occur.

5.3 Implications for Further Research

In order to verify the findings of this study and generalize these findings, this research can be replicated by carrying out studies in different social settings such as a family, a dormitory, and an office.

One of the limitations of the study was that gender difference of the respondents was not taken into consideration. Future studies can replicate this study by studying the differences in the attitude of different sexes.

Another limitation of the study lied in the data-collection method, which was namely role-plays. If possible, future researchers can investigate the speech act of complaint produced in presence of a commiserating and contradicting teacher using naturally occurring data.

In this study a limited number of ENSs and TNSs was used. Further research should investigate the speech act of complaint by including more native speakers. Furthermore, in this study the nationality of the English native speakers was not taken into consideration. The future research should replicate this study by including respondents from the same nationality.

This study put the students into an asymmetrical status relationship with a teacher. Further research should investigate if there are differences in complaints in symmetrical status relationships such as a student talking to a student.

The number of the judges was another limitation of the study. Future study can employ more native speaker judges in assessing the sociolinguistic acceptability of interlanguage speakers.

This study did not take the linguistic aspects of the complaint speech act set. Future studies should investigate the linguistic elements of the set and compare interlanguage elements to that of L1 and L2. Such a study would help understand linguistic strengths and weaknesses that the students have in their interlanguage. In this way, native speakers could be more tolerant to learners' language misuse, and EFL teachers can adjust their teaching accordingly.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ROLE-PLAY SITUATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Role-Play Situation in English

Instructions

Read the situation below carefully. You have got 3 minutes to think about what you would say to your teacher. When you are ready, go to her office and tell her what you want to say.

Your teacher has handed your composition homework back to you. However, you are surprised at your grade, you feel that the mark that you got is too low, and you do not deserve this low mark. You think the reason for this is that the things you wrote are different from your teacher's personal beliefs. You believe that the content and the grammar of your paper are fine. You are particularly upset because you spent a lot of time writing this composition, and actually you had many sleepless nights perfecting the composition. You decide you must speak to her about this. So, after class, you go to the teacher during office hours and say:

Role-Play Situation in Turkish

Instructions

Aşağıdaki durumu dikkatlice okuyun. Öğretmeninize ne söyleyeceğinize karar vermek için 3 dakikanız var. Hazır olduğunuzda öğretmeninizin ofisine gidip söylemek istediklerinizi söyleyin.

Hocanız kompozisyon ödevinizi size geri verdi. Ama siz notunuza çok şaşıyorsunuz, çünkü hiç de hak etmediğiniz kadar düşük bir not aldığınıza inanıyorsunuz. Bunun sebebinin, hocanızın düşüncelerinden farklı şeyler yazmanız olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz. Oysa, kompozisyonunuzun içerik ve dil bilgisinin iyi olduğuna inanıyorsunuz. Bu ödev için çok fazla hazırlık yaptığınız ve uykusuz geceler geçirdiğiniz için de bu duruma gerçekten üzülüyorsunuz. Bu konuyla ilgili olarak hocanızla konuşmaya karar veriyorsunuz ve ofis saatinde hocanızın yanına gidiyorsunuz. Hocanıza ne dersiniz?

APPENDIX B

ROLE-PLAY SITUATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Role-Play Situation in English for the Commiserating Teacher

Instructions

Read the situation below carefully. Speak to your student when he/she comes in your office.

You have handed back your students' compositions. However, one of your students is surprised at his/her grade, and he/she feels that the mark he/she got is too low, and he/she does not deserve this low mark. He/she thinks that the reason for this is that the things he/she wrote are different from your personal beliefs. He/she believes that the content and the grammar of his/her paper are fine. He/she is particularly upset because he/she spent a lot of time writing this composition, and actually he/she spent many sleepless nights perfecting the composition. He/she decides to speak to you during your office hour.

In order to adopt the role of a commiserating teacher, you can do the following:

- You can express appreciation. Some things that you can say are:
 - *I can tell that you put a lot of work into this assignment.*
 - *I'm glad that you came to talk to me about your paper.*
 - *I realize that this grade is disappointing to you.*

- You can ask for elaboration on his/her complaint, and a solution. Some things that you can say are:
 - *Why do you think so?*
 - *Can you explain what you mean?*
 - *What can I do for you?*
- You can confirm the validity of the complaint. Some things that you can say are:
 - *I see your point.*
 - *I think I should have read it more carefully*
- You can provide signals such as eye contact, head nods, smiles, and body alignment, or make noises like “*umhmm*,” “*uhhuh*,” “*yeh*,” “*yerright*” to encourage the student to continue talking.
- You can finish your student’s sentence.

Role-Play Situation in English for the Contradicting Teacher

Instructions

Read the situation below carefully. Speak to your student when he/she comes in your office.

You have handed back your students' compositions. However, one of your students is surprised at his/her grade, and he/she feels that the mark he/she got is too low, and he/she does not deserve this low mark. He/she thinks that the reason for this is that the things he/she wrote are different from your personal beliefs. He/she believes that the content and the grammar of his/her paper are fine. He/she is particularly upset because he/she spent a lot of time writing this composition, and actually he/she spent many sleepless nights perfecting the composition. He/she decides to speak to you during your office hour.

In order to adopt the role of a contradicting teacher, you can do the following:

- You can disapprove of the complaint. Some of the things you can say are:
 - *I don't agree with you.*
 - *I think you've missed my point.*
 - *You think this is unfair!*
 - *What kind of grade were you expecting for this!*
- You can provide defense for the complaint. Some of the things you can say are:
 - *I always read my students' papers very carefully.*

- *I gave the grade that this paper deserved.*
 - *My opinion hasn't got anything to do with it.*
 - *There is nothing I can do. This is your responsibility.*
 - *You are blowing this all out of proportion.*
- You can avoid giving response to the student. Some of the things you can say are:
 - *Your grade won't make difference in your overall grade.*
 - *What did you think was the most important point of today's lecture.*
 - *I don't have time to talk about it.*
- You can provide insufficient or discouraging backchanneling signals. Some of the things you can say are:
 - *Really!*
 - *Oh!*

Role-Play Situation in Turkish for the Commiserating Teacher

Instructions

Aşağıdaki durumu dikkatlice okuyun. Öğrenciniz ofisinize geldiğinde onunla konuşun.

Öğrencilerinize kompozisyonlarını geri verdiniz. Ancak öğrencilerden biri notuna çok şaşıyor. Notunun çok düşük olduğunu ve bunu hak etmediğini düşünüyor. Düşük notun sebebinin yazdığı şeylerin sizin kişisel görüşlerinden farklı olduğuna inanıyor. Ona göre içerik ve dil bilgisi ilgili bir problem bulunmamaktadır. Bu kompozisyonu yazmak için çok zaman harcadığı ve uykusuz geceler geçirdiği için de özellikle üzgün. Ofis saatinizde sizinle konuşmaya karar veriyor.

Destekleyici öğretmene dair rolünüzü uygularken aşağıdakilerden faydalanabilirsiniz:

- Öğrencinizi ve söylediklerini anlayışla karşıladığınızı hissettirebilirsiniz.
 - *Düşüncelerini açıkça söylediğin için teşekkür ederim.*
 - *Ödev için o kadar çok mu çalıştım?*
 - *Sanırım bu not seni oldukça üzmüş.*
 - *Bu not seni çok mu hayal kırıklığına uğrattı.*
 - *Nasıl hissettiğini anlıyorum.*
 - *Anladım.*
- Öğrencinizden konuyu biraz daha açıklamasını isteyebilir ve nasıl bir çözüm istediğini öğrenebilirsiniz.

- *Niçin böyle düşünüyorsun?*
- *Ne demek istediğini biraz açarmısın?*
- *Ne yapmamı istiyorsun?*
- *Ne yapabilirim?*
- Öğrencinizin gözlerinin içine bakarak, başınızı olumlu anlamda sallayıp gülerek ve “*hum hum*”, “*tabii*”, “*öylemi*”, “*evet*” gibi kelimeler kullanarak onun konuşmaya devam etmesini sağlayabilirsiniz.
- Öğrencinizin cümlesini bitirebilirsiniz.

Role-Play Situation in Turkish for the Contradicting Teacher

Instructions

Aşağıdaki durumu dikkatlice okuyun. Öğrenciniz ofisinize geldiğinde onunla konuşun.

Öğrencilerinize kompozisyonlarını geri verdiniz. Ancak öğrencilerden biri notuna çok şaşırıyor. Notunun çok düşük olduğunu ve bunu hak etmediğini düşünüyor. Düşük notun sebebinin yazdığı şeylerin sizin kişisel inançlarınızdan farklı olduğuna inanıyor. Ona göre içerik ve dil bilgisinde bir problem bulunmamaktadır. Bu kompozisyonu yazmak için çok zaman harcadığı ve uykusuz geceler geçirdiği için de özellikle üzgün. Ofis saatinizde sizinle konuşmaya karar veriyor.

Ters tutum takınan öğretmene dair rolünüzü uygularken aşağıdakilerden faydalanabilirsiniz:

- Şikayeti onaylamayabilirsiniz. Şunları söyleyebilirsiniz.
 - *Bu konuda tartışılacak bir şey yok.*
 - *Ben gereken notu verdiğime inanıyorum.*
- Şikayete karşı savunmada bulunabilirsiniz. Şunları söyleyebilirsiniz.
 - *Notunu bir kritere göre verdim.*
 - *Hak ettiğini verdim.*
 - *Benim verdiğim notu nasıl yargılersin.*
 - *Ben öğrencilerimin kağıtlarını her zaman objektif okurum.*

- *Kağıtları farklı hocalar da okuyor.*
- Öğrenciye cevap vermekten kaçınabilirsiniz.
 - *Bunu tartışmam bile.*
 - *“Pek konuşacak zamanım yok.*
 - *Bir sürü okumam gereken kağıt var. Her kağıda bu kadar zaman ayırırsam...*
 - *Verilen not değişmez*
- Göz temasından kaçınabilir, suratınızı asabilir, olumsuz anlamda başınızı sallayabilir veya yine olumsuz anlamda “hmmm,” “ya,” “bak bak,” “hadi ya,” gibi ifadelerle öğrencinizi yıldırabilirsiniz. Hatta başka şeylerle ilgilenerek ya da sürekli saatinize bakarak onu dinlemek istemediğinizi ima edebilirsiniz.

APPENDIX C

THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON NATIVE SPEAKERS' ACCEPTABILITY

JUDGMENTS

Note: Please judge only the content of the response, not the grammar or tone. Remember to answer in the context of the role situation.	YES	NO	MAYBE
1- Is the student aggressive (pushy)?			
2- Is the student respectful?			
3- Does the student present a credible case for obtaining his goal?			
4- Is the student's talk appropriate for the situation?			
5- If you were the student in this situation, would your approach be different from the student you have just heard?			

Please explain your answer to question 5. Continue on the reverse side if extra room is needed.

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