

**POLITENESS PHENOMENA IN THE ENGLISH OF FIRST AND
SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS**

**POLITENESS PHENOMENA IN THE ENGLISH OF FIRST AND SECOND
LANGUAGE STUDENTS**

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"I declare that ... **POLITENESS PHENOMENA IN THE ENGLISH OF FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS** ... is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references".

W A Rawlinson

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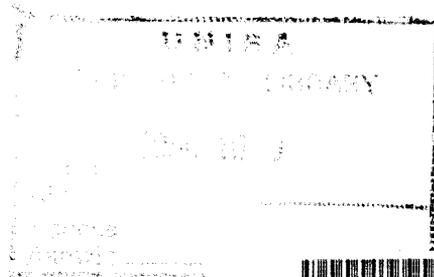
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ABSTRACT

This empirical study examines politeness phenomena in the English of first and second language students at an academic institution. Using the theoretical framework of the CCSARP, a DCT and a qualitative questionnaire were used to analyze the speech act realizations of requests and apologies. The main objective of the study was to establish the extent of differences in the choice of speech act realizations and whether distinct patterns of speech act behaviour obtained.

Findings show evidence of a difference in preference for positive and negative politeness strategies. The L2's expressed more of a concern for solidarity, than for social distance and deference, using in-group markers to signal social closeness. The L1's use of internal modification, in the form of downgraders, exhibited negative politeness. The frequent use of indirectness, especially hints, reflected a hesitancy to impose. Results from the investigation could have implications for enhancing cross-cultural communication.



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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for the study

This study is concerned with politeness phenomena of first (L1) and second language (L2) students of English, exhibited in the speech act realizations of both requests and apologies. Although my primary focus is on the speech act realizations of L2 students, the L1 realizations form a basis for comparison with the speech act realizations of L2 students.

This chapter introduces the topic and gives reasons for my choice of study. A background to the higher education institution in which the study takes place and the subjects who feature in the interactions is provided. The research problem is outlined by pointing to areas of difficulty in cross-cultural communication between the L1 and L2 student groups. This is then followed with an explanation of the analytical framework used for the study together with a description of the methods employed to gather the data. Details of the general aims of the study and an outline of the dissertation conclude the chapter.

I chose this topic because of an interest in the social aspects of language and in the ways in which people from different cultural backgrounds communicate. I am particularly interested in the reasons for miscommunication, especially in a learning environment between L1 students and lecturers, and L2 students.

I have chosen to study the speech act realizations of L1 and L2 students in requests and apologies since these are two of the more frequent speech acts that they are called upon to perform in the academic milieu. Gass (1996:1) claims that fundamental to human communication is the notion of a speech act, that is, the performance of a certain act through words (e.g. requesting something, refusing, thanking, greeting someone, complimenting and complaining). Certain sociolinguistic and sociocultural abilities are needed to perform a given speech act, required in interaction. Sociolinguistic ability is the speaker's control over the actual language forms used to realize the speech act

as well as control over register or formality of the utterance. Sociocultural ability refers to the respondent's skill at selecting speech act strategies which are appropriate to the culture involved, the age and sex of the speakers, their social class and occupations, and their roles and status in the interaction. Learners of a language may lack mastery of speech acts, which may cause breakdowns in communication.

Requests are pre-event acts where the speaker has expectation of the hearer with regard to verbal or non-verbal prospective action. Apologies are post-event (Leech, 1980), where the speaker acknowledges that a violation of a social norm has occurred and acknowledges that he or she is at least partially involved in its cause. It is the production and interpretation of these acts in the academic environment of Technikon Natal that often reflect L2 students' abilities to manage the ways in which politeness is mediated in the target language.

Technikon Natal is an English-medium, higher education institution situated in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. In the South African context, it is regarded as a 'historically white' institution (HWI) because in the apartheid era it admitted only White students. However, with the demise of apartheid, national changes in political and social policies affected education and resulted in broader access to higher education institutions. Transformation took place in the demographic profile of students and staff at universities and technikons. At Technikon Natal, student figures changed from a 30% Black intake in 1994 to 80% in 1999. These changes have, in turn, led to transformation regarding learning and teaching and highlighted the need for more effective communication between the different language communities.

Although the medium of instruction at Technikon Natal is English, the language proficiency of many L2 students is low since the English studied at school was often carried out in under-resourced schools by poorly trained L2 teachers. The

poor quality of education and minimal language input have resulted in inadequately equipped students who are keen to enter the higher education arena but are unable to express themselves effectively, both verbally and in the written medium.

Effective communication is required in order that learning and social interaction takes place efficiently and harmoniously, unimpeded as far as possible by miscommunication. In my experience as a lecturer at Technikon Natal since 1982, I have observed situations in which misinterpretation has occurred between L1 students and lecturers and L2 students because of differences in linguistic formulations and sociocultural norms. The unsuccessful interactions have resulted in negative stereotyping of the respective racial groups. Comments about the interaction by both L1 and L2 groups have often indicated a difference in the perception of politeness.

1.2 Context of the study

Thomas (1983:97) defines pragmatics or 'language in use', as "the place where a speaker's knowledge of grammar comes into contact with his/her knowledge of the world." The grammatical aspects of language such as syntax and semantics, are only a part of what constitutes language; however, an equally important part is the social aspect of language. Wolfson (1989:1) claims that language is "social behaviour" and argues that every language has its own system of social rules and cultural values, which results in different communication conventions. The patterns and conventions of language behaviour are those termed by Wolfson sociolinguistic rules or rules of speaking (Wolfson, 1989:14). Norms and values inform a community as to the appropriacy of their speech regarding both interactants and the situation in which they find themselves.

Pragmatics refers to "descriptions of patterns having to do with interpersonal interaction" Wolfson (1989) and when interpersonal interaction breaks down, pragmatic failure can occur. Thomas' (1983:93) definition of pragmatic failure shows that most of our misunderstandings of other people are not due to an inability to hear them or understand them but to a failure to understand the speaker's intention. It is, in essence, a lack of pragmatic competence.

Pragmatic competence is not used by Thomas as a synonym for "communicative competence" but is regarded by her as one of several levels of knowledge that might include grammatical, psychological and social competencies. In order to be considered 'pragmatically competent' one must be able to "behave linguistically in such a manner as to avoid being unintentionally offensive for most of the time" (1983:95).

Norms and values vary from one speech community or language group to another and often "sociolinguistic relativity" (Wolfson 1989:14), has an effect on intercultural communication and language learning. A lack of knowledge of sociolinguistic diversity is frequently the cause of intercultural or cross-cultural misunderstanding. Cross-cultural communication has been described by Thomas as encompassing groups who 'do not share a common linguistic or cultural background' (Thomas, 1983:91). L2 speakers tend to interpret and realize speech acts according to the rules of their own language communities, which often results in misunderstanding.

Although acknowledging misinterpretation on the part of both groups the current study focuses on the L1's 'perceived inappropriacy' of L2 utterances since English is the medium of instruction at the institution and there exists a strong English language community. In interpersonal interactions in the learning environment at Technikon Natal L2 students have to produce and process speech acts in a language which is not their mother tongue and the sociocultural

rules that obtain are those of the L1 speech community.

Pragmalinguistic failure occurs when the pragmatic force mapped on to a linguistic structure is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by native speakers (Thomas, 1983:101). Two sources responsible for pragmatic failure are, "teaching induced errors" and "pragmalinguistic transfer" (Thomas, 1983:103). The latter involves the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language to the other. It could also be the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances, which seem to be equivalent syntactically or semantically but which, because of different interpretations, tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language. A certain utterance such as, *Could you X* is a highly conventionalised politeness form in English and is more likely to be interpreted by native speakers as a request to do X, rather than the interpretation of a question as to one's *ability* to do X.

"Sociopragmatic failure" (Thomas, 1983:104), on the other hand, has to do with appropriacy of speech, i.e. knowing the appropriate thing to say in the right context, without intentionally offending. Sociopragmatic failure occurs when L2 speakers misjudge the assessment of social distance, of what constitutes an imposition, of what constitutes a face-threatening act, and misevaluation of relative power, rights and obligations. Thomas (1983:104) maintains that different cultures evaluate social categories differently. Different evaluations may relate to; "size of imposition," "tabus," "cross-culturally different assessments of relative power or social distance," and "value judgements."

Cross-culturally different assessments can relate to: a mismatch concerning size of an imposition. For example, some L1 students may regard personal property as an important commodity for the individual whereas some L2's may see personal belongings as a commodity available for the benefit of the whole group,

to be shared more freely. Therefore, cultures differ as to what is considered "freely available".

Tabus are another area where cross-cultural differences are obvious. Certain topics, usually related to sex or religion, may be frowned upon in the target language. A third area of difference is in the cross-culturally different assessments of relative power or social distance, for example the status of lecturers may be judged differently by L1 and L2 speakers. A social judgement could lead to a L2 student regarding a lecturer as someone with higher status and therefore result in more deferential behaviour than that expected by the L1 lecturer.

The area in which the most difficult type of pragmatic failure occurs is that in which pragmatic principles of one speech community, such as politeness, conflict with the pragmatic principles of another speech community, such as truthfulness. It is the differences between cultural rules regarding speech behaviour that when manifest in cross-cultural interactions, cause problems. Certain relative values may be regarded more highly in certain situations by L1's than by L2's. For example, the indirect way in which an L2 speaker utters a request for action on the part of the hearer, may be a reflection of the relative value of the avoidance of confrontation over truthfulness.

The many causes of intercultural misunderstanding mentioned above may not, in themselves, be noteworthy, but numerous cases of miscommunication because of differences in rules of speaking, can have far-reaching consequences. This is especially evident in a particular environment such as the Technikon in which members of different speech communities interact on a daily basis.

Because rules of speaking are "very largely unconscious" (Wolfson, 1989:25),

they are often only noticeable when they are broken and the reaction of L1's is usually negative since the rules, although not explicit or conscious, constitute what is considered appropriate behaviour. L2 students frequently fail to formulate speech acts in ways regarded by the L1 community as appropriate. For example, inappropriacy may be evident in an L2 speaker asking someone to be quiet in a way perceived as 'too direct' by an L1 speaker or an L2 speaker apologizing for an infraction in a way that is deemed 'insincere' by an L1 lecturer. These ways of speaking might cause L1 speakers to judge L2 speakers as rude, insincere or irresponsible.

'Perceived inappropriacy' may be equally exhibited in the misunderstanding by L2 speakers of L1 utterances. For example, a request by an L1 for an L2 speaker to put more effort into a task may be performed in a way, which does not take into consideration appropriately the hearer's 'face' or self-esteem. This may translate not only into misunderstanding, but also into negative character judgements. L1 speakers may be regarded as intrusive, offensive and unfair. Both L1 and L2 groups assume that their ways of speaking are correct and that they are expressing themselves in a proper manner and therefore when another speech community's 'rules' are exhibited, the speakers tend to be stigmatized by the hearers.

1.3 Research problem

The primary question asked in this study is; To what extent do the realizations of speech acts reflect the differences in politeness of L1 and L2 speakers of English in a tertiary study environment? Other key questions are:

- a) To what extent is the L2's speech act behaviour similar to or different from the L1's behaviour under the same circumstances?
- b) What differences obtain between L1 and L2 students' perspectives on the politeness of certain speech acts, as used in the academic milieu?
- c) How do L1 respondents perceive L2 respondents' performance of

requests and apologies?

1.4 Analytical framework

My empirical study is based on the theoretical framework developed for the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). In order to adequately define and describe speech act sets, investigations within and across languages were undertaken and made possible by the framework of the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989). This project compared speech act behaviour of native speakers of a number of different languages with the behaviour of learners of those languages. It also produced useful instruments for data collection and a coding scheme that has been widely replicated in other speech act studies. However, both quantitative and qualitative research methods have application in studies of pragmatics and this study therefore uses the research strategies from both approaches, that is, The Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and a qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix 3) to reveal more about politeness phenomena in L2 students.

The DCT used to collect data is a set of written questionnaires consisting of a brief description of a situation. The discourse is structured, with part of it left open and part closed, providing both for the speech act and a rejoinder. Description of the situation is followed by dialogue with a blank line where the subject is to put in what he or she believes to be an appropriate response. The rejoinder, following the blank line, helps to cue the respondent as to the appropriate nature of the speech act realization, that is, the level of formality, and the roles and relationships of the interlocutors.

1.5 Aims of the study

The general goal is to investigate patterns of request and apology realizations under different social constraints, as used by L1's and L2's in the learning environment at Technikon Natal. Using the framework of the CCSARP, the ways

in which language is used to perform the speech acts of requests and apologies are interrelated with the social and situational variables that may affect their use. I also want to establish whether there are certain pragmatic regularities underlying requesting and apologising behaviour in the particular speech communities of L1 and L2 students at Technikon Natal.

Olshtain and Cohen (1983) suggest that the study of speech acts can provide us with better understanding and new insights into the interdependence of linguistic forms and sociocultural context. By drawing on insights from theoretical pragmatics, and seeing how L1 and L2 speakers differ in their realization patterns, this study reveals how politeness is evidenced in L2 utterances in one specific academic environment. In addition, it indicates sources of misinterpretation between L2 students and L1 students and lecturers. It also attempts to develop ways of raising metapragmatic consciousness so that L2 students at Technikon Natal will be better equipped to express themselves appropriately and achieve their communicative goals more effectively.

1.6 Outline of the dissertation

In Chapter 2, I examine the politeness theories of a number of researchers including Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) since I consider their categories of politeness as providing an important perspective on the concept of politeness and on the CCSARP methodological framework I use. The literature on studies carried out in the area of cross-cultural diversity in speech act realization is then reviewed.

The focus of chapter 3 is the methods of research and analytical framework used in this study. In this chapter a discussion on the use of the framework devised for the Cross-cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (CCSARP) is followed by how it has been adapted in order to elicit responses, which might reveal further insights into politeness phenomena amongst L1 and L2 students.

The methods I used to collect data, namely the discourse completion test [DCT] and a qualitative questionnaire, are also discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 comprises the findings and interpretation of the data collected and in Chapter 5 the conclusions are presented. In addition, recommendations are made regarding the raising of awareness of the sociocultural norms of different communities in order to limit miscommunication in the academic milieu.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical foundations

In this chapter the literature which outlines cultural variability in speech act rules is reviewed and findings from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) are examined. The theoretical contributions of Thomas, Goffman, Leech and Brown and Levinson, whose theories provide a background to research carried out in the CCSARP and aligned studies, are examined. Studies in both requests and apologies, showing different perceptions of politeness are highlighted. In addition studies that show how differences in responses between cultural groups can result in negative value judgements are examined. Differences between Western and African cultures are presented in an attempt to show how variations in factors such as the notion of face, interactional style, sociocultural norms and perceptions of politeness affect cross-cultural communication.

Because each society or social group has different rules and patterns of speech behaviour, investigation into the use of speech in specific societies or speech communities is required. Social rules or rules of speaking (Hymes, 1968) are known by interactants of a speech community but are often difficult to describe objectively. Because sociolinguistic patterns are below the conscious level of awareness, careful and systematic analysis is necessary to provide valid descriptions. Rules of speaking are also not uniform across cultural groups because each society has its own set of patterns. They are part of a general system that reflects the values and structure of the society or group but no society has "a monopoly on correct sociolinguistic behaviour" (Wolfson, 1992:200).

People from different sociocultural backgrounds tend to have very different value systems, which are exhibited in speech and other kinds of social behaviour, but the diversity in value systems and their expression is often misunderstood because interlocutors tend to judge each other according to their own value systems (sociolinguistic relativity). Differences are not easily recognized as a reflection of

different cultural backgrounds because appropriate speech usage within the context of a given society is linked to 'good manners' and good character (Wolfson, 1992:201). Wolfson makes the point that although many NNSs of English have an excellent command of the language and use it regularly, "every English speaking group has its own rules of speaking" (Wolfson, 1992:203). People link sociolinguistic rule-breaking to faulty character and consistent experiences with numerous members of a particular group may result in stereotypes developing (Chick, 1985:315).

The theories of Thomas (1983) are discussed at the outset of the chapter, showing her contribution to awareness of cross-cultural misunderstanding. The theory of Goffman (1975), who elaborates on a speaker's continued attempts at the smooth flow of communication, is then described. The work of Leech, who first introduced a number of the principles underlined in the study, is discussed and finally, consideration of the politeness theories of Brown and Levinson, on whose work much of this research rests, concludes the chapter.

2.1.1 Thomas

Two different types and sources of social differences are identified by Thomas, which may result in miscommunication between L1 and L2 speakers of a language. The two different types of pragmatic failure she terms "sociopragmatic failure" and "pragmalinguistic failure". She uses the term *failure* rather than *error* for, as she explains it, the utterance "failed to achieve the speaker's goal" (Thomas, 1983:94).

Both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure can be explained in terms of speech acts. In analysing cross-cultural comparisons of the speech acts of requests and apologies, it is necessary to define speech acts and analyse their function. Austin, (In Wolfson, 1989:56), first made the distinction between two fundamental aspects of the speech act, namely *locutionary* and *illocutionary*. The locutionary act relates to the speaker's (S's) communicative intent, i.e. which proposition S has

expressed, and the illocutionary act relates to S's illocutionary or pragmatic force, for example interpretation of an utterance as a request instead of a criticism. Individual illocutionary acts or speech acts are defined according to 'felicity conditions' (Austin in Wolfson, 1989:56), that is, the conditions which must exist for the successful performance of a particular speech act.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that short utterances can constitute the performance of speech acts but that a statement such as *I am hungry* can be interpreted in many ways, for example as a remark, a request for food or as a criticism. Speech acts have been classified according to five major categories, and assigned functions (Austin in Wolfson, 1989:56). The same major classes or taxonomy of speech acts i.e., representatives, directives, commissives, etc. and the same strategies for performing speech acts are thought to obtain for all languages and speech communities. However, even where speech act categories may appear to be common to two languages, seemingly similar words may not carry the same referential meaning across languages.

Wolfson (1989:57) argues that utterances may have "illocutionary force" in that they are interpreted as specific kinds of acts. This kind of category of speech acts helps explain problems in communicating which arise when language learners translate sentences that have a specific illocutionary force in their first language into the target language in which the interpretation of the utterance may be very different. The words may translate but the force of the utterance is often lost.

Pragmalinguistic failure may occur when a speaker formulates a speech act which is ambiguous and which may result in misinterpretation. For example, a speaker needs to know how to phrase a request for help in a way that is not misinterpreted as a request for information. This is evident in the English convention of using an indirect form such as *Can you help me?* as a request for action rather than to query the hearer's (H's) ability. Sociopragmatic failure, on the other hand, has its root in

cross-culturally different views of what is considered appropriate linguistic behaviour, that is, knowing the appropriate thing to say in the right context, without unintentionally offending. Thomas maintains that various social factors, some of which include; “size of imposition,” “tabus”, “cross-culturally different assessments of relative power or social distance,” and “value judgements,” are evaluated differently by different speech communities (Thomas, 1983:104). It is the differences in cultural rules regarding speech behaviour which, when presented in cross-cultural interaction, may cause problems.

2.1.2 Goffman

Goffman (1967:10) defines ‘face’ or “an image of self, delineated in terms of approved social attributes”, as the positive social value a person claims for himself. He defines social face ‘as a personal one’, claiming “it is only on loan to him from society and will be withdrawn unless he behaves in a way that is worthy of it.” Goffman introduced the notion of politeness and speaks of intended deference as “that component of activity, which functions as a symbolic means by which appreciation is regularly conveyed” (Goffman, 1971:56). He stressed the importance of social interaction rituals, such as expressing politeness and claimed that everyone has a potential emotional response to others, which is related to his or her “face”.

One cause of sociopragmatic failure could be discussed within the framework described by Goffman (In Thomas, 1983:104). He discusses the notion of ‘free’ and ‘non-free’ goods, the perceptions of which differ cross-culturally. The evaluation of whether these goods, which are not necessarily material and may include information, are free can vary in different cultures. Evaluations by cultures can differ with regard to how available these ‘goods’ are and therefore how intrusive a request for them would be. For example in British English society, a direct enquiry regarding someone’s income would be deemed an intrusion and considered by L1 speakers as inappropriate. Each group has to correctly encode the amount of polite requests and judge size of imposition in order for communication to progress unhindered.

Related to the differences in cultural evaluations and the need for smooth communication are the philosophic notions of Grice (In Brown & Levinson, 1987:95) concerning the organisation of linguistic conventions. He proposed the existence of a code of co-operative behaviour, which organises the way interlocutors interpret each other's speech. Grice's maxims (In Brown & Levinson, 1987:95) which constitute conversational principles, offer guidelines for achieving maximally efficient communication. They are as follows: Maxim of Quality: Be non-spurious (speak the truth, be sincere). Maxim of Quantity: (a) Don't say less than is required (b) Don't say more than is required. Maxim of Relevance: Be relevant. Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous; avoid ambiguity and obscurity. These maxims define the basic set of assumptions underlying every talk exchange although not all exchanges are considered to have met these conditions. The maxims could be considered universal but if deviations from the norm occur in different languages, these may point to additional or different maxims.

2.1.3 Leech

A modification to Grice's theory of conversation is proposed by Leech (1983), who suggests the addition of an extra principle, which he calls a politeness principle. According to the politeness principle, it is in the interest of the speaker, in making an illocution, to give credit or benefit and not to cause offence to the hearer. The purpose of the politeness principle is 'to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being co-operative in the first place' (Leech, 1983:82).

Thus, efficient communication would seem to result from co-operation and adherence to Grice's maxims. However, Brown and Levinson (1987:95) argue that "in addition to other motives, one powerful and pervasive motive for *not* talking Maxim-wise is the desire to give some attention to the concept of face." Politeness is viewed as a major source of deviation from logical efficient communication in that attention to face becomes more important than merely the relaying of information. Their model assumes that politeness is motivated by two kinds of 'face' and two

related kinds of politeness. Negative politeness is used by a speaker to satisfy a hearer's negative face and functions to avoid or minimise the imposition of a face-threatening act on a hearer. Negative politeness is characterised by speaker self-effacement, formality and restraint, and conventionalized indirectness. Positive politeness, on the other hand, is used by a speaker to satisfy a hearer's positive self-image. Positive politeness functions more subtly than negative politeness, to satisfy the hearer's need for approval and belonging (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

2.1.4 Brown and Levinson

According to Hurley (1992:262), "Politeness theories attempt to explain how and to what extent people in different cultures establish, maintain or support social relations in using language." Theories of politeness such as Leech's (1983) and Brown and Levinson's (1978,1987), have formed the basis for research and arguments. They have shown the great degree of cross-cultural variation in the most basic constituents and perceptions of face and politeness.

In Brown and Levinson's detailed argument regarding the universality of speech act strategies, which they base on Goffman's (1967) notion of 'face', they establish an elaborate framework of politeness strategies. Their theory of politeness (1978,1987) assumes that speakers and hearers have the desire to maintain face. 'Face' is described as 'the public self image that every member [of a society] wants to claim for himself' (Brown & Levinson, 1987:60). According to their model (1978, 1987) of politeness, speakers analyse the level of threat involved, considering factors such as social distance, degree of power that one party may have over another and the ranking of impositions within a culture, before selecting a strategy to complete the required act. In a similar vein, Leech (1983) maintains that these two parameters of social distance and degree of power are highly relevant to politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1987:60) distinguish a scale of five different possibilities of directness levels ranging from the very indirect 'off record' through negative politeness, positive politeness, to the most direct 'bald on record.' Generally, for

negative face, the more effort S expends in face-maintaining linguistic behaviour, the more S communicates his desire not to impinge on H. Whereas for positive face, the more effort S expends, the more he communicates his care for H and H's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987:93). The effort put into formulations of negative politeness, positive politeness or into the off-record strategies such as hints usually indicates the extent of the S's sincere desire to satisfy H's face wants. Brown and Levinson (1987:94) suggest that across many cultures a relation exists between these efforts and polite usages and that the degree and extent of these expenditures of effort indicate the importance that face wants are given in any culture. In addition, the social motivation for making use of positive and negative politeness strategies is that they can be used to increase or decrease social distance in relationships.

Brown and Levinson (1987) illustrate various politeness strategies with pragmatic, semantic, syntactic and lexical examples. They claim that these types of strategies are language universals and contend that languages differ only in the relative importance given to particular strategies. They describe a number of positive and negative speech act strategies and investigate their use in three separate languages. Despite the unrelated nature of these languages, the expression of politeness was found to be very similar. They argue therefore, that linguistic realizations are based largely on universal principles. Although politeness is normally associated in western cultures with negative politeness, Brown and Levinson show that both types, i.e. positive and negative politeness, interact in complicated ways according to the nature of the act and the status of S and H.

Some acts, verbal and non-verbal, may be counter to the "face wants" of S or H and, therefore, are "face threatening acts" (FTA's) (Brown & Levinson, 1987:65). Brown and Levinson point out that most speech acts are in some way threatening to either the speaker or hearer, either by imposing on one party's freedom of action, as with acts of requesting, or by damaging the positive self-image of one of the parties as in apologies (1987:24). Hearers can interpret requests both as impingement on

freedom of action as well as a show of power. Speakers may find requests difficult because they may expose a need or risk the hearer's loss of face. In all situations, the many linguistic choices make demands on respondents.

Some strategies are related to one or the other particular type of politeness, as found by Carrell and Konneker (1981:18). With regard to positive politeness strategies, certain strategies such as the following will manifest themselves:

- a. Notice, attend to Hearer's interests, wants etc,
- b. Use in-group markers
- c. Be optimistic
- d. Seek agreement
- e. Indicate common ground
- f. Offer, promise

With regard to Negative Politeness Strategies, the following strategies will manifest themselves.

- a. Be conventionally indirect
- b. Question, hedge
- c. Be pessimistic
- d. Minimize the imposition
- e. Give deference
- f. Apologize

Not only the choices themselves but also the systematic nature of the choices made by interactants during cross-cultural encounter points to an orientation towards distinctive interactional styles. Brown and Levinson (1987:243-255) explain that the extent to which particular types of social relationships predominate in a particular society or culture shows the extent to which members prefer certain types of politeness strategies. Such consistent choices lead to predominant, targeted interactional styles, which result in a particular affective quality in interactions in those societies or cultures. The ratings of power (P) and distance (D) systematically

used by particular groups determine the general level of risk (W_x) and dictate the preferred type of politeness.

2.1.5 Critique of Brown and Levinson's theory

The first difficulty with Brown and Levinson's theory is the proposed relationship between social distance and indirectness. The second is the claimed universality of Brown and Levinson's notion of 'face' and the third is the very different cultural assessments by language communities of power, social distance and imposition.

2.1.5.1 Levels of directness

One of the claims of Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987) is that increased levels of social distance between interlocutors result in increased levels of indirectness in speech act realizations. However, Wolfson (1989) shows that native speakers of American English speak relatively more *directly* to intimates, strangers, and status-unequals and more *indirectly* with status-equal acquaintances such as co-workers. Wolfson's 'bulge' theory (1989:207) is so named because of the way frequencies of certain types of speech behaviour plot out on a diagram. The two extremes show very similar patterns in contrast to the middle section, which displays a characteristic bulge. Wolfson explains how the middle group's (status-equal) requests show higher indirectness whereas intimates and strangers on opposite ends of the distance scale were found to receive more direct requests. She argues that the more status and social distance are seen as fixed by the society, the easier it is for speakers to know what to expect of one another.

Blum-Kulka (1987) disagrees with Brown and Levinson's theory of the relation between politeness and social distance. In her study of politeness phenomena, Blum-Kulka (1987:131) disputes the notion that 'more indirect' means 'more polite' and warns against drawing a parallel between degrees of directness and levels of politeness. Her Hebrew subjects exhibited a high level of direct requests and she argues that directness probably takes greater precedence over face concerns in

Israeli society than in America, in interactants' realizations of requests. Blum-Kulka and House (1989) show that for Hebrew speakers perspective is a more significant contributor to politeness than directness level. House and Kasper (1981) showed respondents preferring higher directness and fewer syntactic downgraders. The study of Blum-Kulka (1987), as well as that of House (1986), shows evidence to suggest that politeness and indirectness are not necessarily related in a linear way because the highest ratings by respondents were to conventional indirectness and not to hints.

De Kadt (1992b:103) claims that the link between directness and politeness levels may not hold true for all languages because her Zulu respondents showed a high frequency of direct requests with a high politeness rating by respondents. She further claims that if a show of sincerity, expressed directly, is preferred over a display of nonimposition, then directness will not necessarily be associated with impoliteness. A concern for solidarity shown as a preference by L2 speakers may also override the concern for social distance and deference in the expression of politeness. De Kadt (1992b:103) claims that the standard polite request 'ngicela', classified according to Blum-Kulka's rating scale as a performative, is normally a form with a high directness rating. However, this categorization is problematic in relation to measures of politeness since her Zulu respondents rated this form 'most polite'. This discrepancy between directness and perceived politeness raises the question of whether the link between indirectness and politeness is applicable to Zulu.

2.1.5.2 The notion of the universality of face

The second criticism, of the notion of the universality of 'face', has come largely from Asian (Matsumoto 1988, Beebe and Takahashi 1989, Gu 1990) and African sources (De Kadt 1992, Nwoye 1992). Matsumoto (1988) used Japanese data to criticise Brown and Levinson's theory of linguistic politeness and the question of the universality of 'face'. He claims (1988:405) that what is important to the Japanese is

not his or her own territory but the interactants' position in relation to the others in the group and his or her acceptance by those others. He argues that in these circumstances, 'face' ceases to be an important issue in interpersonal relationships (Matsumoto, 1988:218). He uses examples from formulaic expression, honorifics and the verbs of giving and receiving in Japanese to justify his argument. The concept of negative face wants as the desire to be 'unimpeded in one's action' (Brown & Levinson, 1987:24) is alien to the Japanese culture in the notion of face, which is attributed to the model person. The notion of face calls into question the universality of a core concept since the desire to be unimpeded in one's activity, claimed by Brown and Levinson, presupposes that the basic unity of society is the individual. However, politeness in Japanese centres on the speaker recognizing the relative social position of *all* interactants.

The notion of loss of face in Japanese society is therefore qualitatively different from the notion held by Brown and Levinson in that it is associated with the perception by others that one has not comprehended and acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group. What affects 'face' in social interaction is social insensitivity and what is important is the need for a person to be judged as responding appropriately. Matsumoto (1988:409) mentions the use of an expression when a speaker is introduced to someone. The literal translation is "I ask you to please treat me well/ take care of me". This conventionalized expression shows deference yet is an imposition on the addressee's freedom of action, i.e. isn't a negative politeness strategy in Brown and Levinson's terms but derives from positive politeness.

Nwoye (1992:311) suggests that the notion of 'face' is culture-specific. He argues that the notion of 'negative face' and the need to avoid imposition doesn't seem to apply to the egalitarian Igbo society. In Igbo society, concern for the interest of the group, rather than the individual, is the expected norm of behaviour. Nwoye (1992:311) further argues that discerning what is appropriate and behaving accordingly is more important than behaving according to strategies designed to

accompany specific objectives such as pleasing or not displeasing others.

2.1.5.3 Evaluations of power and social distance

The third area of criticism, i.e. different cultural evaluations of power, social distance and imposition, are shown to obtain in various cultures, particularly non-Western ones. According to Matsumoto (1988), a person's self-image is dependent on group membership, therefore dependence on others is expected in social interaction. Imposition in Japanese culture is not viewed in a similar way to that expressed by Brown and Levinson, since evidence of acceptance by others is not dependent on *not* invading the territory of others. The deference strategy in Japanese culture is interpreted differently from Western culture in that deference focuses on the ranking difference between the conversational participants whereas in Western culture it may occur between equals. Brown and Levinson's theory doesn't satisfactorily embrace the politeness system in Japan, and the concept of negative face, in Japanese culture, therefore seen by Matsumoto as largely irrelevant.

Similarly, Nwoye (1992:326) suggests that the notion of imposition is culture specific. The group orientation of the Igbo subjects in his study accounts for the fact that "very few actions are regarded as impositions" (Nwoye, 1992:327). Nwoye shows how in Igbo culture gregariousness, as opposed to individualism, is the norm. Despite speech acts such as requests causing inconvenience to others, this is accepted in the interests of communal or societal cohesion and in the belief in the reciprocity of hospitality. Acts that require the aid or co-operation of others are solicited from others as a social right. Negative politeness is therefore not the basis on which interactants operate as requests are not regarded as face-threatening to the same extent as in western cultures. Often there is a lack of any overt politeness marker such as *please*. For example, an utterance could be, *My car has stopped, come and help me push it*. The request is made with the expectation that it will be met, therefore politeness markers, such as *please* are not seen as required. Utterances may therefore be direct, without modification and yet be perceived as

polite and appropriate by members of the speech community.

In terms of Western research, Wierzbicka (1991) claims that there is more than one model of politeness and the linguistic coding of it. She offers her overview as a pilot study in which different cultures express themselves in different systems of speech acts. She argues that Polish speakers opt for direct utterances, which are not considered impolite by Polish native speakers. For example, an imperative such as *Sit! Sit!* might be considered a rude form in English but is not in Polish. In translating some polite offers into Polish, the illocutionary force of the utterance would be lost. In Polish the flat imperative is one of the milder options in issuing directives and the diminutive is often used with it as a softening device.

Wierzbicka shows how features of English, which have previously been attributed to universal principles of politeness, may be language specific and culture specific. For example, in Anglo-Saxon culture the autonomy of the individual, the tolerance of idiosyncrasies and disapproval of dogmatism is valued and reflected in the limited use of the imperative in English and the wide use of the interrogative whereas in Polish this doesn't apply. Formal and even informal offers in the form of an interrogative, used to refer to a speaker's desires and opinions, are polite in English but considered impolite in Polish. Specific differences are motivated by different cultural norms but the general mechanisms themselves are culture specific. She claims that "the concept of negative face is largely irrelevant in Polish" (Wierzbicka, 1992:13).

In a substantial critique, she argues that it isn't just different ways of expressing politeness which Brown and Levinson allow for in their theory but different cultural values encoded in language (Wierzbicka, 1991:175). Her criticism lies mainly in the fact that most research in politeness focuses on the criteria of indirectness which, in her opinion, are interpreted differently in every culture. She states that it is ethnocentric for Brown and Levinson to place universals above culture specifics

(Wierzbicka, 1991:67). In a similar vein De Kadt (1994:104) argues that differences between directives in Zulu and South African English rest on cultural assumptions, which result in a different understanding of directness.

Brown and Levinson (1987:27) mention some research which indicates “the relative absence of mitigating or face-redressive features associated with ...requests in some communities, but the exceptions are the kind allowed for by the specific socio-cultural variables “ introduced by their theory. They state that exceptions are to be expected or possible in accordance with their theory because the values of societies and cultural groups differ.

In concluding discussion of Brown and Levinson’s (1987:24) politeness theory, it would appear that the organizing principle for their theory lies in the implication that “some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and therefore require softening...” Each speech community, they claim, then develops principles on which linguistic strategies are based. Wolfson (1989:68) claims that although there are undoubtedly some difficulties with this framework, it is a very useful contribution to the study of language in society.

2.2 Role of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project

One of the most comprehensive empirical studies of speech act behaviour showing use of politeness strategies is the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989), in which researchers have examined use of the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. The project is based on a conceptual and methodological framework incorporating a variety of studies, some of which are still in progress. Research conducted in the framework of the CCSARP was initiated to investigate cross-cultural variation in verbal behaviour.

The studies in Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) initially compared speech act behaviour in the context of native speakers with that of learners of English across eight different languages, and in order to maintain uniformity, all researchers have

used the same data collection techniques and analysis.

Using a DCT, the study examined the realization of the speech acts of both requests and apologies, identifying units for analysis. Specific attention was accorded to the Head Act of requests and apologies in order to reveal the range of linguistic behaviour exhibited in its performance in a variety of languages. The study of situated speech makes it possible to construct a theory interconnecting communicative functions with the contexts in which they are embedded. The rich data yielded in a variety of languages, such as these, allows researchers to reconsider the theoretical notions such as directness and indirectness.

The results of the CCSARP show patterns of request and apology realizations under different social constraints across languages. Studies in the CCSARP also investigate the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of the speech acts of requests and apologies across L1 and L2 speakers of English, relative to the same social constraints, thus highlighting cross-cultural variation. In addition the CCSARP investigates the effect of social variables on the realization patterns of requests and apologies *within* speech communities to show sociopragmatic variation. CCSARP data show two things, on the one hand a claim for universality whilst on the other, indication of rich cross-cultural variability.

In what follows a discussion of various studies of the project shows how these studies relate to issues in the current research presented here such as directness levels, consideration of social factors such as distance and power and weight of imposition of the speech act. In addition studies which reveal the extent of cross-cultural similarities and differences in the utterances of NSs and NNSs, are highlighted. Lastly, to contextualise these studies an outline of the way in which the two speech acts, namely requests and apologies, are analysed is briefly sketched.

2.2.1 Method of analysis of requests

From the written answers provided in the DCT, the speech act of requests can show

the preferences native speakers have for realizing a request for action or permission. A cross-linguistic comparison of the answers provided for the same item reveals whether there are differences in the type of strategy chosen to realize the act under the same social constraints across languages. Based on Brown and Levinson's theory of 'face', most acts of request and apology will be perceived as threatening to face. Respondents will communicate with the intention of saving face, either S's or H's. A particular strategy, perspective, or form of modification (either internal or external) is chosen in order to communicate S's intended meaning.

In examining realizations of requests and apologies, it is essential to look at the units used by researchers to make the necessary comparisons. Apart from the Head Act, the strategies, perspective and modifications used by respondents are examined. For requests, it is claimed that for every language studied there is a finite set of strategies most commonly used. Choice of a particular strategy is dependent on the level of directness the respondent believes is appropriate in the situation since the level of directness is thought, by Brown and Levinson, to be an indication of politeness. The more direct a given request strategy type, the shorter the inferential path to the request interpretation (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989:133).

Three degrees of directness are thought to manifest universally depending on the extent to which the illocution is transparent from the locution: conventionally direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect requests. In *direct* requests, the illocutionary force is indicated in the utterance by grammatical, lexical or semantic means. *Conventionally indirect* requests express the illocution through fixed linguistic conventions established in the speech community; and *non-conventionally indirect* requests require the addressee to decode the illocution from the interaction of the locution with its context. Directness levels are then sub-divided into nine possible strategy-types (Blum-Kulka, 1989:273-294), running along a continuum from direct to indirect, and are realized in linguistically fixed ways (further elaborated in Chapter 4). Variations of Head Acts are possible through changes in strategies.

Further sources of variation of Head Acts are possible through changes in perspective. In addition to strategy types, Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) analyse request *perspective*, which determines whether the request is hearer or speaker oriented or impersonal (see 4.1.2). Choice of perspective, like strategy choice, may provide variation in requests. Depending on the amount of risk involved to S's or H's face, different choice of perspective can have different effects on the hearer, that is, the request can sound more imposing or be seen as building solidarity. Speakers may choose, in phrasing their request, (a) to emphasise the role of the agent; *can you lend me?* (b) Their own role as recipients; *could I borrow?* or (c) to avoid the issue by using an inclusive we; *can we start clearing now?* or (d) the impersonal; *it needs to be cleared*. Requests can be either speaker oriented, hearer oriented, inclusive "self" oriented or impersonal.

In addition to strategies and perspective, modification such as downgraders of speech acts play a substantial role in the negotiation of politeness in that they are available as optional devices to further mitigate the directness of the request or to soften the harshness of an infraction. Blum-Kulka (1987:274) states that in contrast to the request strategies, which can be regarded as universals, the

subcategories of downgraders may vary cross-linguistically. Upgraders intensify the requests or apologies. Features such as strategies, modifications, and perspective combine in culturally distinct ways to show cross-culturally differing styles of politeness.

2.2.2 Method of analysis of Apologies

The analysis of apologies follows the same structure as in the case of requests. In the same way as request strategies reveal respondents' perceptions of politeness, answers to the speech acts of apologies can reveal whether speakers in a given culture consider it appropriate to apologize in the specific situation. Apologies show a fixed set of means of realization. Use is made of the apology speech act set ranging from the very indirect to the most direct utterances (Brown & Levinson, 1987:60). Olshtain (1989) and Trosborg (1987) were among researchers who coded apology realizations according to the semantic formula identified as constituting the apology speech act set (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989). In contrast to requests, realization strategies for apologies can take one of two forms: a) an illocutionary force indicating device (IFID), which selects a routinized formulaic expression of regret or: b) the use of an utterance containing reference to one or more elements of a closed set of specified preconditions. The preconditions must hold true for the apology act to take place.

In the CCSARP, the apology speech act set, as a unit of apology analysis, is a reliable tool when used for different languages because, given the same social factors, context features and level of offence, different languages realize apologies in similar ways. By performing the apology, S pays tribute to the social norm and attempts to placate the hearer. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1983) indicate that for each language there seems to be a scale of conventionality of IFID realizations.

2.3 Findings of CCSARP and aligned studies

Findings in these studies cluster around certain issues, namely cross-culturally different assessments of relative power or social distance, different value judgements or ground rules and the linguistic encoding of them, and different perceptions on the size of the imposition, often manifesting in different levels of directness.

2.3.1 Requests

2.3.1.1 Contextual factors

Blum-Kulka (1983:20) showed the importance of contextual factors on choice of strategy. She found that the NNSs of English used the same range of strategies as the NSs, yet their strategy choice differed in contextual distribution (i.e. in the different situations). Blum-Kulka and House (1989) concur with this when they report that, in a DCT, NSs of English use conventional indirectness as a first choice regardless of the relative roles of S and H or the imposition posed by the request, whereas Hebrew and Spanish speakers used more markedly different strategies. Blum-Kulka & House (1989) highlighted the influence of social and situational factors by showing how Spanish respondents exhibited more hearer-oriented requests and less downgrading, whereas English speakers showed fewer hearer oriented requests and more downgrading in the situations as well as more double downgraders to soften requests.

Hodge (1990) also showed how sociocultural differences could negatively affect communication between two different speech communities. Differences were evident in the realization of request speech patterns across two culturally different groups. Tasmanians and South Africans differed in their choices of request strategies in a variety of situations. Realizations of requests were influenced by inter-situational variation and speech act realizations were culture specific. The request strategy used by both groups was mainly conventional indirectness but the South Africans made more use of direct strategies, for example in using the imperative. Their choice of strategy emphasized their perceptions of the social

distance between S and H and the social power of H relative to S. The South Africans rated social imposition as being more offensive than the Tasmanians did. It appeared as if they did not share ground rules regarding what constituted an infraction. This was reflected in the more frequently used direct requests, imperatives and expletives used by the South Africans, which showed their annoyance at being imposed on.

Hodge (1990) explains the differences in responses may be attributed to sociocultural factors, that is, the Tasmanian's cultural background is one of a more egalitarian society where the boundaries of social status are not clearly defined. On the other hand, the cultural background of the South African subjects was one in which they had belonged to a socially and politically privileged social group in which social status was more clearly defined. Thus, social structure afforded the expression of privileges in rank and obligations and affected values and attitudes of respondents, which were reflected in their speech act realizations.

2.3.1.2 Social distance and obligation

The importance of social distance and obligation was apparent in some of the studies. Blum-Kulka and House (1989) found for all three NS groups, the most important factor influencing the indirectness level in a given situation was the degree of obligation on the part of H to comply with the request. They reported that NSs of German, Hebrew and Spanish expected more directness in some situations as opposed to others. Blum-Kulka and House (1989) and Kasper (1989) showed that for all language groups, with a few exceptions, the most frequently chosen directness level was preparatory.

2.3.1.3 Status

The effect of status on directness levels was reported by Beebe and Takahashi (In Cohen 1996a). Different levels of directness were also apparent in the study in that they noted a strong tendency for Japanese NNSs of English to use hints to convey

unpleasant information to H. The responses examined in this status-unequal situation, using a DCT, showed that positive remarks were used frequently as an adjunct to face-threatening acts in English. This finding contrasted with Blum-Kulka's (1989) subjects who chose hints infrequently.

2.3.1.4 Modification

The sociopragmatic value of modification may be perceived differently by different language groups. The preference for learners, based on the data, was high frequency in the use of external modification, which appears to be IL specific communicative behaviour, that is exhibited independently of respondents' L1. Kasper (1989) showed the sociopragmatic value of modification procedures. In comparing the speech of three groups of native and nonnative speakers, it was assumed that requestive force could be modified on three major dimensions, namely (a) the choice of a particular directness level, (b) the internal or (c) external modifying of a request. Within the three types of directness, nine directness levels, or request strategies were evident. She found that Danish and German NNSs used external modification procedures, which may not be regarded by NSs as appropriate. She found NNSs long utterances were regarded as too long by NSs.

2.3.1.5 Comparison of NS and NNS

Similarities in the native and nonnative speech acts were evident in the study carried out by Carrell and Konneker (1981) who examined the judgements of politeness made by NSs of American English and nonnative ESL learners. The judgements were investigated on eight different request strategies in English and were varied across the three syntactic/ semantic features namely, the imperative/ declarative/ interrogative mood, the presence or absence of modals and the tense of modals. The study looked at communicative competence, especially in the area of politeness features. Results of the study showed a high correlation between the native and nonnative judgements of politeness on the eight request strategies although ESL learners recognized more distinct levels of politeness and showed an

oversensitivity to politeness in that they identified more distinct levels, which L1 students regarded as unnecessary.

2.3.1.6 Perceptions of politeness

Indirectness in requests may also be an expression of perceptions of politeness and NS norms are generally an indication of what is considered by them as appropriate. Transfer of politeness strategies from one language to the other was evident in the study of Scarcella and Brunak (1981) who focused on the use and misuse of politeness features in adult L1 and L2 performance. They investigated the politeness strategies used by L1 and L2 Arabic speakers when addressing speakers of higher, equal and subordinate rank respectively, and aimed to identify the strategies which adult L2 performers had difficulty acquiring. L2 speakers were found to be limited in their range of politeness features and their ability to vary their use to suit the social context. Cultural differences in attitude towards those lower in rank were reflected by L2 speakers. In her study of request realizations in Hebrew, Blum-Kulka (1989) found the NNSs preferred fewer direct requestive strategies than the NSs, that is, the Hebrew speakers were more direct in their requests than the English speakers and attributed this to their NS norms.

2.3.1.7 Influence of L1 norms

Edmondson *et al.* (1984) claim that the lowest level of indirectness in the interlanguage of the German NNSs of English is accounted for by the L1 sociopragmatic norms regarding the distribution and frequency of this pragmalinguistic strategy rather than by unfamiliarity with the strategy itself. Edmondson *et al.* (1984), reported differences in levels of indirectness in realizing requests, complaints, rejections, and objections in role-plays between NSs and German NNSs of English. Even though a DCT was not used, they found that request and complaint strategies of NSs of English and German demonstrated a similar range of levels of directness but there was a higher frequency of more indirect speech acts in the English corpus.

2.3.1.8 Interlanguage

Interlanguage, as a reason for variability, was highlighted by Kasper (1989), who examined how different types of speech acts were performed by NNSs. She reported a high degree of uniformity among NSs of English in realizing requests, when compared to NSs of Danish and German. The data of Kasper (1989) comprises request realizations under five different contextual conditions collected in the CCSARP by means of a written DCT. Kasper (1989) focused on interlanguage (IL) pragmatics to explain variability since aspects of an interactants' interlanguage describe and explain learners' development and their use of pragmatic knowledge. There were greater degrees of situational variation in the use of hints although no groups used hints more than 20% of the time.

2.3.1.9 Interactional styles

Cultural variables of interactional styles was another factor that had an effect on respondents' choices. Faerch and Kasper (1989), also using a DCT, examined the request strategies used by NNSs with the same L1 (Danish) in two different L2's (English and German). The study demonstrated the NNSs' contextual sensitivity to choice of directness levels, which in most cases was matched with that of the L2 subjects. Differences occurred in the NNSs selection of syntactic and lexical downgraders, which were used less frequently and with less variety than NSs, and influenced to some extent by L1 transfer. This further confirmed Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1986) study. However all NNS groups displayed more supportive moves (e.g., justifications of their requests) than the target NSs.

Cross-cultural differences were also evident in apology realizations. The difference in NS and NNSs choice of apology realizations is reported in Olshtain (1983) (In Cohen, 1996a) where NSs of Hebrew, English and Russian, and English and Russian NNSs of Hebrew performed closed role-plays. The three groups of subjects showed variation in the realization of apology speech

patterns across languages and cultures. Data collected across eight apology situations revealed the extent of cross-cultural variation in the conventions of politeness selected. The responses of the two learner groups of Hebrew differed in politeness formulas from those of the native speakers of Hebrew. Hebrew NSs were more direct in their realizations than the other groups.

2.3.2 Apologies

2.3.2.1 Effect of context-internal and context-external factors

The effect of context-internal and context-external factors was highlighted in House (1988). In her study of apology performance, House combined a DCT, administered to German NNSs of English and NSs of English and German, with 3-point rating scales that assessed the weight of context-internal and context-external factors in the situations included in the DCT questionnaire. Contextual factors, such as severity of violation and culturally perceived obligation to apologize and the social factors including parameters such as social power, distance, sex and age, were assessed. A 3-point rating scale was used to evaluate NS and NNS perceptions. Ratings were found to be very similar except for 'severity of imposition' which the German NSs rated more highly, that is, they regarded infractions in a more serious light than the NNSs of German. The use of apology formulae was found to correlate positively with obligation to apologize. These contextual ratings helped explain the situation-specific use of apology strategies.

In Bergman and Kasper (1993), context-internal factors, such as severity of offence, correlated highly with obligation to apologize. In their study of Thai and American English speakers, informants rated contexts on a 5-point rating scale for contextual -internal and external factors. This concurs with Olshtain's finding that "severity of offence is the representative contextual factor in the socio-pragmatic set of apology" (Olshtain, 1989:160). The only apology strategy that correlated with context -internal factors in all three groups of speakers was apology intensification.

2.3.2.2 Modification

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) and Faerch and Kasper (1989) found that NNSs at an intermediate proficiency level tend to provide more "verbal goods" compared to NSs. That is, they used longer utterances to apologize usually by using three

strategies, namely downgrading responsibility, repair offers, and other kinds of redress such as concern for hearer. NNSs used these consistently more frequently than NSs.

Trosborg (1987), Olshtain (1989) and Cohen, Olshtain and Rosenstein (1986) (In Cohen, 1996a:408), showed differences in modifications between NS and advanced NNS apology behaviour in English. A marked difference didn't emerge between the use of main strategies in groups of Hebrew learners of English and native speakers of American English but marked differences were exhibited in the modifications of apologies. Findings in the latter study revealed that NNSs did not discern certain sociolinguistic distinctions made by NSs, for example in the use of *excuse me* and *sorry*.

2.3.2.3 Transference of sociopragmatic strategies

The transference of sociopragmatic strategies from one language to another is exhibited in Trosborg (1987) who compared Danish learners of English with native speakers of English. A difference between Danish learners and native English speakers emerged in the frequency with which the seven main strategies were selected, indicating a change from NS-English norms. The fact that no significant differences were found on the main strategies when the performance of NS-English was compared with NS-Danish wasn't surprising as Trosborg claims the cultures are similar.

2.3.2.4 Preference for speech act set

Similarities in strategy selection were evident in a number of studies, including that of Olshtain (1989). She used a DCT to focus on the similarities and differences of apology realizations across four different languages, relative to the same social and pragmatic constraints. Similar to Trosborg (1987) the languages didn't show significant differences in strategy selection. Olshtain (1989) reported that in analyzing apology strategies among NSs of Hebrew, American English, Canadian

French, and German, the same types of strategies i.e. from the speech act set, appeared among subject responses for all four languages. However, they varied cross-linguistically in the frequency with which they were applied for different situations (for example, forgetting to return a book, as opposed to bumping into someone's car). Contextual features played a significant role in choice of strategy especially in expression of responsibility. Differences in social distance were also evident since Hebrew speakers used IFIDS with strangers rather than with close friends (Olshtain, 1989:162).

Olshtain (1989) suggests that the data collection instrument, the DCT, be carefully examined and questions whether it accurately reflects data in all situations. The seven situations requiring apologies were specifically chosen to create contexts that were "cross-culturally very similar"(Olshtain, 1989:171), that is, contexts representative of a student's life on a campus in a Western society. Although this was intentionally done to highlight cross-cultural differences that would be evident under such strong circumstances, it isn't surprising that realizations of apologies showed high levels of similarity.

2.3.2.5 Differences in perceptions of cultural values

Cross-cultural differences in apologies may result in misunderstanding since politeness is often perceived differently by different speech communities. Differences in values, which are potential sources of miscommunication, are reflected in the studies of various researchers such as Thomas (1983). She points out that most of our misunderstanding of other people is not due to any inability to hear them or understand their words but a failure to understand a speaker's intention, that is, pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983).

2.3.2.6 Differences in directness levels

Cross-cultural differences in respondents' choice of strategy, in Thomas 1981(In Thomas 1983), showed a gradient phenomenon rather than categorical

differences. Direct and indirect strategies were used by the respondents with varying frequency and these cross-cultural differences exhibited for situations in which the participants might have identified with their role as students as well as in more general situations. The study showed the preference of NSs of English for conventional indirectness regardless of the relative roles of S and H or the imposition posed by the request. Thomas does acknowledge however, that there are greater differences between European and non-Western languages, which may reveal different findings.

2.3.2.7 Differences in interactional behaviour

Wolfson (1992) points out that there are often difficulties when members of one group produce speech acts, which are inappropriate for members of another cultural group, for example in her study where differences in the distribution of compliments led to intercultural miscommunication. She found that although compliments in the US are exchanged between intimates and total strangers, the great majority (the bulge), take place within interactions between speakers who are neither intimate nor strangers. She argues that interactional behaviour is reflective of the American social system i.e. the relative stability of relationships at the two extremes of the social distance continuum, in contrast with the instability of those in the centre (Wolfson, 1992:207).

2.3.2.8 Differences in length of utterances

Another reason for miscommunication between interactants may be longer utterances. This can occur whenever the CP (co-operative principle) or the PP (politeness principle) is violated interactionally. Although they do occur in NNSs speech, they seem to be evident in speakers who are not fully aware of specific cultural norms of what is appropriate pragmatically. Although adherence to the principle of co-operation is necessary prior to communication, the nature of the norms might vary across cultures, subcultures and individuals, even if they are related to Gricean maxims.

Pragmatic failure may therefore result from the unintentional lack of adherence to normative rules of speech behaviour. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) claim that the longer utterances of NN's might lead to pragmatic failure as a result of unintentional violations of native norms. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) investigated length of utterance in the request performance in Hebrew of NSs and NNSs at three levels of proficiency and argue that by examining the choices native speakers make, preferences can be established regarding the manner and type of information to be provided in each request. Learners with a high, yet still nonnativelike, proficiency increase their verbal output to ensure that they are understood.

The inappropriate overindulgence in the use of words by NNSs may cause L1 speakers to react with impatience and to judge L2 speakers more harshly on the maxim of relevance and brevity. Edmondson *et al.* 1984, points out a link between this overinformativeness and the learner's need for higher levels of contextual explicitness. However, over-elaboration by NSs may not be viewed in the same way for NNSs but may rather act as a useful metalingual and metacommunicative tool in cross-cultural communication. For example, in Faerch and Kasper (1989), Danish and German NNSs tended to use more external request modification, that is, grounders and justifications for actions, than NSs of English, which may result in misunderstanding and miscommunication.

In summary, concepts of social distance, relative power and the inherent imposition of a particular face-threatening act can vary enormously from culture to culture, therefore differing perceptions of imposition may cause confusion and result in students being regarded as impolite. The various studies discussed in the literature review show the similarities and differences across and within cultures in the realization of requests and apologies. One of the universals of request strategies is thought to be a close link between indirectness and politeness. Indirect requests are conventionally those considered as having a pragmatic duality, that

is, they can be interpreted as questions for information or requests for action. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) posit that the primary features of requests are universal and that all languages have request patterns that share the pragmatic features or properties attributed to conventional indirectness. They claim that 'The validation of the primary features can count as further evidence for 'universalistic claims' (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989:24). Edmondson *et al.* (1984), Thomas (1983), Kasper (1989), Blum-Kulka and House (1989), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) show that different languages use different features but the *form* of these features varies cross-culturally.

The CCSARP revealed the prominence of conventional indirectness as a highly favoured requesting option exploited by all languages studied. Blum-Kulka points out that the universality of conventional indirectness should be thought of as the sharing of pragmatic features of languages rather than regarding the features as cross-linguistically equal in their form and usage. What emerged was a preference in most languages for the strategy of conventional indirectness, since in most Western languages this strategy serves to save H's face best.

In conclusion, the analysis of CCSARP data in many of the research studies seems to be in line with the basic assumptions underlying the study. On the one hand the phenomena captured by the main dimensions are validated by the observed data and therefore might be regarded as possibilities for universality; on the other hand, the cross-linguistic comparative analysis of the distribution of realization patterns, relative to the same social constraints, reveals rich cross-cultural variability. Researchers participating in the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984:210), caution that the phenomena captured by the analytical framework of the project are not to be regarded as "an exhaustive description of requests and apologies", but that they will be regarded as reflecting their understanding of the speech acts at the time of study. They suggest that further studies will possibly deepen this understanding.

2.3.3 Critique of CCSARP methodology

The studies reported on are subject to the same limitations as any other data obtained through DCT's. As Wolfson has pointed out, this method of data collection has the advantage of allowing a considerable quantity of data to be collected speedily, but it does have serious limitations. She cautions, "it must always be recognized that responses elicited within a written frame are, by their very nature, not the same as spontaneous speech" (Wolfson, 1989:70). She further points out that through this method it is also 'impossible to collect the kind of elaborated (and often negotiated behaviour) which we typically find in naturally occurring interactions' (Wolfson, 1989:70). De Kadt (1992a:106), who argues that politeness is negotiated throughout an interaction, rather than shown in just one utterance, confirms this point,

DCT's have been a "much used and much criticized elicitation technique for collection of data in cross-cultural and IL pragmatics" (Kasper & Dahl 1991:221). However, the CCSARP studies consistently show that responses tended to cluster in a few subcategories, such as all subjects' distinct preference for grounders as supportive moves for their requests, which shows that there is some reliability in DCT's.

2.4 Comparison between Western and African cultures

De Kadt (1992a & b, 1994) and Chick (1985, 1986, 1991) have carried out most local research on interactions with African cultures. De Kadt has examined the request strategies of Zulu mother tongue speakers and compared Zulu speakers of English with first language speakers. Chick (1985) analyzed South African Black/ White interaction and points out how different frequencies of choices of strategies for realizing speech acts may be a potential source of miscommunication. He shows how continued misunderstanding can generate negative cultural stereotypes.

These studies shed light on different cultural norms and speech behaviour in the

South African context. De Kadt (1992a) provides valuable information on the speech act behaviour of Zulu L1 requests that is a basis of comparison with the L2 students in the current study. Chick's work highlights cross-cultural communication and examines reasons for different sociocultural behaviour, especially in an academic environment. Another study that reports on research carried out with South Africans is that of Wood (1992) who showed how differences in realizations of the speech act of thanking, between Zulu mother tongue speakers and English learners of Zulu, can cause misunderstanding.

2.4.1 The notion of 'face'

Certain assumptions about 'face' or, individuals' self-esteem (Brown & Levinson, 1987:2), can be seen in relation to the three main strategies of politeness. Uses of each are tied to social aspects, specifically the relationship between speaker, addressee and the potential offensiveness of the message content. In terms of this, De Kadt (1994:105) claims that the concept of 'face' in the Zulu culture seems to be seen differently from Western societies in that it appears to be more situated in a person's belonging to a group rather than in an individual. Self-esteem seems to be concerned more with one's living up to the expectation of others rather than one's own expectations. Politeness in Zulu culture is not merely a matter of negotiating an interaction politely, relying on tact but is also concerned with sparing others embarrassment or saving H's face (De Kadt, 1994:105). The notion of face also concerns the appropriateness of the topic and consideration of others' feelings. On these grounds, it is apparent that different criteria may need to be applied in the assessment of politeness in L2 speakers of English, but is beyond the scope of this study.

2.4.2 Interactional style

With regard to Zulu interactional style, evidence of politeness strategies used by respondents is contradictory. On the one hand there is a leaning toward negative politeness strategies and on the other, a tendency, to positive politeness. According to Brown & Levinson (1987:102), positive politeness techniques can be seen in

general as a kind of “social accelerator”, whereas negative politeness may be regarded as application of a social brake. Although a particular cultural group may favour a specific politeness type, both styles seem to exhibit in Zulu interactional style. De Kadt (1994) claims that interactants attempt to avoid imposing on the one hand yet on the other hand there is expectancy for requests to be met. “...based on ‘ubuntu’, there is a general expectation of considerateness in social relations” (De Kadt, 1994:104). The Zulu speaker may feel ambivalent about using negative politeness techniques, usually associated with deference by L1 speakers, and on the other hand positive politeness techniques, usually associated with solidarity, in an English speaking academic community.

Chick (1985), like De Kadt, pointed to the differences in communication strategies between NSs and NNSs of English in the South African context. He raised issues regarding interaction between European languages and NNSs of English in South Africa. He showed how second and third language speakers of English in academic institutions are expected to negotiate their meaning in English throughout interactions. Chick (1992:205) cites Wolfson as providing reasons for miscommunication. She claims that people exhibit different cultural patterns of communication and what participants apologize or thank for usually reflects the values of the speech community. Based on this, assessment of people’s character, behaviour or accomplishments usually takes place unconsciously.

Chick (1985) claims different strategies for face-repair work are evident in interactions between Zulu English (ZE) and South African English (SAE) speakers. Interactions with students and a professor concerning poor performance in an examination revealed that the ZE-student used deference politeness and the SAE-student used a form of solidarity politeness. The interactional consequences of the choices of strategies for repairing face by the SAE-and ZE-students differed. The ZE-student was perceived as more severely challenging the professor’s assumptions about equitable relations with his students than the SAE-student and

consequently was possibly evaluated in a more negative light (Chick 1996:341). Difficulties arise when the use of politeness strategies, in this case in an academic context, are perceived as inappropriate and result in negative evaluation.

2.4.3 Sociocultural norms

Wood (1992) outlined how culture-specific sociocultural norms differ between Zulu mother-tongue speakers and English learners of Zulu. She highlighted how differences in the realization of the speech act of expressing gratitude can be misinterpreted. Through empirical research, she attempted to predict the type of mother tongue preferences that might enhance communicative competence for third language learners of Zulu. The perception by Zulu speakers is that NSs of English tend to over-thank. Misunderstanding occurs because the gestural acknowledgement of thanks in Zulu often goes unnoticed by English speakers who aren't accustomed to observing this as an indicator of appreciation. She argues that although the speech act of expressing gratitude exists in the mother tongue, it is not always realized in the same way in the target language and that awareness of sociolinguistic rules should be raised.

Social structure is a factor in cross-cultural interaction, which is reflected in speech act utterances of other studies. Chick points out how in a follow up study conducted by Herbert (1986), White South African responses showed a difference in the pattern of responses to the speech act of compliments. He attributed this to the "uncertainty about social relations, which is a consequence of the rapid desegregation occurring in the South African University". The reason for the differences appears to lie in the social system in which the group is situated, both in this case and in other similar incidences.

2.4.4 Deference

'Deference' and 'respect' are two aspects that relate to politeness in Zulu learners of English. De Kadt (1994:112) suggests that an ethnographic approach to the study of politeness in Zulu would probably be more appropriate

than an empirical study using a DCT to collect data. Deference is often negotiated throughout an interaction by the use of various strategies, such as indirectness, or in some instances very direct speech. De Kadt (1994:104) explains that 'ubuntu' or humanity, defined as a deeply felt respect and belief in the equal value and life of human beings, is central to Zulu ethos. However, Zulu culture is clearly structured into a series of hierarchies involving authority and submission and based on the categories of age, social status and gender. Members of the culture are expected to show deference to those requiring respect in terms of these categories.

2.4.5 Perceptions of politeness

De Kadt (1994) challenges the claims of universality made by the proponents of politeness theory and questions whether there aren't other more appropriate assumptions and methods for the analysis of requests in a non-Western language such as Zulu. She shows (1994:108) that whereas in all other languages, according to CCSARP data, conventionally indirect strategies are by far the most frequent, in Zulu the pattern is inverted (70% direct, 8% conventionally indirect and 22% hints). Zulu speakers exhibit an unexpectedly high percentage of direct requests which leads De Kadt to query whether the universal link between indirectness and politeness holds for Zulu.

Further anomalies show requests as mainly direct and yet hints, usually considered the most indirect, nearly twice as frequent in Zulu than in the English data. This seeming contradiction may be explained according to the deference politeness system of Zulu, with utterances being expressed in a very indirect manner. De Kadt (1994:107) calls for a different model of politeness for analysing Zulu involving three factors, which she believes more fairly contribute to the negotiation of politeness of Zulu speakers of English. These are: non-verbal, and kinesic elements; the structure of the dialogue, for example the frequently used preliminary phase before a request is made; and the actual linguistic forms used.

She argues that interactions between equals and speakers with higher status can “proceed to the matter in hand promptly once the preliminaries have been dealt with, although even here hints can be used in an effort to avoid imposing” (De Kadt 1994:107). When two equals are conversing, direct request strategies predominate but if the request is perceived as weightier and especially if the two speakers are not close friends, hints tend to be used.

In conclusion, different cultural values and norms of speech communities are reflected in the speech act realizations of respondents. Despite the existence of the same strategies available to each speech community, different choices of strategy, perspective and modifications to speech acts result in different expressions of politeness. Differences exist in the perceptions of social relations, status and FTA's being negotiated. Even minor differences in interpretation strategies relayed from the L1 to the L2 can lead to misunderstanding and cross-cultural stereotyping of interactional style. Differences exhibited however, do not contradict the underlying universal or “generic’ properties of the linguistic construction of utterances, which Brown and Levinson (1987:36) see as “deriving from universal constraints on human interaction”. It is the differential assessments of social distance, power and imposition, which produce the variations in interactional style.

Politeness is generally regarded as a positive value, which contributes towards maintaining good relations within society. However, the ways in which this is achieved varies both within speech communities and cross-culturally. In this literature review, a background has been provided to the phenomenon of politeness by the examination of various theories of politeness.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the analytical framework and the methods of data collection and analysis are reported on. Two different methods of data collection and analysis were used in order to provide triangulation and to so raise the validity of the findings. The following three types of data, revealing different aspects of politeness, are included in the study: the realization, elicited through discourse completion tests, of request strategies and apology strategies by L1 and L2 students, and a qualitative assessment of L1 and L2 students' perception of politeness.

3.2 Analytical framework

The analytical framework used in the CCSARP project (In Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989) was used. The CCSARP was initially used to investigate cross-cultural and interlingual variation in two speech acts: requests and apologies. Use of the CCSARP framework allows the obtaining of a fairly large sample of the two specific speech acts used in the same contexts within the same language as produced by L1 and L2 speakers of English. Respondents are required to write what they would have said in the given situation and this written elicitation technique enables the obtaining of more stereotyped responses which is the type of speech behaviour needed in cross-cultural comparability. The use of experimentally controlled techniques required by the DCT methodology also allows for concentration on specific areas of language use.

3.3 Methodology

In answer to the questions raised in the present study, a two-part study was undertaken to analyse the production of the speech acts of requests and apologies by L1 and L2 students and to examine L1 and L2's perceptions of apologies and requests.

3.3.1 Subjects

The sample for the first part of the study (the DCT) comprised 40 L2 and 20 L1 first year students at Technikon Natal. The majority of the 60 subjects

were Zulu speaking since they come from various parts of KwaZulu Natal but there were students who had Xhosa, North Sotho and South Sotho, Tswana and Swazi as their mother tongue. The L1 students all had English as their mother tongue.

3.3.2 Instruments

Two instruments were used to collect data in an attempt to provide both quantitative and qualitative information. The first was a discourse-completion test (DCT) (see Appendix 2) and the second a qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix 3) to elicit in-depth responses.

3.3.2.1 DCT

The DCT was originally used in the comparison of the speech act realizations of native and non-native Hebrew speakers (Blum-Kulka, 1983). According to Beebe and Cummings (1996:65) "...studies of cross-cultural speech act realizations have still relied heavily on DCT's to collect data." The same instrument was used for the present study since controlled elicitation procedures allow for reliable comparability but it was adapted for suitability to the Technikon Natal context. The adaptation of the DCT was informed by the studies of requesting behaviour conducted by Blum-Kulka (1983), Blum-Kulka and House (1989), Hodge (1990) and de Kadt (1992b).

Each situation in the DCT was varied according to the social factors of social distance and power. The descriptions of the respective situations specified the setting and the social distance between the participants and their status relative to each other. The socially differentiated situations, which comprise the test, were then presented as scripted dialogues. Each dialogue was preceded by a short description of the situation, in which the setting was specified, followed by an incomplete dialogue. Respondents were asked to complete the dialogue that provided the speech act (request or apology) aimed at.

The adapted DCT comprised 16 situations. Eight situations related to requests and eight to apologies (see Appendix 2). The situations requiring request and apology realizations were devised to replicate contexts representative of a student's life on campus in a Western society and therefore a strong expectancy existed for students to act quite similarly. The deliberate selection of such contexts was intended to focus on cross-cultural differences that may exist, even under such strong common circumstances.

Situations from the CCSARP were adapted and new ones designed to suit the learning environment at Technikon Natal. All situations reflected possible interactions, which occur in an academic environment between L1 students and lecturers, and L2 students. All dialogues contained a response to the missing turn. The last turn in each dialogue was designed to signal illocutionary uptake and indicated who the respondent needed to address. The coding system devised for the CCSARP is highly sophisticated and allows for the replication of research in any language. In the present study it provided a means of differentiating among types of linguistic choices within each section of the response (i.e. each unit of analysis), thereby allowing for an objective assessment of the speech acts being studied. The CCSARP identifies units for analysis evident in both requests and apologies.

3.3.2.1.1 Requests

The CCSARP analytical framework for requests is based on three major levels of politeness, which are further sub-divided into nine mutually exclusive categories. Based on the CCSARP coding, a request sequence is identified as all the utterance(s) involved in the turn completing the dialogue in the DCT. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:275-277) segment requests into 'Head Acts', alerters and supportive moves, forms of which vary cross-culturally. The Head Act, which is the core of the request sequence, is the minimal unit, which can realize a request. Each illocutionary act has its own felicity conditions which act as the defining conditions of that act. An act of requesting can only be considered successful if these conditions are met.

The framework allows for the following coding: Firstly, relating to the Head Act, the framework allows for strategies used to realize requests. Secondly, it allows for analysis of request perspectives, which looks to see whether the request is hearer or speaker oriented or impersonal. Thirdly, the framework identifies mitigators of the speech act, such as downgraders, upgraders, intensifiers and expletives. Lastly, the framework allows for identification of adjuncts to the Head Act, which are 'external' modifications. The following primary features (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:17) are coded for requests:

Head Act - The request proper, which can vary on two dimensions, namely strategy type and perspective.

Alerters - These serve as attention getters.

Supportive moves - external modification.

Downgraders and upgraders - internal modification.

The utterance; *Sir, I won't be able to type out the assignment. Can I hand write it please*, would be segmented in the following way:

Sir (alerter)

I won't be able to type out the assignment (supportive move)

Can I hand write it (Head Act), (conventionally indirect; speaker perspective)

Please (downgrader)

In terms of request strategies, there are three levels of directness, which are thought to be manifested universally, namely conventionally direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect. These are sub-divided again into nine strategy-types (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:18), which comprise the following:

1. *mood derivable*: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force.
2. *performatives*: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named.
3. *hedged performatives*: utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions.

4. *obligation statements*: utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act.
5. *want statements*: utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act.
6. *suggestory formulae*: utterances which contain a suggestion to do x.
7. *query preparatory*: utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions as conventionalised in any language.
8. *strong hints*: utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act.
9. *mild hints*: utterances that make no reference to the request proper.

3.3.2.1.2 Apologies

Apologies are examined in the DCT but are regarded differently from requests, as they are usually post-events acts, which may involve loss of face for the speaker as opposed to the hearer. Apologies can take one of two forms or a combination of both. Firstly, the illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) or the use of an utterance, which contains reference to one or more elements from a closed set of specified propositions. Olshtain and Cohen (1983), refer to an apology speech act set that they claim encompasses the potential range of apology strategies. A speech act set is a combination of speech acts that, taken together, make up a complete speech act (Murphy & Neu, 1996:214).

The apology speech act set includes the following five potential strategies:

1. an IFID (be sorry; apologize; regret; excuse etc): *I'm sorry*;
2. an explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violation:
I wanted to take notes;
3. an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offence: *It's my fault*;
4. an offer of repair: *I'll rub out the writing* ; and
5. a promise of forbearance: *It won't happen again*.

A great advantage of the DCT is that "it permits the researcher to control for specific variables of the situation, thus giving a coherence to the findings which

may be very difficult to achieve otherwise" (Wolfson, 1989:69). The two variables of social distance and power have been controlled for in the CCSARP, as well as the internal contextual features. These include the parameters specific to the speech acts elicited, such as the type of goal for requests or the kind of offence committed for apologies (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:274). The DCT is useful for an initial classification of strategies, which can be tested for validity through a comparison with data collected through another method, in the present case, a qualitative questionnaire.

3.3.2.1.3 Situational variation

In the situations selected, following Blum-Kulka 1989:15, the roles between students and lecturers were clearly defined and the status relationships relatively clear-cut. The difference in status between the two interactants reflected the power structure within the academic environment and is not necessarily socio-economic. Items in the DCT, to avoid confusion with the qualitative questionnaire, were randomised so that in each situation, the social distance between the participants and their relative status varied. All situations depicted dialogues that reflected daily occurrences at a tertiary institution and were familiar to both L1 and L2 respondents. In the 16-item questionnaire, consisting of 8 request and 8 apology situations, all dialogues contained a response to the turn, which had been omitted (see Appendix 2).

3.3.2.1.4 Manipulating external contextual features

With regard to external contextual features, the items of the questionnaire varied in terms of the participants' role relationship, that is, on the dimensions of dominance (social power) and social distance (familiarity). In constructing the situations, the CCSARP situations were followed and the role relationship between the two participants systematically varied along the parameters +/- dominance and +/- social distance, based on Blum-Kulka (1989:15).

Three role constellations are represented in the situations, namely; (a) {+SD}, {x<y}; (b) {+SD}, {x=y}; and (c) {-SD}, {x=y}. There were no situations where $x >$

y because students were not requested to play the role of a lecturer since this was considered unrealistic. In most situations, +SD was used to describe the social distance between interactants but in those situations, which specifically stated students were friends (10,13,16), -SD was used. It was evident in these situations that the students were familiar and in situation 10 and 16, the actual wording 'friend' was used. Regarding social distance with lecturers, +SD was used to describe the relationship. The sex of speakers and hearers was randomly varied across all situations, as the questionnaire was not designed to investigate this variable. The variable race does not feature because it was assumed that the L2's would use English to address L1's, since otherwise they would use isiZulu.

3.3.2.1.5 Manipulating internal contextual features

Internal contextual features include such factors as the type of goal for requests or the kind of offence committed for apologies. The type of goal (for action or permission) may affect the way in which the request is performed. Respondents sometimes need to seek a favour of the addressee, but in other situations, the requester may need the addressee to perform an obligatory action.

In certain apology situations, in addition to social distance and power, the contextual factors of the severity of the violation and obligation to respond was included. These internal contextual features were systematically varied across situations as the kind of offence in apologies may be mild or severe. For example, Situation 1 is essentially a request for action whereas Situation 5 is a request for permission. In apologies, Situation 9 may be interpreted as a fairly mild apology whereas Situation 16 may be perceived as severe.

Variation may also be evident in the context in which the speech act is made, that is, whether private or public. Some situations reflected utterance in a private capacity (Situation 2 and 3) and others, utterance in a public capacity (Situation 4). Reaction to the speech act was also varied in that most situations reflected compliance on the part of the hearer but two situations reflected non-

compliance (Situation 5 and 14). In both situations the lecturer does not comply with the respective request and apology. The situations, including all the variations, follow:

Requests

- S1 A student is talking loudly while a lecturer is giving important information to the class and you cannot hear. You ask the student to be quiet.
x=y, +SD, goal – action, public.
- S2 A lecturer instructs you to use a particular reference book, which you don't know how to find. You have to ask someone to help you find the book.
x=y, +SD, goal – action, private.
- S3 A lecturer has requested a typed assignment, which you are only able to do by hand. You ask whether you can submit this.
x<y, +SD, goal – permission, private.
- S4 You are in the classroom in the middle of a lecture when you need to go to the toilet. You have to excuse yourself to the lecturer.
x<y, +SD, goal – permission, public.
- S5 You need more time to finish an assignment which was meant to have been completed by a certain date. You ask the lecturer for an extension.
x<y, +SD, goal – permission, private.
- S6 Before you are able to finish taking down notes, the lecturer removes the transparency. You have to request that he leave it on for longer.
x<y, +SD, goal – action, public.
- S7 Whilst in the library studying, you leave your seat for a few minutes. On returning, a student has removed your belongings. You have to ask for your seat back.
x=y, +SD, goal – private.
- S8 A member of your group formed by the lecturer to complete a group assignment has not put any effort into the task. You have to ask him/her to redo the task.

$x=y$, +SD, goal – action, public/private.

Apologies

S9 You cannot explain a difficult concept your lecturer has lectured on and have to apologize for this lack of understanding.

$x<y$, +SD.

S10 You arrive half an hour late for an arranged time of study with your friend. He arrives on time but you have to apologize for your late arrival.

$x=y$, -SD.

S11 You forget to bring along a book that you borrowed from your lecturer. You have to apologize as you promised to bring it that day.

$x<y$, +SD.

S12 You disagreed with a fellow student during a group discussion and were rude to her. You have to apologize for being offensive.

$x=y$, +SD.

S13 You borrowed your roommate's notes without his/her permission and now he is looking for them. You have to apologize to your roommate.

$x=y$, -SD.

S14 You have to interrupt your lecturer to ask the date of the next test but she is speaking to someone else. You have to apologize for the interruption.

$x<y$, +SD.

S15 You have to apologize for scribbles that the librarian has noticed in the book you have just returned. Apologize for your actions.

$x<y$, +SD.

S16 Your friend asked you to hand in for him an important assignment to a lecturer but you forgot to hand it in on time. Apologize for not obliging.

$x=y$, -SD.

3.3.2.2 Qualitative questionnaire

The DCT protocol was supplemented with a qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix 3), as a second instrument because it was assumed that the responses from the questionnaire would reveal more about politeness of both L1 and L2 students. The qualitative questionnaire, unlike the DCT, was administered to only 48, L2 and 15, L1 informants. The 63 first year students were randomly chosen from similar courses. They were comparable with the DCT informants in that English was not their mother tongue. Although the numbers of L1 and L2 informants were smaller in the qualitative questionnaire in comparison to the DCT, reliability is not affected since the L1 comments merely provide general evidence of L1 perceptions of acceptability regarding politeness. Given the demographics at the institution, the smaller sample of L1 informants is also commensurate with the percentage of L1 students. The first 8 questions of the 14-item questionnaire referred to requests and the remaining 6 to apologies. The open-ended questionnaire was an attempt to qualitatively assess perceptions of politeness.

The questionnaire was tried out with a small pilot group of students before being implemented to ensure accuracy in the interpretation of questions and to establish the relevancy of the questions. Revisions, such as the replacement of the word 'fault' for 'infraction', were made. The questionnaire included open-ended questions to which the subject was expected to respond in a descriptive manner. It was hoped that this type of questionnaire would elicit honest answers regarding perceptions of requests and apologies.

The data was analysed by applying an organising scheme and patterns, which emerged from the questionnaire, were recorded. A description of the frequencies obtained for each of the categories in raw numbers was converted to a percentage so as to represent the information quantitatively. Responses were calculated as percentages but answers reflecting a lack of understanding of the question were not included in the total count. Quotations or actual examples of the written data, as suggested by Seliger & Shohamy (1990:244) provided supporting evidence for the patterns and categories obtained. Each

question was linked in some way to context external and context internal features, that is, social distance and power, requestive goal, the question of imposition, severity of offence and obligation to apologize. Questions 1 - 8 dealt with requests and Questions 9 - 14 related to apologies.

In order to complement the data collected from the DCT, responses of students collected from the qualitative questionnaire were recorded and analysed since they were considered to "more accurately reflect what the respondents wanted to say" (Nunan, 1992:143). Question 11, relating to situation assessment, was an attempt to validate student assumptions of dominance and social distance with regard to apologies and to tap native speaker perceptions of other inherent characteristics of these situations.

The following information relates to the questionnaire and explains the rationale for the respective questions:

Question 1. The role of status in politeness (Requests).

This question was an attempt to establish whether politeness, in terms of requests, was related to status.

Question 2. Preference of strategy

This question sought to ascertain whether directness or indirectness was the preferred strategy.

Question 3. The impositive nature of requests.

This question was an attempt to establish whether requests were regarded as an imposition.

Question 4. Words and phrases used to lessen the imposition.

This question was meant to ascertain what words or phrases were preferred in the modifying of imposition.

Question 5. Difficulty of the request.

This question sought to establish which request was considered the most difficult to perform and why.

Question 6. Perception of hints.

This question was an attempt to establish whether hints were regarded as polite or impolite.

Question 7. Situations in which co-operation is difficult.

This question sought to find out which social factors, such as social distance, power and context, made requesting difficult.

Question 8. Risk factor in requests.

This question was meant to probe respondent's attitudes to the risk factor inherent in requests.

Question 9. The role of status in politeness (Apologies).

This question was an attempt to discover whether politeness, in relation to apologies, was related to status.

Question 10. Obligation to apologize.

This question was to ascertain how important respondents regarded the obligation to apologize.

Question 11. Rating scale assessment of apologies.

This question was particularly designed to evaluate the socio-pragmatic factors by situations. It was necessary to establish levels of agreement on the assessment of the independent variables by mother tongue speakers of English. Informants were asked to rate the apology contexts 9 -16 outlined in the DCT. The informants were also required to rate the contexts for 2 context-external factors (social distance and dominance) and 2 context-internal factors (severity of offence and, offenders obligation to apologize). The context-external factors were to be rated on a scale of 1-3 and the context-internal factors on a 1 or 2 scale. The selection of the context-external factors, social distance and dominance, (an indication of power), is based on the weightiness formula of Brown and Levinson (1987:76).

The context-internal factors (imposition and severity), are seen to function as part of Brown and Levinson's, "degree of imposition" dimension, which they specified for the speech act of apology. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the kind and amount of redress is determined by the weightiness of face-

threatening acts (FTAs) together with the added values of social distance, dominance, and degree of imposition. It is essential to establish what constitutes an offence in the L1, how members of different cultures perceive the offence contexts, and how these perceptions are reflected in output strategies.

Question 12. Perception of responsibility

This question was meant to probe respondent's attitude to responsibility for infractions.

Question 13. Role of explanation.

This question sought to establish whether respondents regarded explanation for the infraction as important.

Question 14. Making amends.

This question was to ascertain when respondents thought making amends was necessary.

3.4. Procedure

A pilot study, with members of the target groups, was carried out to establish the suitability of the instrument and to establish whether the dialogues were understandable. The DCT used for the present study was based on student responses in the initial pilot study after adaptations to the wording of the dialogue and the situations. For the first part of the study, the subjects were instructed to complete the request or apology they would have used in the situation and were provided with co-textual clues for the speech acts required to complete the dialogue. The clues were provided by means of an utterance showing compliance or non-compliance with the request and by an acceptance or rejection of the apology. When coding qualitative questionnaire data, responses that revealed a misunderstanding of the task were discarded. In part two of the study, the qualitative questionnaire was distributed to the 63 students and the subjects were instructed to provide an honest answer to the questions.

3.4.1 Data analysis

The data collected were analysed using the analytical framework of the

CCSARP. The coding scheme of the project, based on the frames of primary features, already mentioned, was used. Nil and sub-classifications of listed features were coded. The discourse-fillers, comprising the utterances provided by the informants, were analysed according to the units of analysis prescribed by the CCSARP. The free responses to the open-ended questions of the qualitative questionnaire were compiled to assess the extent to which the realizations provided further insights into politeness.

3.4.1.1 DCT analysis

3.4.1.1.1 Requests

The data was analysed according to the coding scheme and framework used by the CCSARP researchers (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:281-287). The Head acts and Alerters were identified and the same procedure, regarding the nine strategy types and choice of perspective, was followed. The internal modification (downgraders and upgraders) and external modification (supportive moves) were also identified and categorised. The number of respondents' choices for each situation was totalled and converted to percentages in order to show comparability (see Appendix 1).

The responses were sub-categorised according to the three main levels of indirectness identified by the researchers (see Appendix 1). Various sub-categories, such as query preparatory, reveal further variation in the request choices between both groups. Variance in the directness of requesting behaviour was recorded. The following three factors which may affect directness in requesting behaviour were considered, namely: (1) type of request goal, i.e. whether the request is for action, goods, permission or information; (2) the setting in which it takes place, i.e. either private or public and; (3) the social variables of relative distance and power.

3.4.1.1.2 Apologies

The basic form used to realize the act of apologising, i.e. the IFID (illocutionary force indicating device) (Searle, 1969:64) was used to code utterances. The

IFID is the most explicit realization of an apology but can also be realized (sometimes without an IFID), with the use of an utterance, containing reference to one or more elements from the closed set (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983) of specified propositions. The closed set, containing the five potential strategies, was used to code responses. On analysis, an utterance was assigned to a particular category and classified according to a list of sub-classifications.

After coding the data using the CCSARP coding scheme, an interpretation of the data was presented. Tables were incorporated to indicate clearly the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 students' speech act realizations. The data of the L2 and L1' students were compared in order to show differentiation among types of linguistic choices within each component of the response.

3.4.1.2 Qualitative questionnaire analysis

The open-ended questionnaire was administered to 48 L2 and 15 L1 speakers. The qualitative data, yielded by the qualitative questionnaire, required quantification in order that patterns could be identified. Answers were classified according to the factors influencing realization choices such as, perceived size of the imposition, weight of the request and severity of the infraction. Answers were counted and calculated according to percentages to show comparability of data between L1 and L2 responses (see Section 4.). In order to provide more qualitative information, students' comments on perceptions of politeness were included and L1 and L2 respondents' comments compared. The assessment of the situations was an attempt to establish whether the independent variables had an effect on choices of realisation patterns.

In conclusion, Beebe and Cummings (1996:80) point out that they support the use of DCT's despite acknowledging their weaknesses. Although DCT data do not have many of the features of natural speech, they do provide a good account of the stereotypical shape of the speech act. Beebe and Cummings (1996:81) did not find, as a result of collecting natural data, any semantic formula that was not included in the classification of semantic formulas provided by the DCT.

They advocate the comparison of data collected by different data collection procedures and recommend that researchers gather data through multiple approaches since each approach has its own strength and weaknesses.

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings of the research carried out in the study using the theoretical framework of the CCSARP and to provide interpretation of the data. Firstly, with regard to requests, units of analysis, which form part of the CCSARP framework, namely alerters, request perspectives, request strategies, internal modification and supportive moves are dealt with. Units of analysis related to apologies, which is the other main area of focus in the CCSARP are examined. Lastly, the responses to the qualitative questionnaire are examined in an attempt to include students' perception of politeness. The findings on each category are reflected in tables, provided in Appendix 1.

Firstly, the findings of the Discourse Completion Test [DCT] regarding requests are presented. Secondly, follows the findings of the DCT regarding apologies, and finally the findings of the qualitative questionnaire. In each main category the choices of L1 and L2 respondents are reflected in a table provided in Appendix 1. The number of respondents' choices for each situation is recorded in columns. The number of respondents' choices is added to provide a total, which is then divided by the number of times it 'was possible' to use the strategy and calculated as a percentage (Requests L1's-157, L2's-308; Apologies L1's - 157, L2's-315).

The 'out of possible' represents the amount of times the strategy was possible, given the fact that misinterpretation prevented the use of some questions. Where utterances did not reflect proper requests or showed misunderstanding of the question they were discarded. The number of choices calculated as a percentage, enables realistic comparison of groups as the number of L1 and L2 respondents differed (40 L2 and 20 L1's).

4.2 Requests

Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:275-277) segment requests into 'Head Acts', 'alerters' and 'supportive moves', forms of which seem to vary cross-culturally. The Head

Act, which is the core of the request sequence, is the minimal unit, which can realize a request. The Head Act constitutes the essential part of the sequence, which is necessary for realizing the request and can vary on two dimensions, namely strategy type and perspective. The alerters and supportive moves are two nonessential parts in that the Head Act can exist without them. Alerters are usually first in an utterance and are therefore dealt with at the outset.

4.2.1 Alerters

Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:276) define an alerter as 'an opening element preceding the actual request or head act whose function is to alert the hearer's attention to the ensuing speech act'. They list nine types of alerters, (1989:277) possible in utterances. The choices of alerters used by both groups are presented in Tables 1a and 1b (see Appendix 1). L1's used alerters more than L2's (L1-47.13%, L2-41.8%). The category worth noting in alerters is that of attention getters, which was used frequently by both groups. Title, first name, endearment and combination of strategies were the favoured choices. The total percentage of general attention getters used by L1 students outweighed the number used by L2 students (L1 - 29.2%, L2 - 24.1%). Both groups used alerters most frequently in Situation 7 (Seat taken), which may be indicative of a need to gain the attention of a student who may not be familiar to the speaker before formulating a request. Not surprisingly it was also used by both groups in Situation 6 (Overhead notes) and 1 (Unable to hear), situations which required speaking in front of a large group of people.

A breakdown of the strategy of attention getters revealed a preference for the substrategy of *Excuse me* and *Sorry* by both groups, which softens the imposition of requests. Chick (1985:308) shows in his interactional study that a Zulu respondent indicates an awareness of breaking in to a conversation as potentially face-threatening and therefore opts to use the politeness strategy of apologising before asking permission, thereby lessening the sense of imposition. The following utterances are examples of the L2 students' responses:

[1] Excuse me, I have occupied this seat long before you occupied it.

[Situation 7]

[2] Sorry! Please lower your voice, I can't hear the lecturer. [Situation 1]

The attention getter communicates the S's want not to impinge on H. One way to partially satisfy H's negative face demands (Brown & Levinson, 1987) is to indicate that S is aware of them and taking them into account in his or her decision to communicate the FTA. Any infringement of H's territory is recognized as such and not taken lightly. By apologizing for performing a FTA, the speaker can indicate his or her reluctance to impinge on H's negative face and thereby partially redress that impingement.

Combinations of strategies were used across situations by the L2's but were not used in every situation by the L1's. The following example reflects a combination of strategies:

[3] *Excuse me, sorry to disturb you*, but I need to go to the toilet, and it won't be long.

The L1's used first names more than the L2's (L1 - 6.41%, L2 - 0.44%), therefore their requests appeared more informal. The strategy, title, was used overall by both groups of students (L2 - 4%, L1 - 2.56%). L2 students made more use of title, such as *Sir*, which Brown and Levinson (1987:178) claim encodes greater respect. They used surnames in situations which required interaction with a lecturer, such as in Situation 5 (Extension), Situation 3 (Typed assign.) and in Situation 6 (Overhead notes), which indicates a level of formality with interactants of higher status. This is explained by De Kadt (1994:111) in terms of deference for a higher authority, and reflected in the following utterance:

[4] *Sir*, could you please extend one or two days for the assignment, I haven't done it because I am still looking for a book.

In the strategy of endearment the frequency levels weren't high in the L2 responses. However what was noteworthy was that the L1's did not use it at all

(L2 - 2.59%, L1 - 0%). This seems to be indicative of a difference in cultural views and possibly reflects a desire for unity (ubuntu) on the part of L2 respondents. De Kadt (1994:104) defines ubuntu as "a general expectation of considerateness in social relations". The L2's used the category of endearment the most in Situation 1 (Unable to hear), and Situation 8 (No effort). These may be the two situations in which the softening of a potentially difficult request was necessary and a positive politeness strategy required (Brown & Levinson, 1987), for example as evidenced in the following utterances:

[5] Sorry *my friend*, can you help me please. [Situation 3]

[6] *My brother*, you were supposed to be meeting today with our findings for our assignment, please can you do your task by tomorrow?
[Situation 8]

In these and other utterances such as, *Please brother, would you mind finding another seat, because I am using this one*, the L2's showed evidence of in-group identity markers. The use of in-group address forms by the speaker (S) claims common ground with the hearer (H) and is a positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987:107).

Overall then alerters, which served to soften the request proper, were used most often by L1's and possibly perceived by them as lessening the imposition of the request. Use of endearment by the L2's points to a culturally different way of presenting requests. Their choice of positive politeness strategies, such as in-group markers, shows a preference for aligning themselves with the hearers and in this way lessening the imposition. It is possible that this difference in strategy choice may cause misunderstanding since L1's may expect attention getters, such as *excuse me*, to form part of utterances as polite markers and perceive L2's as rude for not supplying them. They may also perceive L2's use of endearment as 'forward' or 'too friendly' for an acquaintance and therefore insincere. The L2's on the other hand may perceive L1's lack of use of endearment as unfriendly and interpret this desire for distance as racist. The

interesting feature of this strategy is the mix by L2's of the two interactional styles; positive and negative politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987), reflected on the one hand by very formal utterances, such as *Sir*, etc. and then very informal utterances such as *my friend*.

4.2.2 Request Perspective

Variation in requests is also evident in choice of perspective. In the phrasing of the request, speakers may choose to emphasise the role of the hearer (agent) and use the hearer dominant perspective such as "*you*" or the speaker dominant perspective, such as "*I*". They may also use an inclusive *we* and choose the speaker/hearer dominant perspective or use the impersonal *it* and use the impersonal dominant strategy. Blum-Kulka (1989:59) maintains that the four alternative strategies are often available to speakers within a single situation. Some of the request perspectives registered scores of above 100% because there were two separate sentences in those utterances, both using the respective request perspective, for example in the following utterance:

[7] Please could *you* (HD) leave the transparency on, or _ (implied you)
(HD) pass it to me because I'm not finished yet.

Social meaning is affected by choice of perspective as requests are inherently imposing (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and the choice of a particular strategy can cause the hearer to respond either negatively or positively to a request or misinterpret the S's meaning. As reflected in Table 2a and 2b (see Appendix 1), there were very similar choices of strategy reflected in perspective in the L1 and L2 data. Most requests are hearer-oriented, which confirms the research of Blum-Kulka (1989:59) who found that in all four languages, viz. English, Hebrew, French and Spanish, most conventional requests are hearer-oriented and emphasise the role of the agent. The proportion of the hearer dominant request strategy differed slightly between groups (L1 - 52.86%, L2 - 56.81%).

Situation 8 (No effort) showed the highest cases of hearer dominant perspective

in both groups. This wasn't surprising, given that in the context, the hearer needs to be addressed directly when 'taken to task'. It was used markedly infrequently in Situation 3 (Typed assign.) because in this situation action is required on the part of the speaker, that is, the lecturer has to give permission. However, L2 students' preference for the use of the hearer perspective in comparison with L1's may cause misunderstanding as L1 students may interpret L2's use of the hearer-dominant strategy as a means of placing responsibility on them, the hearer, and therefore interpret utterances as more imposing. The speaker-oriented request, was the second most frequently used perspective (L1 - 47.77%, L2 - 45.12%), and emphasises the role of the recipient, for example, *Could I borrow...* This finding is similar to those in Blum-Kulka (1989:59). The L1 responses showed more use of this strategy and may be indicative of their avoidance of imposing on the hearer, which matches their later comments in the qualitative data (4.3.1.2) that they perceive requests as imposing.

In the speaker/hearer perspective, an inclusive we was used most often. This perspective was used similarly by both groups (L2 - 4.87%, L1 - 4.45%), although slightly more by the L2's. However, the way in which it was used differed. In Situation 8 (No effort), this strategy was the most favoured type in both groups, which is understandable, given the nature of the group context, where the request for more effort on the part of the student affected group membership. The L1's used it in situations such as Situation 8 (No effort) and Situation 6 (Overhead notes) where a number of students were present when the request was being uttered. However, the L2's used it when they were asking for something on their own behalf. It is noteworthy that in Situation 3 (Typed assignment) and 5 (Extension), although only one student was present, L2 speakers requested on behalf of a number of people, as if *many* required an answer. This may reflect Nwoye's (1992) findings of a desire on the part of L2 students to express a common view. It may also be used to intensify the speaker's case as evidenced in the following utterance.

[8] Sir, *we* had some problems so *we* couldn't finish the work in time.

Could you give *us* a day more to finish. [Situation 5]

The *we* emphasises that the request is for the common good and is a positive politeness strategy. The *we* of the group is an indication that the S does not stand alone. The use of *we* reflects the ideals of the extended family, either as a powerful group behind the speaker (exclusive 'we') or as a partnership (inclusive 'we'), (Brown & Levinson, 1987:202).

The impersonal perspective, reflected in the utterance, *Can anyone help me please* was not used frequently (L2 - 3.24%, L1 - 3.18%), unlike in Blum-Kulka (1989:60), where it was the Hebrew speakers' most frequent second choice of perspective within the class of conventional forms. However, although impersonal in form, it is limited in use to verbs that mark the speakers' perspective and in situations, where speakers' perspective is appropriate, i.e. not where the hearer is called upon to act. In using the impersonal perspective, the speaker avoids imposing on the hearer.

An interesting variation of choices by the L1 and L2 groups for situations emerged in the use of this perspective. The L2's used this perspective in Situation 2 (Find a book), which reflects an effort to distance the speaker and a hesitancy to ask someone specifically for help. The replacement of the pronoun *you* by indefinites serves the negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987:197). It was also used in situations where the speaker chose to avoid stating his or her position such as in Situation 8 (No effort). This negative politeness strategy shows a desire to maintain distance or to appear not too personal in order to avoid offending or being misjudged. In the current study, it may be a saving of the speaker's own face reflected in a reluctance to show one's inability to locate information, thereby being perceived as stupid. The following L2 utterance exemplifies this strategy:

[9] Has *anyone* got an idea where I can find [the] CB book for my assignment, I can't find it. [Situation 2]

In summarising request perspective, as reflected in Table 3, the hearer perspective was the most popular choice in both groups, which does not differ markedly from other comparable research. However L2's showed more frequent use of it. The impersonal strategy was not used frequently, which differs from Blum-Kulka's Hebrew subjects who used it a lot more in their responses (Blum-Kulka, 1989:60). The choice of impersonal strategy used by L2's particularly in Situation 2 (Find a book), reflects a desire to establish distance in order to allay focus on the respondents' incapacity's. The L1 hearer may misinterpret the L2's use of this strategy as impoliteness since the L1 hearer may expect a request to reflect a more personal note, such as, *please can you help me?* Use of the hearer perspective in certain situations may alienate the L2's from the L1's since L1 students may not enjoy the shifting of responsibility from S onto H, which is implicit in the request.

4.2.3 Request strategies

The CCSARP scheme classifies requests on a nine-point scale of mutually exclusive categories (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:18). The nine strategy types with examples of each follows: 1) mood derivable, *leave on the transparency*. 2) explicit performative: *I'm asking you to leave on the transparency*. 3) hedged performative: *I have to ask you to leave on the transparency*. 4) locution derivable: *You must leave on the transparency*. 5) want statement: *I want you to leave on the transparency*, and 6) suggestory formulae, *How about leaving on the transparency*, 7) query preparatory: *Could you please leave on the transparency*, 8) strong hints: *We are not yet finished* and 9) mild hints: *We are not writing machines*.

The three theoretical request strategies ordered according to decreasing degrees of directness, start with conventionally direct request strategies (1- 6), move on to conventionally indirect strategies (7) and follow with non-conventionally indirect strategies (8 - 9).

Figure 1 and accompanying graph shows a breakdown of all three strategy types used by both groups. Figure 1 indicates the rank-ordered distribution of requests of L1 and L2 respondents, where the differences in situational range of use are summarized. The overall percentage for each strategy type is translated into graphic form to highlight differences between the groups.

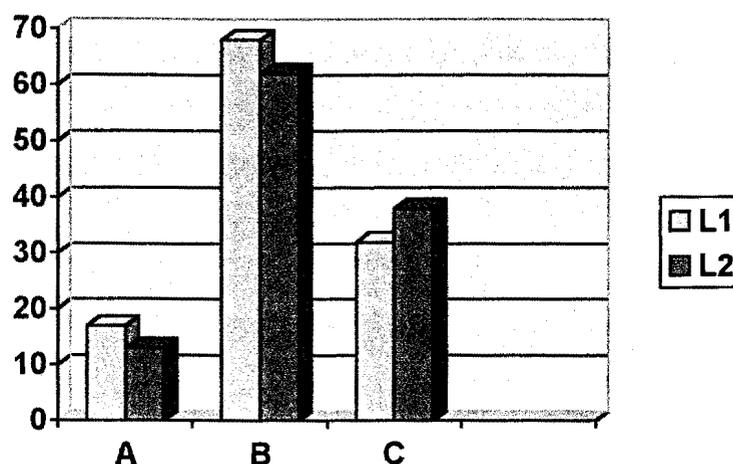


FIGURE 1

Distribution of Request Strategies
 A= Conventionally Direct Requests
 B= Conventionally Indirect Requests
 C= Non-conventionally Indirect Requests

TABLE A: Distribution of request strategies of L1 and L2 students in each situation

Sit	CONVENTIONALLY DIRECT										CON. INDIRECT		NON-CON. INDIRECT			
	Mood. Deriv.		Explic. Perf.		Hedg. Perf.		Want Stmt		Loc. Deriv.		Query Prep.		Strong hint		Mild hint	
	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2
1	8	7				1					9	27	3	5		
2	1										18	22	1	23		
3		1						1			15	23	4	17		2
4								1			18	37		1		
5				1				1			17	34	1	1		
6	11	5									13	26	6	7		1
7		3						1			6	10	19	30		3
8	2	10				1		2	5	5	10	11	16	20	1	6
Tot	22	26		1		L2		6	5	5	106	190	50	104	1	12
%	14	8	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	2	68	62	32	34	0	4

4.2.3.1 Conventional directness

With direct requests the illocutionary force is indicated in the utterance by grammatical, lexical or semantic means. The conventionally direct request strategy includes categories 1 - 6 (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:18) in descending order of directness. The six categories when collapsed into *one* conventionally direct strategy was the least frequently used of the three main request strategies (L1 - 17.19%, L2 - 12.98%) but used more by the L1's as shown in Table 4a and 4b (see Appendix 1). Convention of form (Blum-Kulka 1987:134) deals with the choice of the actual wording in the utterance whereas convention of means deals with the choice of semantic device, for example the most direct strategy is mood derivable, which reflects the imperative form as in *shut up* and is the most transparent. However, the strategies of obligation and want statement reflect the use of specific semantic devices such as *I'd like you to keep quiet*. Mood derivable and locution derivable were the two most used types of strategy. Want Statement deserves mention only in that L1's did not use it. Mood derivable was used more frequently by the L1's than the L2's (L1 - 14.1%, L2 - 8.44%).

De Kadt (1992b:103) showed that Zulu respondents, in a written DCT, used direct strategies 68.8% of the time. It is noteworthy that L2 students in the current study did not transfer this direct strategy into their utterances. In the L2 data, a surprisingly high number of mood derivable utterances were found in Situation 8 (No effort), indicating possibly that more direct requests are sometimes preferred in a situation where force is required, as reflected in the following utterance:

[10] Please man! Can't you see you holding us, *just do your task*. [Situation 8]

However, the addition of an in-group term such as *man*, added to an imperative such as *just do your task*, indicates that S considers the relative power/ status differential between himself or herself and the addressee to be small. Use of

man thus softens the imperative by indicating that it isn't a power-backed command (Brown & Levinson, 1987:108).

In Situation 1 (Unable to hear), the L2's made use of mood derivable type utterances such as *Shut up, shut your mouth* which L1's did not use. It is generally accepted that the straight imperative, as recorded in a command, is one of the most intrinsically face-threatening speech acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987:191) and would be considered too rude to occur in most normal social situations. The interesting thing about Situation 1 was that L2's didn't use modifiers with the mood derivable strategy, which may be viewed by the L1's as inappropriate and may alienate the L2's. However, in Thomas 1981 (In Thomas, 1983:98), direct utterances were quite common in the L2 responses. Direct utterances, in the form of the imperative, accounted for one-third of the responses of peer group students in a university setting. In this study, in order to soften the mood derivable strategy, sometimes endearment and an attention getter were used to preface the utterance, for example in the following utterance:

[11] *Excuse me, please lower down [your] voices I can't hear what the lecturer is saying. [Situation 1]*

Another strategy used more frequently by the L1's than the L2's was locution derivable, where the illocutionary intention is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution (L1 - 3.20%, L2 - 1.62%). Interestingly, it was evident in only one situation in both groups, namely Situation 8 (No effort). The L1's used this strategy more than half the number of times of the L2's in this situation, where it was presumably used as a means of expressing frustration and showing firmness with a lazy student, reflected in the following utterance:

[12] *You didn't pull your weight, so I think you must redo your work, if you want marks. [Situation 8]*

The want statement strategy, which expresses the speaker's desire that the

event mentioned in the proposition come about, was also only used by the L2 students. There was a noticeable difference in L1 and L2 choices because although frequencies were low, the L1's opted not to use this strategy at all. The L2's used want statement the most in Situation 8 (No effort), reflected in the following utterance:

[13] *I would like you to please contribute to this assignment because we have no input from you.* [Situation 8]

In using this strategy, the L2 speaker appeals to the hearer to respect the speaker's wishes; thus S elicits co-operation from H, possibly anticipating reciprocal consideration. This positive politeness strategy is in keeping with the general trend by L2 speakers to claim common ground. It expresses a desire for unity and harmony over and above the request to perform an action, which wasn't reflected in the L1 group. The explicit performative and hedged performative strategies were used infrequently by the L2's and not at all by the L1's. Explicit performative is a positive politeness device aimed at conveying participation and co-operation (Brown & Levinson, 1987:120), expressed in the following utterance:

[14] *What I'm asking for is some more time to finish up.* [Situation 5]

Hedged performative was only used by the L2's in two situations, namely Situation 1 (Unable to hear), and in Situation 8 (No effort). Some of these utterances could reflect what De Kadt (1994:110) mentions under the sub-category of aspect. These positive politeness devices serve to avoid a precise communication of S's attitude. They assume some degree of common ground between S and H, in that S calls upon H to use his or her common knowledge to interpret S's attitude, reflected in the following utterance:

[15] *We could be very pleased if you could have your task done well.*
[Situation 8]

In conclusion, the conventionally direct request strategy was used overall more by the L1 than the L2 respondents (L1 - 17.19%, L2 - 12.98%) reflected in Table 4a and b. All the strategy types used were direct in the sense that the speakers' illocutionary intent was apparent from the locution, that is, the speaker's meaning was unambiguous. The L1's seemed to prefer only two strategies, namely mood derivable and locution derivable whereas the L2 respondents used all the direct strategies, except suggestory formula, which on the universal scale of directness, would imply impoliteness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). However, they used more positive politeness devices than the L1's such as endearment to soften the requests. Also, the use of politeness markers, such as *please* and hedges such as *I think*, modified this strategy in most instances.

In Situation 1 (Unable to hear), many L2's didn't use softeners, therefore their utterances could be interpreted by L1's as rude and unnecessarily harsh. The L2's use of the want statement could also be interpreted by L1's as bordering on rude and fairly coercive as it is not understood by L1's as a solidarity strategy. Although more direct in their utterances, the L1 respondents, used more negative politeness devices, which may be interpreted by L2's as more distant.

4.2.3.2 Conventional indirectness

Query Preparatory comprises the conventionally indirect strategy, categorised as number 7 on the indirectness scale (Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:18). A speaker will choose the conventionally indirect strategy where there is a threat to the listener's territory or autonomy but cultures, subcultures, and groups apply these principles differently (Brown & Levinson, 1978:283). Productive ways of constructing indirect speech acts is a marked feature of English usage and according to Brown and Levinson (1987:132), probably universal. They argue that the social rationale of indirectness is based on universal principles and define universal in the sense that languages share universally a set of pragmatic distinctive features (Brown & Levinson, 1987:47).

A systematic way of performing indirect speech acts in English is by stating or questioning the presence of the chosen preparatory condition (Searle, 1975). The preparatory utterance contains reference to a preparatory condition for the feasibility of the request, usually one of ability, willingness or possibility, which is conventionalised in the given language such as, *can I, could you, I was wondering if you would...* It is a strategy where the speaker chooses to be indirect in order not to impose and is the linguistic realization of negative politeness. Hedges on illocutionary force, polite pessimism, for example about the success of requests, etc., and emphasis on H's relative power, are all part of negative politeness as it constitutes redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face. There is ambivalence between the speaker wanting to go on record and a desire for negative-face redress, which comes together in the strategy of conventional indirectness (Brown & Levinson, 1987:130). The conventionally indirect form is favoured because it is both communicatively effective and interactionally safe and doesn't directly challenge the hearer.

In conventional indirectness, phrases and sentences are used that have contextually unambiguous meanings because of conventionalisation. For example the phrase *Could you leave the transparency on* is intended and interpreted as a request not an enquiry. It is a conventional form that hearers do not interpret literally. The strategy of conventional indirectness, reflected in Table 5a and b (see Appendix 1), proved to be the most popular requesting option by both groups in comparison with conventional directness and non-conventional indirectness (L1 - 67.51%, L2 -61.68%). This confirms other comparable research where the query preparatory strategy was the most widely used request strategy. The more conventionalised forms are selected, since the major motivation for being indirect is politeness and indirect speech acts function as hedges on illocutionary force. Knowledge of the conventions of the means and forms of the target language allows speakers to express the intended level of illocutionary transparency effectively.

The findings in this study confirm the cross-linguistic validity of the category of

conventional indirectness as the most frequently used main strategy type. The findings also correlate with conventional indirectness in Blum-Kulka (1987:47), where its range varied from 58.6% in Hebrew to 82.4% in Australian English, representing the most frequently used level of directness. The two most common conditions on request compliance are a) that the addressee can comply and b) that he or she is willing to carry out the requestive act. L1 and L2 speakers varied their request realizations according to situational constraints.

It appears that in *standard situations*, the speaker has a social right to utter the request, and the hearer is perceived as having a social obligation to comply with it. Standard situations, according to House (1989:107), are “situations in which the parameters which make requests such potentially difficult work interactionally are...relatively set or standardised: i.e., negotiations of meaning are much reduced and relatively easy linguistically because participants are familiar with the conditions and expectations of the situation. Non-standard situations however, are those where the participants are not familiar with the conditions and expectations of the situation and therefore find more difficult to negotiate.”

There are numerous ways of manifesting the query preparatory strategy and L1 and L2 utterances differed in their choice of phrases. Although this strategy was used in all situations, the situations which reflected the highest use of query preparatory in the L1 utterances were Situation 2 (Find a book) and 4 (Leave the room). The L2 respondents also showed a preference for this strategy in Situation 4, indicating a similar perception to the L1's of when indirectness was required.

Substrategies of query preparatory (see Table 6) were used with differing frequencies in the L1 and L2 data. Findings confirm the cross-linguistic validity of these categories since high degrees of conventionality are exhibited in both L1 and L2 groups. The four main substrategies (Blum-Kulka, 1989:52) are: a) Reference to hearer's ability, b) Reference to hearer's willingness, c) Predicting

hearer's doing the act, and d) Questioning the general possibility of the act being carried out. Table 6 (see Appendix 1) shows a summary of these substrategies.

a) *Reference to hearer's ability*, was the only strategy that was similar in the L1 and L2 data and of a fairly high frequency (L1 - 67.51%, L2 - 61.68%). The L1 students favoured the negative politeness strategy *could you*, followed by *would you*. *Could you*, indicating ability questions have a high frequency, which matched the findings of Blum-Kulka (1989:52). It is generally considered more polite for a past tense form, such as *could*, to be used in English. Reference to the hearer's ability was used both for requesting a favour, for example *Could you* and *Can you...* and in requests for a justifiably demanded action. The most frequently used substrategy by L2 students was, *Can you* (L2 - 12.66%, L1 - 5.09%), reflected in the following utterance:

[16] *Can you* give us at least three more days to finish the assignment.
[Situation 5]

De Kadt (1992a:110) showed how the very frequent use of "*can*" rather than "*could*" by Zulu English speakers was a further indication of greater directness on the part of the respondents. *Could* and *can* are a good example of conventional indirectness because they have the potential to keep a balance between the *literal* and the *requestive* interpretation. The requestive goal can be achieved whilst at the same time maintaining their face-saving optionality. The second favourite preference of L2 students in the substrategy of reference to hearer's ability was *May I*, with the utterance *Can I* proving popular as well, for example in the following L2 utterance:

[17] Please *may you* show me how to find this book. [Situation 2]

May you, was only used by L2's but was used incorrectly as it is not understood that *May I* indicates permission for the speaker to do something; L2 students

also used *might I* and *shall you*. The following utterances are examples of inappropriate usage:

[18] *Shall you* please keep quite [quiet] we want to hear. [Situation 1]

b) *Reference to H's willingness*, which was the second substrategy used by respondents to carry out a request, is reflected by a variety of subtypes. The following utterance is an example of a request referring to H's willingness:

[19] I was sitting here, my things was [were] here just now, *would you mind moving?*

The subtypes differ in form in the L1 and L2 data, for example *would you mind* questions H's willingness to carry out an action and is more evident in the L2 responses than the L1 responses. It is interesting to note that the phrase *would you mind*, is unlikely to have any idiomatic function as an indirect speech act in social relations dominated by power (Brown & Levinson, 1987:138). Brown and Levinson contend that if S is powerful, he doesn't care if H does mind; if S is dominated, then it is presumptuous to assume that H might not mind, and even if he did not, his not minding would not provide him with any motive to do A. Blum-Kulka (1989:53) found this form to have a wide range of use in Australian English, (10.4% of cases) but only (1.27% of cases in Hebrew).

Query preparatory forms are fairly flexible as they leave options for negotiability. The speaker presupposes that he or she has the permission of the addressee to do the volitional acts required in the speech act and that the addressee will not mind doing them. There is always the possibility of refusal to the question, *would you mind doing X*, which students referred to in the qualitative questionnaire (section 4.3.1.1) reflected in the following utterance:

[20] Excuse me guys, I can't hear the lecturer, *do you mind* lowering your voices?

Some L1 utterances referred broadly to the hearer's wishes, but didn't have a fixed form, for example *would it bother you?* or, *will you be willing?* or, *would it be alright/OK?* that is, they showed more flexibility of forms than the L2's. There is evidence of an adaptation of the use of *do you mind?* or *will you mind?* albeit inaccurate, by the L2 students, reflected in the following utterance:

[21] Excuse me, *will you mind talking softly* I am trying to listen to what the lecturer is saying. [Situation 1]

The cross-linguistic variations in form such as *could you?* and *can you?* suggest that appeals to H's ability are universally more preferred than appeals to willingness such as *would you mind?*

c) *Predicting H's doing the act* is another substrategy in which there is variation in form, for example in the respondents' use of *will* and *would*. The indeterminacy of the forms allows for interpretation of prediction or volition, reflected in the following utterance:

[22] *Would you* help me find the book?

[23] *Will you* please leave it for a while I am not finished?

The L1 speakers favoured *would you* as opposed to the *will you* used by the L2's. The L2's use of *will you*; for example *will you lend me your notes?* reflects non-obviousness of compliance and therefore shows more of a tentativeness on the speaker's behalf or it could be part of the speaker's 'learner status' in the sense that he or she is not fully conversant with the sociolinguistic rules of the L1 and may be misjudged because of it.

d) *Questioning the general possibility of the act being carried out* was the fourth substrategy used by respondents, for example in the following utterance:

[23] I've had some trouble with my assignment and won't be able to hand it in by tomorrow. *Is it possible* to get an extension?

Forms such as *would it be possible to...* and *is it possible to...* were used more by the L1's than the L2's. *Is it possible to*, is a means in English of avoiding reference to persons involved in FTA's and is a negative politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987:194). The L1's used it frequently in this way to remove direct reference to the hearer, evident in Situation 5 (Extension) and 3 (Typed assignment) both requests for a favour from a lecturer.

Negative politeness strategies were used by both groups to communicate S's want to not impinge on H. The speaker indicates that any infringement of H's territory is recognized as such and is not taken lightly (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Evidence of this was in the extensive use of *sorry* in Situation 6 (Overhead notes) and of *excuse me* in Situation 7 (Seat taken). Brown and Levinson describe three ways in which not wanting to impinge on a respondent is achieved. Firstly, the respondent can apologize for the infringement, which involves recognising the infringement and making amends for it. Secondly, the speaker attempts to show with the use of hedges or by means of expressions such as, *I hate to impose, ...I don't want to interrupt you...do you mind* (Situation 7) that he or she is reluctant to impinge on H. Thirdly, S may claim that he or she has compelling reasons for doing the FTA (for example his or her own incapacity), thereby implying that normally S wouldn't dream of infringing H's negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987:189). This is evident in the utterances of Situation 7 (Find a book) and 1(Concept); *I can't understand a word of this ... do you know? I simply can't manage... can you possibly help me with this?*

In summary, the conventionally indirect request strategy was the most popular of all strategy types, which reflects other research carried out by Blum-Kulka (1989:47). In Australian English, conventionally indirect requests accounted for 82.4% of strategy types, conventionally direct requests accounted for 9.8%, and

nonconventionally indirect requests accounted for 7.8% of the request strategy types. The trend for less directness indicated by respondents' choice of strategies is probably due to transfer of social norms. However, especially in the case of L2's, it might be due to reluctance on the part of the speaker to express emotion directly in a language over which he or she doesn't have full control (Blum-Kulka, 1989:47). In all the languages studied, conventionally indirect strategies were by far the most frequent but De Kadt's (1994:108) results for South African English (SAE) were 32% direct strategies, 55% conventional indirect strategies and 11% hints. In Zulu, the pattern was; 70% direct strategies, 8% conventionally indirect and 22% hints.

4.2.3.3 Non-conventional indirectness

In conventionally direct requests, and in conventionally indirect requests, the speaker's intention is made explicit in the utterance. However, in nonconventionally indirect requests (hints), the interpretation of the speaker's intentions is highly context-embedded, for example in Situation 1 where the request is to be quiet: *Can't you see I'm trying to concentrate*. In hints the speaker's intention is not made known either by the sentence meaning of the utterance or by some grammatical or semantic device and disambiguation is highly context-dependent. The utterance can display a variety of meanings and tends to be non-specific. As suggested by Dascal (1983:130) "indirectness occurs when the direct interpretation of an utterance is rejected as being the speaker's meaning."

The strategy of hints comprises two categories, namely strong hints and mild hints, categorised as 8 and 9 on the scale of indirectness (Blum-Kulka, 1989:18). Although they are difficult to categorise, strong hints are considered less ambiguous than mild hints (Weizman, 1985). An example of a strong hint in the current study was in the request for the lecturer to leave on the overhead transparency; *Sorry I haven't finished writing my notes yet*, whereas for the same situation, a mild hint expressed by an L2 respondent was; *We are not writing machines*. The use of the hint strategy for both groups in this study, reflected in

Table 7a and b, (see Appendix 1) was extremely high in comparison to other groups studied in the CCSARP (L2 - 37.66%, L1 - 32.48%). The use of strong hints was high overall (L2 - 33.76%, L1 - 31.84%) with L2 and L1 respondents using strong hints mainly in Situation 7 (Seat taken) and 8 (No effort), seemingly because of greater face threat.

However, in Situation 2 (Find a book) L2 respondents used strong hints frequently whereas L1 respondents only used the strategy once. This could be attributed to a cultural difference in perception of the level of imposition and amount of face-threat involved in the request. My interpretation is that L2 students do not want to appear unknowledgeable and therefore risk being misunderstood rather than losing face. L2 students are sensitive when it comes to knowing about academic matters such as where things are in the library etc. Chick (1985:315) suggests that "there is a tendency for Blacks to interpret as best they can instructions they do not fully understand rather than ask for clarification." Although in Situation 2, the speaker was not solely dependent on following the instructions of someone else, there was an element of reticence on the part of L2's to ask for help.

The L2 students used mild hints, which are classified as more opaque on the indirectness scale, more frequently. This suggests an extreme form of politeness since although the speaker knows the student is in her seat, she chooses not to explicitly request the addressee to move.

[24] *I guess you are sitting in the wrong place. Isn't this my place?*

Situation 8 (No effort) was a favoured situation for this strategy, which may point to the necessity for students to maintain a tentativeness in dealing with a *perceived* face-threatening request. The L2 respondents also used mild hints frequently in situation 7 (Seat taken).

There seems to be a strong desire on the part of L1 and L2 students to keep

power relations equal and to avoid any direct request being interpreted as an exercising of power or authority, confirmed in qualitative data (section 4.3.1.2), and reflected below.

[25] This is group work and *I guess* you too should put some effort as a member of this group. [Situation 8]

The use of *I guess* as a hedge in the above utterance [25], reflects a negative politeness strategy

A general trend is to associate indirectness with politeness and tact, according to Leech's definition (1980). Indirect illocutions are often perceived as polite because they increase the degree of optionality, therefore the more indirect an illocution, the more tentative its force is viewed as (Leech, 1983:108). Not threatening the hearer's face seems to be the main objective in using a hint and the reason the L1 and L2 respondents opted for this strategy so frequently. It is evident from the responses of L1 and L2 speakers that the greater the perceived face-threat, the more likely is the use of hints. This pattern is very different from the data collected by House (1989:115), where the *less* the face-threat, the *more likely* the use of hints.

Hints are heterogeneous and consist of several hint sub-strategies that vary in type and degree of opacity (Weizman, 1985:155). Hints in the CCSARP data were found to consist of several main sub-strategies ranging from extreme opacity to relative transparency, which was evident in this study too. It is either hint's illocutionary force, or their propositional content or both that may be obscure, for example in Situation 7 in the L2's request for someone to move from the speaker's seat or in Situation 1 as a request to be quiet:

[26] I'm sorry to bother you but knowing that these books belonged to someone else, you still sat here? [Situation 7]

[27] I did not come here to listen to you and your friend's conversation.

[Situation. 1]

In some situations, rather than emphasising distance, the indirectness appeared to express empathy between participants. The positive politeness strategy may be indicative of shared expectancies. The speaker tries to make the speech act less threatening thereby saving H's positive face. This strategy is reflected in Hodge (1990:127), where she claims that the speaker uses various face-saving strategies to save the hearer's face. The extent to which the speaker uses such strategies may be culturally and individually determined, but the basic principles involved are universal.

In Japanese culture, it is possible that indirectness relates to empathy and that, as suggested by Takahashi & Beebe (1993:148) "a closer relationship exists in Japanese culture between indirectness and politeness." Indirectness may be reflected in a similar way with respondents' utterances in this study. Takahashi & Beebe (1993:48) show that Japanese speakers try to make the speech act less face-threatening by using non-conventionally indirect requests and that they try to understand the feelings and needs of the speaker. However, research has shown (Blum-Kulka & House, 1987:138), that although perceptions of politeness vary across cultures, hints are not always conceived as the most polite strategy.

Usually, the best way for a speaker to get a requested act carried out by the hearer would be to use a direct request, not an "off-record" strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987:210). However, the respondents in this study used hints frequently, which indicates that there is "an apparent mismatch with the concept of communication as a goal-oriented activity carried out by a rational agent" (Weizman, 1985:134). The frequent use of hints in this study is surprising especially in comparison with data carried out in comparable research (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989). "In the CCSARP data, native speakers' use of hints is usually remarkably *low* relative to either direct strategies or conventionally indirect ones" (Weizman, 1985:125). "The analysis of request strategies in five languages combined, reveals that native speakers' selection of hints varies from

1.14% - 7.16%, depending on situational constraints” (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989:130), which is significantly different from the data in this study where L1 speakers’ use of hints made up 32.47% of the total utterances.

The explanation for this phenomenon is that the high percentage of hints is a reflection of the sociocultural background in which L1 and L2 respondents find themselves. Consideration has to be taken of the macro issues surrounding the microanalysis of this study. There is a necessity, as suggested by Chick (1985:317), to “articulate micro studies with macro studies” in order to understand respondents’ preference for non-conventionally indirect speech. A reticence to confront seems to explain both groups’ reluctance to make explicit their requests.

If the speaker wants to carry out an FTA, but wants to avoid the responsibility for doing it, he or she can do it off-record and leave it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret it. The hearer needs to make some inference to recover the intended meaning. Brown and Levinson (1987:212) believe that most often ‘face’ is the motivation behind the choice of an indirect strategy as well as violation of one of the Gricean maxims, which will invite conversational implicatures that convey FTA’s off record. In this way the speaker hopes the hearer will understand the clues and interpret what the speaker really intends to say.

Situational features also affect the selection of hints. In some instances, L1 and L2 choice of strategy was similar and in some situations differed markedly. For example, there is a clear difference in opaqueness in the utterances expressed by L2 and L1 respondents in Situation 3 (Typed assign.).

[28] Sorry, I have a problem with this because I have never typed before. [L2]

[29] I have a problem, as it is impossible for me to type this assignment.
Could I please hand it in written? [L1]

In many instances, the L2 respondents stated their problem and chose to use a hint *only* to realize the request leaving it up to the H to interpret the meaning [28]. This highlights what De Kadt (1992b:105) mentions a Zulu tendency to “wait for H to proffer the hoped-for solution” whereas the L1’s followed their preamble with a conventionally indirect request, thereby making clear their meaning [29].

However, in some situations the same sub-strategies were used. For example, in Situation 8 (No effort), the same hint sub-strategies such as stating potential grounders and questioning feasibility and commitment, were selected by L1’s and L2’s. This supports the assumption put forward by Weizman 1989, (In Weizman, 1993:134) that “although apparently “open-ended”, even nonconventional indirectness is governed by semantic norms”. In both groups, the frequency of hints is situation dependent with hints rarely occurring in Situation 4 (Leave the room) and Situation 5 (Extension).

Although hints don’t normally co-occur with *p/lease* there were a few exceptions in the data analysed, possibly because of an inability on the part of an L2 student to manipulate the language. For example, in the following L2 utterance *p/lease* marks the hint as a request.

[30] Sorry, I was here, this is [these are] my books *p/lease*.

In the CCSARP coding scheme mild hints and strong hints were initially distinct in relation to the amount of contextual knowledge needed for their interpretation. However, the combined strategy of general hints, collapsed by Weizman (1989), shows evidence of the amount of requestive hints exhibited in the L1 and L2 data of this study, particularly the L2 responses (L2 - 37.66%). The strategy of hints used by both groups may be considered as the only request strategy that bears a high deniability potential for both interactants. It allows the requester to deny having made a request, especially to someone in higher authority such as the lecturer. For example in the following L2 response to Situation 3 (Typed

assign.):

[31] I've never typed before, meaning that I don't know how to type.

The utterance allows the requester to deny its propositional content, which explicitly stated would be *Can I submit a hand written assignment?* According to Weizman (1989:125) the requestee, in this case the L1 lecturer, is in a position to ignore the request or pretend to have misunderstood its content. Utterance [31] may also be an example of cumulative summing of associative hints where the speaker relies on mutual knowledge shared by the lecturer, for example of the need for computer competency, in order to produce a typed document. It may also be an example of a violation of the relevance maxim in order to rely on the hearer to provide a solution.

Such hints leave it up to the hearer to offer taking the responsibility for the FTA away from the speaker, which was a strategy used fairly frequently by L2 students in the study. It also confirms previous data on choice of requestive perspectives from the DCT, which found L2's favoured the H perspective (Section 4.1.2). This particular strategy by L2 students may result in negative responses by L1 respondents who expect S to take responsibility for the FTA and may judge the L2 respondent as lacking in confidence and 'opting out'. The two different types of hint sub-strategies exhibited in the study were stating potential grounders and questioning feasibility and commitment, for example in utterance [33] where a question is used as a request for someone to move:

[32] I'm now a little beat [bit] confused where to find this book.

[33] Can't you see that seat is taken and why did you remove my books?

The first sub-strategy [32] indicates how a statement is used as a request for help. The latter sub-strategy [33] indicates how a question is used as a request for someone to move.

In a sense all hints (conversational implicatures) violate Grice's (1975:45) quantity maxim (say as much as and no more than is required), because by being indirect, the speaker is inevitably saying something less than or something different from what he or she actually intends to convey. One of the main reasons for this is the social pressures against carrying out FTA's (Brown & Levinson, 1987:217), which was reflected in my study. On a few occasions, hints were used to express sarcasm or dissatisfaction with the situation as in the following examples:

- [34] Aren't you interested to [in] what the lecturer is saying? (Request to be quiet)
- [35] What's with Mr so and so? We haven't yet finished, we are not writing [writing] machines. (Request to keep on the transparency)

The following utterance is an example of what Brown & Levinson (1987:218) refer to as understatement, which is a violation of the quantity maxim. The phrase in *Italics* in Situation 8 serves as an understated criticism of the student's effort:

- [36] Its unfair, we all had [a] task to do and time to prepare, *Is this what you have to offer?* (Request to put in more effort)

Often hints enabled the speaker to direct the dissatisfaction to a person other than himself or herself, as reflected in the following utterances:

- [37] This is not satisfactory work...The information and grammar just won't satisfy the *lecturer*. (Request to put in more effort)
- [38] Didn't you know that you had to do your work and submit it to *the group*?

The avoidance of reference to the speaker herself is a negative politeness strategy to distance S from H. This is possibly to prevent the H from being perceived as the bearer of the complaint and an attempt to keep social relations

equal and conciliatory. Tact is another dimension of appropriate polite behaviour, which may be viewed as the need to show consideration of others, the need to “minimise impolite beliefs,” (Leech, 1983). For example in the following L2 utterance instead of stating directly that the student has let down the group, the speaker minimises an impolite belief of the hearer:

[39] You know *its not good for all of us*, for you not to do the assignment. We will give you some time to do it, OK? (Request for more effort)

In the utterance the speaker claims common ground with the hearer in assuming that both parties want the common good. It is a positive politeness strategy that implies shared wants and shared knowledge. The use of *you know*, claims H's knowledge of that kind of situation in general with which she assumes the H is familiar (Brown & Levinson, 1987:117).

In conclusion, the nonconventionally indirect strategy was a very popular choice in the present study. Zulu students' responses in De Kadt (1992b:105) pointed to similar evidence. However, these findings differ greatly from languages in the CCSARP study. The L2's more frequent use of mild hints suggests a desire to exercise options in the sense that their intended meaning is more open to interpretation and action on the part of the hearer. It may however result in misinterpretation of intention in that L1's may perceive this lack of explicitness as dishonest. They may prefer a respondent to come to the point when requesting and interpret as 'cowardly' attempts to circumvent the issue. L2 respondents, on the other hand, may perceive their own attempt at indirectness as a way of respecting the hearer's choice to make a decision or take action and therefore polite.

The fact that the L1's use of hints was also high points to a unique social situation in which students in an academic environment choose to make requests in a non-threatening manner in order not to offend or appear confrontational. It appears to be a conscious, or unconscious, strategy to keep

social relations equal despite the risk of misunderstanding. Students' preference may be to produce and receive clear, unambiguous messages, as expressed in the qualitative data (section 4.3.1.1) but their actual responses were indirect. The strategies used were very different from the profile seen in Blum-Kulka (1989:47) where Australian English showed 9.8% direct requests, 82.4% conventionally indirect requests and 7.8% non-conventionally indirect requests. De Kadt (1992a:110) found speakers of Zulu English, in answers to a DCT, used hints 19% of the time.

4.2.4 Internal modification

Internal modification is defined by Blum-Kulka (1989:60) as "elements within the request utterance proper, the presence of which is not essential for the utterance to be potentially understood as a request." They have two functions, firstly, they may act as indicating devices, used to signal pragmatic force, as well as sociopragmatic devices, meant to affect the social impact the utterance is likely to have (Blum-Kulka 1985). Secondly, in their sociopragmatic roles, they may act either as downgraders meant to soften the act or as upgraders that emphasise its degree of coerciveness. The more effort a speaker expends in face-preserving work, the more he or she will be seen as trying to satisfy H's wants. Therefore the more strategies the S utilises, the more he may be judged as trying to appear polite.

Often the compounding of hedges and indirect phrases exhibited in downgraders, are perceived by L1 speakers as increasing the relative politeness of expressions since they are seen to decrease the imposition of the request. Mitigating devices such as interrogatives, conditionals, hedgers, and politeness markers were evident in the data of the current study. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984) found that the analysis of request patterns used by speakers in their study showed that both direct and indirect request strategies were often modified by speech act markers. The L1's made more effort to soften their requests than the L2's, by using a number of devices for example, softeners i.e. expressions or hedges such as, *I believe*, or *I think* and other expressions intended to lighten

the gravity of the interlocutor's mistake, or to defend the interlocutor such as, *You made one **small** error.*

Internal and external modification can be affected by a variety of different factors. As in previous research (Faerch & Kasper, 1989; House, 1989), situational features were found to have an affect and Blum-Kulka (1989:274) points out that the sub-categories of downgraders "may vary in availability and relevance cross-linguistically." The two types of downgrader, syntactic, and lexical and phrasal, were both used in varying degrees in this study, reflected in Table 8a and b, 9a and b (see Appendix 1). The downgrader lessens the imposition of the request and acts as an illocutionary force indicator for example, by the use of the word *possibly* in the following utterance:

[40] Can you *possibly* put the transparency back on?

Internal syntactical and lexical and phrasal modifiers are shorter than external modifiers and their politeness function is *implicit* rather than *explicit*. For example if the speaker wants to convey that he or she is unsure whether H can do the requested act, S questions the improbability of H's doing the act.

Tables 8a and b and 9a and b (see Appendix 1) show the proportion of downgraders (syntactical and lexical and phrasal) in the class of conventional indirectness in L1 and L2 responses. The cross-linguistic differences point to interesting facts regarding politeness. L2 speakers of English used downgraders (lexical and phrasal and syntactic) overall less than the L1's (L1 - 80.25.90%, L2 - 69.48%). The figures were calculated by adding the syntactic downgraders to the lexical and phrasal downgraders and dividing by the amount of possible options. The figures reflects a similar profile to that of Blum-Kulka (1989:62) who showed that English speakers used twice as many downgraders with conventionally indirect requests than the speakers of Canadian French, and Hebrew, as well as Argentinean Spanish. This may be because L1's use them with little conscious attention but hearers do notice their absence. It seems that

hearers do not consciously attend to them when interpreting incoming speech but Faerch & Kasper (1989:243) found that hearers are aware when they are not included.

Blum-Kulka and House (1989:139) found that a culture's preferred level of indirectness does not predict the degree to which its members will tend to use internal modifiers. The L1's may have objections to the L2's use of requests, which don't show internal modification and although the L1's may not voice their objections, L2's utterances may be interpreted as *impolite*, for example in Situation 7 (Seat taken) where the respondent uses no internal modification:

[41] Could you move to another seat?

4.2.4.1 Syntactic downgraders

Modification can further be achieved by syntactic variations within the request strategy, for example *could you* instead of *can you* or by lexical choice. Syntactic Downgraders (CCSARP coding manual, 1989:281) modify the Head Act internally by mitigating the impositive force of the request by means of syntactic choices, such as in the use of the conditional. For example, *Please, I wonder if I can have an extension of the due date to finish my work*. Both the syntactic devices and their mitigating function are part of the structural properties of a given language and the ways these are put to use, and therefore specific for individual languages. What emerged in the data in relation to syntactic downgrading in Table 8a and b was a marked preference for the use of the conditional clause, more especially amongst the L1 students (L1-7.64%, L2 - 2.59%), reflected in the following utterance:

[42] Mr Johnston, I am sorry to disturb you, but I would like to know *if I can write out my assignment* as I have no access to a typewriter or a computer.

Their frequent use of this strategy could be accounted for by the fact that it is

syntactically more complex for use by L2's than L1's. In the L2 responses, the situation in which the conditional clause was most preferred was in Situation 8 (No effort) and Situation 3 (Typed assign.). In the following utterance it was used to turn a command into a polite suggestion:

[43] *If you want to talk, go outside.*

The use of *if* is usually that of possibility marker but it can be used to soften commands. The only other category of syntactic downgrader used by the L1's, although infrequently, was the interrogative, reflected in the following L1 utterance:

[44] *Is it possible for me to hand the assignment in tomorrow?*

The negative politeness device impersonalises the speaker, resulting in further distancing and allows for the possibility of refusal. Phrases used fairly often were; *is it possible* and, *is it Ok/alright*.

The L2 respondents used only two other strategies namely, negation of precondition [45], and conditional aspect, for example in the following utterance:

[45] Excuse me Sir, I did my work but I am not done, *won't you* please give us an extension of days?

Negation of preparatory conditions exemplifies the 'be pessimistic' category referred to by Brown & Levinson (1987) in which redress is given to H's negative face, by the speaker carefully avoiding presuming or assuming that anything involved in the FTA is desired by H. The strategy use was similar to that in De Kadt (1994:110) where it was described as "infrequent". In this study it was only used by the L2's and in only two situations. Sometimes the choice of modal verbs is semantically possible in the context but may distort the politeness effect. *May you* is intended by the L2's as a request for help whereas the word *may* is

used in English for permission to do something. It is an incorrect use of form and wouldn't be used by an L1 speaker. The L2's use of *May you* might be a way of showing more deference and tentativeness however, my interpretation is that it may simply be lack of knowledge of correct usage.

On the whole syntactic downgraders were not used frequently by L2 respondents, which is in line with De Kadt (1994:110), where she found that "relatively few of the syntactic downgraders listed by Blum-Kulka (1989) are used in Zulu and that some don't seem to be available in Zulu."

4.2.4.2 Lexical and phrasal downgraders

According to the CCSARP coding manual (1989:283), the categories of lexical and phrasal downgrader listed in Table 9a and b (see Appendix 1), serve as optional additions to soften the impositive force of the request by modifying the Head Act internally through specific lexical and phrasal choices. The distribution of lexical/phrasal downgraders in the situations varies considerably between the realizations of L1 and L2 responses and across situations, as well as according to the type of downgrader. De Kadt (1994:111) points out that lexical and phrasal downgraders have greater applicability to Zulu than syntactic downgraders, which may explain why this strategy was used more than syntactic downgraders by the L2's.

Internal modification in the form of politeness markers (see Table 9a &b) was evident more in the L1 than the L2 responses (L1 - 53.2%, L2 - 44.8%). The L2's used the politeness marker, such as *please* most in Situation 1 (Unable to hear) although very direct utterances were recorded. In most other situations where politeness markers were used lecturers were involved, which may be an indication of the reason for increased politeness in these contexts. In the L1 data, situations were differently varied since the politeness marker was noticeable in situations where permission was required such as in Situation 4 (Leave room) and in Situation 2 (Find a book) where help was required. The use of fewer politeness markers by L2's may make their requests appear less

polite to L1 speakers, whose unmet expectations for this marker may result in misinterpretation of requests and poor character judgement of L2's by the L1's. The minimal use of a downgrader is achieved by the addition of the politeness marker *please*, which has a double function. It can be used as an illocutionary force indicator and as a transparent mitigator and is the most frequently used downgrader. Double markings were also evident in the majority of situations.

A strategy used by the L1 respondents, but not by the L2's, was the subjectivizer (L1 - 5.76%, L2 - 0%,). The use of this strategy conveys hedged performatives, that is, it modifies the force of a speech act in the way that the statement becomes true only in certain respects. Ordinary communicative intentions are often potential threats to co-operative interaction and the L1's use of this strategy modifies the imposition. This strategy was not used by any L2 students, possibly because it requires a certain level of language sophistication on the part of a speaker. The situation in which the subjectivizer was most evident was Situation 8 (No effort) where L1 students expressed their opinion about students' effort, as in the following utterance:

[46] *I think* you should do the conclusion page of the work because you had no input at all.

Overall, understaters, reflected in the following utterance, were used by the L2's more frequently than the L1's:

[47] There are a *few* things extra you need to do to your part of the assignment. Would you please redo it?

The situations in which they were used varied (L2 - 13.63%, L1 - 5.76%). In both the L1 and L2 responses, understaters were used the most frequently in Situation 6 (Overhead notes), and in requesting to a lecturer. Thereafter situation choice varied. Usually a way of *minimising* the FTA is for the speaker to indicate that the seriousness of the imposition isn't great, which may pay H

deference and is a negative politeness device. Words such as *just* can achieve this because it can convey its literal meaning of *exactly* or *only*, which narrowly delimits the extent of the FTA, or it can mean its conventional implicatures, *merely*. L2's used the strategy frequently in Situation 4 (Leave room) as they attempted to minimise the imposition to the lecturer,

Another strategy that respondents used in an attempt to be indirect was the hedge, demonstrated in the following L2 utterance:

[48] *It seems as if you didn't afford [manage] to do anything concerning the assignment. Would you mind doing the last part of it.* [Situation 8]

However it was not as frequently used as some of the other downgraders (L2 - 2.27%, L1 - 1.28%). In the L2 data, Situation 8 (No effort) showed the highest frequency of this strategy. This positive politeness device (Brown & Levinson, 1987:116) saves H's face by S not giving direct negative opinion but rather hedging an opinion and is a primary way of disarming routine interactional threats (Brown & Levinson, 1987:144). Two of the considerations of negative politeness are: not to presume; and the want not to coerce H (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Often assumptions such as those relating to co-operation, informativeness, truthfulness, relevance, and clarity need to be softened for reasons of face. The downtoner was markedly underused in the L2 data (L2- 3.89%, L1 - 8.28%). This is in keeping with Faerch and Kasper (1989:233), where it was found that the downtoner was underused in the learner data in all situations compared to native speaker use. The following utterance is an example of a downtoner:

[49] *By any chance can I please hand my assignment in tomorrow because I haven't completed it yet?*

The marked difference in the use of this category by the L1 respondents might

be indicative of a difference in perceptions of politeness. L1 respondents may attribute L2 students' minimal use of the downgrader as a lack of politeness. Common amongst L1 speakers was, *Do you mind, would you mind, is there any way...* The situation which showed the highest use of this strategy was Situation 3 (Typed assign.). It involved interaction with a lecturer and perhaps the L1's used the downtoner to exhibit greater politeness to someone in authority as they sought to present their request politely and maintain harmony with their lecturer.

L2 speakers show, as the second language speakers in Blum-Kulka (1989:42), that they have no awareness of its potential function and therefore don't make use of it. In some situations there was uncertainty as to whether a request would be positively received and therefore respondents resorted to use of the applier strategy (L2 -0.64%, L1 - 0.64%), such as the following:

[50] Excuse me Mr... I'm sorry to bother you but I can only submit a hand written copy. *Would that be OK?*

An expression such as *OK* implies *all right*, a concession with a finalising note and as part of the negative politeness strategy, seems to soften commands or requests in casual speech. There is evidence of the use of a number of downgraders or combinations in the L1 responses, which has the effect of deferential politeness. This confirms previous research where English speakers were found to have displayed this phenomenon of the use of many downgraders.

"The accumulated effect of deferential politeness created by the use of a number of downgraders in one utterance is typically English" (Blum-Kulka, 1989:62). The L2's didn't use double marking to the same extent as the L1's and their infrequent use of it may be perceived by the L1's as impolite. The following utterance shows the number of double markings in one L1 utterance:

[51] Chantelle, could you *please just* add a *little bit* more information to your work so we can get higher marks.

The use of *just* and *little bit* minimises the size of the face-threat implying that it isn't much to ask and is a positive politeness device which implies co-operation between the speaker and hearer. More downgrading and less hearer dominant perspective in L1 responses compared with the L2's indicates that the amount of downgrading is considered by the L1's as a more significant contributor to politeness than choice of perspective.

In summary, downgraders play a substantial role in the negotiation of politeness in that they further mitigate the directness of a request. The most preferred pattern of internal modification across the groups was the *query preparatory + lexical/phrasal downgrader* and most respondents preferred to use the lexical/phrasal modifiers without syntactic downgraders (except for the interrogative). Frequent use of downgraders by the L1's seems to reflect a higher need for tentativeness on the part of the respondents. Blum-Kulka does expect some culturally based variation in this strategy and found that English speakers used twice as many downgraders with conventional indirectness than the speakers of Canadian French and Hebrew and that American speakers used them least of all (Blum-Kulka, 1989:62).

Miscommunication can prevail if the L2 respondents use downgraders sparingly because they may be perceived by L1's as insensitive to the extent of the imposition. There may be expectancy on the part of the L1's, for L2's to use minimisation to express concern for the infringement on H's space and time and for the inconvenience, which is backed up by L1's comments in the qualitative questionnaire (section 4.3.1.2). Lack of use of this strategy may categorise the requester as blunt and unfeeling. The L2's underuse of this strategy in comparison with the L1's may also be the result of lower language proficiency where knowledge of these norms and linguistic formulation are unknown.

4.2.4.3 Upgraders

Upgraders, reflected in Table 10a and b (see Appendix 1), act as internal modifiers of the Head Act and *increase* the imposition of the Head Act. In so

doing, the pragmatic force of the request is made clear, although this may be at the expense of politeness, unless the speaker intentionally wishes to be impolite. Only four sub-categories within the upgrader strategy were used by L1's and only five by the L2's (L1 - 7%, L2 - 4.54%), which is different from the research findings of Hodge (1990), who showed the frequent use of upgrading by South African speakers of English. The categories most used in my data were intensifiers, time intensifiers, lexical uptoners and emphatic condition, reflected in the following L1 utterance:

[53] Mrs Kassier, I would *really* appreciate it if you could give just one more day to complete my work. Please.

Intensifiers, in utterance [53], emphasise certain elements of the proposition of the utterance and were used more by the L1's than the L2's (L1's - 3.82%, L2's - 1.29%). Intensifiers were used most frequently in Situation 5 (Extension).

Time Intensifiers (L2 - 1.29%, L1-0.63%) lexical uptoners (L1 - 0.63%, L2 - 0.32%) and commitment indicators were used infrequently overall by both groups. Similarly, emphatic addition was not chosen often (L1 - 1.91%, L2 - 1.29%), for example in the following utterance from Situation 7:

[53] *How dare you* move my stuff.

The L2's used it most often in Situation 7 (Seat taken), presumably to stress the need for co-operation to vacate the chair and in Situation 8 (No effort), to emphasise the urgency of the request to put in more effort. The L1's made use of this strategy in a few situations, which they regarded as requiring stronger formulation of request.

Overall, the L1's use of intensifiers emphasised the pragmatic force of their requests, thereby clarifying their intention. However, they may not have been perceived by L2's as impolite because politeness markers and downgraders

modified many of the utterances. Perhaps the L2's less frequent use of the intensifiers points to a lack of knowledge of its usage and function. On the whole upgraders were not a favoured strategy, which confirms the findings of the DCT and qualitative questionnaire where strategies to *modify* rather than *increase* imposition were preferred. Perhaps the L2's minimal use of the strategy of additional emphasis is more evident of a desire not to impose, confirmed in the qualitative data (section 4.3.1.2), and an earnest intention for unity.

4.2.5 Supportive moves

Supportive moves serve to indirectly modify the pragmatic force of the utterance used for realizing the request. This is done through the mitigating or aggravating effect such supportive moves have on the context in which the Head Act is embedded (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984:205). Supportive moves are longer and more explicit in comparison with modification within the Head Act because they have their own propositional content and illocution. They are therefore more transparent politeness procedures, which conform to the conversational principle of clarity. According to Faerch and Kasper (1989:244), selecting efficient supportive moves requires conscious planning decisions on the part of the speaker, and the hearer has to attend to their semantic and pragmatic meaning in order to assess their persuasive force before deciding on his or her own response.

4.2. 5.1 Mitigating supportive moves

Table 11a and 11b (see Appendix 1) represents the distribution of the various categories of mitigating supportive moves between L1 and L2 speakers of English and across situations. It is evident from the data that the grounder emerged as the most frequent mitigating supportive move, reflected in the following utterance:

[54] *I don't have access to a typewriter or computer so would it be alright if I*

wrote it out?

The L1's used supportive moves only slightly more than the L2's (L1 - 59.8%, L2 -57.1%). This finding corresponds with other studies (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). The most frequent modification type across all situations was the grounder (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986:173). Language users appeared to want to give reasons, justifications and explanations for their action. Grounders give reasons for the request thereby mitigating the imposition involved.

This category showed high frequency in both groups, in quantity but was widely spread. The L2's used grounders the most in Situation 1 (Unable to hear) whereas the L1's favoured Situation 3 (Typed assign.) The L1's provided more reasons for wanting fellow students to be quiet whereas L2's provided more reasons as to why they couldn't type the assignment. Double grounders were evident in a few situations, for example in the following utterance:

[55] John, could you please redo your assignment *because it make[s] no sense and you were out of [off] the point.*

The frequent use of grounders or grounder combinations in some situations could be a reflection of the interactional norms of L2 speakers of English (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986) or it could be speakers wanting to make themselves understood. The L2's appear to prefer a more transparent communication style than do NSs, which might be considered as a specific kind of face-supportive activity, shown in the following utterance:

[56] Excuse me, do you mind not talking *because I am trying to listen to the lecturer because she is giving important information today.*

As a result of lack of confidence, and also perhaps lower proficiency levels in English, learners might see the need to explain and justify their requests before actually making the request. In this way, learners hope to minimise the impact of

imposition on the hearer.

Based on the data in this study, the L2's preferred the conversational principle of clarity to that of quantity (Grice, 1971) thereby violating the quantity maxim as they endeavoured to make explicit their request realizations. This often resulted in longer, overelaborate utterances. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986:165ff) claim that non-native speakers produce longer utterances compared with native speakers. The L2 subjects in a study of realization requests seem to elaborate on the point they are making in order to ensure they are making themselves understood. For example, in the following L2 utterance where a request was formulated for more effort:

[57] Sanele, you know how complicated this assignment is, and I think you can see for yourself that this is going to make us loose [lose] marks. Please do something about it.

However, according to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986:175), overinformativeness might be "perceived by the L1 hearer as irrelevant and thus might weaken the force of the speech act." The interactional work on the part of the L2 respondents' increases with the perceived degree of face-threat involved, for example in the following request to submit a hand written assignment:

[58] I'm sorry I can't use [the] typing machine and there is noone who can help me now as they are writing exams. May I submit the [a] hand written one.

Three other sub-strategies of mitigating supportive moves were used, namely getting a pre-commitment, disarmer and promise of reward and only one, by the L1's. Getting a pre-commitment was only used by L2 respondents in Situation 6 (Overhead notes), as reflected in the following utterance:

[59] Sorry, we are not yet finished to write [writing] all your notes, please just *do [me] a favour* [to] put the transparency on.

The use of the phrase *do me a favour* presupposes common ground on the part of the speaker who assumes the H is aware of mutual favour. Requests for favours are commonly used in kinship-based societies (Brown & Levinson, 1987:116). A request for a favour is a positive politeness device to stress common ground with the H and reduce distance between S and H. There is a perception by L2 respondents that this type of request is acceptable and presumes reciprocity (Nwoye, 1992). This fact was confirmed in the qualitative questionnaire (section 4.3.1.2).

The other strategy only used by the L2's was promise of a reward and although not very frequent is noteworthy when seen in relation to the strategy, promise of forbearance in apologies, which registered a high number of choices, for example in the following utterance:

[60] I would like to have maybe sometime to finish my assignment but /
promise to have it done tomorrow morning.

The use of the promise strategy in both speech acts points to a distinctive style. De Kadt (1994:109) found a use of this strategy in her data where Zulu speakers used promises frequently to strengthen or even replace a request. It is possibly a trait of L2 speakers in South Africa, where speakers believe that a promise is necessary to modify a request since no research findings elsewhere reflect a high use of the promise strategy. It was only used in Situation 5 (Extension), possibly to reassure lecturers of respondents' intention to submit their assignment.

The strategy of disarmer, also used only by the L2's, shows a concern for the hearer's wants and is a way of indicating that S and H are co-operators, evidenced in the following utterance:

[61] *Although I know its a [the] deadline for our assignment today, but can you*

give one more day to finalise it.

It has the potential to put pressure on H to co-operate with S because it implies a knowledge of the H's wants and a willingness to fit one's own wants in with them (Brown & Levinson, 1987:125)

In concluding this section, with regard to supportive moves, the grounder emerged as the most frequently used supportive move.

4.2.5.2 Aggravating supportive moves

Supportive moves are used to increase the impositive force of the request. Unlike other comparable research such as Hodge (1990), aggravating supportive moves were not popular options (L1 - 3.18%, L2 - 1.94%). Table 12a and b (see Appendix 1) show that only three strategies were used in this category, namely threats, moralising and insults, the latter only by L1 students. L1's were observed to use external modification more than L2's. More frequent use by NNSs was also evident in a study involving American learners of Hebrew (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986), who found similar overuse of supportive moves in the IL or learner data as compared to the target language.

Although not used often, threats were the favourite strategy chosen by both groups. It was used marginally more by the L1 respondents than the L2 respondents (L1 - 1.91%, L2 - 1.62%), for example in the following utterance:

[62] ... You have just sat back and picked your nose whilst we have worked hard on this assignment.

Very few cases of moralising were found in the data of both L1 and L2 students. L2's only used the strategy in Situation 7 (Seat taken) and the L1's in Situation 8 (No effort). This strategy can be used as "implicated imperatives" (Brown & Levinson, 1987:274), as evidenced in the following utterance:

[63] ...You can't just take people's seat without asking if anyone is using it.

In concluding this section on supportive moves, it is worth noting that the number of aggravating supportive moves was limited, especially in comparison to other research such as Hodge (1990:125). South African speakers of English used this category more than Tasmanian respondents who aggravated the force of their requests with the use of expletives and other lexical intensifiers. They also used this strategy a lot more than respondents did in this study, which is not surprising given the number of indirect speech acts used by L1's and L2's. The nature of the academic environment may also have been a restricting factor. The minimal use of aggravating moves, together with high indirect use, may also be indicative of a non-confrontational interactive style used by both groups. This correlates with Brown and Levinson who claim that in an effort to be polite, or equal, respondents don't use dominating or aggressive utterances.

4.3 Apologies

Just as requests of L1 and L2 respondents were analysed in the first part of the study, so apologies were examined in the second section since these two speech acts were the main foci of the CCSARP. Both these speech acts throw light on politeness phenomena among L1 and L2 students. As with request realizations, apology realizations were also coded according to units of analysis used in the CCSARP, which were the semantic formulae identified as constituting the apology speech act set (Olshtain, 1989:157).

Apologies can be defined as compensatory action to an offence in which the speaker was causally involved and which may be costly to the hearer (Bergman & Kasper, 1993:82). Goffman (1971) speaks of 'remedial exchanges', a working at re-establishing harmony after a real or virtual offence. The act of apologizing is face-saving for the Hearer (H) and face-threatening for the Speaker (S) (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The culpable person must let the offended person know that he is sorry for what he has done, which makes the

act highly hearer-supportive and often self-demeaning.

Goffman 1971(In Bergman and Kasper, 1993:82) distinguishes between ritual and substantive compensation as, respectively, those redressing virtual offences, which are remedied by an apologetic formula, and those redressing actual damage inflicted on the addressee, which may include an offer of material compensation. L2 speakers often have difficulty acquiring appropriate formulas for ritualistic apology but substantive apologies are far more difficult. There is firstly, *the identification of the occurrence of the event requiring an apology*. Secondly, *the severity of the offence*, where the weights of contextual variables such as *power* and distance need to be assessed, and finally, *the selection of appropriate output strategies*. The DCT questionnaire that was used in this study of apologies provided contexts for both types of compensation.

To linguistically realize the act of apologizing can take two basic forms or a combination of both. Firstly, an explicit realization of an apology can be via an explicit *illocutionary force indicating device* (IFID) (Searle, 1969:64), which reflects a routinised formulaic expression of regret such as: *(be) sorry, regret, excuse*. According to Olshtain and Cohen (1983), the language specific scales of conventionality determine preferences for IFID realizations. Secondly, an utterance can be used which contains reference to one or more elements from a closed set of specified propositions whose semantic content relates directly to the apology preconditions.

In this study, I have made reference to Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) notion of an *apology speech act set* to encompass the potential range of apology strategies, any of which may count as an apology. The speech act set served as the main units of analysis in this study and includes the following 5 potential strategies:

1. an IFID (*be sorry: apologize: regret: excuse* etc.)
2. an explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violation;
3. an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offence;

4. an offer of repair and
5. a promise of forbearance.

Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that the kind and amount of redress is determined by the weightiness of face-threatening acts (FTA's), together with the added values of social distance, dominance, and degree of imposition. It is essential to establish what constitutes an offence, how members of different cultures perceive the offence contexts and how these perceptions are reflected in output strategies. The analysis of the apology data collected from the 60 respondents is presented in Table B below and shows choice of strategy of L1 and L2 respondents across situations. The percentages in each case represent the number of choices made out of the total number that was potentially possible.

Table B: Summary of Percentages of L1's and L2's Strategy Selection from Total Number of Possibilities across Situations in Apology Realizations

Group	IFID	Resp.	Explan	Offer	Prom.F	Con.H
L1 N=157	124.8%	94.2%	45.8%	9.55%	6.36%	1.91%
L2 N=315	100%	73%	43.8%	4.76%	10.7%	1.26%

An apology may be performed directly by the use of one of the verbs which directly signal apology such as, *apologize, be sorry, excuse* etc. or it can be done indirectly by taking on responsibility, minimising the degree of offence, or giving explanations. Sometimes a verbal apology is not felt to be sufficient to restore social harmony and therefore an offer of repair is often required (Trosborg, 1987:164). Other strategies such as a promise of forbearance, which relates to future behaviour and expressing concern for the hearer may also be used to placate the complainer.

The different categories will be discussed in relation to the choices of L1 and L2

respondents. Firstly, the most conventionalized strategy of apology is discussed, namely the IFID, including use of sub-strategies of the IFID. Secondly, indirect apologizing, expressed in taking on responsibility, explanation of infraction and offer of repair for infraction is discussed. Lastly, expression of concern for the hearer, which is external to the apology and strategies that minimise the degree of offence, is discussed.

4.3.1 IFID

When a speaker uses an IFID, he or she accepts the need to apologize and assumes the cost to do so. Cost can be at two different levels, i.e. cost owing to losing face in public but also cost to the S's well-being; because by apologizing the S may appear guilty. There may also be cost related to what the speaker may lose or gain from apologizing. The expression of IFID stipulates the S's recognition that some norm has been violated and that the H deserves to be placated. Despite this use of IFIDs, internal modification was also used by L1 speakers. It was seen as more sincere than an IFID on its own and a more adequate response to a complaint.

IFIDs and expression of responsibility appeared in high percentages in all situations with IFIDs especially, predominating overall in both groups (L1 - 124.8%, L2 - 100%). The reason for the percentages reflecting more than 100 is the frequent use of more than one IFID in each utterance. The findings on use of IFID are presented in Table 13a and b (see Appendix 1). The results refer to the eight apology situations and show the percentages of use of each IFID strategy. The percentage in each case represents the number of choices made out of the total number that was potentially possible.

Internally, words and phrases are used to intensify the apology. Categories within the IFID included the following: intensifying adverbial, double intensification or repetition and emotional expression. Exclamations, expressions for register and politeness markers also make up this sub-strategy. Use of the intensifying adverbial (L1-84.36%, L2-85.7%) intensifies part of the

proposition, for example an expression of regret or embarrassment or intensifying a lack of intention. Often intensification was used to present an offer of apology to the lecturer because the strategy is usually known to generate greater empathy and show interest on the part of the S toward the well being of the hearer. For example, *I'm **very** sorry, I lost track of time* or, *I'm **really** sorry, something came up*. Through the use of intensification, S expresses an interest in restoring harmony and good relations with Hearer, attending to the H's positive face and takes responsibility for the seriousness of the offence.

Interestingly, the variation in the use of emotional expressions across situations is quite different in both groups from the use of other IFID substrategies. This strategy was markedly greater in the L1 than the L2 responses (L1 - 24.3%, L2 - 9.20%). This could be an area where misunderstanding is generated as L1's have an expectation that the apology of L2 respondents is possibly not as sincere as they think it should be because emotional expressions are less obvious in the utterances of L2 speakers. This confirms research carried out by Olshtain (1983:246) with three groups of subjects, where different expectations relating to language use were manifested in speech realization patterns. The frequent use of intensification, in both IFID and in expressing responsibility by L1's concurs with Bergman and Kasper (1993:96), who found that intensification is necessary for apologies to count as sincere apologies, given the routinized nature of apologetic formulas.

Both L2 and L1 responses indicated a fairly high preference for Intensifying adverbials in Situation 16 (Interruption), presumably because both groups of respondents perceived interruption as involving a lecturer of higher status than themselves and therefore requiring greater deference. In English, neglecting to intensify the apology dilutes the apology, which may result in the apology being viewed as inadequate when interacting with friends or interlocutors who have a higher status than the speaker does. Unintensified apologies are more common with strangers and are appropriate when infraction is not severe. For L1 speakers, intensification with the word *very*, as expressed in utterance [64], is

not always perceived as true intensification because the use of *really* is more common and seen as more sincere in colloquial English (Olshtain, 1983). The following L2 utterance was common:

[64] I'm *very* sorry guys, I woke up late this morning and there was lots of traffic.

The emotional use of *Oh* was a common intensification strategy used substantially more by the L1 than the L2 respondents (L1 - 24.3%, L2 - 9.2%), as shown in the following utterance:

[65] *Oh my God!* I left it in my study desk. I might [must] have forgotten it.

Not surprisingly, Situation 11 (Assignment) exhibited the highest number of emotional expressions in both groups, perhaps because it related to a person's personal property. The L2's felt the need to use this strategy in a variety of situations, whereas the strategy was evident in fewer situations in the L1 data, for example in Situation 11 (Borrowed book), Situation 13 (Borrowed notes), and 15 (Scribbles). All three situations reflect an infringement on other people's property, which L1 students seemed to regard as serious and therefore gave extra emphasis.

Double intensification or repetition of an intensifying adverbial was used mainly by the L1's, for example in the following utterance from Situation 10 (Late):

[66] *I apologize*, I was caught up in some domestic work I couldn't leave undone. *I'm sorry* to keep you waiting.

Double intensification was evident in the L2 responses only in Situation 16 (Assignment). Obviously it was not regarded as an essential part of the apology whereas the L1 respondents used it in a variety of situations. Another two types of IFID, namely expressions marked for register and please were only used by the L2 respondents. Examples of both follow:

[67] I'm sorry about what happened, *I feel bad about it, and can we forget about it?*

[68] I'm sorry about that I was just not thinking straight. *Please forgive me.*

The high use of IFID in both groups' responses confirms the research carried out by Olshtain (1983) (1987), Holmes (1989), House (1988) and Kasper (1989). Throughout the five studies, 15 groups of informants were compared and apology realizations coded according to the speech act set. The findings showed that most subjects apologized explicitly by means of an IFID and stated whether they assumed responsibility for the offence (Bergman & Kasper, 1993:84). Trosborg (1987) found in utterances of British English and Danish speakers elicited from role-plays, that IFID frequencies were lower than the other researchers but these results could be because of differential contextual effects.

There is a hierarchical categorising of IFIDs ranging from the more informal, such as *sorry* to the more formal, such as *I'm afraid...* The overall breakdown of sub-strategies of IFID for L1 and L2 respondents is displayed in Table 14a and b (see Appendix 1). In using an IFID, an apologizer may choose to express his or her apology explicitly usually using a routine formula generally accepted to express apology.

The apology responses of Head Acts were extremely uniform, with the routinized *I'm (very, really) sorry*, emerging in most cases. Expression of regret and request for forgiveness, two sub-strategies of IFID, were also used to intensify the apology. There are three areas which the semantic content of IFID may cover namely, a) expression of regret, e.g. *I'm sorry*, b) an offer of apology, e.g. *I apologize*, or c) a request for forgiveness, e.g. *Please forgive me, Excuse me, Pardon me*. These sub-strategies of IFID were used to strongly intensify the apology, for example in the following utterance:

[69] I'm *really* sorry something came up. *I hope you'll forgive me.*

The routine formula *I'm sorry*, was by far the most commonly used form of expression in this study, especially by the L1 respondents. Some L2 respondents used request for forgiveness e.g. *forgive me* more than the L1's (Trosborg, 1987:152), as demonstrated in the following utterance:

[70] Oh man, I had a problem of traffic congestion on my way to the study centre, *I hope you'll forgive me.*

The use of *forgive me* is a negative politeness device where the speaker begs forgiveness or asks for acquittal in the sense that the hearer should cancel the debt implicit in the FTA. By using this strategy, the speaker communicates the want not to impinge on the hearer, thereby satisfying the H's negative face wants.

L2 respondents lacked sensitivity to sociolinguistic distinctions that native speakers made, such as between forms for realizing the semantic formula of expressing an apology, for example between *excuse me* and *sorry*. L1 respondents used *excuse me* more than L2 students do when offering an expression of apology (L1 - 6.14%, L2 - 4.76%). The L2 respondents used only *sorry* for most of their utterances where *excuse me* would possibly have been more appropriate. This finding correlates with that of Cohen, Olshtain and Rosenstein 1986 (In Cohen 1996a) where NNSs used *excuse me* less than NSs.

There were very few utterances in the study where an IFID was not used, as shown in the following utterance:

[71] *Tell me*, when is the next test?

In most utterances, the IFID was used together with either an alerter or endearment as shown in the following examples:

- [72] *Excuse me mam*, I'm sorry to disturb you but could you please tell me when the next test is. (Alerter)
- [73] Forgive me *my friend*, I took those notes last week. (Endearment)

4.3.2 Taking on responsibility

Choice of taking on responsibility, reflected in the L1 and L2 utterances, fluctuated between groups by about 20%, (see Table B) with the L1's choosing it more frequently than the L2's (L1 - 94.2%, L2 - 73%). The strategy of taking on responsibility is reflected in the following L1 utterance from Situation 13:

- [74] Oops! I completely forgot to tell you about it.

The marked difference between the two groups, shown in Table 15a and b (see Appendix 1), might be an added reason for L1 utterances being perceived by L1 lecturers as more polite than the L2 utterances in that taking on responsibility may be equated with honesty by the L1's. On the other hand, L2 students may not want to be seen as the guilty party and may be afraid of losing face and thus refrain from using the strategy of taking on responsibility. This fact is borne out by other research (Trosborg, 1987:159), which found that L1 speakers would acknowledge responsibility from the beginning, implicitly or tentatively by means of the inclusion of modality markers.

A substrategy of taking on responsibility, the strategy of admission of facts, was evident less frequently in the L2 responses than the L1 responses (L2 - 53%, L1 - 69.3%). The following utterance is evidence of L2 students' admission of fact in Situation 9:

- [75] *I didn't understand what you were talking about*, I'm sorry, *I cannot explain*.

It would appear that the L1's greater use of this strategy results in a perception by L1 students and lecturers of their being more polite than the L2's because

they admit to the infraction. However, it is admission without acceptance of responsibility, which may be the result of a higher level of linguistic manipulation. In comparison, the L2 's with lower linguistic proficiency are unable to be as subtle and therefore resort to the strategy of explicit blame.

As evident from Table 15a & b, explicit self-blame was used markedly more frequently in the L2 responses than the L1 responses (L2 - 6.03%, L1 - 0.62%), which is surprising considering the lesser use of acceptance of fact in their other responses. The following L2 utterance shows how respondents expressed self-blame:

[76] *I can see that I was wrong and I regret what I did.*

However, explicit self-blame could reveal a more open acceptance of responsibility in comparison with the more guarded utterances of the L1's. In the L2 responses this strategy was used most in Situation 12 (Offence) and Situation 15 (Scribbles), perhaps in an effort to restore social harmony. It appears that in L2's frequent use of this strategy, a positive politeness style operated in that loss of face was regarded as secondary to the need to re-establish communication. It was used in only one situation in the L1 responses, namely Situation 15 (Scribbles). Perhaps L1's see use of this strategy as encompassed under the general IFID and therefore unnecessary or as placing them in an inferior position, with less power and possibly more vulnerable in terms of losing face.

4.3.3 Explanation

The strategy of explanation, reflected by the ability to account adequately for an infraction, is likely to require linguistic strength (Trosborg, 1987:159) and is the reason learners provided fewer explanations than the NSs in her study. This was similar to the findings of the current study where L2 respondents used explanation slightly less frequently than the L1's (L1 - 45.8%, L2 - 43.8%). The L2 respondents showed a preference for this strategy in Situation 10 (Late),

reflected in the following utterance:

[77] I [am] sorry, *it was because of the traffic.*

However, there was a markedly high usage of this strategy by both groups, indicated in Tables 16a and b (see Appendix 1). Olshtain found in comparative data (Olshtain, 1989:64), that respondents did not use this strategy as frequently as the South African respondents who might have used it in order to more clearly express themselves and prevent miscommunication. The L1 respondents, particularly those with a better command of the language, were able to explain and justify their behaviour. Sometimes a combination of explanation and admission of fact was evident and sometimes long and multiple explanations were used, reflected in the following utterance from Situation 13 (Borrowed notes):

[78] Forgive me, I need [ed] your notes desperately and you weren't around so I took them.

With the phrase, *I needed your notes desperately*, the speaker uses the positive politeness device of showing extreme need (exaggeration). In so doing she assumes the speaker will co-operate with her and indicates she is optimistic that the H will agree to act in accordance with her needs.

4.3.4 Offer of repair

Trosborg (1987:160) found that although the strategy of offer of repair was negotiated by all three groups of learners in her study, NS of Danish repaired less than NS of English. This was not a strategy frequently used by any of the groups, which is different from the data in the present study. Table 17a and b (see Appendix 1) shows that this strategy was used markedly more by the L1 respondents than the L2 respondents although the L2's used it over more situations (L1 - 9.55%, L2 - 4.76%). The following utterance in Situation 15 reflects an L2 respondent's offer of repair:

[79] I am sorry I was only highlighting main facts with a pencil, I forgot to erase it but *I'll do so just now.*

Possibly the need to offer compensation for the infraction reflects on respondents' intentions to appear non-confrontational and conciliatory.

4.3.5 Promise of forbearance

Brown and Levinson (1987:125), claim that in order to redress the potential threat of FTA, the speaker chooses to stress his or her co-operation with H in another way by demonstrating S's good intentions in satisfying H's face. It is noteworthy that the strategy of the promise of forbearance featured equally strongly in apologies, as it did in the request responses, but particularly strongly in the L2 data (L2 - 10.7%, L1 - 6.36%), reflected in an L2 respondent's utterance:

[80] I forgot it today but *I promise to give it back tomorrow.*

Findings are displayed in Table 18a and b (see Appendix 1). These results are contrary to the findings of the CCSARP data where Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989) describe this strategy as a 'more limited strategy' and in Bergman and Kasper (1993:86) where they found this strategy was used 'very rarely'. Trosborg (1987:160) found that it was not frequent in any of the groups. In group 1, Danish learners of English (intermediate level) the strategy occurred 4.3% of the total number of responses.

In request strategies De Kadt (1994:109) found that the request was frequently strengthened or even replaced by a promise. Requests for an extension produced a large number of avoidance strategies in the form of promises rather than explicit requests, thereby enabling respondents to avoid an actual request. Speakers from both groups used the full range of request strategies but to degrees that varied across situations. Promise of forbearance was used markedly in the L2 responses in Situation 11 (Borrowed book).

In certain situations respondents used a long utterance where all categories were included, which points to a need for clarity and assurance of interpretation, for example in the following utterance:

[81] I'm sorry, guys for being late (IFID), the traffic was jammed (explanation) and we couldn't move an inch (explanation). I'm sorry (IFID) it won't happen again (promise of forbearance).

4.3.6 Downgrading or distracting from the offence

After an infraction has occurred, the speaker tries to divert the hearer's attention from his or her own responsibility for the offence. This is achieved by the use of internal modification, reflected in Table 19a and b (see Appendix 1). These devices serve to mitigate the circumstances under which an offence is committed and as a result lessen the blame that can be attached to the complainees (Trosborg, 1987:161). Even though L2's used the same apology strategies as L1's, their utterances did not appear to the L1's as polite as the L1 utterances because of their minimal use of modification, which serves to add strength to the apology. Downgrading was used slightly more than by the L1 respondents (L1 - 10.08%, L2 - 9.20%).

Downgrading or minimising the face threat implies that the infraction is small and the co-operation between S and H can be taken for granted. The offence can be minimised or qualified through a grammatical form, for example, *It's not that bad, is it?* or a conditional, *sorry if I hurt you*. The following example is of an L2 utterance used in Situation 16 (Assignment):

[82] It's *just* that sometimes I lose my cool.

The majority of L1 respondents combined this strategy with another semantic formula, usually with some expression of responsibility or even with an IFID, for example in the following utterance:

[83] *I'm sorry* (IFID), *I forgot it at home* (expression of responsibility), but *I promise* (promise of F), I will *definitely* (downgrader) bring it tomorrow first thing in the morning.

The strategy of query precondition demands linguistic as well as cognitive skill and may well increase with competence in the second or foreign language. L1's tended to query the preconditions on which the accusation was made more than the L2 respondents did (L1 - 2.5%, L2 - 1.58%). It was used in Situation 10 (Late), and Situation 12 (Offence). Query precondition was used by the L2 respondents in only two situations, Situation 16 (Assignment) and Situation 13 (borrowed notes), reflected in the following utterance:

[84] *Oh, are you looking for this?* I'm sorry, I took them yesterday while you were still talking to Zandile.

The strategy of downtoner was not used to the same extent as in the request data. Adverbial sentence modifiers, such as *just*, *simply*, etc. and adverbials expressing tentativeness, for example, *possibly*, *perhaps*, *maybe*, were used. This was the only other category of downgrader that was noteworthy (L1 - 1.25%, L2 - 0%). In the L1 data, the downtoner was evident in all situations except situation 9 (Concept), showing it is regarded by L1's as a more natural part of polite speaking. It is reflected in the following utterance:

[85] Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't even realize that I hadn't rubbed them out.

4.3.7 Concern for the hearer

Concern for the hearer is a strategy used to placate the person on the receiving end of the infraction and is *external* to the Head Act. The following utterance is an example of an L2 respondent's apology in Situation 13:

[86] Oh those, I'm sorry I had to take them with because I've lost mine. *I hope*

you aren't angry.

It generally occurred infrequently in both groups, (L1 - 1.91%, L2 - 1.26%), shown in Table 20a and b (see Appendix 1), which is similar to the results found by Trosborg (1987:161) where the strategy was 'the most rare of all the strategies'. Surprisingly, concern for the hearer was used by both groups in the same two situations, namely Situation 13 (Borrowed notes) and Situation 10 (Late), which indicates a similarity in the perception of L1 and L2 respondents concerning the type of infraction requiring more careful consideration of the hearer.

In conclusion, L1 respondents included more modality markers in their responses and thereby achieved a different effect of politeness. Intensification was the most markedly different strategy as L1's used it more than the L2's. Trosborg (1987:162) found that there was an increase in the use of modality markers related to increasing linguistic competence. Although this cannot be validated in the current study there is a possibility that the increased use of modality markers by L1's was a result of their level of linguistic proficiency.

Trosborg (1987:159) found that expressing an explicit apology (IFID) and making a responsibility statement were the two most common strategies used by her subjects. This confirms findings of respondents in other research, such as Olshtain (1983) and Bergman and Kasper (1993:86). Providing explanations, minimising the offence, offering repair and verbal redress were optional and, context-dependent strategies. Use of downgrading may be a distinct area affecting understanding since the L1 students' may perceive L2 utterances as lacking in sufficient softening devices and therefore impolite.

Bergman and Kasper (1993:86) caution that close attention be given to instruction effects in the study of apologies because data elicited from role-plays and DCT can vary substantially. Wolfson, Marmor and Jones (1989:180), comment that "cross-linguistic study of apologies may well reveal that the

notions of offence and obligation are culture-specific and therefore become an object of study in themselves”.

4.4 Qualitative data

A qualitative questionnaire was chosen to complement findings on the DCT since, as suggested by Seliger and Shohamy (1990:121), this type of research appears to be an appropriate vehicle for describing the social context of a second language. I thought the qualitative assessment of student perceptions of politeness would provide further insight into the differences and similarities between L1 and L2 student responses. The use of more than one method of data collection, that is, DCT and qualitative questionnaire, is a form of triangulation that should increase the reliability of my findings. A questionnaire (see Appendix 3) comprising 13 questions was used to elicit responses from 63 students.

The aim in using the qualitative questionnaire was to discover phenomena such as patterns of L1 and L2 behaviour not necessarily described or covered in the DCT and “to understand those phenomena from the perspective of the L1 and L2 participants” (Seliger and Shohamy, 1990:120). Logistical difficulties and time constraints prevented use of a verbal interview but through a written questionnaire I was able to obtain data about student perceptions of politeness. In all, 48 L2 and 15 L1 students answered the qualitative questionnaire. In an attempt to ensure objectivity, the 63 respondents of the qualitative questionnaire were not part of the original group who responded to the DCT. In this way the students were not influenced by questions and situations in the DCT but had to draw on their own general perceptions of politeness

4.4.1 Requests

It was assumed that respondents’ answers would highlight two main areas of request, namely levels of directness and size of the imposition, therefore questions were grouped around these issues.

4.4.1.1 Levels of directness

Brown and Levinson (1987) argue for the seemingly universal link between indirectness and politeness and nine different request strategies in the CCSARP coding scheme, are ordered according to decreasing degrees of directness by Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989:278). Questions 1, 2, 6, and 8 all reflect various aspects of directness. Question 1 looked at how the higher status of a respondent may affect directness levels, Question 2 examined the issue of directness from a hearer's point of view, Question 6 sought to establish whether indirectness was considered polite or not and assessed respondents' perceptions regarding the use of hints. Question 8 looked at request modifications.

Question 1 tapped students' perception of politeness with regard to status.

Do you find you are more polite to lecturers than students? If so why?

In counting the number of responses, 45.83% of L2 respondents stated they were more polite to lecturers than students. 2.08% of the L2's stated they were more polite to students and 29.2% said they were polite to "both" (although this was not requested and revealed a lack of understanding of the question). Among the L1 respondents, 73% stated they were more polite to lecturers, 13% said they were more polite to students and 13% said they were equally polite to both parties. In their comments most students reasoned that lecturers were older, had higher status and therefore commanded more respect than students. L2 comments are also in line with De Kadt's (1992b:105) argument that L2 speakers' culture influences their showing deference and respect especially towards older people. The following utterance reflects how the role of deference in traditional Zulu society impacts on requests:

[87] It is my culture to be polite to elders. It shows respect.

[88] Yes, because I respect lecturers [more] than students because they [lecturers] have more power.

Surprisingly, in the light of cultural views on deference towards older people, more L1 respondents indicated that they would show greater deference than the

L2's to someone of higher status, such as in the following utterance:

[89] They [lecturers] are our mentors. Most fellow students don't acknowledge politeness

Question 2 was constructed to establish whether respondents preferred direct or indirect utterances when being addressed and how they would perceive the politeness.

Do you prefer being spoken to directly or indirectly when someone is requesting something from you?

The answers were contradictory to the actual behaviour of students in the study possibly because in the DCT speakers are being addressed whereas this question referred to requests from a hearer's point of view.

All L1 and L2 respondents (63) stated that they would prefer being spoken to directly. This was surprising given that the choice of hints was the most preferred strategy in many of the contexts. Respondents' comments confirm what Wolfson (1989) describes regarding the unconscious behaviour of participants in communicative interaction, i.e. that speakers are not consciously aware of what they do when communicating and often perform oppositely to what they profess. However, given a situation in which students were addressed directly, perhaps their opinion on preference for directness would have differed. The following comments point to a desire by the L2 respondents to understand clearly what is being requested in order to prevent misinterpretation:

[90] I prefer being spoken to directly, to get it from the horse's mouth.

[91] Directly, to save time and energy.

[92] Directly, there is no confusion as to whom the request is being made and what it is they want. [L1]

Question 6 assessed respondents' acceptability of the indirectness of hints.

Answers to Question 8, in the DCT, were phrased in a very indirect way

(students hinted at the action they required instead of asking fellow students directly). Do you think hints are polite or not?

Feedback showed a high percentage of L2 and L1 respondents who felt that hints were impolite (L2 - 50%, L1 - 46.7%), which is contradictory to the utterances in the DCT where hints were the second favourite strategy. The following answer reflects an L2 student's view:

[93] No, [hints are not polite] because you does [do] not know what the other person feel[s] about it.

This comment indicates an uncertainty on the part of the student regarding the interactants' feelings and opinions. Wolfson (1989) maintains that speakers of English in an American environment speak more directly to strangers and intimates and more indirectly to those with whom they are not too familiar. The respondent in the above comment acknowledges that misinterpretation is possible when one is unsure of the interactants, i.e. the parameters of social distance are not clearly defined. The comment by an L2 respondent reveals her expectancy for directness in a request and her perception of a hint as impolite, for example in the following utterance:

[94] They [hints] are not [polite] because you got to be polite [direct] when you ask for help.

Her utterance may reflect an understanding of Lakoff's 1997b term 'efficiency factor' (In Thomas, 1983), where it was perceived as rude to require a superior to calculate the illocutionary potential of an off-record request. This view however, is at odds with the actual responses of the students who made use of a high percentage of hints.

However, many students considered hints more polite than a direct utterance. The prevalence of indirect requests in participants' utterances is therefore seen as part of the social roles expected in interaction. De Kadt (1994:108) shows in

her Zulu data that 22% of requests were formulated as non-conventionally indirect strategies. The speaker assumes the request will be granted but doesn't wish to be imposing on the hearer and therefore chooses this strategy (De Kadt, 1994:108). The following L2 comment indicates that knowledge of social norms is required in linguistic formulations:

[95] Yes, [hints are polite] because some people get offended when you give them straight talk.

Schmidt and Richards (1980:130) claim that hints are frequent in "families and communal groups". There is a strong possibility that the students at Technikon Natal, who speak English as a second language, consider themselves a communal group even though different mother tongues obtain. Observation and informal comment shows evidence of student identification with other L2 students in the institution, which brings solidarity. My interpretation is that within this group, there is a presumed, unconscious assumption on the part of L2 students of shared knowledge, shared obligations. Therefore prompt understanding of requests, without explicit reference, is expected.

Comments by L2 respondents indicated an awareness of the hearer and the need for indirect language because of the cultural considerations of interactants, which would explain respondents' overabundance of hints. As Chick (1985:315) points out, 29% of South African English speakers, in reply to a questionnaire, described Zulu English speakers as "modest and respectful." This view was reflected in the following L2 utterance:

[96] I don't know [if hints are polite] because some of the students are shy.

Some of the L1's comments indicated more awareness of the ambiguity of hints and the resultant potential for misunderstanding:

[97] They [hints] are polite but most often misunderstood.

The above comment from Question 6 concurs with the results of Thomas 1981, (In Thomas, 1983), regarding the potential for misunderstanding inherent in cross-cultural interaction. Wolfson, D'Amico-Reisner, and Huber 1983 (In Wolfson, Marmor and Jones, 1989:182) show how native speakers of American English expressed strong disapproval of forms, which in reality they made use of.

In Question 8, I wanted to assess whether there was a risk factor in requesting.

Do you ever worry about whether students will refuse to co-operate?

L1 and L2 respondents answered this question in the majority of cases in the affirmative, which confirms that requests imply risk. Brown and Levinson (1978) claim that "Requests are by definition face threatening acts, by making a request, the speaker impinges on the hearer's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition." Based on an analysis of student responses, a higher percentage of L2 students, compared with L1 students, expressed anxiety when having to request co-operation (L2 - 70.83%, L1 - 53%). Based on the frequency of expression of anxiety by both groups, L1 and L2 students differed in their opinion of how much risk was involved (L1 - 46.7%, L2 - 18.75%). Comment [98] explains an unwillingness by an L2 student, when addressing people from a different culture, to formulate a request for fear of rejection or refusal of compliance and thereby loss of face. Comment [99] expresses an L1's reservation to impose:

[98] Sure they are [a risk], as students we are [from] different backgrounds.

[99] Students have at times negative attitudes.

The above L2 comments reflected an understanding of possible problems associated with cross-cultural values and norms, whereas L1's thought student attitude might pose a problem. They also confirm Leech (1983), who claims that respondents will do anything to avoid rejection. A motivation for L2's choosing the indirect form rather than the direct form is to reduce the possibility of a refusal or to make it seem that a hearer's compliance is voluntary. In the current

study the indirect request reflects a popular strategy chosen by many L2 respondents in a western academic setting. What is noteworthy in the answers on requests is that students' views on hints or indirect requests didn't concur with actual behaviour, confirming Wolfson's (1989) argument of the inadequacy of native speaker intuitions and underlines the fact that much of our speech behaviour is unconscious. In certain situations requests were seen as imposing by L1 and L2 students and specific 'polite' language, that is, indirect utterances were seen as necessary to soften imposition.

4.4.1.2 Imposition

The second issue that relates to requests is one of imposition and Questions 3, 4, 5 and 7 had relevance in this regard. Imposition of a request, I thought, would impact on decisions regarding directness levels, therefore Question 3 examined students' perceptions of the role imposition plays in requests.

Do you think asking a favour or asking someone to do something is imposing?

Nwoye (1992) suggests that imposition is perceived differently by different cultural groups and I wanted to see whether this also applied in my study. The difference between L1 and L2 responses indicated a different view of imposition.

Nwoye (1992:316) claims that Igbo hospitality and regard for the collective good make requests routine occurrences without imposition and although the acts might cause inconvenience, these are acceptable in the interests of societal cohesion and belief in the reciprocity of hospitality. Regarding imposition, 73% of the L2 students stated that they *didn't* believe asking a favour or asking someone to do something was imposing, compared with just 53% of L1 students. Figures differed markedly in the answer to whether asking a favour was imposing (L2 - 8%, L1 - 40%).

The L2's opinion in this regard is in line with Nwoye (1992:316) who argues that in Igbo and other kinship-based societies, imposition is almost regarded as a right. "Acts that require co-operation of others are solicited, in fact demanded,

from others as a social right - that is as a right accruing to the person requesting or demonstrating the act as a member of that society". Brown and Levinson (1987:111) claim that asking for favours is commonly used in all kinship-based societies and positive politeness strategies are frequently used to raise or assert common ground. This idea was reflected in the following L2 comment:

[100] No, because next time he or she may need a favour from me.

De Kadt (1994:104) refers to a 'considerateness' in social relations based on 'ubuntu', where one attempts to avoid imposing yet has expectancy that requests will be met. The following L2 comment reflects De Kadt's argument and confirms the findings of Nwoye (1992:316) that there is an underlying expectation to oblige for the social good:

[101] No, [requests aren't imposing] because asking a favour *usually brings togetherness*.

Some L2 students agree that requests are imposing in certain situations, and use indirect utterances to soften the imposition. However, in a Western academic milieu it seems that L2 students' responses may more closely reflect the cultural norms of their L1 counterparts, thereby manifesting different utterances from L2's own mother tongue. De Kadt (1992a:111) acknowledges the cultural preference of Zulu speakers for indirect strategies and argues that "traditionally, the deference due to interlocutors of greater age and higher social status, is largely expressed by a very indirect approach to a request." De Kadt claims that if the request is perceived as weighty, and especially if the two speakers are not close friends, hints tend to be used. This accommodation to L1 norms may be similar to that mentioned in De Kadt (1992a:105), who shows the problems of communication on campus experienced by Black students. Although English is a pre-condition for registration, many Black students experience difficulty with the language and in an attempt to overcome these difficulties, often make a conscious effort to adapt to the norms of South African

speakers of English.

However, a larger number of L1 students believed requests were imposing and their utterances reflected this, for example in the following comment:

[102] When you ask often, yes it is imposing.

Thomas' 1981 study, (In Thomas, 1983:98) on pragmatic failure in peer group interaction, showed that requests were not seen as an imposition or limitation of rights and freedom to act, but as the right of equals. According to De Kadt (1994:108), in Zulu students' conversation between equals, direct request strategies predominate and undue politeness is considered unnecessary. Two equals do not pay much attention to negotiating politeness, using existing forms without much further modification (De Kadt, 1994:110).

Question 4 was formulated in an attempt to find out what words or phrases lessened the imposition of requests.

If something is imposing, what words do you usually use to make the request less so (i.e. how do you lessen the imposition?)

L2 respondents also find requests imposing and the words respondents gave as examples confirm the findings of the DCT where many of the conventionalized forms were the same and obviously regarded by respondents as polite. This confirms De Kadt (1994:106), who argues that the main structuring principle used by Zulu speakers regarding requests is the unwillingness to impose on others, which leads to a conscious positioning of requests. Words and phrases used to lessen the imposition included querying the precondition [103] and questioning the feasibility of an act being carried out [104]. The frequent use by the L1's of the conditional clause in the answers to the DCT (L1 - 7.64%, L2 - 2.59%), was confirmed in the qualitative data and is reflected in the following L1 utterance:

[103] Can you *please do me a favour?*

[104] You must use the words, *if you are not busy*

Question 5 assessed which request students felt was the most imposing and therefore the most difficult to perform.

Of the eight requests, which one would you find most difficult to perform and why?

Interestingly Situations 6, 5, and 3, chosen by the L1's, were all requests to lecturers. Both L1 and L2 respondents found question 7 (Seat taken) and 8 (No effort) problematic.

The following responses indicate the number of the situation the respondents found most difficult to perform, together with explanation as to why this was so. Response to Situation 7 (Seat taken) differed between L1 and L2 respondents. Some L2 utterances contradicted earlier comments where a request was not regarded as imposing. In some instances, for example Situation 7, the L2 student seemed more perturbed about offending the perpetrator of the infraction than exercising the right to get his or her own seat back. This shows positive politeness in the extreme where concern for the H's wants has priority. It may also be an attempt on the part of the student to avoid disagreement or embarrassment since according to De Kadt (1994:105), politeness for the Zulu includes 'sparing others embarrassment', as evidenced in the following utterance:

[105] Simple[ly] because he/she may be busy and now he must move.

In some instances, L1's expressed their difficulty in having to ask someone to move when the hearer had intentionally sat in the speaker's seat, thus the following utterance from Situation 7:

[106] If someone is arrogant enough to sit in a seat where someone else's stuff is, they are not going to want to move and will usually look for a fight.

Some L1 students felt it was difficult to ask a student to move in Situation 7 because of the misinterpretation of intentions, reflected in the following L1 utterance:

[107] Some people would feel offended, like you are bossing them.

The following L2 comment in Situation 7 (Seat taken) expresses the respondent's unwillingness to impose on an adult male. The comment relates to what Wierzbicka (1991:67) terms 'culture specifics' and in this instance reflects a Zulu cultural norm. According to De Kadt (1994:105), 'deference is part of the prescribed behaviour for the group' and Zulu speakers believe that the requestee has rights, which in the spirit of politeness, one is obligated to uphold. The following positive politeness strategy shows agreement by an L2 for a speaker not to impose on the rights of a hearer, in this case an adult male:

[108] It's kind of difficult [to ask someone to move seats]. It is not good for a grown man to be told what he should do if he knows and don't [doesn't] want to.

The L1's acknowledged that the lack of effort by the student in Situation 8 (No Effort), might be intentional, which was not evident in the comments of the L2 respondents. L2 respondents found Situation 8 difficult, because of the *type* of request. The following comment exhibits a dislike for formulating a request, which demands action on the part of another individual and may entail a reprimand, as reflected in the following comment:

[109] I hate *being after* a person. [Situation 8]

The word '*face*' in the following utterance shows the difficulty experienced by one L2 respondent. It reflects what Chick (1985:311) describes as having to call for more effort whilst simultaneously protecting the hearer's positive face, and

maintaining harmony.

[110] It's not easy to *face* another person.

The type of act considered face threatening for a Zulu-speaker (De Kadt, 1994:105) happens in a situation in which a person's behaviour doesn't benefit his or her group. This would result in damage to a person's 'dignity' and cause loss of face in the eyes of others.

There was a noticeable difference between some of the L1 and the L2 comments in Situation 8 (No effort) where the student's misdemeanour was stated explicitly by L1 respondents as 'lack of effort', thus the following comment:

[111] ... You don't have to be polite, the student has let you down.

On the other hand L2 students perceived a need for the request as the result of a misunderstanding of the task by the L2 student. This was despite the statement in the context that the student had put in no effort, thereby legitimising the request for more effort:

[112] Because he/she didn't understand what to do. (L2)

The misinterpretation of students' effort or participation is an ongoing problem in the learning environment where confusion between laziness and lack of understanding may arise. Students may use the excuse of lack of understanding to explain away their lack of effort. On the other hand, students' lack of participation may be due to a genuine lack of understanding and reluctance to ask for clarification. The following comment in Situation 8 explains why some L1's used hints as a means of avoiding confrontation with interactants:

[113] People often refuse to admit to being in the wrong and become upset.

In Situation 5 (Extension), reasons proffered by both groups differed. The L2's feared non-compliance by someone in authority whereas the L1's perceived automatic compliance by a lecturer to a request for an extension as contrary to expectations of a student in an academic environment.

[114] Because I would be asking [for an extension] because of personal default.

The above L1 utterance reflects understanding of rights and responsibility. Because the date of the assignment has been set, there is a concomitant expectancy, on the part of the student for the lecturer to refuse the request on these grounds.

However, L2 students' comments revealed an expectancy of reciprocity of obligation (Brown and Levinson, 1987:118). In kinship cultures, L2 respondents don't expect to be turned down by a requestee of higher status. De Kadt (1994:104) refers to "the 'power that obligates'," and points out that "persons of higher status have the onus of having to show consideration for others". The perception by L2 students was that personal default (the student not fulfilling her part) didn't apply in this situation.

Similar situations of misunderstanding occur in the learning environment with L2 students regarding lecturers' refusals of extensions as impolite. The perception is that if a request is formulated politely, the lecturer (higher status) has a social obligation to grant the request to a student (lower status). Nwoye (1992:327) makes mention of the cultural norms of non-western groups who subscribe to behavioural patterns which have an effect on their linguistic formulations. These cultural norms may explain the lack of directness in the DCT data, as well as of L2 students in this situation, where the request focuses on the expected action of the hearer. In contrast to this cultural norm possibly held by some L2 students, L1's don't hold the same view. They show an understanding of the

student's responsibility in the situation and an acceptance of self-blame where it is warranted, which the following L1 comment reflects:

[115] I would feel the lecturer would say no [to an extension] or would not believe me and think I was lazy.

Question 7 attempted to establish to what extent requesting was an imposition.

When do you find it difficult to ask people to co-operate?

Both groups had difficulty in two main areas, namely the situations involving social distance and status. Comments point to an awareness of the role of the context external factors of social distance and power and the subsequent use of indirect language in these situations. In relation to social distance, students found requests an imposition, as reflected in the following utterance:

[116] When they [students] are strangers, people you have no power over.

[117] When you don't know them (students) well and don't understand them.

De Kadt (1994:107) mentions the use of indirect strategies by Zulu respondents in interactions between equals and speakers with higher status, "although here too the wish to avoid imposing can lead to the use of hints." Some students had problems formulating a request to someone of higher social status and authority, for example in the following comment:

[118] It is difficult if I think they have more power.

[119] When you don't know them very well and they are not co-operating people.

4.4.2 Apologies

In addition to student perceptions of requests (Questions 1-8), it was necessary to assess student perceptions of apologies (Questions 9 -14) in order to adhere to the same speech acts assessed in the DCT. There were three areas I thought all answers related to in some way namely, severity of the offence,

obligation to apologize and social distance. These were also the foci of ratings in the rating scale of Question 11. I contended, based on Olshtain (1989:159), that answers in the rating scale (Tables C and D) would provide insight into student perceptions of politeness in apologies.

Tables C and D on the following pages illustrate a rating scale assessment of apologies in Question 11.

Table C: L1's Evaluation of Socio-pragmatic Factors Across Situations

Weighted means of Each Scale N = 15 (L1)

FACTOR	SIT 9 CONCEPT		SIT 10 LATE		SIT 11 B. BOOK		SIT 12 OFFENCE		SIT 13 B. NOTES		SIT 14 INTERRUPT		SIT 15 SCRIBBLES		SIT 16 ASSIGN	
Distance scale: 1 – 3	25	1.66	43	2.8	25	1.66	29	1.93	43	2.86	25	1.66	10	1.26	24	2.93
Power scale: 1 – 3	42	2.8	23	1.5	42	2.8	24	1.6	29	1.93	36	2.4	20	2.33	13	1.73
Severity: low=1 / high=2	18	1.2	28	1.8	27	1.8	28	1.86	29	1.93	24	1.6	14	1.8	16	1.93
Obligation: low=1 / high=2	21	1.4	29	1.9	28	1.86	28	1.86	28	1.86	29	1.93	14	1.8	16	2.

Social distance on a scale of 1 – 3; (1 = strangers, 2 = acquaintances, 3 = friends)

Social power on a scale of 1 – 3; (1 = S lower than H, 2 = S and H are equals, 3 = S higher than H)

Severity of offence on a scale of 1 – 2; (1 = low, 2 = high)

Obligation of the S to apologize on a scale of 1 – 2; (1 = low, 2 = high)

Table D: L2's Evaluation of Socio-pragmatic Factors Across Situations

Weighted means of Each Scale N = 48 (L2)

FACTOR	SIT 9 CONCEPT		SIT 10 LATE		SIT 11 B. BOOK		SIT 12 OFFENCE		SIT 13 B. NOTES		SIT 14 INTERRUPT		SIT 15 SCRIBBLES		SIT 16 ASSIGN	
	Distance scale 1 – 3	96	2.	138	2.87	99	2.06	116	2.41	126	2.62	97	2.02	48	1.37	108
Power scale: 1 – 3	134	2.79	98	2.04	131	2.72	91	1.89	94	1.95	133	2.77	99	2.62	77	2.08
Severity: low=1 / high=2	57	1.18	81	1.68	74	1.54	85	1.77	84	1.75	61	1.27	60	1.56	7	1.72
Obligation: low=1 / high=2	61	1.27	82	1.70	88	1.83	84	1.75	88	1.83	68	1.41	65	1.68	72	1.83

4.4.2.1 Severity of offence

Question 11 comprised a rating scale assessment of apologies (Tables C and D) adapted from the study of Olshtain (1989:160). An assessment of the situations 9-16, which were used for data collecting in the study was considered necessary since the independent variables embedded in the situations relate to the preconditions of the apology speech act set and should have an important effect on choices of realization patterns. Questions 12, 13 and 14 would, I hoped, provide additional information on the ratings given in Question 11 and would show different aspects of the severity of offence. The evaluation of a situation is a useful technique to further reinforce the learner's awareness of the factors affecting the choice of semantic formulas, therefore Question 11 was aimed at assessing students' perception of both the social and contextual factors surrounding apologies.

The respondents were asked to evaluate on a scale, socio-pragmatic factors, such as distance and power, for situations 9-16 provided in the DCT. In the DCT, each apology situation had been constructed to vary according to social factors of distance and power and the contextual factors of the severity of offence and obligation to apologize. Both groups had to evaluate the relative social status (authority or ascribed power) of either S or H, severity of offence (as perceived by the respondents) and obligation to apologize (evaluation of the H's expectancy of an apology (Vollmer & Olshtain, 1989:199). Question 11 follows:

Please rate the severity of the violation (how severe do you think the fault was?)

L1 and L2 respondents had to decide whether the violation in the situations requiring the apology (questions 9-16 of the DCT) was mild or severe and whether the obligation to apologize was low or high. The distance and power scale allowed a choice of evaluation between 1 and 3 and the severity of infraction and obligation to apologize permitted a range from low (1) to high (2).

Students were given guidance to categories represented in the table by means of a key, which detailed the various terms.

Tables C and D show the results of the evaluation, by the 63 respondents, of the socio-pragmatic factors across the apology situations (9-16) of the DCT. The first column comprises the total number of responses and the second column comprises the number divided by the total number of respondents (In Table C, 25 divided by 15 results in 1.66). Both L1 and L2 respondents' evaluations are reflected in Tables C and D (L1 - 3a, L2 - 3b). As indicated, there is a strong congruence between the ratings of the L1 and L2 respondents in the context-external factors of distance and power.

Given the difference in the languages and cultures, this close approximation may be interpreted as owing to L2 students' intercultural or interlanguage competence in the academic milieu or an accommodation to L1 norms by L2 respondents. The close approximation to L1 norms in the academic setting however, may differ from the L2's social perceptions of distance and power expected in their native culture (Zulu, Tswana) where their evaluation of the socio-pragmatic factors may differ from those expected in the target language of the institution.

The rating scale, related to severity of offence, was systematically linked to the offender's obligation to apologize by both L1 and L2 respondents, which is in accordance with other research (Olshtain, 1989:160, Bergman & Kasper, 1993:89). However, severity of offence was rated differently by the L1 and L2 respondents. In every apology situation of the DCT (9-16), L1 respondents rated severity of offence *more highly* than L2 respondents did.

In Question 11(see Tables C and D), L1 respondents gave higher severity ratings than the L2's to all situations, for example in Situation 10 (Late), L2's rated severity 1.68 and L1's rated the same infraction as 1.86. Situation 9 was

perceived on the whole as a light offence, possibly because both groups considered the infraction not the full responsibility of the speaker. However the majority of situations were seen as constituting medium to heavy offences, that is, impositions on one's time, physical space or face-wants were regarded as serious offences requiring apologies. Situation 13 (Borrowed notes) was regarded as a serious infraction especially by L1's.

The tendency by L1's to regard infraction in a more severe light than L2 respondents may provide further evidence of causes of misunderstanding and frustration between the groups. It may cause L1 respondents to regard L2's behaviour as insensitive, irresponsible and uncaring. On the other hand L2's may think of L1's as oversensitive and intolerant.

In an attempt to evaluate when respondents thought amends should be made, the following question was asked:

When do you think you should offer to make amends when you have caused inconvenience?

In answer to Question 14, L1's replied that it should be when an infraction had led to ill feeling, offence or inconvenience. The following comment confirms previous data (4.3.1.2) in which L1's saw apologies as imposing and inconvenient.

[120] Where inconvenience has led to hard feelings. [L1]

I wanted to examine whether students' perception of expression of responsibility was similar to other research (Olshtain, 1989:159). Olshtain (1989:159) found that the two general apology strategies are IFID and expression of responsibility and observed that they will materialise to varying degrees in all situations and in all languages. Expression of responsibility fluctuated across languages somewhere between 65%-70% (Olshtain, 1989:164). Bergman and Kasper (1993:84) also found that most subjects apologised explicitly by means of an

IFID and that responsibility is a factor in apologizing. In order to tap student' views on willingness to accept responsibility I formulated question 12:

Do you accept responsibility when you apologize or try to pass on blame?

The majority of L1 students said they accepted responsibility when apologizing, which confirms the responses to the DCT apology questionnaire where respondents in Olshtain (1989:168) rated responsibility as a favoured strategy. However, responses to the qualitative questionnaire showed fewer L2 students accepting responsibility in comparison with L1's. The following comment reflects why L1 respondents thought it important to accept responsibility:

[121] Yes, to make it clear that I am apologizing.

I wanted to examine the strategy of explanation also regarded as necessary in the apology speech act set (Olshtain, 1983), and therefore posed Question 13:

Do you feel you have to give an explanation when you apologize?

The overwhelmingly positive response to the question of giving explanation when apologizing by both L1 and L2 students confirms findings in the DCT regarding the high frequency of supportive moves, especially the use of grounders. However, it is contrary to data gathered by other researchers such as Olshtain (1989:164) who showed this strategy was used less than 10% in the seven situations selected for the CCSARP project.

Most students in the present study chose to provide detailed explanation about the infraction. This may point to a heightened awareness on the part of South African students to clarify their behaviour in order to prevent misunderstanding and to soften the attitude of the hearer towards the respondent. The latter reason for the use of explanation seems to hold not only for apologies but also for requests since De Kadt (1994:109) found that most frequently explanations were proffered in conjunction with requests in an attempt to gain the sympathy of the hearer. The following utterance shows the seriousness with which L2

respondents regard this strategy:

[122] Yes there is no apology without a reason.

Obligation to apologize was the second area, which I considered impinged on choice of apology strategies and Question 10 threw light on the issue.

Do you think there are certain situations in which people are obliged to apologize?

This question linked in with the context internal features of apologies, namely obligation to apologize. It is generally assumed that most infractions require an apology, which was confirmed by student responses.

[123] Yes, especially when the offence is very harsh.

L2's were more expectant of and saw the need for an apology more than the L1's. The majority of both groups felt there were certain situations in which people are obliged to apologize (L2 - 91.66%, L1 - 86.7%). 2.08% of L2's felt there was no obligation to apologize. Of the L1's, 13% felt there was no obligation to apologize.

4.4.2.2 Obligation to apologize

In Question 11, Situation 9 (Concept) was rated low, by the L2 and L1 respondents, on obligation to apologize (see Tables C and D). However, for the remainder of the situations, both groups perceived obligation to apologize as medium or high. The L1 and L2 respondents perceived most contexts as similar on the dimensions of severity and obligation to apologize. Some offences received a higher rating on obligation to apologize than on severity of offence. For example, in the L2's rating in Situation 11 (Borrowed book), respondents regarded obligation to apologize (1.83) more importantly than the severity of the infraction (1.54) whereas in the L1 ratings the difference was less marked (1.86 as opposed to 1.8). The L2's emphasis on obligation to apologize, rather than

severity of offence, suggests a heightened concern for restoring social harmony and thus an emphasis on positive politeness strategies. Although remedial action for the infraction is seen as required, the lessened perception of severity of the offence by the L2's in comparison with the L1's may lead to misunderstanding.

4.4.2.3 Social distance

The third area, which impinges on apologies, is social distance. In most situations in Question 11, both L1 and L2 respondents' ratings reflected similar perceptions of the social role relationship between offender and offended party. L1 and L2 respondents agreed that the closest relationships were those between friends and fellow students, and the most distant relationship between strangers. Both groups assessed the relationship between student - lecturer as medium distance.

Question 9 was posed in order to draw out student perceptions of the role of status in apology strategies used.

Do you find it easier to apologize to your fellow students or to lecturers?

A fairly high percentage of L2 students, 62.5%, found it easier to apologize to fellow students, that is, to those of similar status whereas a low percentage, 12.5%, found it easier to apologize to lecturers. This means that the L2's consider the status of a lecturer inhibiting with regard to performing apologies, and therefore entailing higher risk.

In contrast to the L2's, only 40% of L1 students stated that they found it easier to apologize to fellow students rather than to lecturers. 26.7% stated that they found it easier to apologize to lecturers, which indicates that a high percentage of L1 students exercise caution in approaching other students. The L1's comments indicated more of a tentativeness when apologising to fellow students than to lecturers, which concurs with Wolfson (1992:207), who claims that where

relationships are not clear-cut and parameters not clearly defined, negotiation is more difficult. The parameters of social status and distance in relation to student /lecturer are more clearly defined and fixed, therefore speakers know what to expect of one another. 20% of L1 students, as opposed to 10% of L2 students, indicated that they found apologising to lecturers and students the same. In some instances L1 respondents saw the equal status of fellow students as more of a challenge and thus the following comment:

[124] No it's not easier [to apologize] to students sometimes because they don't understand, they might think you had done it deliberately.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, in examining the data provided in the qualitative questionnaire I was able to determine which were the most standard forms of expression in each group and to examine their range of use in a limited set of request and apology situations. The amount and type of elaboration expected in making standard requests and apologies seems to form part of cultural expectations. L2's views were ambivalent on the issue of imposition since although they claimed requests were an expected and acceptable part of human interaction, they expressed difficulty in formulating them, in some circumstances, because of the weight of the imposition.

Different opinions on politeness confirm De Kadt's (1992a:114) observation about the two types of politeness, positive and negative that need to be held in balance, and Chick's view on the interrelating of two interactional styles. Just as in the utterances of Zulu speakers, so in the English spoken by Zulu speakers, contradictory evidence supports the existence of both a deference politeness system and a positive politeness system. However the frequent use of hints by respondents in the present study, differed from the Zulu data of De Kadt (1992b:103) where interaction between peers was more direct. The reason for the use of hints by L2's in the academic environment may be an attempt to

formulate appropriate polite utterances in keeping with the expectations of L1 students who, despite being peers, have different social norms regarding what constitutes politeness. L2's may perceive L1's as requiring different expressions of politeness.

Both groups' ratings in Question 11 (see Tables C and D), reflected similar perceptions of social distance but ratings related to obligation to apologize suggest L2 students' heightened emphasis on making amends and restoring social harmony as opposed to the rating of L1 respondents. Noteworthy was L1's higher severity ratings of the infraction in *all* situations in comparison with the L2's. This points to a possible area of misunderstanding and even stereotyping where L1's may interpret L2's less serious attitude to an infraction as insincere and unrepentant especially when measured together with the L2's lesser use of intensification and modifications, evident in answers to the DCT. The L2's attempt at building solidarity and attending to H's wants and needs, as signals of politeness, may go unnoticed by L1's.

One of the limitations of the qualitative questionnaire was possibly the inhibiting nature of the written questionnaire, which might have prevented respondents from fully expressing their opinions and feelings. Also, as suggested by Seliger and Shohamy (1990:172), there is no assurance that the questions used were fully understood by the subjects and answered effectively, especially in the light of the level of English language proficiency of some L2 students. Respondents' perceptions regarding speech act behaviour is often limited and don't always provide a valid basis on which to build a description of the actual patterns that exist in interactions. However, findings from the DCT go a long way toward complementing and explaining qualitative data in which respondents' perceptions are reflected.

Overall, differences existed between the L1 and L2 data, which provide reasons for misinterpretation and miscommunication. One of the differences is the

different use of negative and positive politeness strategies. The query preparatory strategy is the linguistic realization of negative politeness and although this was the most popular choice by both groups, L1's used this strategy slightly more frequently (L1 – 6.75%, L2 – 61.6%), which reflects a choice to make use of negative politeness strategies in their desire not to impose. Another consideration of negative politeness is not to presume. In this strategy, assumptions relative to informativeness, co-operation and truthfulness are regarded as requiring softening. The L1's used the downgrader, especially the downtoner, frequently to reduce the perceived imposition of requests and apologies.

On the other hand, the L2's seemed to make more use of positive politeness strategies, reflected in their use of alerters such as endearment. The use of in-group markers by the L2 speakers claimed common ground with their hearers. L2's chose to align themselves with the hearer in more instances than the L1's and in this way lessened the imposition. L2's often assumed shared wants and shared knowledge, reflected in the use of the hearer and speaker perspective *we*, which points to an emphasis on concern for the community and the communal good.

A second difference between L1's and L2's was in choice of modification. The L1's opted for internal modification as opposed to the choice of supportive moves by the L2's. The most noticeable difference (reflected in Tables 8 & 9) was apparent in the use of the downgrader, both syntactical and lexical/phrasal (L1 - 80.25%, L2 - 69.48%). The syntactic downgrader, namely conditional clause, was used frequently by the L1's and lexical and phrasal downgraders, in the form of dntoners, was perceived as increasing politeness. This pattern of increased internal modification on the part of the L1's, in comparison with L2's use, may result in misunderstanding and negative stereotyping. L1's more frequent use of upgraders, in the form of intensification, may compound their misinterpretation of L2's expression of polite behaviour and reinforce their

perception of L2's requests as impolite. Although non-conventionally indirect strategies were similarly used, the L2's made more use of the indirect mild hints, which require more processing on the part of the H. Utterances required the H to take responsibility for the FTA away from the S. A similar strategy employed by the L2's was choice of the hearer perspective when making a request.

In apologies, the two main differences related to use of IFID and internal modification. L1's used IFIDs more frequently than L2's and chose intensification to emphasise regret for the infraction. They also varied their use of intensification by making sociolinguistic distinctions more often than the L1's. These patterns could cause friction in interaction between the groups.

Perception of politeness was another difference between groups in that L1's perception of the severity of offence was greater than the L2's and signals of solidarity on the part of the L2's may not be perceived as sufficient, by the L1's, in regarding the infraction in a serious enough manner. Perceptions of politeness also differed in that different cultural norms resulted in different expectations on the part of students regarding requests. L2's did not generally regard requests as imposing as L1's and did not therefore minimise utterances to the same extent as the L1's. An expectancy of reciprocity of obligation seemed to influence some of the situations in which L2's interacted, which was not apparent with the L1's. Overall then, different cultural values and norms were reflected in the speech act realizations of the L1's and L2's. Different choice of perspective, strategy, and modification to speech acts resulted in different expressions of politeness.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter draws to a close the various theoretical and practical elements discussed throughout the preceding chapters and seeks to provide some answers to the question of the phenomenon of politeness among L1 and L2 students as expressed through requests and apologies.

In this chapter the findings are summarized in relation to the aims initially outlined in the study (section 1.5), with emphasis on the aspects that are of particular, descriptive and applied linguistic value, especially language use in the particular academic context of a tertiary institution.

The research question is examined and some explanation for the findings and anomalies is provided. The limitations of the study, focusing on certain weaknesses of the DCT as an instrument in data collection and on the lack of Zulu first language data, are acknowledged and examined. Suggestions are then made as to how cross-cultural communication could be improved by examining strategies used by researchers and teachers in the field. Some of the strategies relate to explicit teaching and some to the more implicit raising of awareness. Examples of speech act realizations of L1's and L2's, as a reflection of expressions of politeness in the academic environment of Technikon Natal, are provided. The responses are an indication, particularly in relation to politeness, of the norms and values expected in the various speech communities. Implications of the study are examined and recommendations for further applications made.

I support the view that language teaching is not neutral and that language use, especially sociocultural rules, should not be taught or learned without being viewed critically. A case is made for the inclusion of a component of Critical Language Awareness in courses or programs for lecturers and students to ensure minimisation of miscommunication between interactants of different cultures. Lastly, I point to the need for further research.

5.2 Contribution of the study

The findings seem to suggest that the similarities of utterances in many situations can be regarded as evidence of the same primary feature or patterns being exhibited by different speech communities, that is, the L1 and L2 groups share properties attributed to the various directness levels. Both groups displayed the three major levels of directness, which are conventional directness, non-conventional directness and non-conventional indirectness. On the other hand, utterances in certain situations within the categories of the three directness levels, such as the L1 preference for downgraders to modify their requests or their frequent use of intensification in apologies, show the extent of cross-cultural differences in speech act realizations. These findings are similar to those of Blum-Kulka and House (1989) who reported that higher frequencies of certain levels of directness were evident in some situations rather than in others across all the cultures.

A final account of the contribution from a descriptive point of view follows and my contribution at an applied linguistic level will be discussed in 5.3. The descriptive contribution of the study can be seen in the L1's and L2's use of request and apology realizations and in their opinions about politeness.

Although at first glance overall totals seem to be very similar, on closer inspection individual categories varied. One of the contributions of the study was to show where these variations occurred. Most interesting was the preference for certain strategies such as endearment by the L2's in many situations and the preference by the L1's for one subcategory, for example the downtoner, in one situation. Some areas of significance include:

- (a) The L1's used more direct request strategies but these were mostly modified with the use of downgraders such as politeness markers. When L2's used the direct strategy, fewer downgraders were used and therefore their utterances might not have appeared as polite to L1's.

- (b) Conventional indirectness was the most favoured strategy but the L1's often modified this choice with the use of downgraders. The syntactic downgrader, more especially the conditional clause, was used often by the L1's but less by the L2's.
- (c) The L1's showed a preference for lessening the imposition of the request, for example by use of the downtoner whereas the L2's used it sparingly. This is similar to findings of the CCSARP, where this strategy was largely found to be unused in learner data. Although caution needs to be applied when generalizing about findings in the many different studies of the CCSARP, the low frequency use internal modification by the L2's is noteworthy.

Supportive moves were preferred above internal modification by the L2's, which could be attributed to a lack of knowledge regarding the function of this strategy or the need for more sophisticated language use. It seems that the Zulu L1 tendency to use direct requests in certain situations did not influence strategy choices, which may indicate an adaptation to L1 norms. The use of direct strategies varied according to the situation, depending on speakers' estimates of the weight of social right, social distance and degree of perceived imposition.

A sub-category of supportive moves used frequently by both groups was the grounder. This is contrary to findings in the CCSARP, which showed a much lower use across all cultures. A possible explanation for this could be a determination to explain in detail, either the reason for the request or the infraction, in order to prevent misunderstanding.

In terms of alerters, endearment was not a strategy used by the L1's. Although not used in all situations, it was a marked sign of L2 use. An alerter used frequently by both groups was *sorry*, which seems to point to a particular South African speech behaviour where an apology before a request is perceived as appropriate and signals in advance, an acknowledgement of the imposition.

In apologies, the use of intensification (Table B) showed the most obvious variance. L1's used this strategy in most situations and sometimes more than once. The L2's expressed their apology in more different ways, such as in the use of alerters. L2's used promise of forbearance more than the L1's, which shows a different expression of politeness that may not necessarily be interpreted as polite by L1's. The frequent use of the strategy of explanation by both groups, contrasts with Olshtain (1989:164).

Evidence for the validity of the Bulge theory exists in the current study. Wolfson (1992:207) argues that in a complex urban society, and I would add an academic institution, in which speakers may belong to a variety of social groups, relationships among speakers are often very uncertain. The dynamic and open nature of the relationships among these friends or interactants of equal status provides a freedom but not security in the sense that speakers are unsure as to what to expect of each other. This instability is unlike at the two extremes of social distance where there is relative stability of relationships. When status is seen as being fixed, speakers better understand what to expect of one another.

Wolfson takes the view that this uncertainty in knowing how to formulate speech acts, is reflected in the care people take to signal solidarity and to avoid confrontation, which was clearly evident in the indirect utterances of both groups in the current study. The high use of non-conventional strategies or hints, especially in relation to all other data in the CCSARP and CCSARP aligned studies, points to a particular interactional style evident in this academic environment in which the bulge theory is in operation. Although equal in terms of their status as students, L1's and L2's remain unsure of the parameters of their social interaction and in an attempt not to offend, settle for indirect utterances.

I would further suggest that this speech act behaviour is different from that of a few years ago and that it reflects a change in socio-political conditions in South

Africa. Herbert and Straight 1989 (In Wolfson, 1992:208) held the position that social stratification was intrinsic to South African ideology and that speech act behaviour reflected this. However, the speech act behaviour in the realization of requests and apologies of both L1's and L2's is confirmation that the social stratification posited by Herbert, no longer obtains in the academic context of Technikon Natal because there is little evidence of direct utterances that express social distance and superiority.

As further evidence of this theory, the L1 speakers in my study, in contrast to the South African speakers of English in Hodge (1990:124), did not manifest more of an "awareness of social superiority" in their utterances. In her study, direct, aggressive utterances distinguished South African speakers of English from the Tasmanians but this didn't emerge in the current study. L1's didn't use imperatives more than L2's, thereby acknowledging and emphasizing social distance between S and H, and the social power of the H relative to the S. This speech act behaviour may be explained in relation to the fact that the apartheid system is no longer legally institutionalized.

5.3 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study hinge on two main aspects, namely the instrument used for collection of data, the DCT, and the lack of Zulu mother tongue data. The latter does not adequately allow comparison of findings with L1 data and assist in supporting the notion of transference of mother tongue norms by L2's onto the target language.

Although DCT's are a highly effective research tool in creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural speech, they do not give us natural speech or claim to do so. However, Beebe and Cummings (1996:80) point out that many studies of natural speech have not given us scientifically collected speech samples that represent the speech of any identifiable group of speakers. DCT's do not provide many of the features of natural speech such as repetitions, the number of turns, the length of responses,

the emotional depth, but they do seem to give one a good idea of the stereotypical shape of the speech act (Beebe & Cummings, 1996:80).

Because not enough work has been done on speech acts in non-Western contexts, Kasper and Dahl (1991) argue that universal generalizations can not be confidently made about data collected through elicitation techniques such as the DCT. They question whether the DCT can be used cross-culturally as a valid means of data collection. Many studies have dealt with the validity of DCTs (Rintell and Mitchell, 1989; Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig 1992).

Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig 1992 (In Cohen, 1996:392), compared naturally occurring data from NSs' and NNSs' rejections of advice collected from spontaneous conversation in 39 academic advice sessions, with data collected from a DCT. They found the DCT elicited a narrower range of semantic formulas, fewer status-preserving strategies and none of the extended negotiations found in the natural data. Because of a lack of face-to-face interaction, the DCT allowed the respondents to be less polite; however the DCT provided help in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Rose (1994) reports the results of two questionnaire studies in which two different data collection instruments were used to collect speech act data. A DCT was used in a contrastive study of requests in Japanese and American English and a multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) was used as a way of exploring the validity of open-ended questionnaires in non-Western contexts. Both instruments yielded very different results with hints being recorded fairly frequently on the MCQ but not, as was expected, on the DCT. According to the DCT, Japanese requests registered as more direct than the American ones, unlike the indirect style usually reflected by Japanese utterances. As a result of this study, Rose argues that DCT's may be inappropriate for the collection of data on Japanese respondents, but more in-depth work is needed to clarify or confirm these perceptions.

Alternatives to the DCT are ethnographic methods and collection of data by role-play. Open role-plays have the advantage that they allow a speech act to be examined in its full discourse context. For example, Kasper 1981 (In Kasper and Dahl, 1991:228), showed how request performance could be strategically planned right from the beginning of the conversation. Face work and steering moves could direct the course of the conversation towards the requester's goal. In comparison to DCT data, open role-plays provide a much richer data source but open role-plays need transcribing and coding data is more difficult than coding data from more tightly-controlled tasks such as those on the DCT. Beebe and Cummings (1996:67) mention the problems that exist with "ethnographic" data. They argue that each approach to data collection has strengths and weaknesses but support the continuation of DCT data collection.

A further limitation of the current study could have been the size of the sample, that is, 40 L2 and 20 L1 respondents. However, owing to time constraints and the difficulty of analyzing the speech acts of requests and apologies for 60 respondents across 16 situations, it was not possible to increase the sample. It is not apparent whether it is possible to generalize these findings to the two language communities at large, namely English first and second language students at other academic institutions, but a fairly strong claim can be made about the particular sociolinguistic patterns (politeness phenomena) at Technikon Natal.

With reference to the aims of the study, different patterns underlying request and apology behaviour in the L1 and L2 speech communities were seen to exist. Differences in the choice of negative and positive politeness strategies obtained. With regard to Carrell and Konneker (1981:18), both groups showed preferences for certain strategies associated with one or the other type of politeness. For example, the L2's used in-group markers such as *brother*. They noticed and attended to hearer's interests for example, *its not good for all of*

us...showed optimism in dealing with requests, such as expecting the best from the hearer and were more indirect in an attempt to show deference, such as *Isn't this my place?* Lesser use of overt politeness markers such as *please*, did not indicate lack of politeness but L2's exhibited expressions of politeness with the use of supportive moves, such as providing reasons for the imposition.

The L1's showed more of a preference for negative politeness strategies in that they used conventional indirectness and sought to soften requests by questioning or hedging, with the use of the conditional clause. Overt politeness markers and downgraders such as, *Is there any way...* were used to minimize the imposition, even when direct strategies were chosen. The L1's use of hints exhibited a non-confrontational interactive style. Their indirect utterances reflected a desire to prevent signals of social superiority.

In terms of opinions about politeness, it seemed that L2's concern for solidarity overrode the concern for social distance and deference in the expression of politeness. The L2's viewed imposition less seriously than the L1's since many students regarded requests as providing opportunity for reciprocity. In the interests of communal or societal cohesion, L2's chose to soften their requests by using hints, which avoided direct criticism and saved the face of the H. The strategy of explanation was used to apologize in preference to the internal modification such as *really sorry* used by the L1's, and promises to rectify the situation were opted for by the L2's to express regret for the infraction. L1's used IFIDs, the strategy of intensification and taking responsibility to indicate their regard for the infraction as serious.

Different choices by L1's and L2's point to distinct styles of communication and show the source of potential misunderstanding. Certain speech act behaviour patterns of L2's do not seem to be compatible with those considered appropriate by L1's and unmet expectations on behalf of both parties exist as to what is considered polite. The frequent use of hints by both groups is noteworthy in

comparison to other research in the CCSARP. In the current study, the greater the perceived face-threat, the more likely hints were chosen which is opposite to research elsewhere. This does point to a unique interactive style where speakers seek to prevent utterances from being interpreted as power-backed.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Chick questions whether insights from sociolinguistic studies of intercultural communication can be used to improve the practice of intercultural communication (Chick, 1996:331). Hornberger, (In Chick, 1996:331), expresses the view that sociolinguists are slow to implement changes as they are reluctant to interfere with the cultures they study in case they are perceived as not recognizing equality of individual communities. She argues that "given our increasingly independent, interdependent and intercultural world, and the rapidly accumulating evidence of the damage caused by poor intercultural communication", it is essential that those who are knowledgeable about intercultural communication contribute to its improvement. I take the position that in an academic institution in which different cultures co-exist, the application of practical solutions is essential

Chick (1996:331) rightly questions whether sociolinguistic studies of intercultural communication contribute to change or merely reinforce the status quo. Researchers need to assess whether information from the studies does result in a degree of positive change. Chick (1985:316) showed how intercultural gatekeeping encounters such as interviews for jobs or unequal encounters in the academic sphere, resulted in miscommunication owing to inaccurate evaluation of the motives and abilities of members of minority groups. Often members of a particular speech community do not attain an equitable share of resources and opportunities and because of this are often not able to realize their potential. Members of a particular speech community are not always given opportunity to occupy positions of authority in academic institutions or even receive acceptance as equals, and the existing inequities in the institutions remain.

Chick (1985:316) argues that the consequences of intercultural miscommunication significantly affect members of subordinate groups in South Africa whose access to educational opportunities and academic and social acceptability is dependent on successful communication with those in authority. He suggests that the widespread misevaluation of the abilities of members of subordinate groups, that occurs in gate-keeping encounters, results in discrimination and the reinforcement of the inequity of the socio-economic and political system. I further argue that similar misevaluation exists between L1 lecturers and students, and L2 students at academic institutions, where English is the medium of instruction. Also maintenance of the status quo in terms of speech utterances and sociocultural norms of behaviour, including perceptions of politeness, continues.

Further research that would make up for the limitations of my, and other, research is necessary. I would recommend a wider variety of data collection methods that would tap deeper into students' perceptions of politeness and measure other forms of expressions of politeness such as non-verbal. More creative ways of raising awareness of sociocultural rules could be devised and more inventive computer programmes catering for the acquisition of these rules could be devised. Components of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) could also be implemented in syllabi, designed to meet the needs of L2 students interacting in non-mother tongue academic environments.

5.5 Implications and applications

The CCSARP played a role in the present study in that it provided a means of acquiring shared knowledge of sociocultural norms of the English spoken by L1's and L2's. Examining results of the CCSARP enabled me to make appropriate comparisons with my own findings. There are many practical applications which the work of my study and the CCSARP project suggest for applied linguists, course designers, second and foreign language learners, mother tongue language teachers and learners and for use in teacher training

courses, outlined by Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989).

5.5.1 Teacher training

Firstly, as evidenced in my study, the CCSARP framework may be used effectively in L2 teacher-training courses or staff development programmes. Lecturers' understanding of the differences in sociocultural norms would assist in student consciousness of norms and thus prevent unintentional misunderstanding. Staff development courses in academic institutions could assist in the imparting of this information.

In the light of recent studies of language, it would be remiss not to include aspects of critical awareness of language posited by Fairclough (1992). He suggests that investigations and analysis of language should lead to transformation. His approach to language, termed *critical language study*, looks at the relationship between language, power, and ideology. His examination of the role of language in society shows how utterances reflect power relations.

The inclusion of Critical Language Awareness in the teacher-training curriculum would sensitise teachers to the relationship between power and discourse. In addition its inclusion as Critical Social Practice in programmes would allow student empowerment in this time of social change in South Africa. English, as a medium for the expression of social and ideological meanings could be further examined. Lecturers could guide students in analyzing discourse and the perceptions of power aligned to various speech acts such as thanking or complimenting.

5.5.2 Second language courses

Secondly, cross-cultural pragmatic analysis has a vital role to play in L2 courses. My results suggest that cross-cultural pragmatic analysis should be an initial part of the syllabus of second language courses and feature more prominently as students become more proficient. Knowledge of appropriate usage would benefit students as they grapple with language formulations and

language for academic purposes in their first year at an academic institution.

Part of the courses offered to students could be computer related. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is an area where CCSARP results and categories may be applied. Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989:27) suggest the following uses: Data bank systems, e.g., storage of CCSARP data from seven languages/language varieties (see Thomas, 1987). Thomas describes computer programs that have been designed to help language learners experiment with performing the speech acts, request and apology, under different social constraints using CCSARP situations and categories.

Computer programs which students could work through at their own pace would assist in introducing them to the similarities and differences in sociocultural norms and equip them to make the kinds of language choices that would best perform their intended function. Along similar lines, the authoring of appropriate packages, suited to a specific institution by lecturers, is a largely untapped area in the South African context. Students and lecturers could work together to devise exercises or case studies in which problem-solving strategies requiring the application of speech act realizations and sociocultural rules are needed.

Computer programs already exist that provide social parameter specifications to learners who are then given an opportunity to perform requests/apologies and be evaluated on their utterances. One such program in use is the program LOAN described in Johns (Johns, 1983:96). Further development in institutions where class sizes are expanding, would allow students to practice appropriate responses at their own pace. The design of web-sites and accessing information on the internet and intranet pose interesting possibilities for the development of the production and interpretation of sociocultural rules in a variety of situations.

5.5.3 Acquisition of sociocultural rules

There are various viewpoints regarding the acquiring of sociocultural norms, with

some researchers arguing for explicit teaching and others opting for a more implicit approach, emphasizing instead the raising of awareness. Language learners are constantly required to produce speech acts such as complaints, apologies, requests and refusals, each of which can be realized by many different strategies, and therefore speech act behaviour is an important area of concern for L2 students and teachers.

Olshtain and Cohen 1990 (In Cohen, 1996a:409) believe that speech act behaviour can be taught. They carried out a study on apologizing, with advanced EFL learners in Israel and native speakers of American English. Changes were noticeable after the teaching of strategies and modifications of apologies in that the EFL learners' speech was more similar to the native speakers.

Similarly, in a study carried out by Billmyer (1990) on compliment and compliment responding, it was found that the nine female Japanese ESL learners, who had been instructed in speech act behaviour, were able to produce more norm appropriate compliments than the untutored group. In both these studies the researchers show that instruction in sociocultural rules does help learners communicate more appropriately with native speakers.

Olshtain and Cohen (in Cohen, 1996a:414) suggest the following five methods that could be used in the planning and implementation of lessons on speech acts:

- 1) diagnostic assessment to assist in determining students' level of awareness and areas needing instruction;
- 2) model dialogues which will provide examples of the appropriate speech act;
- 3) evaluation of a situation in which the speech act has been used and reasons for the choice;
- 4) role-play activities to practice speech acts in particular situations;
- 5) feedback and discussion in which students discuss similarities and

differences, expectations and perceptions. These strategies help enable students to react more appropriately to native speakers and become better listeners.

The most suitable type of L2 pragmatic instruction and the best time for its introduction requires careful consideration. One method could be for teachers to expose differences between learner and NS output and then allow learners to decide to what extent they wish to approximate TL norms (Hurley, 1992:275). Variety in instruction may be required for the differing needs of learners of different L1 backgrounds.

One such variation in instruction could be role-plays. Scarcella's (1979) research model (In Hurley, 1992:276) shows role-play as a possible tool for testing and implementing knowledge-based approaches to teaching pragmatics and non-verbal communication. Role-plays were used to get the NSs and NNSs enacting the same situations and observing the different results. Videotapes could be used to measure learner progress and to see if their new knowledge resulted in more native-like performance. Second language lecturers and teachers who understand speech act theory and practice would be in a position to assist learners to produce more contextually appropriate speech in the target language.

Introduction of specific strategies by lecturers needs to be carefully considered and implemented since L2 learners may need some strategies before more difficult ones are introduced. Edmondson *et al.* (1984) showed that L1 transfer and avoidance of error or developmental factors may influence the L2 conversation management strategies of NNSs. Indirect strategies, which may prove more difficult for learners to manipulate than direct strategies, may have to be introduced to the syllabus at a later stage (Hurley, 1992:274).

Some strategies may require more emphasis than others for example, Carrell and Konneker (1981) found that the various factors contributing to politeness were not equal in value in English request strategies and should therefore not all be given equal teaching emphasis. They felt that of the three syntactic /semantic features investigated, the mood distinctions, which contributed the greatest to politeness distinctions, should be given more emphasis than other features in teaching politeness. The inclusion of native speaker data in Carrell and Konneker (1981) allows for the comparative testing of theory and L2 data. They hypothesize that improvements in our understanding of the pragmatic aspects of second language learning will only be possible if L2 data is related to L1 data and pragmatic theory. The speech act realizations of the current study provide further insights into these pragmatic aspects of L2 language learning.

Despite the possible advantages of the explicit teaching of speech act behaviour or conventions, where rules are presented in a *prescriptive* manner, many researchers argue for the *implicit* learning of these conventions such as awareness raising. Here learners are made aware of L1 and L2 differences in verbal or written speech act responses but are able to choose whether to embrace or reject the rule. Widdowson 1979 (In Thomas, 1983:97), notes that describing the pragmatics of linguistic competence is more complex and less defined than that of grammar and is therefore not as easily imparted. Secondly, pragmatics (language in use) impinges on value systems and is therefore a sensitive area of study. In addition, the teaching of sociocultural rules isn't clear-cut therefore all these factors point to the need for learners to be made aware of these norms as opposed to 'being taught'. Hurley (1992:277) expresses uncertainty as to whether L2 pragmatic competence is something that can be taught in the classroom at all

The CCSARP coding scheme and the assumptions and hypotheses underlying CCSARP might be used as a tool for raising second language learners' consciousness of pragmatic factors. In addition the units of analysis such as

alerters, modifiers and so forth allow for ease of comparison between L1 and L2 utterances. Cross-cultural workshops could be run with groups of students and staff to raise awareness of the similarities and differences in sociocultural norms and to allow students opportunity to discuss the difficulties they experience. This has been carried out on a small scale at Technikon Natal and has produced positive results. Workshop participants examined and recorded interactional situations, which had frustrated or perplexed them, secondly they were made aware of sociocultural norms, resulting in an understanding of the reason for the misunderstanding and finally, they were given an opportunity to suggest solutions. A positive side effect for participants was the heightened awareness of patterns of pragmatic behaviour.

Learners should be made aware of the values of the target culture, particularly the relative social power attached to different roles as well as the obligations and rights of participants in different interactions. They also need to be aware of the perceived impositions underlying requests, or the social 'weight' of a particular request or offer.

The practice of smooth intercultural communication may be assisted by studies such as Herbert and Chick (In Chick, 1996:345), who also strongly suggest that teachers and learners of a language benefit from knowledge about sociolinguistic rules of various cultural groups, especially dominant groups. Another researcher who suggests focusing on interpretation as opposed to the more mechanical teaching of sociolinguistic rules is Erickson (In Chick, 1996:345).

Erickson suggests interpretation of the *processes* of the interaction by students rather than the mere focusing on surface message form. He argues for analyzing what went wrong in an interaction rather than being told what is appropriate. He emphasizes the value of acknowledging the fault of both parties in misunderstandings in interactions and cautions against blaming. He

advocates the usefulness of 'repair strategies' and in his 1985 study he suggests the effectiveness of direct strategies, such as telling the participant honestly why the utterance is offensive or providing a satisfactory alternative.

Herbert suggests that the more natural acquisition of sociolinguistic rules is possible by raising awareness of factors that specifically lead to misunderstanding and stereotyping. Awareness of a learner's own contribution as participant in the interaction as well as 'evaluative discussions', are suggested by Chick as an effective strategy that contributes to establishing good relations between participants in interethnic communication (Chick, 1996:344).

Evaluative discussion of interethnic encounters is a strategy also suggested by Gumperz and Roberts (In Chick, 1996:344), who argue that while they disagree with the teaching of sociolinguistic rules, they agree that these rules can be learnt. Discussion of assumptions and values underlying speech conventions should be allowed and promoted and is considered a natural progression of awareness.

Wolfson (1989) holds the position that in addition to lecturers or teachers needing to know about sociolinguistic rules, equally importantly they need to facilitate the imparting of this knowledge to students. As Wolfson succinctly puts it, it is necessary for teachers "to use their knowledge in order to guide students and help them to interpret values and patterns which they would otherwise have difficulty in interpreting" (Wolfson, 1989:31).

Thomas (1983) argues that the teacher should enable the student to express her or himself in the way she or he chooses, whether politely or not. She cautions against the enforcing of Anglo-Saxon norms or standards of behaviour. She calls for the development by teachers of students' "metapragmatic ability" which she defines as the ability to analyze language in a conscious manner (Thomas, 1983:98).

The question of the acquiring of sociocultural rules leads to the evaluation of how communicative competence is assessed and ultimately how politeness is perceived. Faerch and Kasper (1989:246), maintain that the assessment of nonnative communication should not take the same format as that of mother tongue communication. They argue that more emphasis on phatic, metalingual and metacommunicative functions and on participants' strategic competence are required for more accurate assessment.

Different criteria for L2's should be used for evaluating the success of nonnative verbal interaction. A *deficit* hypothesis in viewing L2 communicative competence, which sometimes obtains in an academic institution, is not helpful and students may feel stigmatized when perceived as lacking in the ability to communicate, especially when effort has been expended on choice of utterance.

However, the notion of describing and explaining interlanguage communication is still in an embryonic stage in many language classrooms and description, as opposed to evaluation of the interaction, could take place in informal discussion in the classroom. Hornberger (1996:468) holds the view that evaluation and assessment " must also take on a dynamic aspect, focusing on processes rather than outcomes" because language is constantly transforming and being transformed.

Herbert (1992:205) claims that speech behaviour reflects the perceived rights and obligations of members of a speech community and shows how the society is structured. More importantly, the relationship between speech act form, and the identity of the interlocutors often gives insight into the social strategy people use to accomplish their purposes. These may be to "gain co-operation, to form friendships and to keep their world running smoothly " (Herbert 1992:205). In the current study, the realization of speech acts reflects the sociocultural values of the society. The gradient difference in the speech act realizations of L1's and L2's points to similarities in perceptions of politeness.

I would like to suggest that the responses of L1 and L2 students in the present study reflect the speech behaviour and accompanying sociocultural norms of the two different speech communities to which they belong in the academic institution of Technikon Natal. What Chick (1985) refers to as the 'power differential' is clearly represented in the request and apology utterances of L1 and L2 students. The extreme indirectness prevalent in requests and apologies points to a deep concern on the part of both parties to show equal power relations.

L1 and L2 speech act realizations also reveal a deliberate effort on the part of L1 lecturers and students to 'play down' what Hodge (1990) refers to as 'social superiority'. This non-aggressive behaviour is an effort to be polite and perceived by both parties as appropriate in the context. I hold the view that in the post-apartheid society in an academic institution, to be polite is to be perceived as 'politically correct'. It is in the interests of all parties, especially L1's, to be seen as facilitating social equity within the academic context and to expend effort to speed up the process of transformation. Non-confrontational, indirect utterances go a long way toward maintaining this impression and redressing past inequities.

Findings in the present study of L1 and L2 responses show that many speech acts are extremely indirect, reflecting a type of politeness where no-one dominates the discourse. Less emphasis on direct utterances in interactions, in contrast to that found by De Kadt (1992b), indicates more equal power relations in the academic environment of the Technikon. De Kadt (1992b) found that L2 (Zulu) speakers of English realized the speech act of requests more directly than L1 speakers of English.

Responses at the micro-level of my study therefore tend to reflect a change in the attitudes and social behaviour of a 'post-apartheid' South Africa in an academic institution where changes in speech act behaviour have resulted from

changed social attitudes. Discussion of a learner's compliance to L1 sociolinguistic rules and an awareness of their implications (as in Critical Language Awareness) is crucial if L2 learners of English are going to be equipped to make rational decisions regarding their intentions and production in speech acts and the communicative interaction.

Realization of the speech acts of requests and apologies of L2 speakers in my study not only reflects politeness phenomena of L2 students, but also raises awareness of what is perceived as politeness by L1 speakers and whether strategies used by L2 speakers are seen as appropriate. By not accommodating to L1 norms, some L2 speech act responses may be regarded as "oppositional discourse" and yet become accepted. They may even result in the development of a new 'form' of L2 student expression.

Learners should be able to distinguish between unconscious sociolinguistic transfer that leads to interactional difficulties as opposed to that arising from the *conscious* employment of oppositional discourse. Critical awareness of language, the specific realization of speech acts, should put students in a better position to distinguish between successful intercultural communication arising from overlap in the conventions of the interlocutors and that arising from the cultural sensitivity of the interlocutors and their willingness to make the necessary adjustments.

Despite the fact that much research has been carried out, many research questions need further investigation. The unit of analysis for apology, that is, the speech act set across languages (Olshtain & Cohen 1983), is a useful tool but better means of collecting intracultural data could possibly be developed. The CCSARP revealed strong similarities between languages but Olshtain (In Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989:171), states that "more accurate assessing of both productive and interpretive features will show more culturally representative features". Further work in this field will deepen our understanding of speech act

behaviour across languages.

In the academic environment, constructive interaction is essential and this is only possible if both participants show mutual respect. L2 responses should be recognized as a valid basis on which to build additional information regarding sociocultural and sociolinguistic rules. Lecturers with an appropriate training will not disregard prior knowledge of L2 students, but will use and supplement it.

My own investigation suggests that institutionalized, asymmetrical power relationships of the past no longer exist to the same extent at an academic institution. Previously, students may have been reluctant to express their opinions and interpretations for fear of rejection or non-compliance. However, indirect responses, show an unwillingness to offend as well as a desire to save face and be perceived as polite. Lecturers who interact with L1 and L2 students need to ensure that the academic environment is a 'safe place' in which students feel secure enough to freely practice production and interpretation of speech act responses rather than passively conform to expectations by L1 speakers. In cross-cultural workshops students should be encouraged to view new information in the light of their own rules, prior knowledge and experience.

There is an urgent need for research in pragmatics, based on the languages of Africa, called for by De Kadt (1992a:115) and the contribution that findings on these languages still have to make to linguistic theory. De Kadt (1992b:105) calls for the expansion of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory to include non-verbal components of interaction and the inclusion of complete interactions to show the mutual negotiation of politeness.

Thus, although further research is required, I hope my study has, in some way, added insight into the politeness phenomena of L1 and L2 students reflected by the rules of speaking among the L1 and L2 speech communities at an academic institution. I hope it has made some contribution to what Chick calls for, namely

“intensive sociolinguistic investigation of the contexts of societal institutions” (Chick, 1992:230). I trust that in some small measure it will enhance communication across cultures.

Examining speech behaviour in the social context in which it occurs, has enabled me, not only to analyze patterns of social behaviour, but also to gain insights into cultural values. Chick (1992:227) takes the position that South African academic institutions are characterized by “increasing ethnic diversity and time constraints, participants crowding and bureaucratization”, and therefore interactants are expected to perform in particular ways in situations that don’t allow for “negotiation of meaning”. Because of this it is imperative that interactants have the necessary skills to convey their intended meaning at the outset. Hornberger (1996:465) argues that the potential for miscommunication in intercultural communication exists but equally present is the potential for the social negotiation of comembership.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 1a: L1s' Use of Alerters Across Request Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Title		1			3				4	2.56
Surname										
First Name		1	2		2	1		4	10	6.41
Nickname										
Endearment										
Offensive										
Pronoun										
Attention Getter	9	4	2	5		8	18		46	29.2
Combination		2	4	4	1	3			14	8.97
Total	9	8	8	9	6	12	18	4	74	47.13
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 1b: L2s' Use of Alerters Across Request Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Title		1	2	2	4	1			11	4
Surname								3	3	0.77
First Name			1	1					2	0.44
Nickname										
Endearment	4	1					1	3	9	2.59
Offensive										
Pronoun										
Attention Get	10	5	14	9		11	20	5	74	24.1
Combination		2	6	5	3	10	1	3	30	9.74
Total	4	9	23	17	7	22	22	15	129	41.8
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 2a: L1s' Use of Request Perspective Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Hearer D	16	18	1		3	15	6	24	83	52.8
Speaker D	2	1	22	17	14	1	16	2	75	47.7
Speaker/Hearer D						1		6	7	4.45
Impersonal					2			3	5	3.18
Total	18	19	23	17	19	17	23	35	170	108
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 2b: L2s' Use of Request Perspective Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Hearer D	33	28	2	0	21	28	23	40	175	56.8
Speaker D	2	11	40	38	16	9	21	2	139	45.1
Speaker/Hearer D			1		1	2		11	15	4.87
Impersonal		4	1				3	3	10	3.24
Total	35	43	44	38	38	39	47	56	340	110
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 3: Distribution of Substrategies of Conventional Indirect Requests by Perspective in each Situation

PERSPECTIVE		L1 = 20 L2 = 40															
SITUATION		HEARER DOMIN				SPEAKER DOMIN				SPEAK/HEARER				IMPERSONAL			
		L1	%	L2	%	L1	%	L2	%	L1	%	L2	%	L	%	L2	%
1.	Can't hear	16	80	33	85	2	10	2	5								
2.	Find book	18	94.	28	74	1		11	29							4	11
3.	Typ.ass	1	5	2		22	11	40	10			1	3			1	3
4.	Leave rm					17	90	38	10								
5.	Extension	3	15.	21	54	14	74	16	41			1	3	2	1		
6.	Overhead	15	75	28	72	1	5	9	23	1	5	2	5				
7.	Seat	6	30	23	61	16	80	21	55							2	5
8.	No effort	24	12	40	10	2	10	2	5	6	30	11	28	3		3	8
	Totals	83	10	14	57	75	48	13	45	7	5	15		5	3	10	3

Table 4a: L1s' Use of Conventionally Direct Requests Strategies Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Mood Derivable	8	1				11		2	22	14.1
Explicit Perform										
Hedged Perform										
Locution Der								5	5	3.20
Want Statement										
Suggestory Form										
Total	8	1				11		7	27	17.19
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 4b: L2s' Use of Conventionally Direct Requests Strategies Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Mood Derivable	8					5	3	10	26	8.44
Explicit Perform					1				1	0.32
Hedged Perform	1							1	2	0.64
Locution Der								5	5	1.62
Want Statement			1	1	1		1	2	6	1.94
Suggestory form										
Total	9		1	1	2	5	4	18	40	12.98
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	30	308	100

Table 5a: L1s' Use of Query Preparatory Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Q. Prep	9	18	15	18	17	13	6	10	106	67.5
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 5b: L2s' Use of Query Preparatory Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Q. Prep	26	22	23	35	32	24	17	11	190	61.6
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	96.2

TABLE 6: RANK-ORDERED DISTRIBUTION OF PREPARATORY REQUEST STRATEGIES OF L1 & L2 STUDENTS

STRATEGY		SITUATIONS																TOTAL				
		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		167/308		%		
QUERY PREPARATORY		L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2	
A	Can you	1	7		7						9	5	11		2	2	3	8	39	5.0	12.6	
A	May I					1	5	15	20	5	6		3		1			22	35	14.0	11.3	
3.	Could you	4	6	6	6		1		1	1	6	7	6	2	1	6	3	26	30	16.5	9.74	
A	Can I					4	8	3	14	2	4		1	2	3			11	30	7.00	9.74	
C	Would you		6	3		1	2					3	1	3		1	1	4	6	19	3.82	6.16
A	May you		3		1							3		1		2		2		12		3.89
A	Could I			1	6	2	1	2	2	2	1							7	10	4.45	3.24	
B	Will you mind		2				1												2			0.64
C	Will you	1	2						1					2				1	5	0.63	1.62	
B	Do you mind	2	2													3		2	5	1.27	1.62	
B	Would you mind				1		1							1	2		1	1	5	0.63	1.62	
C	Is it alright						3												3			0.97
D	I wonder/was wondering if			1		1						2						2	2	1.27	0.64	
C	Won't you											1							1			0.32
A	Can we											1							1			0.32
A	Could you, if you don't mind													1					1			0.32
A	Might I								1										1			0.32
C	Shall you		1																1			0.32
D	Is it OK					2	1											2	1	1.27	0.32	
	Please allow me								1										1			0.32
D	Is it possible if I could					1					3							4		2.54		
D	Would that be alright/ok/possible					3												3		1.91		
D	Is there any way you could			1		1					1							3		1.91		
A	Do you think you could			1													1	2		1.27		
A	I would like to know if...					1												1		0.63		
A	Could I ask if you could			1														1		0.63		

Table 7a: L1s' Use of Hint Strategies Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Strong Hint	3	1	4		1	6	19	16	50	31.84
Mild Hint								1	1	0.63
	3	1	4		1	6	19	17	51	32.48
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 7b: L2s' Use of Hint Strategies Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Strong Hint	5	23	17	1	1	7	30	20	104	33.76
Mild Hint			2			1	3	6	12	3.89
Total	5	23	19	1	1	8	33	26	116	37.66
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 8a: L1s' Use of Syntactic Downgrader Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Interrogative			1		1				2	1.2
Negation of Prec										
Subjunctive										
Conditional Asp										
Tense										
Conditional C	1	3	4		2			2	12	7.64
Total	1	3	5		3			2	14	8.91
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 8b: L2s' Use of Syntactic Downgrader Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Interrogative			3						3	0.97
Negation of Prec					1		1		2	0.64
Subjunctive										
Conditional Asp					1					0.32
Tense										
Conditional C			2		1		1	4	8	2.59
Total			5		3		2	4	14	4.54
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 9a : L1s' Use of Lexical and Phrasal Downgraders Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Politeness M	11	12	5	15	12	11	4	13	83	53.2
Understater	1		1			6	1		9	5.76
Hedge			1				1		2	1.28
Subjectivizer		1	1					7	9	5.76
Downtoner					2		2	4	8	8.28
Cajoler										
Appealer		1							1	0.64
Total	12	14	8	15	14	17	8	24	112	71.3
Out of possible:	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 9b: L2s' Use of Lexical and Phrasal Downgraders Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Politeness M	27	16	6	21	23	24	6	15	138	44.8
Understater				11	5	15	3	5	42	13.6
Hedge			2		1		1	3	7	2.27
Subjectivizer										
Downtoner	1		1			3	6	1	12	3.89
Cajoler								2	2	0.64
Appealer			1					1	2	0.64
Total	28	16	10	32	29	42	160	27	200	64.9
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 10a: L1s' Use of Upgraders Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Intensifier	1	1			3		1		6	3.82
Commitment Ind										
Expletive										
Time Intensifiers								1	1	0.63
Lexical Uptoner								1	1	0.63
Determination M										
Repetition of R										
Emphatic Add	1					1		1	3	1.91
Pejorative Det										
Total	2	1			3	1	1	3	11	7.0
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 10b: L2s' Use of Upgraders Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Intensifier			1					3	4	1.29
Commitment Ind					1				1	0.32
Expletive										
Time Intensifiers			2	2					4	1.29
Lexical Uptoner								1	1	0.32
Determination M										
Repetition of R										
Emphatic Add							3	1	4	1.29
Pejorative Det										
Total			3	2	1		3	5	14	4.54
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 11a: L1s' Use of Mitigating Supportive Moves Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Preparator										
Get.a Pre-comm										
Grounder	16	9	21	2	15	10	7	13	93	59.2
Disarmer	1								1	0.63
Promise of a R										
Imposition Min										
Total	17	9	21	2	15	10	7	13	94	59.8
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 11b: L2s' Use of Mitigating Supportive Moves Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Preparator										
Get. A Pre-comm						1			1	
Grounder	34	8	28	10	25	26	16	21	168	54.5
Disarmer					3			1	4	1.29
Promise of a R					3				3	0.97
Imposition Min										
Total	34	8	28	10	31	27	16	22	176	57.1
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

Table 12a: L1s' Use of Aggravating Supportive Moves Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Insult								1	1	0.63
Threat	1						1	1	3	1.91
Moralizing								1	1	0.63
Combinations										
Mode										
Irony										
Total	1						1	3	5	3.18
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 12b: L2s' Use of Aggravating Supportive Moves Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	No.	%
Insult										
Threat	1							4	5	1.62
Moralizing							1		1	0.32
Combinations										
Mode										
Irony										
Total	1						1	4	6	1.94
Out of possible	39	38	38	38	39	39	38	39	308	100

APOLOGIES

Table 13a: L1s' Use of IFID Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Intensifying Adv	10	20	17	17	14	21	15	21	135	84.3
Emotional Expr		9	10	3	1		2	14	39	24.3
Exclamations			4		4		4		12	7.5
Express for Reg		1			1	2		2	6	3.75
Double Intensifier		1		2	1				4	2.5
Please										
Total	10	31	31	22	21	23	21	37	196	124.
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100.

Table13b: L2s' Use of IFID Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Intensifying Adv	26	42	28	44	33	35	30	32	270	85.7
Emotional Expr		7	4	5	4			9	29	9.20
Exclamations	2	1	6				2	1	12	3.80
Express for Reg										
Double intensifier			3						3	0.95
Please								1	1	0.31
Total	28	50	41	49	37	35	32	43	315	100
Out of Possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 14a: Breakdown Of Substrategies Of IFID (L1 Respondents)

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Sorry	11	19	17	17	14	15	15	21	129	81
I apologize				1					1	0.62
Excuse me						5		5	10	6.14
Forgive me		1		3					4	2.5
Pardon me										
Total	11	20	17	21	14	20	15	26	144	91.7
Out of Possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 14b: Breakdown of Substrategies of IFID (L2 respondents)

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Sorry	25	39	26	37	30	23	28	31	239	76
IFID (2)		4	2	7	3		1	1	18	5.71
I apologize		3	3	1	2		1		10	3.17
Excuse me	1		2			12			15	4.76
Forgive me		2		7	2			2	13	4.12
Pardon me			1				1		2	0.63
Total	26	48	34	52	37	35	31	34	297	94.2
Out of possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 15a: L1s' Use of Taking on Responsibility Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Admission of Fact	18	10	18	10	22	9	7	17	111	69.3
Explicit Self-b							1		1	0.62
Lack of Intent		3	1	12					16	10.0
Justify Hearer				1				1	2	1.25
Expr of Embar					1			2	3	1.87
Ref to Acknowl							5	1	6	3.75
Denial of Resp		1					5	1	7	4.37
Blame hearer								1	1	
Pretend to be O								1	1	
Total	18	14	19	23	23	9	18	24	148	94.2
Out of Possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 15b: L2s' Use of Taking on Responsibility Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Admission of F	38	8	31	6	35		16	33	167	53.0
Explicit Self-b		1		7	3		6	2	19	6.03
Lack of Intent				17	1	1	5	6	30	9.52
Justify Hearer								1	1	0.31
Expr of Emb.				1				1	2	0.63
Ref to Acknowl G										
Denial of R							11		11	3.49
Blame Hearer										
Pretend to be O										
Total	38	9	31	31	39	1	38	43	230	73.0
Out of Possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 16a: L1s' Use of Explanation Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Explanation	9	16	7	12	12	4	5	7	72	45.8
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 16b: L2s' Use of Explanation Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Explanation	9	36	13	15	19	2	19	25	138	43.8
Out of Possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 17a: L1s' Use of Offer of Repair Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Offer of repair			3				6	6	15	9.55
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 17b: L2s' Use of Offer of Repair Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Offer of repair	1	2	1		2		5	4	15	4.76
Out of Possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 18a: L1s' Use of Promise of Forbearance Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Prom of Forb		1	4	2			3		10	6.36
Out of Possible:	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 18b: L2s' Use of Promise of Forbearance Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Prom of Forb		5	24	2			2	1	34	10.7
Out of Possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 19a: L1s' Use of Distracting from the Offence Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Query Precond		2		2					4	2.5
Act Innoc/pret.		2			5			2	9	5.17
Future T/O rem		1							1	0.62
Humour										
Appeaser								1	1	0.62
L/p Downgrader					1		1		2	1.25
Total		5		2	6		1	3	17	10.8
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	100

Table 19b: L2s' Use of Distracting from the offence Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Query Precond					2			3	5	1.58
Act Innoc/pret.		1	3	4	3		8	2	21	6.66
Future T/O rem										
Humour										
Appeaser		1						2	3	0.95
L/p Downgrader										
Total		2	3	4	5		8	7	29	9.20
Out of possible	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

Table 20a: L1s' Use of Concern for hearer Across Situations

L1	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Concern		1			2				3	1.91
Out of possible	20	19	20	19	19	20	20	20	157	97.6

Table 20b: L2s' Use of Concern for hearer Across Situations

L2	SITUATION								TOTALS	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	No.	%
Concern		2			2				4	1.26
Out of possible:	40	40	40	39	37	40	39	40	315	100

DCT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of course:

First language:

The following situations are likely to take place in the daily interactions of the learning/teaching environment. Read through the situations and fill in, in the space provided, what you would say (the requests or apologies you would use). Please respond as naturally and honestly as possible.

REQUESTS

1. Unable to hear

The student next to you is talking loudly to his friend while your lecturer is giving important information to the class and you are unable to hear what the lecturer is saying.

You:.....
.....

Student: "OK, OK, I'll let you listen in peace."

2. Find a book

Your lecturer tells you to use a particular book as a reference for your next assignment but you don't know how to find this book.

You:.....
.....

Student: "Sure, I've used it before, I know exactly where it is."

3. Typed assignment

A lecturer has set an assignment with directions for it to be typed but you are only able to submit a hand written one.

You:.....
.....

Lecturer: " Well, just make sure you write neatly!"

4. Leave the room

You are in the classroom, in the middle of a lecture when you need to go to the toilet.

You:.....
.....

Lecturer: "Alright you can go but come back as soon as possible."

5. Extension

The class has been given an assignment to do by a certain date, after which, marks will be deducted. Although you have done some work, you need more time to finish.

You:.....
.....

Lecturer: " I'll give you one more day only."

6. Overhead notes

You are in a lecture with forty students when the lecturer takes off the overhead transparency before you have taken down all the notes.

You:.....
.....

Lecturer: "OK, I'll leave it on for a few extra minutes. "

7. Seat Taken

You are in the library studying when you leave your seat for a few minutes. When you return to your seat, another student has moved your belongings and is in your place.

You:.....
.....

Student: " I didn't know it was occupied, but I'll move."

8. No Effort

You are a member of a group, formed by the lecturer to do a group assignment. You feel that another member of the group has put no effort into the task he or she had to prepare. You ask him/her to redo the task.

You:.....
.....

Student: "Okay, I'll have it done by tomorrow."

APOLOGIES

9. Definition of a concept

Your lecturer asks you to give the definition of a difficult concept(idea) he has lectured on. You cannot explain it to him.

Lecturer: "I hope you've understood what I've been talking about?"

You:.....
.....

Lecturer : " That's alright, I'll have to explain again in another way."

10. Late

Your student friend has made an arrangement to meet in the study centre in order to work on a joint project. He arrives on time but you are half an hour late.

Student: "I thought you weren't coming!"

You:.....
.....

Student: " O.k. we'd better start working, we've got lots to do."

11. Borrowed book

You have borrowed a book from your lecturer, which you promised to return today. You realize you have forgotten to bring it along.

Lecturer: "I hope you've brought the textbook back today ?"

You:.....
.....

Lecturer: "Okay, but please remember it next time, I need it."

12. Offence

During a group discussion, you disagreed with what a fellow student had to say and were rude to her. You want to make amends.

Student: "You didn't have to get personal, you offended me."

You:.....
.....

Student: "Okay, but just remember, it's only a discussion."