
Realization of Speech Act of Permission by Kurdish EFL University Students

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: August 12, 2020

Accepted: September 15, 2020

Volume: 1

Issue: 1

DOI:

KEYWORDS

Pragmatic competence, EFL learners, Pragma linguistics, Speech acts, Sociopragmatics.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine Kurdish EFL university students' development of L2 pragmatic competence by investigating their performance of the speech acts of permission. The methodology of this study was a combined research method, which comprises a quantitative and a qualitative method (mixed method). Total of 97 participants were involved in this research study. 83 (33 males and 50 females) were from four state universities and one private university in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and 14 were native speakers of English. A discourse completion test (DCT) was used to elicit the required data from participants. The study used convenience sampling for the participants because both native and non-native participants were selected on the basis of their availability. The data were coded and analysed quantitatively in terms of overall strategy use and strategy patterns. The findings revealed that there were differences in the frequency and percentages of strategies and semantic formulae in performing the speech act. KEFLUS tended to use more direct and explicit. There were more politeness and implicitness in NSE' behaviours in performing the speech act, which might have resulted from the lack of pragmatic competence of KEFLUS.

1. Introduction

The English language is regarded as a necessary tool for communication universally. With the growing advance in technology, the English language, particularly from the perspective of its functional aspects, has gained more attention and importance than ever. After the emergence of the communicative approaches to second or foreign language teaching, the term, pragmatic competence has gained more attention and importance. The emphasis has shifted from a structural aspect of language to a communicative one, which stresses the appropriate use of language in different discourse contexts (Thomas, 1983).

Being successful in fulfilling one's wishes depends on communicative competence to some degree. Moreover, insufficient competence in communication can sometimes lead to many social problems in society. Traditionally, teaching and learning of grammatical rules are the focus of language learning. Most learners spend time and effort in acquiring the structures and patterns of a language and neglect the social aspect of language learning. Dornyei and Thurell (1991) claim that traditionally the goal of language learning in classrooms is to develop linguistic competence. Consequently, after learning vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation for a long time, language learners still face challenges in communicating efficiently (Cohen 1996). Linguistic or grammatical competence is believed to be a prerequisite for acquiring a second or foreign language for several decades, but after the emergence of communicative approaches, the focus has changed and as a result, functional aspects are prioritized (Thomas, 1983). Furthermore, communicative competence and the use of appropriate language in a certain social situation has become the main aim of most second language (L2) learning (Hymes, 1972). On many occasions, learners who have mastered the language rules find it very difficult to express themselves as much as they want, when they engage in an authentic communication in different social contexts.

Communicative competence as the main goal of any second or foreign language learning is required more than ever today. Language learners need to improve all aspects of communicative competence as a condition for effective and successful communication in the target language. Pragmatic competence is considered an important and crucial construct of communicative competence. Numerous studies have assured that language competence does not only mean mastering grammar and vocabulary (Krasner, 1999). Language is more than structure and words. Therefore, to be able to communicate successfully and effectively,

language users need to focus on grammatical or linguistic competence (grammar, pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, etc.) as well as communicative or pragmatic competence.

English language has gained much attention in nearly last two decades in the current curricula of education system in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Therefore, it is worth searching for what extent Kurdish EFL undergraduate students (KEFLUS) are able to use English appropriately in diverse social situations and contexts and the overall strategies and strategy patterns employed by them to perform the speech acts. It is taught as one of the main subjects with the minimum of five periods per week from the early stage of school, from the first grade to the twelfth grade, and then to the university level. Moreover, English is the only compulsory foreign language course taught one to two hours per week for the first-year university and college students. Although the curriculum is based on communicative approaches (communicative language teaching and task based learning), students display challenges in communication.

English language is becoming more important as a universal means of communication, particularly after the recent advances in technology that have brought people of different cultures and countries closer to one another (Alzebaree & Yavuz, 2017). English is an international Language and one of the five most widely spoken in the world today (Mckay, 2002). Approximately, 427 million people are considered as native speakers of English (Crystal, 1997). It is estimated that around two billion people speak English as a first, second and foreign language (Crystal, 2008). That is to say an approximate 30 % of the world's population speak English and the number is increasing. So, people belonging to various culture and countries all over the world use English as means of communication and exchanging ideas and cultures with one another. It is estimated that about 80 % of English speakers are non-native speakers (Crystal, 2003). English has great influence in different fields and disciplines worldwide. To a large extent language used to store electronic information in the world to write is English. English has become the dominant language in almost all international forums and meetings and in United Nations institutions. Knowledge of English is being a precondition to pursue a study or get a suitable occupation in many countries.

2. Literature Review

The pragmatics has attracted attention in language learning field recently. There are wide investigation and studies in speech acts in interlanguage pragmatics discipline. Speech acts are a reflection of the essential cultural principles and social rules of the language. So, the lack of the cultural, social, and pragmatic context and norms in communication may result in misunderstandings. Hence, the importance of the speech acts realization and production comes in the first and second language. An effective communication does not mean only mastering the linguistic structures, but also using them appropriately in diverse social situations (Hinkel, 1999). Language is used as a means of communication in society, which restricts people's language, and communication (Mey, 2001). Social aspects have gained more attention in language learning than ever today. Pragmatics has appeared for more than three decades as a branch of linguistics in language learning and studying.

Pragmatic competence means the ability to use the linguistic forms and vocabulary of a certain language in an appropriate way in different situations. This ability grows spontaneously in L1, while it must be learned in L2, L3, etc. Multilingualism is becoming an important part of cultural development. It is more widespread (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Safont Jordà, 2011; Stavans & Hoffmann, 2015) due to globalization and mobility, the pragmatic competence in both written and spoken modalities of the languages becomes more essential.

Although much is known about the progresses in the more traditional aspects of phonology, morphology, lexicology, syntax and even semantics, very little is discovered about the advances in pragmatic forms of language practice. Competency in language requires knowledge of syntax, morphology and phonology forms of that language as well as how to apply these forms in a certain social situation. There are many definitions of pragmatics (El-Okda, 2011). Pragmatics is defined as a subfield of linguistics dealing with language use in a social context. It centers on how meaning is shaped and interpreted in a social situation. It involves the relationship between language structures and the users of these structures. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as a study of

meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It is the study of invisible meaning or interpreting what is meant by what is said. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1975) claims that the main reason behind pragmatics is to scrutinize how language users perform linguistic acts, like, requests, apologies, orders, advice, etc. Being able to communicate language indicates both competence in the language, and implementing competence (Widdowson 1983; Candlin 1986). Levinson (1983) argues that the study of pragmatics has traditionally been confined to the following five aspects: deixis, conversational implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and conversational structure. Nevertheless, the research in second language pragmatics, often called interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), emphasizes primarily on the study of speech acts, conversational structure and conversational implicature. These studies are investigated by comparing between different cultures and languages pragmatics (cross-cultural pragmatics) and how learners develop and acquire pragmatics (Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008). Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) split pragmatics into two elements: Pragma linguistics and Sociopragmatics. Soler & Martínez-Flor (2008) claim that these two elements have taken into account in the language learning discipline. However, the former element has been studied and searched much more than the latter in the ILP field. Kasper (1996) defines Interlanguage pragmatics as “the study of nonnative speakers’ use and acquisition of L2 pragmatics knowledge” (p. 145).

In the present time, studies in interlanguage pragmatics have increased, focusing mostly on second language use, i.e. meaning or function rather than on pragmatic development. The use and acquisition of second language by nonnative speakers is known Interlanguage pragmatics (Kasper, 1989). As a field in second language acquisition, pragmatics is occasionally called as interlanguage pragmatics. ILP concerns with the study of non-native speakers’ acquisition, comprehension and production of pragmatics. Richards et. al, (1985) defines interlanguage as the production of a kind of language by second and foreign language learners during the language learning process. Pragmatics has not been searched widely in second language field compared to pragmatics at large. The speech act has been the central domain of study within interlanguage pragmatics (Trosborg, 2010).

No doubt that human beings are pragmatically competent. People utilize language appropriately in tangible situations, utter relevant arguments, act properly and are considered a competent communicator. Pragmatic competence is what Descartes (1637, p. 6) called ‘le Bon Sens’: ‘Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed.’ Yes, this sense is equally distributed but differently manifested in different languages, which is affirmed by Gumperz and Gumperz (2005) that there is no difference between monolingual people and multilingual people in the aim of language, but in how they do what they do. Pragmatic competence has been claimed as “the most difficult aspect of language to master in learning a second language” (Blum-Kulka & Sheffer, 1993, p. 219)

Pragmatic competence, known as being able to communicate properly in a social situation and as a key aspect in communicative competence, has been investigated widely in various fields, like linguistics, applied linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, communication research, and cross-cultural studies (Taguchi, 2009). Pragmatic competence in second language's (L2) study means ability of producing and comprehending L2 utterances (e.g., Rose and Kasper 2001). Pragmatic competence is defined as “the knowledge that influences and constrains speakers’ choices regarding use of language in socially appropriate ways” (LoCastro, 2012, p. 307). Pragmatic competence needs knowledge of each of the Pragma linguistics, how to make speech acts, like apology, complaint, etc. in a certain language, and Sociopragmatics, knowledge about how to use such speech acts in appropriate situations.

Social distance and social power, rights and obligations, and the degree of imposition involved in particular communicative acts vary greatly from one community to another (e.g., Rose and Kasper 2001). Bilingualists and Multilingualists need to be careful of their utterances. Bialystok (1993) argued that bilingual adults make pragmatic errors occur not only because of the lack knowledge of forms and structures, or inadequate vocabulary, but because they choose improperly. The interaction of pragma linguistic aspects and sociopragmatic elements is significant in intercultural communication where the participants have usually had more access to pragma linguistics than to sociopragmatics, particularly if the target language acquisition occurs in the classroom. This presumes that L2 learners frequently have more pragma linguistics competence than sociopragmatics (Kecskes, 2014). Linguistic ability is an important element. There has been a debate that being grammatically proficient does not necessarily mean pragmatically competent. Structural ability is quite widespread. Then in another research, Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) claimed

that there is no connection between grammatical competence and pragmatic competence, although a deficiency of former in a certain place may impact the affectivity of an utterance. Barron (2003) claims that grammatical competence is interconnected with pragmatic competence and the former is a requirement for the latter.

Pragmatic competence is developed via socialization in the given speech community. Linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge are interrelated with one another. Ochs (1996: 407) states “the acquisition of language and the acquisition of social and cultural competence are not developmentally independent processes, nor is one process a developmental prerequisite of the other. Rather, the two processes are intertwined from the moment a human being enters society.”

Pragmatic progress via language socialization in first language (L1) context relies to a large extent on the kind of immersion in communications. L1 language and social development are interconnected. L1 people can access directly to the socio-cultural environment that forms their norms, values, conventions, and beliefs. In contrast, L2 learners are often restricted to target socio-cultural context even if they reside in the target settings, they may not have direct contact with socio-cultural environment for one reason or another. In L2 learning, the focus is more on the grammatical skills than on socio-cultural aspects. (Keckes, 2014).

Pragmatic competence has gained importance in second language acquisition as the focus has switched from non-communicative approaches that emphasizes on the grammar and structure (form) to communicative approaches that prioritize functional aspects (meaning) (Trosborg, 1987)

The study of pragmatics in second language, known as interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), emphasizes primarily on the study of speech acts, conversational structure and conversational implicature. Studies on pragmatic competence suggest that speech acts performance in L2 is a challenging duty for L2 learners due to the variance between the L1 culture and the target language culture (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Consequently, misunderstanding and miscommunications occasionally occur and may offend native speakers sometimes (Boxer & Pickering, 1995).

Competence has taken several forms in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature, each of which concentrates on a certain aspect. A knowledge of how, when and where to use what to whom is known as pragmatic knowledge or competence (Hymes, 1972).

Levinson (1983) points out that speech act theory has triggered. A speech act is regarded as the functional aspect of language. The speech act is first developed by Austin (1975) who states that speakers not only say things, but also do things with their words. While presenting the speech act theory, Austin (1962) differentiates between the two main speech acts: constative and performative utterances. The former are statements that can be judged in terms of truth, used to describe an event, process or state of affairs. While the latter are used to do something, or perform an action, they are either happy (felicitous) or unhappy (infelicitous) (needs suitable location). The two above mentioned types of speech results in more language analysis. Austin (ibid), in his theory of speech acts, argues that, when communicating, an utterance has three types of meaning. The first category is the propositional or locutionary meaning (the actual words of an utterance or production of a meaningful linguistic expression) specifically, dictionary or literal meaning. The locutionary meaning in the example “It is hot in here” is to state or describe a fact. A well- structured utterance is not produced purposelessly. This is the second type of meaning or illocutionary act (the force or purpose assigned to an utterance), precisely, the intended or hidden meaning. The illocutionary meaning of “It is hot in here” may mean more than a statement of a condition. It may be a request to open a window, turn on air conditioner, etc. It could be a complaint if the utterance is reiterated. Finally, the third kind of meaning is perlocutionary. It is the effect of speech act on the hearer (Hornberger, 1996). According to Austin (1962), speech act and illocutionary act are similar in meaning. Moreover, the meaning of speech act, illocutionary act, illocutionary force, pragmatic force or just force, all are alike.

Speech acts, produced by an utterance, are the implicit actions like, request, warn, command, etc. Distinguishing the speech act is very significant and vital as it is the speech act that to a certain degree tells us the intention behind what is uttered. Unless we

recognize the intended meaning produced by some speech acts, we will not be able to give opinion about the position of a speaker regarding what s/he utters and attribute the right opinions and aims to a participant (Schiffrin, 2005). Furthermore, recognizing the purposes of utterances is often important to successful communication. However, the relationship between the linguistic structure of an utterance and its implicit function isn't always clear (Searle, 1975).

The utterance, which produces an action, has three interrelated acts. Locutionary act, illocutionary and perlocutionary.

Studies investigated in speech act fall into four wide types. First, intra-lingual studies that emphasized on exploring speech acts in one language or culture, like apologies in Korean (Hahn, 2006) or compliments in Chinese (Yuan, 1998). Second, cross-cultural studies, in which social situational utterances of different languages and cultures are studied and compared; for instance, the speech act of apology in Arabic and American English (Bataineh, 2004). Third, different data elicitation approaches of speech acts are investigated and compared, for example, Golato (2003) conducts a study in which the effectivity of naturally occurring data tool and discourse completion task is examined. Finally, this kind of researches concentrates on the learners' performance of speech acts and comparing it with the native speakers of the target language. It deals with interlanguage pragmatic competence.

Face-threatening acts, such as, requests, apologies, complaints, thanking have been focused more (see below; cf. modern studies (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989).

Austin (1965) states that there are three types of linguistic: "locutionary," "perlocutionary," and "illocutionary" acts. People say what they say with purpose, viz., there is an intention (illocutionary) behind what they say and write (locutionary). If someone says, "it is raining", it may mean a statement or a warning.

There are three kinds of act in Speech Act Theory: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. In Searle's (1969) opinion, a 'locutionary act' means is what is said (the act of saying something). Austin (1962) defines locutionary as: The pronouncing of some sounds and words in a certain structure that has a certain meaning and a certain reference. An 'illocutionary act' is what is meant by what is said while a 'perlocutionary act' implies the effect of what is said to a listener or writer.

A certain language purpose, achieved by an utterance, is known as an illocutionary act. Speakers via these utterances carry communicative intentions, like suggestions, invitations, requests, apologies, etc. (Achiba, 2003), Which defines a directive as an attempt by a speaker or writer to get the addressee to carry out an act (Searle 1969, 1976). This, of course, implies a direct interaction between addressor and addressee.

Researches are confirmed that differences in performance and realization of speech acts between foreign language (FL) learners and native speakers return particularly to input, proficiency, length of exposure, and transfer (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001a). To bridge the gap, explicit pragmatic instruction has been recommended to be included in FL and L2 curricula over the last forty years (e.g. Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989).

A speech act is an utterance used to perform a certain action. We utilize speech acts when we request, apologize, complain...etc. According to the *Oxford learner's dictionaries* (2016), the word "Permission" has two meanings. It means the act of allowing somebody to do something, particularly when somebody in a position of authority does this. The second meaning of permission is an official written statement allowing somebody to do something. The action of officially allowing someone to do a particular thing; consent or authorization (ibid).

3. Method

This section presents the methodology used to investigate KEFL university students' performance of the speech act of permission. A discourse completion test (DCT) is used to elicit the required data from participants.

3.1 Population

Yaremko et al. (1986: 177) define the population of a research study as “the entire collection or set of objects, people or events of interest in a particular context”.

Table 1: Number of participants of both groups

Participants	Male	Female	Total
Kurdish EFL Undergraduate Students	33	50	83
Native Speakers of English	3	11	14
Total	36	61	97

The subjects of the study were drawn from two groups: the first group consisted of 83 (33 males and 50 female) KEFLUS in Iraqi Kurdistan Region. They were between 19 to 24 years old. The second group comprised 14 (3 males and 11 female) NSE with different academic degrees. Three of the NSE have a diploma, two bachelors, six masters, one PhD, one honorary doctorate and one with no degree. While all the KEFLUS were university undergraduate students.

Table 2: Kurdish EFL Undergraduate Students

No.	University	College	Stage				Gender		Age	Number
			1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Male	Female		
1	Duhok	Arts	6	8			6	8	19-24	14
2	Salahaddin	Languages			11		2	9	19-24	11
3	Nawroz	Languages			25		11	14	19-24	25
4	Soran	Arts	2		3	22	10	17	19-24	27
5	Zakho	Arts			6		4	2	19-24	6
Total			8	8	45	22	33	50		83

Table 2 shows a detailed description of the first group of KEFLUS participants. It is important to point out that the KEFLUS participant groups came from five state and private universities in the two cities of Erbil and Duhok in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

The NSE participant group, on the other hand, came from different English-speaking countries including: the US, the UK, Canada and Ireland. They were 14 (3 males and 11 females). Three of NSE have diplomas, two bachelors, six master degrees, one PhD, one honorary doctorate and one with no degree.

The study used convenience sampling for the participants because both native and non-native participants were selected on the basis of their availability. As the procedure for the collection of the data from native speakers was more demanding and

comparatively fewer native speakers were available or agreed to participate in the study, the number of non-native participants was greater than that of native speakers.

3.2 Data collection instrument

Data gathering tools are clustered into three types: interaction (authentic discourse, elicited conversation, role play), questionnaires (discourse completion, multiple-choice, scaled responses) and written and oral forms of self-report not based on questionnaires (diaries and verbal protocols). The three most extensively used kinds of questionnaire in pragmatics are discourse completion tasks (DCT), multiple choice and rating scale questionnaire (Spencer, 2008). According to Felix-Brasdefer (2008), DCT and role-play are most widely and common instrument utilized to collect the data in the domain of pragmatic research. However, naturally occurred talk or interaction is favoured but it is not easy to obtain and to control variables. Kasper (2000) states that there are three key categories of data kinds in interlanguage pragmatics research.

- A. Observational data of spoken interaction: authentic discourse, elicited conversation, and role-plays.
- B. Self-reported questionnaire data: discourse completion, multiple-choice, and scaled-responses.
- C. Oral and/or narrative self-reports: interviews, diaries, and think-aloud protocols

The present study employed a DCT and rating scale in collecting the data.

3.3 Data analysis

Data collected from the participants were analysed on the basis of semantic formulas or taxonomy of Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) Cross-Cultural Speech Acts Realization Patterns (CCSARP), Olshtain and Cohen (1983) taxonomy, Beebe et al. (1990) and Taxonomy of advising speech act based on Hinkel (1994, 1997) and Martinez Flor (2005) which It classifies advice act into three categories: direct (*Dir*), conventionally indirect (*CInd*), and indirect (*Ind*) acts.

The coding framework for requests distinguishes nine types of expressions classified into four main categories: direct, conventionally indirect (hearer-based), conventionally indirect (speaker-based) and indirect requests. A direct request is when there is direct and explicit relationship between the structure and function (e.g., 'Please open the door'). A conventional indirect request refers to "contextual preconditions necessary for its performance as conventionalized in the language" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 201-202) (e.g., 'Could you pass me the salt?'). An indirect request is expressed implicitly without referring directly to illocutionary force (e.g., 'I have to be at the airport in half an hour.'). Cohen (1996) states that a semantic formula may be "a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy; any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question".

Data were coded and transformed into numbers. Using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 22 used descriptive statistics to examine the frequency of participants' strategy use and strategy patterns. To measure the appropriateness of the participants' responses pragmatically and linguistically, the elicited data was rated by four research assistants using a rating scale developed by the researcher with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'entirely inappropriate' (one) to 'entirely appropriate' (five) used for the question posed to measure sociopragmatic competence and from 'strongly disagree' (one) to 'strongly agree' (five) used for the question posed to measure pragma linguistic competence.

4. Results and Discussion

What are the similarities and differences between KEFLUS and native speakers of English's speech acts of permission with regard to overall strategy use, and strategy patterns?

Permission

Table 3 Individual Strategies used by the two groups (Permission1)

Strategy	Kurdish EFL	NSE
Permission	33 (39.8 %)	3 (21.4 %)
Permission & Reason	50 (60.2 %)	11(78.6 %)
Total	83 (100 %)	14 (100%)

Table (3) above illustrates the semantic formula of the speech act of permission realized by both groups of KEFLUS and NSE. Both KEFLUS and NSE used "permission & reason" strategy like, "I'm afraid I have a headache and am feeling ill. Can I go home please?" most (60.2 % - 78.6 %) and the strategy of "permission" for example, "May I use your phone? "Second (39.8 % - 21.4 %). The findings indicate that there is a slight difference between the two groups of respondents.

Table 4: Individual Strategies used by the two groups (Permission2)

Strategy	KEFLUS	NSE
Permission	33 (39.8%)	2 (14.3 %)
Permission & Reason	50 (60.2 %)	12 (85.7 %)
Total	83 (100 %)	14 (100%)

Table (4) shows how individual strategies are utilized by both groups KEFLUS and NSE in expressing the second situation of permission act with their interlocutors. Both groups prefer the "permission & reason" strategy most (60.2 % - 85.7 %) like, "I am out of credit and I need to call the dentist. Could I use your phone to make a quick call?" and the strategy of "permission" second (39.8 % - 14.3 %) like, "Excuse me sir, can I go out? ". According to the results seen in Table (4), there is a slight difference between KEFLUS and NSE.

Table 5: Individual Strategies used by the two groups (Permission3)

Strategy	KEFLUS	NSE
Permission	33 (39.8 %)	1 (7.1 %)
Permission & Reason	50 (60.2 %)	13 (92.9 %)
Total	83 (100 %)	14 (100%)

Table (5) displays individual strategies used by KEFLUS and NSE in expressing the third situation of permission. The results indicate that there is a noticeable difference between both groups of participants. However, KEFLUS and NSE have the tendency to use the "permission & reason" strategy most (60.2 % - 92.9 %) and the strategy of "permission" second (39.8 % - 7.1 %).

To what extent are Kurdish EFL university students able to choose the appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms in performing the speech acts of permission?

Permission

Table 6: Appropriate pragmatic and linguistic forms (permission)

Questions			permission1	permission2	permission3
Sociopragmatics	N	Valid	332	332	332
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		3.0843	3.0813	3.2922
	Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00
	Std. Deviation		1.20377	1.18755	1.13001
Pragmalinguistics	N	Valid	332	332	332
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		3.1777	3.1295	3.2681
	Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00
	Std. Deviation		1.08061	1.05931	1.11721

Table 6 illustrates the mean, mode and standard deviation of the participants' responses to the speech act of permission rates by four raters. The results indicate that there is a slight difference between the mean scores of the both sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence. Participants are more competent in structuring the speech act of permission than they do in functioning. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the mode is 3, which means that the participants' responses are generally appropriate and neutral.

Is there a significant difference between male and female of KEFLUS in terms of overall strategies used and appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms in performing the speech acts of permission?

Permission,

Descriptively, Table (7) showed the comparison between KEFLUS males and females.

Table 7: Independent-Samples T-Test (Permission)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Permission 1	Male	264	3.0606	1.10138	.198
	Female	400	3.1775	1.17022	
Permission 2	Male	264	3.0076	1.10303	.069
	Female	400	3.1700	1.13548	
Permission 3	Male	264	3.2424	1.09351	.483
	Female	400	3.3050	1.14247	

An independent-samples t-test has been conducted to compare appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms of the speech act of permission for KEFLUS males and females. There is no significant difference in the scores for male and female. These results suggest that choosing appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms do not have an effect on gender.

Is there a significant difference between private and state universities in terms of appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms of the speech acts of permission?

To determine whether the participants' responses are appropriate or not in terms of function and form, four researchers rated the responses according to a rating scale developed by the researcher. They completed the 30-item discourse completion test (DCT), which used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (entirely inappropriate) to 5 (Entirely appropriate) for the first question posed in the rating scale and from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) for the second question. Then, Independent Sample T-Test was used to compare if there was a significant difference between state and private universities.

Permission

Table 8: Independent Samples T-Test of the speech act of Permission between

	Type of University	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Permission 1	State	464	3.0625	1.20581	.019
	Private	200	3.2900	.96985	
Permission 2	State	464	3.0948	1.16818	.712
	Private	200	3.1300	1.01897	
Permission 3	State	464	3.1897	1.15655	.002
	Private	200	3.4900	1.01244	

Table (8) displays the descriptive statistics on the ratings given by the four raters on the degree of appropriacy of the pragmatic and linguistic form of the speech act of permission. As shown in this table (8), the lowest mean score belongs to the state universities, while the highest score belonging to the private university. The two groups display differences. To explore whether these differences are statistically significant, an independent-samples t-test has been computed. The results reveal that there is a significant difference between state and private universities in the first and third situations. On the other hand, the results reveal that there is no significant difference between the two groups in performing the second situation. Furthermore, according to the mean score, private university respondents are seen to be more competent.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of the study that there were differences in the frequency and percentages of strategies and semantic formulae in performing each act. KEFLUS tended to use more direct and explicit. There were more politeness and implicitness in NSE' behaviours in performing the speech act, which might have resulted from the lack of pragmatic competence of KEFLUS. Also, regarding the sociopragmatic and pragmatic competence, the KEFLUS' responses were rated in terms of function (sociopragmatics) and form (pragma linguistics). The results indicated that the responses were appropriate. With respect to gender, the study did not find a significant difference between males and females in terms of appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms of the speech acts investigated though the results indicated that females had politer behaviours in performing the speech act than males. Further, regarding state and private universities, the independent sample t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the respondents studying at both types of universities. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between state and private universities. Moreover, private university respondents showed more competence than those at state universities. Language and culture are closely related. Therefore, teaching a foreign language is inseparable from teaching its cultural and social norms. Hopefully, the findings of the present research study will help EFL/ ESL teachers to pay more attention to pragmatic knowledge, raise student awareness of English socio-cultural norms of speech act realizations and will fill an important gap in the ILP literature.

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