Doktori disszertáció

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Developing Pragmatic Competence in the English as a Foreign Language Classroom: An Experimental Study with Hungarian Secondary School Students

A Pragmatikai Kompetencia Fejlesztése az Angol mint Idegen Nyelv Tanításában: Kísérleti Tanulmány Magyar Középiskolás Diákokkal

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List of abbreviations

AAVE: African American Vernacular English

CCSARP: Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern

DCT: Discourse Completion Task

DRT: Discourse Rating Task

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ELT: English Language Teaching

ELT INSET: English Language Teacher In-Service Training

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

IL: Interlanguage

ILP: Interlanguage Pragmatics

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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Introduction

Research has repeatedly proven that even proficient speakers of English often lack the pragmatic competence that would match their high grammatical competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992b; Omar, 1992b). These speakers are not aware of the social, cultural and discourse conventions that have to be followed in various situations (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a). It has also been investigated how the lack of availability and salience of input contributes to the disparity between grammatical and pragmatic competence (Kasper, 2001a).

My professional experience has also reflected these observations. I have had the opportunity to teach both in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context of Hungary and the English as a Second Language (ESL) context of the United States of America. In both learning environments I have observed miscommunications and communication breakdowns in and outside the classroom. The reason for these was not insufficient linguistic competence, but the lack of awareness of the pragmatic rules of the target language. These students, advanced as they may have been, often committed pragmatic errors and failed to recognize their seriousness. This problem is especially crucial in the foreign language context, as EFL students tend to evaluate pragmatic violations less serious than grammatical errors (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). It is therefore essential that students be made aware of pragmatic violations and the dangers of appearing rude or insulting in interactions.

One of the most thought-provoking questions of Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) literature has been the teachability of pragmatic competence, or more specifically, whether

pedagogical intervention in pragmatics results in better awareness and performance than simple exposure to the target language and how the appropriate usage of speech acts can explicitly or implicitly be taught to students. This question has inspired a number of research projects in recent years (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; House, 1996; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Overstreet & Yule, 1999; Rose, 2005). All studies carried out in this area conclude that learners who received instruction in an area of pragmatics outperformed those who did not (e.g., Kasper, 2001b; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Lam & Wong, 2000; Takahashi, 2005b).

The aim of my dissertation is to explore the teachability of pragmatic competence in the Hungarian EFL context, focusing on how to open and close conversations. For this reason, I designed four main lines of investigation. First, in order to provide a background to pragmatics instruction in the Hungarian EFL classroom, I examine how two EFL coursebook series present openings and closings. Second, the main line of investigation focuses on the effects of a five-week pragmatic treatment program on students' pragmatic awareness and speech act production. This quasi-experiment was conducted involving 92 secondary school students in Hungary. I analyze the data both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Third, I investigate the relationship between pragmatic competence and foreign language proficiency, namely the effect students' proficiency has on their production of openings and closings, as well as how this situation changes after the pragmatic treatment program. Fourth, I conducted a follow-up study in order to look into students' and teachers' attitudes to the treatment and pragmatic competence in general.

Openings and closings were chosen for the investigation for two main reasons. First of all, research concludes that openings and closings have a significant role in

conversations. Furthermore, they are built on subtle rules and therefore are very delicate matter even for native speakers (Button, 1987; Grant & Starks, 2001; Levinson, 1983; Richards & Schmidt, 1983). Secondly, because of the differences between English and Hungarian, these speech acts often pose problems for Hungarian students of English (Edwards, 2003a; Edwards & Csizér, 2004). For these reasons, awareness-raising activities and explicit training in this area are essential and beneficial in the classroom. However, there has been no study to date that investigates these two speech acts in the EFL, or more specifically, in the Hungarian context. I have conducted my research in an attempt to fill this gap.

The first two chapters of my dissertation provide a thorough literature review into several areas related to pragmatic competence. Chapter 1 focuses on speech act theory, presenting definitions and models of communicative competence, pragmatic competence, and speech acts. The main areas of investigation in speech act theory, such as universals, face, and politeness, will also be touched upon in this chapter. Then, I devote a section to exploring what the literature has to say about the two speech acts under investigation, openings and closings.

Chapter 2 comprises the literature review of seven major areas in interlanguage pragmatics. First, I define concepts and look at the goals of interlanguage pragmatics research. Second, I devote a section to the question of setting the model for instruction in pragmatics, discussing current and controversial questions such as the paradigm shift from the "ideal native speaker" model and English as a lingua franca in the EFL context. Third, I examine the relationship between pragmatic competence and second or foreign language proficiency, which is one of the research questions of my study. Fourth, a section on

pragmalinguistic transfer provides insights into positive, negative, and bidirectional transfer, as well as the relationship between transfer and second language proficiency. Following this, I discuss the sources and manifestation of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. In the subsequent section I propose how these failures may be avoided by instruction in the ESL and EFL classroom. The last section in this chapter is devoted to data collection techniques in interlanguage pragmatics research, mainly those pertaining to my dissertation.

I present a study of two coursebook series in Chapter 3. This investigation was motivated by my review of the literature on ESL and EFL coursebooks. These studies concluded that coursebooks provide inadequate input in the area of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan & Reynolds, 1991; Bouton, 1994; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Gilmore, 2004; Holmes, 1988; Overstreet & Yule, 1999; Vellenga, 2004). My goal was to examine how openings and closings are presented in two coursebook series used in the Hungarian EFL context, *Headway* and *Criss Cross* (for full references of coursebooks see pp. 214-215). This chapter gives an account of both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the data.

I outline the structure of the experimental study in Chapter 4. This chapter contains the research questions and hypotheses for the project. In the *Method* section I present the participating teachers and students, the procedures, as well as the seven data collection instruments I employed in the study. I also describe the treatment tasks that were used in the training.

The following two chapters present the analysis of the data from two perspectives. First, Chapter 5 contains the quantitative analysis, based on the results of statistical

procedures that were carried out. I investigate the relationship between pragmatic competence and foreign language proficiency. I also discuss the effects of explicit teaching on students' pragmatic competence, namely on their pragmatic awareness and speech act production.

Following this, in Chapter 6, I provide a qualitative analysis of the data. This comprises an account of students' production of openings and closings before the treatment as well as a description of the effect the pragmatic training had on students' speech act production. This chapter also includes a discussion of non-verbal means of expressing the closure of the conversation and problems in students' speech act production.

I present the findings of the follow-up study in Chapter 7. My aim with this study is to place pragmatic competence in the larger context of EFL instruction. In order to do so, I discuss the implementation of the treatment tasks in the schools, the participants' feedback on the treatment, and students' and teachers' views on pragmatic instruction. Following this, I devote my attention to general classroom issues raised during the observation, student questionnaires, and teacher interviews.

Finally, I summarize the conclusions of the dissertation in Chapter 8. This includes an account of the answers gained to the research questions in both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses. I also discuss the implications for teaching as well as the limitations of the project. Last, I suggest areas for further research.

Chapter 1: Pragmatic competence and speech act theory

1.1 Pragmatic competence

1.1.1 Models on communicative competence

In an attempt to define pragmatic competence, it is necessary to have an overview of models of communicative competence. Communicative language pedagogy and research into communicative competence have shown that language learning exceeds the limits of memorizing vocabulary items and grammar rules. Hymes (1971), who proposed the term communicative competence from an anthropological viewpoint, wanted to extend the Chomskyan notion of competence to include not only what is grammatical, but also what is feasible and socially appropriate. Hymes (1974) and Giglioni (1972) describe a person with only grammatical competence as a cultural monster, who has acquired all the grammatical rules of the language, yet does not know the rules of social contact, that is, when to speak, when to be silent, or what is appropriate to say and do in a given situation. Hymes (1971) also extended the Chomskyan concept by including both knowledge and the ability to use knowledge as components of communicative competence. He defined communicative competence as the knowledge "as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, what, where, and in what manner", and the ability "to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others" (Hymes, 1971, p. 277).

Table 1. *Some models of communicative competence based on Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell (1995, pp. 11-12)*

Canale and Swain (1980)	**Canale (1983)**	**Celce-Murcia et al. (1995)**	**Bachman and Palmer (1996)**
			Organisational knowledge
	Discourse competence	Discourse competence	Textual knowledge
Grammatical competence	Grammatical competence	Linguistic competence	Grammatical knowledge
			Pragmatic knowledge
			Lexical knowledge
Sociocultural competence	Sociocultural competence	Actional competence	Functional knowledge
		Sociocultral competence	Sociocultural knowledge
Strategic competence	Strategic competence	Strategic competence	Metacognitive strategies

Table 1 provides a summary of some models. Canale and Swain (1980) constructed their model of communicative competence dividing it into grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. As opposed to Hymes (1971), however, they did not include the ability to use knowledge as part of their theory. Later, Canale (1983) added a fourth component to the construct: discourse competence (which had been included in the sociolinguistic part). Two other significant studies were published in the same year: Thomas (1983) and Leech (1983). Thomas defines linguistic competence as consisting of the learner's grammatical competence, which is the abstract, decontextualized knowledge of intonation, phonology, semantics, etc. and pragmatic competence, referring to "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" (p. 92). This definition corresponds to Leech's model, which divides linguistics into grammar, meaning the decontextualized formal system of language and pragmatics, referring to the use

of language in a goal-oriented speech situation, where the goal of the speaker is to produce a specific effect in the hearer's mind.

In Bachman's (1990) model, pragmatic competence is one of the two major components of language competence, comprising the ability to carry out linguistic action and to assess the appropriateness of utterances in different contexts. This is further divided into illocutionary competence (the knowledge of speech acts and speech functions – similarly to Leech's definition of pragmalinguistics) and sociolinguistic competence (knowledge of dialect, register and other cultural factors – corresponding to Leech's description of sociopragmatics). The other major component, organizational competence, entails knowledge of the linguistic material and the ability of the language learner to sequence it into sentences and texts. This comprises two sub-categories: grammatical competence and textual competence (paralleling Canale's discourse competence). There is of course an overlap between the two major components. As an example, knowing the word order of English to produce correct sentences is a part of organizational competence, yet how to use these sentences appropriately in a conversation in order to request, apologize, or compliment, is a matter of pragmatic competence. A later framework by Bachman and Palmer (1996) leaves the two major components and the sub-categories of organizational competence unchanged, but defines the parts of pragmatic competence as lexical, functional and sociocultural. It also adds metacognitive strategies as an overall category. Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) extend the concept and include actional competence, which corresponds to functional knowledge in Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model.

Finally, as speech act studies have been accused of being prevalently English as a Target Language centered (Wierzbicka, 1985), I close this section with a source focusing

primarily on the languages of the European Union. The *Common European framework of reference* (2001) divides communicative language competence into three parts: linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competences. Linguistic competences cover phonological, lexical, and syntactical knowledge and skills. Sociolinguistic competences refer to sociocultural conditions of language use, such as the rules of politeness or rules pertaining to relations between generations, social groups, etc. Pragmatic competences are "concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources" (p. 13), including the production of speech acts and language functions and mastery of discourse. The authors underline the "major impact of interactions and cultural environments in which such abilities are constructed" (ibid.).

1.1.2 Defining pragmatic competence

Every model of communicative competence includes a component that corresponds to pragmatic competence. The definitions of this concept center around the following ideas: using the language effectively and appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Fraser, Rintell & Walters, 1980) and communicative situations (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981), being goal- and hearer-oriented (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983), understanding and interpreting speakers' intentions, feelings, and attitudes (Garcia, 2004), using linguistic resources in a functional way (Bachman, 1990; *Common European framework of reference*, 2001), including the ability to react in a culturally acceptable way (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981) and to accommodate the communication partner in the process (Dirven & Pütz, 1993). In their definition of sociocultural competence, some researchers include "the cultural norms,

values, and beliefs needed for appropriate and native-like language use" (Lee & McChesney, 2000, p. 162). I discuss the challenges of the latter definition in section 2.2, including the problems with the native-speaker as the model for instruction and values and beliefs in teaching pragmatics. For the purposes of my dissertation, pragmatic competence was defined as "the knowledge of social, cultural and discourse conventions that have to be followed in various situations" (Edwards & Csizér, 2001, p. 56).

Pragmatic competence is an organic part of communicative competence, and not a piece of additional knowledge to the learners' grammatical knowledge. It is not something "extra or ornamental, like the icing on the cake" (Kasper, 1997a, p. 2). Pragmatic competence is "not subordinated to knowledge of grammar and text organization but coordinated to formal linguistic and textual knowledge and interacts with 'organizational competence' in complex ways" (ibid.). Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan and Reynolds (1991, p. 4.) highlight the importance of pragmatic competence by pointing to the consequences of the lack of this competence.

> Speakers who do not use pragmatically appropriate language run the risk of appearing unco-operative at the least, or, more seriously, rude or insulting. This is particularly *true* of advanced learners whose high linguistic proficiency leads other speakers to expect concomitantly high pragmatic competence.

In an exciting article, Paradis (1998) confirms the importance and the uniqueness of pragmatic competence by citing evidence from the field of neurolinguistics. As he argues, traditionally language pathology has been concerned with problems in left-hemisphere-based linguistic competence (e.g. phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics). However, this approach has radically changed.

> It has become increasingly apparent over the past twenty years that linguistic competence is not sufficient for normal verbal communication. Right-hemisphere-based pragmatic competence is at least equally necessary. As a result, on the one

> hand, neuropsychologists have been investigating pragmatic deficits, and on the other, language pathologists have been using aphasic patients' preserved pragmatic abilities to help them compensate for their deficits in linguistic competence. From the viewpoint of linguistic theory, there is now an external justification for treating sentence grammar independently of pragmatics (p.1).

The following sections provide an overview on two theoretical aspects related to pragmatic competence: speech act theory (section 1.2) and openings and closings (section 1.3). The second part of the literature review explores more practical aspects of pragmatic competence: interlanguage pragmatics research (section 2.1), setting the model for instruction (section 2.2), the relationship between pragmatic competence and second language proficiency (section 2.3), pragmalinguistic transfer (section 2.4), pragmatic failure (section 2.5), the teachability of pragmatic competence (section 2.6), and research methodology in interlanguage pragmatics (section 2.7).

1.2 Speech act theory

Speech act theory was introduced by philosopher J. L. Austin (1962) and was developed by J. R. Searle (1969). It provided a radical reformation of the truth-based semantics that was prevalent at the time and has since developed into "one of the most influential paradigms in the study of language use" (Rose, 1997, p. 271). Conducting an extensive literature review in speech act theory would be beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, I will provide a summary of some definitions (section 1.2.1), studies (section 1.2.2), and research issues (section 1.2.3) in speech act theory. Last, in section 1.4, I discuss factors affecting speech act production.

1.2.1 Definition of terms

Levinson (1983, p. 5) defines pragmatics as "the study of language usage." One of the focal points of pragmatics research is the study of speech acts, which are defined as "all the acts we perform through speaking, all the things we *do* when we speak" (Schmidt & Richards, 1980, p.129, emphasis original). Austin (1962) distinguished among three kinds of acts. A locutionary act entails vocalizing a sentence with a certain sense and reference, in other words the act *of* saying something. Illocutionary acts (which Austin called speech acts) are performed with the intention of having an effect on the addressee. They are utterances that do not report a fact, but instead are themselves the performance of some action, that is, they are acts performed *in* saying something. Perlocutionary acts pertain to what the effect of the utterance is on the hearer, i.e. an act performed *by* saying something. They cannot be systematically related to illocutionary acts, as the speaker may not know what effect their utterance will have on the hearer (Fraser, 1983).

Speech acts have been numbered and classified in several different ways. There have been analyses that distinguish as many as 4800 speech act verbs divided into 600 categories (see Rose, 1997; Szili, 2004). Speech act verbs (Versucheren, 1999) or performative verbs (Fraser, 1983), such as *threaten*, *request*, or *promise*, are used in an utterance to carry out a speech act. One of the most notable classifications were carried out by Searle (1969). He categorizes speech acts according to the point of illocution into five groups: assertives (*I like fast cars.),* directives (*You need to be home by ten.*), commissives (*I promise to bring your car back in one piece!*), expressives (*Sorry that I wrecked your car!*) and declaratives (*I give up*). As for the speech acts under my investigation, openings, and closings, Schmidt and Richards (1980) note that based on

speaker intentions, greetings and farewells constitute a small category or categories, not generalizable as major classes, but deserve attention.

The interpretation and negotiation of speech act force are often dependent on the discourse or transactional context. There is a distinction between the syntactic structure of an utterance and the illocutionary force it carries. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986), in their analysis of expressing gratitude, eliminated those instances in which the illocutionary force of the act was not primarily that of expressing gratitude, even though expressions containing these words were used. For instance, if a participant used *Thank you* as accepting an offer, it was not taken into consideration in the analysis. Speech acts cannot be equated with utterances or turns either, as sometimes it takes more turns to perform a speech act.

Since the birth of speech act theory, many changes have been proposed to Austin's and Searle's taxonomies and definitions. Richards and Schmidt (1983, p.126) suggested that one limitation of the original theory for conversation analysis is the fact that speech acts are "usually defined in terms of speaker intentions and beliefs, whereas the nature of conversation depends crucially on interaction between speaker and hearer." They also pointed out that many speech acts are multifunctional and cannot be classified as carrying one illocutionary force. Kachru (1992, p.239.) argues that speech act theory by itself is not adequate "to study the illocutionary force and the perlocutionary effect of locutionary acts" and there needs to be a more integrated theory incorporating speech act theory, conversational analysis, sociolinguistics, and ethnography of communication.

Geis (1995) set out to reform Searle's theory and to provide a dynamic speech act theory. He proposed that the primary speech acts are "social as opposed to linguistic in

nature and are therefore better viewed as communicative actions than as speech acts" (p. 9). Geis criticizes Austin because he says that illocutionary acts are necessarily verbal acts. An interesting example he quotes is kissing. We could call it a reciprocal, bilabial, ingressive, pulmonary act; but rather, and more importantly, it is a social action, even if it necessarily requires performance of a physical action. In Geis' argument the same is true for offering, making threats, etc, as "these are social actions even if they sometimes require some sort of linguistic action – talking, writing, signing, etc." (p. 15). While these are certainly valid claims, the literature still refers to these acts as speech acts but takes into consideration the modifications to the original theory.

1.2.2 Studies in speech act theory

The literature of speech acts is indeed voluminous, since no other area in pragmatics has generated more research (Rose, 1997). The review of all these works would require a book on its own, therefore I will only highlight a few essential research projects and some basic issues researched in the speech act literature. Kasper (1992) mentions that among speech acts, the most researched are requests (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Ellis, 1992; Garton, 2000; Hassall, 2001) and apologies (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper, & Ross, 1996; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). There are several studies on suggestions (Matsumura, 2001 and 2003) and refusals (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1991; Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Nelson, Carson, Batal, & Bakary, 2002), and some on compliments (Boyle, 2000; Golato, 2003; Holmes & Brown, 1987; Yu, 2004) and complaints (Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Trosborg, 1995).

Meier (1999) points out that relatively few speech communities are represented in the studies. The most popular ones are the USA and Japan, meaning that these studies examine learners of English and Japanese as a Second or Foreign Language. Some welcome exceptions are the above-mentioned studies by Félix-Brasdefer (2004), involving learners of Spanish, and Hassall (2001), focusing on Australian learners of Indonesian. Another learner characteristic that shows little variation among the studies is age, as most projects focus on adult learners. The contexts of these studies are also quite limited, as most of them are carried out at universities (Rose, 2005).

Studies have been conducted in the Hungarian as a Second Language context as well. Most of them investigate the speech acts of requests, refusals, and apologies (Bándli, 2004; Bándli & Maróti, 2003; Szili, 2002, 2004). Szili (2004) points out that the Hungarian speech act literature is rather poor in studies conducted thus far. Some concentrate on Hungarians' production of speech acts in the first language (L1) (see Bándli, 2004, on refusals), whereas others focus on the pragmatic performance of learners of Hungarian as a Second Language (such as the study by Bándli & Maróti, 2003, researching Japanese learners' requesting and refusing behavior).

Perhaps the most well-known and largest-scale study is the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern (CCSARP), researching requests and apologies in six languages under different social constrains including both native and non-native varieties (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). The project investigated three kinds of variation: cross-cultural (comparing the realization patterns of given speech acts across different languages relative to the same social constrains), sociopragmatic (examining the realization patterns of speech acts within specific speech communities), and

interlanguage variation (comparing the speech act use between native and non-native speakers of a given language). The research project was carried out using a discourse completion task (DCT), in order to be able to make cross-cultural comparisons by gathering large amounts of data (100 male and 100 female native-speakers and the same number of non-native speakers completed the DCT in all six languages). The questionnaire comprised sixteen situations, half of which were requests, and half apologies.

The researchers in the CCSARP used two factors in their analysis that distinguish the relationships between communication partners. One factor is social distance, or degree of familiarity, between speakers. On the basis of this factor, there are two kinds of social distances between communication partners. Two students speaking to each other have a negative social distance (-SD), whereas strangers on the street will share a positive social distance (+SD). The other factor is dominance, or social power. This again provides two kinds of relationships between communication partners, an equal and an unequal one. An equal dominance relationship exists between roommates, for instance (x=y), whereas a policeman and a driver will share an unequal dominance relationship (x>y). Using these two factors in the analysis, there are role constellations represented: +SD and x<y, -SD and x=y, etc. The authors observed that children as young as two years old are sensitive to the relative power and the social distance, and use different levels of directness depending on their communication partners. As an example, American children use more imperatives talking to mothers than fathers, give orders to siblings but request politely from strangers.

Several studies have investigated the different speech act usage of native and non-native speakers. Bardovi-Harlig (1996, p. 22) distinguishes four main categories to describe how second or foreign language learners' speech act use differs from that of native speakers'. First, native and non-native speakers may use different speech acts. In a longitudinal study on suggestions and rejections in an academic advising session data base, non-native speakers used more rejections, whereas native speakers used more suggestions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993). Second, non-native speakers may use speech acts that differ in form. In the same study, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford concluded that in early sessions non-natives used different speech acts, whereas in later sessions they used the same speech acts as their native speaker peers, but in a different form. Third, native and non-native speakers may use different semantic formulas, and fourth, the content of these formulas may not be the same. In the later sessions non-natives showed change toward the native speaker norms in their ability to employ appropriate speech acts, used more suggestions and less rejections and became more successful negotiators.

Blum-Kulka (1982) points out that second language learners are often recognized as such because of the ways in which they realize their speech acts in the target language. Non-native speakers are sensitive to the setting and interpersonal relationships in the dialogues and form speech acts in both direct and indirect ways, but their actual use of strategies differ systematically from native speakers'. On the one hand, non-native speakers' degree of directness differs from native speakers'. On the other hand, second language learners may have a lack of knowledge concerning the conventions that govern the choice of certain forms in context, that is, non-native speakers do not use the

appropriate form. They may fail to realize indirect speech acts in terms of both communicative effectiveness and social appropriateness. Schmidt and Richards (1980) also mention that non-native speakers often concentrate on the surface level, and that is why they miss indirectly marked speech acts or functions.

1.2.3 Main concepts in pragmatics studies

1.2.3.1 Face

Yule (1996) defines face as the public self-image of a person, referring to the "emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize" (p. 60). With respect to face-saving, we can distinguish two perspectives: one is a defensive orientation toward saving the person's own face, whereas the other is a protective orientation for saving the other person's face (House & Kasper, 1981).

In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terminology, the notion of face consists of two kinds of desires, or 'face-wants'. One of them is the interactant's desire not to be impeded in their actions (negative face), and the other desire is for the interactant to be approved by the conversational partners (positive face). Brown and Levinson define the notion of face as universal, however, it is subject to cultural differences in each society. Certain kinds of acts in each society tend to threaten face, mainly those acts that are contrary to the face wants of the speaker or the addressee. These acts may threaten the speakers' positive or negative face. The researchers also make a distinction between positive and negative politeness. Positive politeness focuses on the positive face and self-image of the hearer and respects the face of the addressee. Negative politeness, on the

other hand, is oriented toward the hearer's negative face and is essentially avoidance-based. As they point out:

> different speech acts have different face-consequences. A request threatens the recipient's negative face by imposing on the recipient's freedom of action. An invitation, on the other hand, seems to pay respect to the responder's positive face (p. 120).

1.2.3.2 Politeness

The concept of politeness has been in the center of attention in pragmatics studies since the 1980s (Szili, 2004). Researchers have interpreted this concept in different ways: as a principle for decreasing friction and the impression of impoliteness in communication (Leech, 1983), as a face-saving act (Brown & Levinson, 1987), or as a contract among interactants (Fraser, 1990). In all three approaches the goal was to define politeness in a way that would be universal for different languages.

House and Kasper (1981) note that we do not indeed know whether politeness is a universal phenomenon. What we do know is that it occurs, though with varying norms, in "highly differentiated societies whose predominant cultural feature with respect to forms of interpersonal contact might be called 'urbanity'"(p.157). The authors define the characteristics of urbanity as the highly developed emotional control of the individual and the social recognition of an individual's face. Thomas (1983) cautions against the attempt to establish any "absoluteness" in politeness. She argues that the lack of context can especially be misleading when setting up "standards" for politeness. Asking native speakers to rate the forms of requests in the "hierarchy of politeness" will not lead to valid results. For instance, a request *I was wondering if you would please take the dog outside?* between a husband and wife is much more likely to express sarcasm and

annoyance than politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987) also argues that such requests, though they may be considered very polite without a context, sound standoffish when they are used between close friends. On the contrary, the imperative form, which is considered ”extremely impolite” by some researchers, is often used in polite offers (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and accounted for more than one-third of Thomas’s (1983) corpus of requests within a peer group. Would it be correct to say, then, that people in peer groups are “less polite” than in other groups? Not necessarily. The more accurate answer would be that they are appealing to different forms of politeness.

Politeness phenomena have a significant effect on pragmatic errors or pragmatic failure. House and Kasper (1981) conducted an experiment investigating politeness markers in English and German because they had observed that German speakers of English were often considered impolite by native speakers of English. The question they posed was whether this observation was due to the German EFL learners not knowing the formal English equivalents of what they would say in their first language or the different social norms in the two speech communities that affect the politeness in the speakers’ linguistic behavior. In order to investigate this issue, they designed role-play activities in which pairs of German and English native speakers performed everyday informal conversations. The researchers distinguished eight directness levels both in the case of complaints and requests. Their results indicate that Germans used higher levels of directness in the case of both speech acts. German speakers tended to use more upgraders (such as overstaters and lexical intensifiers), whereas English speakers used more downgraders (e.g., hedges or downtoners). House and Kasper underline that it is essential

to include pragmatic aspects of language use in language teaching, one being the interpretation and usage of politeness.

1.2.3.3 Indirectness

An important part of Blum-Kulka's (1982) discussion on second language learners' acquisition is the question of indirectness. She argues that though languages provide their speakers with explicit, direct ways for achieving communication ends, in day-to-day communication speakers seem to prefer indirect ways. This indirectness is based on universal principles. In a study on indirectness, Blum-Kulka (1989) argues that languages differ in the way of the social appropriateness of conventional indirectness. She mentions that these differences between languages can cause communication problems even between intimates. The example she quotes is a couple's communication problems due to different views on politeness, possibly because the husband is from Israel and the wife is from France. One of the Israeli informants in the research project argues that politeness is irrelevant between intimates.

Blum-Kulka and House (1989) researched cross-cultural and situational variation in requesting behavior. They focused on the use of conventional indirectness, hints, and the use of impositives in five requesting situations. The five languages they examined were Australian English, Canadian French, German, Hebrew, and Argentinean Spanish. When the degree of directness and indirectness was taken into account, some cross-cultural differences were established. Argentinean Spanish was the most direct, followed by Hebrew. The least direct language was Australian English. Canadian French and German speakers were placed on the middle point in the continuum of directness. The

same differences were found in both the "student situations" (where the situations were tailored to student life on campus) and the more general ones. When the findings of this indirectness study were compared to the CCSARP results (concerning one language, Hebrew), the researchers found a highly similar pattern of distribution between levels of directness in both sets of data.

1.2.3.4 Universals

A question that has concerned researchers since the beginnings of speech act theory is to what extent speech acts are universal. Brown and Levinson (1987) presented their well-known theory of universalism after they discovered parallelisms in the expression of politeness in three unrelated languages. They examined British and American English, the Tamil of South India, and the Tzeltal spoken by Mayan Indians in Chiapas, Mexico. They pointed out that these three languages have parallel structures as far as politeness strategies are concerned, yet the application of these principles differs systematically across cultures and subcultures or groups. Fraser, Rintell and Walters (1980) claim that every language possesses the same basic set of speech acts and the same set of semantic formulas to perform them.

Throughout the years, the politeness theory presented by Brown and Levinson (1987) has been criticized by various researchers. As Kuha (1999, p. 2) describes it, in many circles there are "customary reservations about their claims of universality." Wolfson (1989) challenged the Brown and Levinson politeness theory, claiming that politeness investment does not increase in a linear fashion with greater social distance and power, but that most politeness is expended in interaction with friends and

colleagues, rather than with intimates and strangers. Nevertheless, Wolfson acknowledges that her research was limited to American middle-class respondents. Wierzbicka (1985, p.145.) argues that speech act studies have "suffered from an astonishing ethnocentrism", being predominantly English-based and speech acts are culture-bound.

The researchers of the CCSARP project conclude that the conventionally indirect forms of request were preferred among all 13 language groups, suggesting that these forms may represent linguistic universals for requests. However, as Garton (2000) proposes, the CCSARP does not include non-western languages (other than Hebrew, I should add), therefore the claim for universalism requires validation from other researchers, investigating non-western languages. Garton conducted a research project in Hungary investigating the effect of age, gender, level of imposition, and length of stay on the production of requests. His results did not verify those of the CCSARP, as requests in Hungarian tended to be more direct than the languages examined in the CCSARP.

Blum-Kulka (1982) claims that "conventional indirect speech acts represent a special case of interdependence between conventions of language and conventions about the use of language. The nature of this interdependence varies systematically across languages and cultures" (p. 34). She opposes the argument that second language learners do not have to 'code their intentions', as there is a similarity of indirect speech acts across languages. If it can be shown that these strategies are indeed similar, then it means that second language learners do not have to acquire new strategies for realizing communicative functions in the second language, but only new (social) attitudes about which strategies may be used appropriately in a given context.

1.2.4 Factors affecting speech act production

There have been several studies exploring the effects of the length of stay in the target environment on pragmatic performance (Bouton, 1994; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Matsumura, 2001; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Schauer, 2006). The findings differ as to the extent length of stay plays a role in learners' speech act production. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) investigated whether non-native speakers of Hebrew would approximate native-speaker norms in their requests and apologies. They found that after ten years in the target community learners' perceptions of politeness strategies and level of directness became similar to those of native speakers. Félix-Brasdefer's (2004) study shows that learners of Spanish who spent more time in the target community improved in their ability to negotiate and mitigate a refusal. Bardovi-Harlig (1999a) argues that even shorter length of stay may help to be more targetlike.

There are some researchers that have arrived at more controversial conclusions regarding the effects of residing in the target community. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) found that the advanced learners in their study demonstrated a surprisingly poor performance in expressing gratitude. They also note that the learners had lived in the United States for a while, however, this fact did not seem to have an effect on their production of pragmatic functions. Matsumura (2001, 2003) discovered that Japanese learners' acquisition of pragmatic competence in Canada was aided by residing in the target community, yet was not necessarily associated with length of stay. Their development may have been due to the fact that their stay in the target culture was limited to eight months, therefore they were keen on interacting with native speakers. In other words, the deciding factor is exposure rather than length of stay. Matsumura (2001) also

notes that the longer learners stay in the target environment, the longer they may be able to maintain the level of pragmatic competence they have reached after they return home.

Research suggests that there is no linear relationship between the length of residency and pragmatic performance. Bouton (1994) conducted a longitudinal study, examining how ESL students develop in their knowledge and awareness of implicatures. He concluded that students made considerable progress over the 4.5 years, but there was still a significant difference between native and non-native speaker performance. It seemed that there was a "cutoff point" in the length of stay and students mastered their ability to interpret implicatures in the first 17 months, after which their progress slowed down. Bouton argues that unguided learning in this area seems slow.

Another focus in the studies is the use of monitor and the role of planning. Cohen (1996) highlights the importance of planning by arguing that those learners who do more careful planning before starting to speak may be less prone to violate certain sociocultural and sociolinguistic conventions. Cohen and Olshtain (1993) focus on the process of students producing speech acts, namely apologies, complaints, and requests. Their retrospective interviews revealed that half of the time the students conducted only general assessment of the utterances, without planning specific vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, there was a great difference in the use of monitor among the students. A very interesting point they mention is that some students' word choices were affected by pronunciation problems. One respondent remarked in a retrospective interview that she used *excuse me* because it was easier to pronounce than *sorry* as an opener. I believe even as advanced speakers of a foreign language (or language teachers, for that matter), we can

think of such instances; yet this issue has not received much attention in speech act research.

The literature of speech act studies has investigated several other factors affecting learners' pragmatic performance. Without the aim of giving a full account of these, I will discuss some of them in the later chapters of my dissertation. I concentrate on the ones that pertain to the present study, such as the effects second language (L2) proficiency has on speech act production (see section 2.3) and the influence of the mother tongue in the forms of positive and negative transfer (see section 2.4).

1.3 Openings and closings in speech act theory

1.3.1 Greetings and partings as formulas and rituals

The usage of verbal routines or formulas has been an important topic in the literature for the last few decades. Anthropological and ethnomethodological research point out their significance in three ways. First, Ferguson (1981) mentions that interpersonal verbal routines, such as greetings and thanks, are universal phenomena in human languages. Although their form and usage may vary enormously from one society to another, all human speech communities use these politeness formulas. Second, they have the effect of controlling and regularizing a social situation (Firth, 1972). Third, formulas are tools of polite behavior and they serve as a means of reducing the risk of face threats (Laver, 1981).

Openings and closings have been recognized for having significant roles as formulas in human interaction. Richards and Schmidt (1983) consider openings and

closings organized and orderly accomplishments by conversationalists. Firth (1972) points out that greetings, in the social sense, recognize an encounter as socially acceptable, whereas parting behavior implies that the encounter has been acceptable. Both serve as "softeners" of social relationships, employed to maintain the positive face wants of the participants. Laver (1981, p. 292.) proposes that it is at the beginning and the end of conversations that the participants conduct their "social negotiations about respective status and role partly by means of their choices of formulaic phrase, address term and type of phatic communion." Wildner-Bassett (1984) points out that the primary social functions of openings are three-fold. First, it is to defuse potential hostility which could arise when there is silence instead of the expected speech. Second, they create the opportunity for partners to cooperate in the beginning of their interaction, so that the beginning of their conversation is cordial and shows mutual acceptance. Third, they allow participants to express their perceptions of their relative social status. As for closing sequences, Wildner-Bassett (1984) distinguishes two important functions: one is to manage a cooperative parting in order to avoid rejection, whereas the other is to consolidate the relationship by expressing mutual esteem and solidarity.

Firth (1972) counters the view that greetings and partings are spontaneous emotional reactions of people coming together and then separating. He argues that according to sociological observation, these behaviors are highly conventionalized and can be considered rituals; as they follow patterned routines, convey other than overt messages, and have the adaptive value of facilitating social relations. He also points out that these rituals are not universals, but tend to be culture-specific. Wolfson (1989) mentions that non-verbal signals are also part of these rituals. Greetings are often

expressed with head gestures, mutual glances, and smiles (more smiles if participants are acquainted). As for partings, the most common non-verbal behaviors are breaking eye-contact, leaning toward the door, and leaning forward.

Research has underlined the challenges of the acquisition and the production of openings and closings. Richards and Schmidt (1983) point out that these two speech acts are problematic even for native speakers. The challenge is not simply entering or getting out of a conversation, but all states from non-talk to talk (or vica versa) require engineered solutions. Another problem in the analysis of openings and closings is defining the limits of the conversation (Francis & Hunston, 1996). They refer to a project where doctors were asked to record their interactions. One of them turned the tape-recorder on after the greetings, the other turned it off before dismissing the patient. These actions clearly indicate the speakers' belief that the interactions start after the greetings and finish before the leave-takings. Nevertheless, there are interactions whose limits are not easily defined. As an example, co-workers in an office or school-children and their teachers greet and take leave of each other at the beginning and end of the day, but in the course of the day a number of interactions are not marked this way.

Routines, such as greetings and partings, are different from other elements of language even in their acquisition, as pointed out by Ferguson (1981). Parents often prompt children with the markers *Say* or *What do you say?* to elicit routines of language from the children. An interesting observation is that in response to *Say bye bye!*, which is the earliest routine to be learned, the child may not even respond verbally, only by a motion of waving hands. As opposed to lexical elements, which are introduced embedded

in a variety of contexts (such as *This is your nose. Nice little nose. Where is your nose?*), politeness formulas do not trigger any explanatory behavior on the part of parents.

> …such routines have little internal structure or variability and little in the way of underlying cognitive structure compared with less ritualized speech and are to be learned as appropriate for a situation rather than to express a referential message (Ferguson 1981, p. 33).

An important concept in the analysis of openings and closings is that of adjacency pairs. Verschucheren (1999) defines adjacency pairs as pairs of turns which are normally expected to follow each other. Seedhouse (2004) mentions that the concept of adjacency pairs seems somewhat obvious, yet it is an essential aspect of conversation analysis that deserves attention. In his definition:

> Adjacency pairs are paired utterances such that on production of the first part of the pair (e.g., question) the second part of the pair (answer) becomes *conditionally relevant*" (p. 17, emphasis original).

Greetings and reply-greetings constitute a minimal interaction (Francis & Hunston, 1996). If the second part is not immediately produced, it still remains relevant and appears later, or the absence of it is accounted for. Psathas (1995) points out that in an adjacency pair the first speaker constrains what the next speaker may do in the next turn. If the respondent does not produce the appropriate utterance, they may have to show the reason for their omission, such as failure to hear or understand, a misunderstanding, or a disagreement. "Even slight pauses or hesitations can be indicative of some sort of interactional troubles" (p. 18).

1.3.2 The significance of openings

Sacks (1992) notes that although greetings sometimes do not occur in conversations, in many cases their absence becomes noticeable. For instance, someone may say about another person: *He didn't even say hello to me*. As Sacks argues, because "the absence of greetings is at least sometimes noticeable suggests that they have a relevance beyond their actual use" (p.35). Greetings are also one of the few things that make the speaker interrupt their own utterance (such as when a third person walks into the room while they are talking).

In order to demonstrate the importance of greeting formulas, Ferguson (1981) conducted an informal experiment in his office. When his secretary greeted him in the morning, he did not reply verbally but smiled in a friendly way, and behaved as usual throughout the rest of the day. When he repeated the same procedure the next day, the tension was tangible in the office, so he stopped the experiment. Ferguson notes that this small project supports the observation that the "importance of our trivial, muttered, more-or-less automatic polite phrases becomes clear when they are omitted or not acknowledged" (p. 24). The author also notes that a simple and obvious greeting, such as *Good morning*, may actually be quite complicated. *Good morning* is only said at a certain time of the day (whereas other languages do not have a temporal variation), only on the first encounter of two people in the beginning of the day, it implies a certain degree of formality, and it can be used sarcastically (addressed to a latecomer to a class).

1.3.3 The structure of openings

Sacks (1992) argues that greetings occur in adjacency pairs or utterance pairs, and the two greetings have to be placed immediately following each other with no other utterance in between. This fact distinguishes greetings from other types of adjacency pairs, such as questions and answers and even goodbyes. The absence of this structure is noticeable and commentable on, and may result in the first speaker repeating the greeting in order to elicit a response from the second speaker. Sacks also notes that greetings are identified as the beginning of the beginning of a conversation This implies that for greetings their placing is the highest priority. On the contrary, the exchange of 'how-are-you's, which are considered as the second part of the beginning section (called post-openings by Edwards & Csizér, 2001, p.57), are movable and can be placed later in the beginning section. As an example, in most cases the sequence *How are you?* is a formulaic exchange, but when it elicits a piece of news, the conversation may move into a topical talk. Therefore the how-are-you sequence is "massively separable" (Sacks 1992, p.190), whereas the greetings cannot be separated in such a way.

Because greetings are culture specific, their acquisition proves to be rather challenging for learners. This is especially true for post-openings. Jaworski (1994) points out that advanced Polish EFL students had trouble acknowledging the formulaic nature of the greeting *How are you (doing) (today)?* and considered it an "insencere question." Although Jaworski acknowledges the formulaic nature of this phrase, he points out that it *can* be a genuine question. Some of the replies produced by Jaworski's EFL students that were the highest rated by the native speaker judges treated it as such, though "the beginning of these utterances is always formulaic, and the non-formulaic part follows the

former almost automatically, giving an impression of being a ritualistic complaint, not in need of further reply" (p.50). A response like this would be: *Fine, thank you. A little tired.*

Wolfson (1989) mentions that the phrase *How are you?* has different functions depending on the culture. Whereas in English it may be considered simply a polite way of saying hello, in many societies such questions require a long sequence of turns regarding the well-being of both participants and their families. Not to engage in the lengthy greeting exchange would be a serious breach of the etiquette and might well undermine the relationship. However, in some societies such long exchanges are not to be interpreted literally, one is expected to say all is well, even if their relative is on deathbed. Bad news will emerge only later in conversation. Considering English, Brown and Levinson (1987) point out that as an answer to the question *How are you?*, a person should not admit that they are feeling too bad. Their answer is to start with the polite reply *I'm fine* or *I am OK*, and only then can they admit that something is going less ideally than it should. Similarly, in the case of "too positive" answers, a person is not supposed to admit feeling too good right after the question *How are you?* was asked. Interestingly enough, Firth (1972) points out that a common Malay greeting is *What news?*, to which the appropriate response is *Good news*. If the speaker has bad news to share, that should be given later. This observation suggests that the "compulsory positive" post-openings that are considered "insincere" by some EFL learners (Jaworski, 1994) may not be a characteristic of English greetings exclusively.

A special area of investigation is the analysis of telephone openings (Godard, 1977; Hopper, Doany, Johnson, & Drummond, 1991; Psathas, 1995). Psathas (1995)

notes that openings in telephone conversation are different from other types of openings. As he points out, on the telephone both partners need to identify the other, as well as produce some means to achieve mutual recognition. However, in recent years, cell phone communication has changed this procedure, as many times the answerer knows who the caller is before the beginning of the conversation. Still, there are many challenges that await the learner in this area as well. As an example, Godard (1977) compares telephone openings in France and the United States and notes that this speech event receives a different cultural value in the two countries. She points out that there are seemingly small things that are considered polite in France, yet not needed in the US, such as for the caller to check the number, excuse and identify himself, and engage into polite conversation with whoever answers the phone. In the US speakers apologize only when they feel they have called at an inappropriate time, they often ask for the intended addressee without identifying themselves or without conversing with the answerer even when that person is known. In general, they behave as though the person who answered the phone is an extension of the instrument itself. Godard, when residing in the US, was shocked by the way Americans behaved on the telephone. She was offended when she tried to converse according to French rules and could not engage in polite talk either as a caller or answerer. Even though I resided in the United States almost three decades after Godard, my experience is very similar. It took me considerable time not to be offended when callers did not say hello and identify themselves, which I was trained to do in Hungarian as a child. This situation became most awkward when I worked as a coordinator of a learning center. Many times I found myself in the midst of a lengthy phone conversation with a prospective student or parent, realizing that the person is sharing rather

confidential issues with me (learning disabilities, family problems, etc.) without having identified themselves.

1.3.4 Functions of closings

Closings have been described in a variety of cultures and social settings (Aston, 1995, on English and Italian service encounters; Clark & French, 1981, on urban American telephone conversations; Grant & Starks, 2001, on Australian textbooks and soap operas; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992a, on American academic advising sessions; Placenia, 1997, on closings in Ecuador). Button (1987) describes closings as a crucial and delicate section part of conversations that have major social relevance and bear consequences for the conversational partners' relationship and future encounters. Levinson (1983, p. 316.) highlights the complex nature of closings in social relationships.

> Closings are a delicate matter both technically in the sense that they must be so placed that no party is forced to exit while still having compelling things to say, and socially in the sense that both over-hasty and over-slow terminations can carry unwelcome inferences about the social relationships between participants.

Grant and Starks (2001, p. 39.) identify the communicative function of closings as: "Each participant must ensure that the other is satisfied and the conversation is complete."

Laver (1981) considers closings "fragile" phases of a relationship that can serve two major functions: mitigation and consolidation. The polite norm is to use at least one mitigatory or consolidatory phase, together with an appropriate phrase of parting. Laver mentions that to "omit such reparatory acts entirely is rare, and triggers a somewhat extreme implicature of rejection" (p.303). Mitigatory phrases are usually addressed to the negative aspect of face and can be centered on the speaker's face (e.g. *I'm sorry but I*

need to go) or focus on the face of the listener (such as in *I'll let you get back to your studies*). Consolidatory comments, however, pertain to the positive aspect of face. They reflect the speaker's esteem for the listener (as in *It was nice talking to you*) or express care about the conversational partner's future welfare (e.g. *Hope your headache gets better*). Many times consolidatory comments refer to arrangements for the continuation of the relationship, such as *See you next Saturday!* or similar phrases. Other consolidatory comments may be benevolent admonitions (*Take care*) or benedictions, such as *God bless*. Many times the phrases refer to a mutual acquaintance or family member (*Please say hi to Jen for me*).

In the examination of closings, it is very important to take into account the cultural differences that exist among countries, and even subcultures. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992a) mention that closings are culture specific. English closings are complex for two reasons. First of all, closings may not take a long time in a social setting. As an example, American culture is very prompt, efficient, and respectful of one's time. In other words, the countless social settings that I have had the opportunity to observe, the host rarely tried to make the guests stay longer or ask why they had to leave "so soon." Secondly, even though English leave-takings may not take a great amount of time, they are complex in linguistic form and pragmatic function. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig mention that American English, Kiswahili, and Hungarian have fairly elaborate ones with up to three parts. English closings have also been identified as more ritualized than German ones (House, 1996).

The complexity of closings differs to a great extent in different languages. In Thai it suffices to say: "*Goodbye, I'm leaving now*" (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992a). As

counter-examples from two opposite ends of the world, leave-taking in Columbia and Uzbekistan takes a very long time (Fitch, 1991; Jennifer Edwards, personal communication, 2006, respectively). At a social gathering, the hosts typically ask the guests why they are leaving, even if they are not very well acquitted with each other. Fitch points out that this is only true for social gatherings, and not business or phone conversations. If people in these two cultures "acted American", i.e. accepting the leave-taking right away, they would look rude or bored hosts. Leave-takings in Hungary, especially in social gatherings, seem to be closer to the Columbian or Uzbek way. I find it very interesting that Hungarian even has a verb describing this phenomenon: *marasztalni*. Looking at this observation from a linguistic point of view, Hungarian closings tend to be more complicated, but mainly in a guest-host setting and not in general.

Kiefer (1980) describes the Hungarian greeting system which has at least two distinguishable subsystems. The neutral system usually does not express social stratification. The two parameters of this system are time of day and arrival-departure. The stratified system, however, is socially highly stratified and rather complex and has parameters such as social environment and age. Some parameters are independent of each other, some are stronger or weaker in force. Kiefer suggests that the following order of relations seems to hold: working place > generation > occupation > dwelling place. That is, the conventions of the working place have the strongest force, whereas generational and occupational factors are weaker, and dwelling place has the weakest effect on the greeting in a situation. There are some rules that are specific for the Hungarian greeting system. The form of the greeting is determined by other properties of the utterance, such

as the form of address, the form of the pronouns (formal vs. informal) and using certain lexical elements expressing politeness (such as the form *tetszik*).

It is essential to point out that much has changed in the Hungarian greeting system since Kiefer's (1980) article was published 26 years ago. A general observation is that largely due to the new forms of communication (internet chat rooms, mobile phone and e-mail messages, etc.), Hungarian has become much more informal. Although the formal or stratified system prevailed in many encounters and social environments and between people with a generational difference, the usage of the informal forms has increased. Nevertheless, from a pedagogical perspective, as English does not have formal and informal forms, nor any specific phrases such as *tetszik*, Hungarian EFL students need to discover other forms of politeness in the English greeting system.

1.3.5 The structure of closings

Firth (1972) claims that most rituals have a well-defined structure, and conversational closings are no exception. Closings have two crucial components: a terminal exchange and the proper initiation of the closing section (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) argue that the bare minimum for a closing is a terminal pair or terminal exchange, but other turns are also included to verify that the conversation has ended. Shutting down the topic and pre-closings function to indicate a speaker's intention to end the conversation, and present the opportunity for a conversational partner to continue the interaction if they wish. In other words, this is the place for speakers to extend the conversation without appearing rude. The closing phase of an interaction is not a place for new things to come up, unless they have roots in the

pervious parts of the exchange. In the instances where new material is introduced, it is marked as misplaced, such as *By the way, my name is…* (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

Button (1987, 1990) describes closings as spanning four turns in conversations. The first two turns are called first and second close components and usually constitute of phrases like *Okay* and *All right*. The last two turns are called first and second terminal components and consist of items such as *Bye* and *Goodbye*. Button (1987) calls closings made up of these four turns archetype closings and draws the attention to the fact that closings occupy a section of the conversation, rather than just a turn. However, closings do not always follow this archetype pattern. As Button (1987) points out, we may observe foreshortened closings, where the termination is more imminent. Such a case may be when the first closing turn produces a first close and a first terminal component. As opposed to foreshortened closings, closings may be extended by the addition of a close component in the third turn that displaces the first terminal component.

Button (1987) mentions the opportunity spaces that serve for moving out of closings. They can either follow the first close component, the second close component; but even the first terminal in the conversation. However, the latter was observed less frequently in Button's corpus, and he also noted that all cases of movements out of closings after the first terminal were observed when the first terminal did not occupy its position as the third turn in an archetype closing.

In Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) framework, there are four types of closings: those making references to the other speaker's interests (*Well, I'll let you go*), those involving explanation (*I've got to go.* or *I need to get back to the office*), those making references to the particulars of the conversation (*I'll let you get back to your studies*), and

silence. Richards and Schmidt (1983) set up a similar classification, which has five categories, yet it does not contain the non-verbal signal, silence. The first one refers to the speaker's own interest (*Well, I gotta go*), whereas the second type refers to the other party's interest (*Well, I don't want to keep you any longer*). The third class occurs when the routine question at the beginning of the conversation provides moves towards conclusion. For instance, if the speaker asks his partner *What are you doing?* at the beginning of their interaction, he can refer back to it when using the pre-closing: *So, I guess I'll let you back to your work*. Forth, a speaker can reinvoke the reason for entering a conversation (*Well, I just wanted to know how you're doing*). Last, partners may make arrangements for future contact, as in *Let's go out for lunch together sometime*. In my data base of authentic speech act production I collected in the United States over the course of four years in various types of interactions (Edwards, unpublished), utterances from all five categories, such as the ones I quoted above, are represented in about equal proportions.

There is some ambiguity in the literature as to the elements of closings. Grant and Starks (2001) mention some terminal exchanges that are classified as pre-closings by Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991). *Thank you* and *OK* were considered pre-closings in our analysis of coursebook closings as well (Edwards & Csizér, 2001). According to the field data I collected, the majority of closings did not end with the "conventional" terminal exchanges mentioned in the literature (*Bye*, *Goodbye*), rather with *Have a nice evening*, *It was nice to see you/talk to you,* and *Thank you*. These real-life terminal exchanges are considered pre-closings in many studies. Richards and Schmidt (1983) also mention that the adjacency pair is not the only solution to end a conversation. The phrases *Thank you*,

You're welcome, or *OK* also occur as last utterances in conversations. Since these are not unambiguously terminal exchange parts, there must be other signs indicating that the conversation is ending, such as pre-closings and non-verbal signals.

Clark and French (1981) examined the final exchange *Goodbye* in urban American telephone conversations, in the context of inquires addressed to a university switchboard. They conclude:

> the final exchange of goodbye doesn't terminate the conversation per se but brings to completion a process of leave-taking in which the two parties reaffirm their acquaintance before breaking contact (p.1).

If the conversational partners are not acquainted, they only exchanged goodbyes 39 percent of the time. However, this percentage increased when the caller asked for more personally revealing information, felt more appreciation for the information they received, or when operators revealed more about themselves through self-correction. These findings indicate that the closer acquainted the partners felt they had become, the more likely the caller wanted to reaffirm their acquaintance by saying goodbye.

1.3.6 Pedagogical implications

Because of their significant roles as formulas and rituals, the teaching of openings and closings deserves attention in pedagogical research and practice as well. Jaworski (1994) examined pragmatic failure among advanced Polish EFL students in their awareness and production of openings. He pointed out that students had trouble perceiving the formulaic nature of the greeting *How are you (doing) (today)?* and responding appropriately. Omar (1992b) investigated how native and non-native speakers open conversations in Kiswahili. She concluded that non-native speakers had difficulty

opening conversations in certain situations where their lack of experience hindered native-like speech production.

Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992a) researched closings in academic advising sessions. They show that institutional conversations differ from natural conversations with respect to their closings, mainly concerning the infelicity of reinvocations and the presence of post-session conversation. Pragmatic knowledge the researchers consider necessary to close the advising session is how to close the conversation in general, what work must be accomplished in the advising session proper, what constitutes appropriate timing, and what topics qualify as permissible post-session topics. Both native and non-native students had difficulty closing the conversation in some interactions. Problems arose when the sessions went beyond time constraints, or students introduced an infelicitous topic.

Bardovi-Harlig et al (1991) argue that even advanced learners of English have difficulty perceiving and responding to closings. Because of the complexity of closings, students have to be aware of several factors. First, they have to be familiar with the function of pre-closings and know that if no new topic is introduced or previous topic is re-introduced, the conversation will end. Second, they need to be familiar with the structure of terminal exchanges (initiation and response). If they have initiated a terminal exchange, they need to wait for the partner's response, whereas if they are the ones responding, they must provide the second part of the exchange. Speakers who use closings inappropriately may be considered rude for two reasons. They can either be overly brief, communicating abruptness, or overly extended, implying that they are hard to get rid of.

Chapter 2: Interlanguage pragmatics

2.1 Interlanguage pragmatics research: an introduction

2.1.1 Defining interlanguage

The utterances produced by most language learners are not identical to utterances produced by native speakers who seem to intend to express the same meaning. The term interlanguage (IL) was introduced by Selinker in 1972, who hypothesized the existence of a separate linguistic system, which results from the language learner's attempted production of the target language norm. Interlanguage refers to second language learners' developing, partly instable, and transient knowledge of the target language. Second language development studies have pointed out a U-shape curve development in interlanguage, meaning that mistakes in interlanguage may increase after a period of language learning, however, following this decline, performances improve over time (Ellis, 1984; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Interlanguage includes elements from the learner's first language, the target language, any other languages he or she knows, and of course unaccounted for features as well. Interlanguage studies have been conducted in various fields (phonology, syntax, etc.) and have focused on a wide range of topics including child language, fossilization, the effects of individual differences on the learners' interlanguage, and the like.

A learner's interlanguage is in a constant state of change. It is non-stationary, dynamic, and open; and its development is a creative and cognitive process (Wildner-Bassett, 1984). Interlanguage is influenced by many external and internal factors.

External factors include the relationship between the learner and his/her communication partner(s) (e.g. social distance and power), the topic of the conversation, and any environmental factors such as background noise. Internal factors may be cognitive (such as the use of monitor or preparation time before an utterance) or psychological (the level of the learner's anxiety, for instance). All contact to the foreign language that the learner has (inside or outside the classroom) has the function of a potential context for learning, and thus shaping the learner's interlanguage. The development of interlanguage is obviously not a constant linear progression and often follows a U-shape pattern of development, as was mentioned above. As Selinker (1972) points out, some non-native portions of the learner's speech seem to become fossilized, and even reappear, for example, under stressful conditions when they had otherwise been eliminated as "errors" from the learner's speech.

2.1.2 Goal setting in interlanguage pragmatics research

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is a relatively new research area. When Selinker's pioneering work appeared, interlanguage morphology, phonology, and syntax were already well-established areas of research (Kasper, 1998). Interlanguage pragmatics is defined as the investigation of non-native speakers' comprehension and production of speech acts, and the acquisition of L2-related speech act knowledge (Kasper & Dahl, 1991) and the basic goal of interlanguage pragmatics research is described as follows:

> Just as in earlier interlanguage research particular importance has been attached to learners' linguistic errors, as these provide valuable insight into learning and communication processes, in interlanguage pragmatics attention has been focused on learners' inappropriate speech act realization in order to uncover their

> pragmatic knowledge at a given time in their learning process. (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 10)

Kasper (1996, p.145) defines ILP as "the study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge." She also argues that linguistic action is always embedded in situations and texts and 'action' is interactionally constituted, i.e. utterance meaning is jointly constructed by the interlocutors (Kasper, 1998). However, much of ILP has followed a reductionist approach, meaning that it reduces context to a few controlled and independent variables. This trend results from the comparative methodology of ILP, which links it strongly to cross-cultural pragmatics rather than interlanguage studies at large.

Several researchers have pointed out that studies in interlanguage pragmatics have been essentially comparative, comparing non-native and native speakers and had primarily focused on second language use rather than development (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a; Kasper, 1998; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Rose, 2000). There have been a few notable exceptions examining the acquisition of different pragmatic routines in a longitudinal fashion (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993; Ellis, 1992; Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig 2000, 2001; Schmidt, 1983). However, as Bardovi-Harlig (1999a) claims, interlanguage itself has been ignored in research on interlanguage pragmatics as most ILP studies focus on what is used and not how it develops. She mentions two observations that support her view. One is that ILP studies identify non-native speakers as non-native speakers, not as learners; which signifies the comparative nature of the studies, rather than an acquisitional approach. The second observation is that at international conferences separate sections are organized for pragmatics and second language acquisition, thus dividing these two fields. In light of these observations, she proposes a

research plan for interlanguage pragmatics that would have a broadened field of inquiry, expand learner populations to include beginners, implement cross-sectional studies across all levels of proficiency, institute longitudinal studies, and integrate studies of development of interlanguage grammar with works on pragmatic competence.

The following sections of my dissertation are devoted to reviewing the literature in some of the aforementioned areas of interlanguage pragmatics. In section 2.2 I discuss the goal-setting of ILP, focusing on the problem of the native speaker as the model for instruction. The relationship between pragmatic competence and second language proficiency is the focus of my investigation in section 2.3. The effects of the mother tongue and other known languages on the pragmatic performance of the speaker are examined in section 2.4 on transfer. Section 2.5 revises key studies on pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. Finally, moving closer to the description of the present investigation, I progress towards instruction in the EFL classroom (section 2.6) and the description of research methodology in ILP (section 2.7).

2.2 The model for instruction in pragmatics

The quest for the model in ESL and EFL instruction, and more specifically pragmatic competence, has been ongoing in the literature. The *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* (2005, 54/4) devotes an entire issue to the ultimate attainment in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), discussing topics such as the critical period hypothesis and nativelikeness. Since I believe this discussion is essential to my research project, I will investigate models for pragmatics instruction in the following sections.

2.2.1 Paradigm shift in choosing a model for pragmatic instruction

Most interlanguage pragmatics studies compare the pragmatic competence of native- and non-native speakers and assume that the goal of instruction is to bring learners closer to native-speaker-like production of speech acts (Kasper, 1997b). Traditionally the learner's language development was viewed as a linear progression or continuum of interlanguage, at the end of which the "native speaker" construct was placed (Kramsch, 1993). However, there has been a significant change in the perception of the goals of second or foreign language education. The aim is no longer to master the languages "in isolation, with the 'ideal native speaker' as the ultimate model" (*Common European framework of reference*, 2001, p. 5). Researchers urge for a change of perspective. As Cook (1999, p. 196) argues, "language teaching should place more emphasis on the student as a potential and actual L2 user and be less concerned with the monolingual native speaker" and L2 users should be regarded as "multicompetent language users rather than as deficient native speakers" (p. 185).

The purpose of EFL and ESL instruction is now to develop plurilingual competence (Breidbach, 2003). What this implies is that as a person's knowledge of languages and their cultural contexts expands, he or she does not keep the individual languages in separate mental compartments, "but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact" (*Common European framework of reference*, 2001, p. 4). Moreover, the learner develops interculturally by keeping his or her first language and culture, yet weaving in the new languages and cultures into the existing frameworks, like the successful language learner in Sillár's (2004) case study.

There are two main reasons for this paradigm shift. First of all, defining "native speaker usage" is a challenge in itself. Studies point out that native speakers often have differing opinions and productions of speech acts, and their intuitions are not a reliable source of information (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999b; Jaworski, 1994; Kasper, 1997b, 1998; Wolfson, 1989). Second, it may be a mistake to assume that the ultimate goal of second or foreign language learners is to produce native-like language (Kasper, 1998; Kramsch, 1993; Valdman, 1988). In sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 I explore these two reasons in more detail, then I concentrate on the EFL, more specifically the Hungarian context in section 2.2.4. Finally, I draw conclusions in section 2.2.5.

2.2.2 "All native speaker actors are not equal"

When native-speaker norms are set as the goal of instruction in pragmatics, it is assumed that the concept of a "native speaker" is a homogeneous entity and that their responses and intuitions are a reliable source of information. However, as Kasper (1997b) argues, the notion of the "native speaker" is not a homogenous entity, as social, geographical, and situational variation occur in any speech community. Another issue is the consistency of native speaker responses to different pragmatic issues. Lee and McChesney (2000) believe that - when given sufficient context - there is a shared understanding of appropriate language use among native speakers, and this competence is what we expect our students to acquire. However, Bardovi-Harlig (1999b, p. 245) claims that "all native speaker actors are not equal." Pragmatics instruction cannot be based on the intuitions of the native speaker or the language learner (Fraser et al., 1980) and research is essential in this area (Kasper, 1997b).

2.2.3 Learners' choices about target language models

It is very important not to view the foreign or second language learner as "the non-native speaker", who is only a passive recipient of target language norms and models (Beebe, 1985). Goldstein (1987) argues that learners have affective responses to input, which influence the process of input becoming intake. These responses may be connected to the learners' choices of the model they wish to follow in their language acquisition. Language learners also make conscious decisions about which variety of the target language they wish to set as their model for language learning. Brown (1997) points out that the Inner Circle Variety is the standard and the acrolectal or highest level of language used by educated native speakers and most researchers assume that standard English is the only target for ESL learners. As Brown argues, rather than automatically adopting the Inner Circle Variety as a target, we have to look at reasons why students are studying the language. As a result of observing the purposes the language is used for, a different model, other than the native speaker, may emerge.

Research shows that in some cases learners may not desire to become identified as members of the target language group (Hartford, 1997; LoCastro, 2001). In an ESL context, an immigrant may wish to remain a non-member in the second language community because of family or homeland ties. Sociopragmatic aspects of the target culture may conflict with the learner's beliefs and values, thus they might opt for speech varieties that symbolize non-membership and diverge from the target language community in pronunciation, pragmatic norms, or some other ways. Goldstein (1987) carried out a research project among Hispanic boys acquiring English in the New York metropolitan area, aiming to identify the model for acquisition among these young men in

an urban setting. She concluded that the target language variety the Hispanic boys opted for was Black English. Some of the boys mentioned that they made conscious choices about which variety they wanted to speak as their L2 and expressed that they vary their English according to their conversational partners and settings (classroom vs. street).

The case of Ebonics (or African American Vernacular English, AAVE) is a very good example of how the choice of the target language (in this case, a dialect) can become a social, and even a political issue. Fillmore (1997) mentions that schools in the United States traditionally regarded the speech of Black children simply as sloppy and wrong, not as an educational pattern the child can build on in school. It took considerable time for teachers and school authorities to accept that AAVE is not an evidence of ignorance but a very valuable possession that the children have when entering the school system. TESOL issued a declaration that it considers African American Vernacular English as a rule-governed linguistic system, with its own lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse patterns. For this reason they claim that AAVE deserves pedagogical attention (*Policy statement of the TESOL board on African American Vernacular English*, 1997).

The choices about target language models have an effect on the acquisition of grammatical, as well as pragmatic competence. The extent of contact plays a key role in these choices. In addition to this, the choices made by the Hispanic boys in Goldstein's (1987) study were obviously influenced by affective factors, such as their feelings of identification with black Americans and pop culture, or their rebellion against adult norm. If researchers were to carry out an acquisitional study on negation among the Hispanic boys, they may conclude that the participants have not acquired this aspect of English and

their use of negation has fossilized. However, if we take Goldstein's findings into account, it is quite possible that the participants' target may be Black English, in which case their use of negation has not fossilized but follows the Black English standard.

Does the acquisition of pragmatic competence include the obligation to behave in accordance with the social conventions of a given speech community (Beneke, 1981)? The ability to behave like people in the target culture does not guarantee that one will be more easily accepted or that mutual understanding will emerge. An example for this is the immigrant communities in the United States, where adapting to the target culture may help, but in no way guarantee, the immigrants' social integration. In the county where I worked as a coordinator of a learning center, the Hispanic population increased by approximately 400% in ten years. Most of these Mexican people did not integrate successfully into the mainstream culture, which in my opinion is a bidirectional phenomenon. On the one hand, as I argued earlier in this section, immigrants may choose not to adapt to the target culture norms. On the other hand, from the native speakers' perspective, non-native speakers may simply be expected to speak and behave like non-native speakers. As Kasper (1997b, p. 117.) puts it: "Nativelike pragmatic behavior demonstrated by nonnative speakers may not be entirely desirable either, just as diverging behavior may be seen as unproblematic or even particularly likable."

2.2.4 English as a lingua franca (ELF) in the EFL context

Foreign language learners also make conscious decisions about various aspects of language acquisition, such as choosing a model for language learning, spending time in the target community, or interacting with native speakers (Csizér, 2004; Kormos &

Lukóczky, 2004). Selecting a model for instruction is very complex in the EFL setting (Kasper, 1997b). The *Common European framework of reference* (2001, p.2) defines the purpose of EFL teaching as follows: "to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding, and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination."

Byram and Grundy (2003) mention that in the past 10 to 15 years the social and political significance of language teaching has been acknowledged. In the context of the European Union, most EFL learners use English as much as a lingua franca - that is, with speakers of other first languages – as they do with native speakers of English. With this paradigm shift, the focus has moved from English-speaking countries (mainly Britain and the United States) to the role of English as a lingua franca (Decke-Cornill, 2003; Wandel 2003). Because of their limited contact with native speakers of English, EFL learners may consciously decide that native speaker norms are an unrealistic and unattainable objective and seek other models for their language learning that provide them with realistic and attainable goals.

It is important to explore the perspective of European EFL teachers concerning the model for instruction. Decke-Cornill (2003) investigated German EFL teachers' views of this paradigm shift. The author was surprised that despite the widespread notion of ELF, none of the teachers she interviewed had ever reflected on this issue and they were unsure about this concept. They also shared their fear that ELF may mean the loss of meaningful and deep communication, and teaching and learning may become trivial and superficial. One teacher felt that they would have to invent the language they are supposed to teach. Although most teachers thought that the native linguistic standard

should be maintained, they were willing to explore new ways that would aid successful communication. For some of them, the reality of ELF actually meant relief, as they had been feeling guilty about not offering the full British and American cultural program in their classrooms.

Similarly to other European EFL learners, Hungarian learners of English are active participants in their own language learning process; therefore, they are deliberately choosing the target language model they wish to follow (Csizér, 2004; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006). An interesting trend was observed in students' choice of the target language pronunciation in the experimental study described in Chapter 4. The five teachers instructing the students spoke British English, were involved in British Council projects, and were very knowledgeable about British culture. Therefore, it would have been logical for the students to follow the same target language models as their teachers. However, when the classroom observations and the pre- and post-test tasks were carried out and recorded, the researchers concluded that the majority of the students spoke English with a distinct American accent. This observation suggests that the students actively selected a different target language model for themselves (at least as far as pronunciation is concerned) than their EFL teachers.

In the absence of the native English models, EFL learners may choose to refer to the pragmatic rules of their first language when speaking English. In research projects, this phenomenon is considered negative transfer (see Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Kasper, 1992; and also section 2.4.2). However, the "negative" aspect of transfer may be put in a different light when the context is considered. As an example, when a Polish, a Czech, and a Hungarian person sit down for lunch, they will say *Good appetite* in some language

or form, because all their native languages require them to do so. They may use another shared language (French, for instance) or the English phrase *Good appetite*, even though they are aware that this phrase is non-existent and pragmatic rules in English do not require speakers to "wish good appetite" to their conversational partners.

Last, I would like to discuss some affective factors in connection with the native speaker model in the EFL setting, namely what I call inferiority complex in the case of non-native teachers and students. Kramsch (1993) argues that non-native teachers and students alike are intimidated by the fact that they are supposed to approximate the "native speaker norm" as their goal in the classroom. Let me quote three personal examples to support this argument. First, I have observed at EFL teachers' conferences that teachers are often afraid to contribute even in a small group discussion, possibly intimidated by the fact that their English is "worse" than the "standard" expected by the other teachers. This situation becomes even more tense if a native speaker happens to be present. Second, the teacher who piloted the treatment tasks (see Chapter 4) shyly expressed that she and her colleagues are often uncertain and hesitant when talking about how "native speakers say" certain elements of the English language. This teacher is highly competent and respected in professional circles, so her comment cannot be disregarded. My third example is from the target language setting and I often quote it as a "disclaimer" in the discussions about the "ideal native speaker". In the learning center I coordinated in the United States, I worked with some adult learners who – because of learning disabilities or abusive background – had basic literacy needs, such as learning to read at kindergarten or first grade level. Considering this example may aid non-native teachers to find a realistic and attainable goal for instruction in their EFL classrooms.

2.2.5 Setting the model for instruction: conclusions

In conclusion, the "ideal native speaker" as the model for instruction has to be reconsidered. One alternative for setting the native speaker standard as the ultimate goal of language instruction is to take into consideration the conversational partners the language learners have while speaking the target language. McArthur (2002), in his discussion of World Englishes, argues that English now has no center, because it has a significant presence on every continent; and that it is now a commodity, a global resource owned by everybody and nobody. For this reason, the adoption of a "world language perspective" may be the most advisable standpoint for non-native speakers of English (Brown, 1997, p.137).

However, we need to be cautious not to discard the concept of a native speaker model in its entirety. In Kuo's (2006, p.213) view, "a native-speaker model could serve as a complete and convenient starting point and it is up to the TESOL professionals and the learners in each context to decide to what extent they want to approximate to that model." It must be the learner's choice to make a decision about the target language model he or she wishes to follow. Our goal as language teachers should be to provide learners with adequate input about World Englishes and the different choices they can make when selecting a target language model in order to facilitate them in reaching their goals. In the case of EFL, this perspective also means the inclusion of non-mainstream English-speaking cultures in the syllabus (Wandel, 2003). It is also essential to take into consideration the instructional goals of the learner and the prospective second or foreign language situations they will be engaging in.

2.3 Pragmatic competence and language proficiency

2.3.1 The relationship between pragmatic competence and L2 proficiency

An important question concerning pragmatic competence is its relationship with target language proficiency. Most studies in this area of research are based on questionnaire data on a pragmatic aspect of learners' interlanguage, which is then compared to the learners' general language proficiency measured by a standardized proficiency test (Bouton, 1994; Matsumura, 2003) or a self-rating scale (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). Some studies conclude that more advanced students use less direct utterances, more lexical downgraders, fewer imperatives, and are more successful in transfer; while other projects show no such differences (see Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a). Bardovi-Harlig points out that these differences in findings may be due to the fact that no real beginners are included in the majority of interlanguage pragmatics studies, mainly because advanced learners are available as university students, and the results have some shock value if they show that even advanced students have not mastered certain areas of L2 pragmatics.

A large number of research projects have revealed that high levels of grammatical competence do not guarantee concomitant high levels of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001; Takahashi, 2005a). In one of the earliest works on interlanguage pragmatics, Olshtain & Blum-Kulka (1985, p.57) noted that even at a rather advanced stage of learning, second language learners fail to achieve native-like communicative competence. Another example from the later years is Bouton (1994), who examined the relationship between

the understanding of implicatures and overall proficiency by conducting a longitudinal study. He concluded, much to his surprise, that there was little correlation between the overall proficiency of a student and the performance on the implicature multiple choice test. Similar results have been reported from institutional settings. Bardovi-Harlig and Harford (1990) investigated the speech production of graduate students at Indiana University and concluded that speakers with high levels of grammatical competence in their second language (English) showed a range of pragmatic abilities. Advanced learners can not be considered uniformally successful or unsuccessful in this area; the range of their pragmatic abilities is quite wide (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996).

What level of grammatical development must be achieved for learners to convey pragmatic intent? The studies conducted by Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig (2000, 2001) aim to answer this question from a developmental perspective. Conducting a one-year longitudinal study exploring the relationship between learners' linguistic competence (expressions of modality) and their pragmatic competence (disagreements) in English, the authors investigated the extent to which ESL learners' *emerging* grammatical competence facilitates their pragmatic competence. The results of the research are two-fold. On the one hand, they show that pragmatic competence is affected by linguistic competence. On the other hand, the authors are in agreement with the earlier observations when they conclude that "linguistic competence does not guarantee that learners will use all their available linguistic resources in the service of pragmatics" (p. 148).

In light of the above findings, the researchers suggest some desired changes. First, the inclusion of beginner learners in the studies is recommended (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a), and second, an increase in the number of longitudinal studies is urged (Salsbury &

Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001). Third, the authors propose changes in second and foreign language curricula by incorporating awareness raising and practice that would improve learners' pragmatic competence (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p.176).

2.3.2 The effects of instructional environment: research findings in EFL and ESL

Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) carried out a large-scale study in Hungary, the United States, and Italy comparing EFL and ESL students' and teachers' awareness and assessment of pragmatic versus grammatical violations or infelicities. The researchers uncovered a significant difference between the two instructional environments.

> The results show that whereas EFL learners and their teachers consistently identified and ranked grammatical errors as more serious than pragmatic errors, ESL learners and their teachers showed the opposite pattern, ranking pragmatic errors as more serious than grammatical errors. (p. 233)

The study also examined the effect the students' proficiency levels had on their perception of pragmatic and grammatical violations. The findings indicate that high proficiency EFL students noticed more mistakes of both kind than their less proficient peers. However, advanced students pointed out more grammatical than pragmatic mistakes. The same tendency was observed in the ESL context: higher proficiency students noticed more mistakes in general than lower proficiency learners. Nevertheless, high proficiency ESL students rated the grammatical mistakes significantly lower than their low proficiency peers. Therefore, the language level of the students had a significantly positive relationship with pragmatic/grammatical awareness, yet the direction was exactly the opposite depending on the instructional environment.

Two notable studies have replicated Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) project. Niezgoda and Röver (2001), working in the Czech context, confirmed Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's finding in that their ESL students also rated pragmatic violations more severe than grammatical ones. However, unlike the Hungarian EFL learners in Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study, the Czech EFL students noticed a much higher number of grammatical *and* pragmatic errors and rated both kinds of errors as more serious than the ESL learners. Niezgoda and Röver also pointed out that low proficiency learners in the ESL and the EFL context regarded pragmatic infelicities as more serious than grammatical ones, whereas the opposite tendency was observed in the case of high proficiency students. The second study was conducted by Schauer (2006), including German EFL students in Germany, German ESL students in Britain, and British native speakers. Schauer, using Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's instruments, concludes that EFL learners were less aware of pragmatic violations than the ESL group and that the ESL learners' pragmatic awareness increased significantly during their stay in Britain. These results suggest that pragmatic and grammatical awareness are largely independent and that proficiency development is intertwined with the learning context in a complex way.

The differences in students' perception are due to two factors. One is residency and contact with the representatives of the target language. The authors found that limited contact did not influence results in the case of EFL students, only staying in the target language environment for an extended period (for more discussion on this topic, see section 1.2.4). The second factor is the washback effect of exams. In the EFL context, success often equals passing various exams, and many foreign language classes are primarily geared toward exam preparation (Nikolov, 1999). As Medgyes Péter (personal

communication, 2001) argues, students will ascribe great importance to pragmatic competence only if it is included in formal evaluation. However, as Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998, p. 254.) point out, this ideal has not been attained:

> Although recent language testing practice in Hungary (as in many other parts of the world) has assumed an increasingly communicative character, it is still to a large extent determined by a form-focused approach; in addition, for the time being even the world's most communicative tests lack a systematic pragmatic component.

Therefore, the aim is, as was mentioned earlier in this section, to make increased pragmatic awareness a priority of classroom instruction. This is especially essential in the instructional environment of EFL, where natural input is much scarcer for the learners than in an ESL setting. In section 2.6 I will examine how various research projects have strived to attain this goal in the classroom. Then, in Chapter 4 I will present the implementation of a pragmatic treatment program, attempting to address this issue in the Hungarian EFL context.

2.4 Transfer in interlanguage pragmatics

Transfer has been investigated in various contexts both in the fields of foreign and second language acquisition and interlanguage pragmatics research. In section 2.4.1 I explore the definitions of transfer and transferability. The two main types of transfer, positive and negative, will be the topic of my discussion in section 2.4.2. Following this, in section 2.4.3 I describe the concept of bidirectional transfer, presenting somewhat of a paradigm shift from the traditional approach to transfer in SLA. I conclude with an investigation of the relationship between transfer and L2 proficiency in section 2.4.4.

2.4.1 Transfer and transferability

In interlanguage pragmatics research, transfer has been defined as "the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of other languages and cultures on their comprehension, production, and acquisition of L2 pragmatic information" (Kasper 1998, p.193). Research shows regular evidence for linguistic transfer, but the presence of cross-cultural pragmatic influence is more challenging to pinpoint. The difficulty, both in the case of acquisitional studies and interlanguage pragmatics, lies in the fact that transfer cannot be identified solely by contrasting L1 and L2 pragmatics. First, research cannot conclude that what it identifies as L1 or L2 pragmatics is identical to the learners' cognitive representation. Second, the assumed transfer in a learner's interlanguage may be due to factors other than the learner's first language, such as other languages he or she knows or individual differences.

Transferability refers to the conditions of transfer and the interactions of different factors that play a part in it. Very few research papers have investigated this concept, the study by S.Takahashi (1996) being the most notable one. As Takahashi argues, product-oriented research on pragmatic transfer may not yield insights as to whether learners actually rely on L1 or how they view the role of their first language in realizing speech acts. Interlanguage pragmatics research needs to include process-oriented studies of pragmatic transferability, investigating the conditions under which transfer occurs. In her study, S.Takahashi (1996) defines the transferability of request strategies as "the probability with which a given L1 indirect request strategy will be transferred relative to other L1 indirect request strategies" (p.195). Her study concludes that Japanese indirect request strategies were transferable to different degrees, depending on the degree of imposition implied by the goal of the request.

Despite the methodological difficulties, researchers have highlighted the importance of investigating transfer in interlanguage pragmatic studies. Kasper (1992) compares linguistic and pragmatic transfer and concludes that "in the real word, pragmatic transfer matters more, or at least more obviously, than transfer of relative clause structure or word order" (p. 204). This observation underlines the fact that negative transfer can cause pragmalinguistic failure in real life situations (see section 2.5). Our goal as researchers and language teachers is obviously not to downgrade the importance of linguistic transfer, but to make learners aware that pragmatic transfer can be equally, if not more, important in second or foreign language production.

2.4.2 Positive and negative transfer

Based on the utterance's relation to the target language, interlanguage pragmatics research distinguishes two main types of transfer, positive and negative. Positive transfer presupposes the existence of similar pragmatic structures in the learner's first and second languages, this way making the transfer successful. Kasper (1998, p. 193.) defines positive transfer as follows:

> When learners' production of a pragmatic feature is the same (structurally, functionally, distributionally) as a feature used by target language speakers in the same context and when this feature is paralleled by a feature in learners' L1, the converging pattern is referred to as positive transfer.

Positive transfer is often difficult to distinguish from the presence of linguistic universals (see section 1.2.3.4 on universals in pragmatics). As an example, most languages can express requests with different degrees of directness (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Szili, 2002). This phenomenon is universal among the languages examined in interlanguage pragmatics research. The requests range from an imperative (e.g., *Take out the trash!* or *Vidd ki a szemetet!*) to the conventionally routinized indirect forms (such as *Would you mind taking out the trash?* or *Kivinnéd a szemetet?*). Therefore, if a language learner produces a pragmatically appropriate request in the target language, it is most likely that the utterance is the result of pragmatic universals rather than positive transfer. However, if the learner's utterance contains a pragmatic element that is present in the L1 and L2, but is not a universal feature, it is probably the result of positive transfer.

Negative transfer is observed in the case of pragmatic elements or functions that are different in learners' first and second languages. Learners may transfer their

pragmalinguistic knowledge from their L1 to L2. Thomas (1983, p. 101.) defines pragmalinguistic transfer as:

> …the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one language to another, or the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances which are semantically/syntactically equivalent, but which, because of different 'interpretive bias', tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language.

I would like to quote some negative transfer situations in the case of Hungarian EFL learners and students of Hungarian as a Second Language. First, Hungarian learners of English often use *Hello* as a leave-taking in English, which is a negative transfer from their first language, reflecting parallel examples of using the same term for greeting and leave-taking as in *Szia* or *Szervusz* (Edwards, 2003a). The second example was mentioned by a Hungarian as a Second Language learner in a case study (Edwards, 2004), when he described an annoying situation that occurred between him and his Hungarian roommate. When speaking English, his roommate often formulated his offers by using the form negative auxiliary + subject + verb, as in *Don't you want some soup?* This form, which is a clear negative transfer from the Hungarian *Nem kérsz levest?* annoyed the non-native speaker of Hungarian, as it communicated to him that the roommate had been asking him for several times to no avail. Only after discovering the transfer effect were the roommates able to realize the nature of the miscommunication. There are examples of negative transfer from the field of Hungarian as a Second Language as well. Bándli and Maróti (2003) describe a transfer effect when Japanese learners of Hungarian produced requests that were interpreted as suggestions by the Hungarian listener (e.g. *Elnézést, hogy zavarok, de szerintem nem jó itt dohányozni*). This

utterance was the result of the negative transfer of a Japanese phrase that has a different illocutionary force in Hungarian.

In addition to the negative transfer of pragmalinguistic knowledge, socio-pragmatic features of the first language may also be transferred to the target language. Kasper (1998) supplies examples for this observation. She mentions that Chinese learners of English may be reluctant to accept compliments on the basis of Chinese cultural norms. She also points out that negative transfer of pragmatic norms can be present in a classroom setting, such as the low participation by Japanese learners of English compared to speakers of other languages. Although there is no scientific evidence to attest to this justification, it is likely that the Japanese learners follow their L1 participation patterns. Tyler (1995) describes a cross-cultural miscommunication between a native speaker of Korean and American English. In this situation, the Korean speaker transferred Korean conversational routines into English, which resulted in the misconception on both sides that the conversational partner was uncooperative. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that negative pragmatic transfer does not necessarily equal pragmatic failure. Many times negative transfer can and does cause miscommunication and in some cases, failure; yet not all divergences in non-native speaker speech production lead to communication breakdowns. As in the example above, Japanese learners may be perceived as less active compared to their peers of other nationalities. This, however, does not necessarily imply miscommunication or communicative failure.

Despite the fact that pragmatic transfer can be both positive and negative, it is negative transfer that is analyzed in the majority of interlanguage pragmatics studies. Kasper (1992) argues that positive transfer has been short shifted by interlanguage

pragmaticist. There are two main reasons that explain this phenomenon. The first one is that interlanguage pragmatics research is mainly focused on learners' miscommunication or failure in the second language. The goal of most research projects on transfer is to identify miscommunications, investigate the negative transfer that caused them; and most importantly, provide learners with resources in and outside the classroom that enable them to avoid future miscommunication or failure. The second reason is the methodological complications with identifying and investigating positive transfer; mainly the difficulty of distinguishing positive transfer from linguistic universals, the learner's successful acquisition of the rule, or the effect of other languages the learners know. One research tool that can aid the investigation of positive pragmatic transfer is the think-aloud protocol. Using this tool, the researcher can receive input from the learner right after the utterance (after recording a role-play, for instance) as to the thought processes he or she used when producing a particular utterance successfully. It is also essential that the researchers know the learners' first language and culture, which enables them to identify positive pragmatic transfer in learners' interlanguage.

2.4.3 Bidirectional transfer

Pavlenko and Jarvis (2002) call for a change in the traditional approach to transfer in SLA studies. Traditionally transfer is defined as "the unidirectional influence of native (or other language) knowledge on the acquisition and use of a second language" (Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002, p. 190). However, the authors argue that transfer can be bidirectional, meaning that language users' L1 is also influenced by their L2, and not just the other way round. This phenomenon has received little attention in the literature of

foreign and second language acquisition. Studies in bilingualism, however, do investigate bidirectional transfer, but mainly in the case of simultaneous bilingualism of children. Let me quote two personal examples to illustrate my point. Our first son, Olivér Máté, is 3 years old and is bilingual in Hungarian and English. Recently he has produced some utterances that show transfer in simultaneous bilingualism. I had expected such transfer to occur when his more proficient language, Hungarian, affects his speech production in English. Surprisingly, both instances included a transfer from English into Hungarian, which also underlines the bidirectional nature of transfer, even in the case of a bilingual child. In the first example, he said: "*Elmegyünk a postára. Bedobjuk a ... a ...* [hesitantly] *betűt*." The explanation for this utterance is mixing up the two meanings of the English vocabulary item *letter* and transferring the incorrect one (*betű*) into the Hungarian sentence. In the second instance, he was helping me make a pie. Pointing to the flour container, but not being able to recall the word *liszt*, he said: "*Tegyük bele azt a ... virágosat.*" Similarly to the first example, this transfer occurred due to the confusion of the homophones *flour-flower* and transferring the wrong one (*flower*) into the utterance in Hungarian.

2.4.4 Transfer and second language proficiency

Maeshiba et al. (1996) identify factors affecting pragmatic transfer. These factors may be learner-external (such as the learning context and length of residence) or learner-internal (the learner's attitude towards the native and target community, L2 proficiency and the like). Out of these factors, the relationship of transfer and L2 proficiency has been investigated in interlanguage pragmatics studies. Most studies have involved native

speakers of Japanese, which is the most frequently spoken first language in transfer studies (Maeshiba et al., 1996; S.Takahashi, 1996; T.Takahashi & Beebe, 1987).

Research has provided evidence both for positive and negative correlation between transfer and L2 proficiency, while some studies showed no correlation between the two factors (S.Takahashi, 1996). However, the results are less than conclusive. T.Takahashi and Beebe (1987) advanced the hypothesis that L2 proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer, as more highly developed interlanguage would allow learners to cast L1 strategies in L2 linguistic forms (see also Blum-Kulka, 1982 for a similar view). Advanced learners have the linguistic competence in the L2 to carry out the transfer, yet their pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic competence may not be developed enough to assess the negative nature of the transfer. On the other hand, lower level L1 learners may revert to transfer less, as their linguistic competence may not be sufficient to carry out transfer. As an example, T.Takahashi and Beebe (1987) discovered that highly proficient Japanese ESL learners use more implicit strategies and a typically Japanese formal tone when performing refusals in the target language. However, their study, according to S.Takahashi (1996), did not demonstrate the predicted proficiency effect.

Other researchers conclude that there may be a negative correlation between transfer and language proficiency, as lower level learners may transfer L1 pragmatic structures because they do not realize the pragmalinguistic meaning of these phrases. Maeshiba et al. (1996) designed a dialogue construction questionnaire focusing on apologies. Their results contradict those of T.Takahashi and Beebe (1987). Maeshiba et al. argue that when advanced Japanese students face a situation about which they have

little experience to rely on, they are inclined not to transfer their L1 strategies they know are insufficient for the context. The authors also contradict T.Takahashi and Beebe's statement, according to which negative pragmatic transfer is more prevalent in a foreign language than in a second language context. The study conducted by Maeshiba et al. did not yield the same results. These contradicting findings may be due to the different populations or research design, as well as the aforementioned methodological difficulties. For these reasons, these research questions in transfer studies certainly deserve further investigation.

2.5 Pragmatic failure

2.5.1 Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure

Pragmatic failure captures certain types of misunderstandings that stem from a second language learner's lack of awareness of pragmatic aspects of the target language. Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as the inability for the hearer to understand what is meant by what the speaker said. Misunderstandings of pragmatic nature can occur at different levels of communication. Thomas (ibid.) reserves the term 'pragmatic failure' to those misunderstandings that arise "from an inability to recognize the force of the speaker's utterance when the speaker intended that this particular hearer should recognize it" (p. 94). This definition includes instances when the hearer perceives the force of the utterance stronger, weaker, or more ambivalent than it was intended; or the hearer takes the utterance to be a different speech act than it was intended (order instead of a request, for example).

Research in pragmatics distinguishes two main kinds of pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983). Pragmalinguistic failure results from non-native speakers knowing the correct thing to say, but not knowing how to say it correctly. Sociopragmatic failure, on the other hand, refers to failures that are due to non-native speakers not knowing what to say or not saying the appropriate thing as a result of transferring incongruent social rules, values, and belief systems from their native languages and cultures. The two domains are interrelated, or as Kasper (1992) puts it, they have fuzzy edges between them. Misunderstandings are not always clearly attributable to either pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic failure. However, it is less challenging to aid learners to avoid pragmalinguistic failure by teaching them rules, strategies, and formulaic expressions. Making them aware of the sociopragmatic aspects of the target language, however, is a more complicated issue, as it involves a possible change in the learners' world view or belief system (Clyne, 1994; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Jaworski, 1994).

It is important to make a distinction between grammatical error and pragmatic failure. Even as the name suggests, grammatical violations can be called *errors*, as they are violating rules that can be prescribed. The field of pragmatics, however, contains "probable" rules or guidelines rather than "categorical" rules. We cannot say that the pragmatic force of a utterance is "erroneous". The only thing that can be determined, as the definition of pragmatic failure suggests, is whether the speaker's goal with the utterance was achieved in a pragmatic sense. Wolfson (1983, 1989) argues that rules of speaking and norms of interaction are both culturally specific and largely unconscious, meaning that native speakers are often oblivious to the pragmatic rules of their mother tongue. However, native speakers are usually tolerant of non-native speakers' mistakes in

grammar or syntax, but sociolinguistic errors are often interpreted as "bad manners" (Wolfson, 1983, p. 62) or "breaches of etiquette" (Boxer & Pickering, 1995, p. 56).

Pragmatic failure can occur in all speech acts. As the scope of this section does not allow for an exhaustive review of the literature, I only examine a research project that focuses on openings. Jaworski (1994) examined pragmatic failure among advanced Polish EFL students. The context was an end-term university examination, and the respondents were 72 English major students. The author asked each student the question *How are you (doing) (today)?* at the beginning of an examination, and the students' responses were rated by four native-speaker judges on a scale. The investigation pointed out that though formulaic language is recognized as useful and is taught in the beginning stages of foreign language courses, it poses practical problems even for advanced language learners. Pragmatic failure occurred when students failed to perceive the formulaic nature of the greeting and either interpreted it as a question for information or they did not tolerate it as an acceptable or 'sincere' greeting, even though Polish has similar formulas.

2.5.2 The sources of pragmatic failure

The sources of pragmatic failure are many-fold. Pragmalinguistic failure might arise from negative pragmalinguistic transfer or teaching-induced errors (Thomas, 1983). Inappropriate transfer includes using a direct speech act when a native-speaker would use an indirect one or applying the politeness strategies of the first language when the politeness strategies of the target language are different (for more discussion on transfer please see section 2.4). Teaching induced errors result either from teaching materials, as

they often present speech acts inappropriately (see Chapter 3 on how coursebooks present pragmatic information) or classroom discourse. As an example for the latter, we probably all remember our language teachers insisting that we “answer in complete sentences”. However, these “complete sentences” sound unnatural in real-life interactions and also violate the maxim of quantity (Yule, 1996).

Two other factors that may be in the background of pragmalinguistic failure are the length of utterance and overinformativeness. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) explored the theoretical and applied domains of pragmatic failure in connection with length of utterance. Data was derived from the framework of CCSARP, involving native and non-native speakers of seven languages. The results showed systematic differences between native and non-native speakers in the length of utterance. The researchers hypothesized that non-native speakers would use fewer words due to less knowledge. However, the results showed that it was the native speakers who needed fewer words to get their message across – this result was independent of transfer. How does length of utterance affect pragmatic failure? As Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986, p. 175) argue:

> The non-native speaker uses more words than the native speaker in order to accomplish the same pragmatic act. In this case, pragmatic failure might result from overindulgence in words, creating a lack of appropriateness which might cause the hearer to react with impatience.

The problem of overinformativeness arises when non-native speakers elaborate the background and preconditions of the situation in their speech act production. As some of this “background information” might be considered irrelevant, they weaken the force of the speech act. As Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986, p.176.) describe it, non-native speakers' motto can be: "the less confident you are that you can get your message across, the more words and contextual info you use."

Sociopragmatic failure results from the foreign speaker assessing the size of imposition, social distance, or taboos differently than the native speakers. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that as for the size of imposition, there are great differences among cultures as to what is regarded as "free goods" (for instance one's own food in the house) and "not free goods" (i.e. food in someone else's house). The case is similar with taboos. As an example, the United States is a society with a high number of taboos; as far as a person's finances, marital status, personal space, sexual orientation, or privacy in general are concerned. This perspective is reflected in the pragmatic norms of American English: such as the lack of references to these taboo topics, the relatively low amount of physical contact between non-intimate interactants, and the frequent usage of *Excuse me* when violating someone's personal space (which is larger than in most other cultures). American humanitarian workers in Central Asia, for instance, face the danger of sociopragmatic failure when – often at the first encounter – they are asked questions pertaining to their salary and the number of children they have (or the reason for not having any children). In these encounters the American workers consciously have to remind themselves that these questions are not a result of the "lack of politeness" on their conversational partners' side, but a manifestation of different sociopragmatic norms (Aaron Edwards, personal communication, 2006). Overall, in some cases it is difficult to decide the cause of a pragmatic failure, and as teachers we should aim at beginning the pragmatic awareness raising at the lowest possible level of language instruction.

2.5.3 Redefining pragmatic failure

Pragmatic failure is an area of cross-cultural communication breakdown. As such, it is often assumed that it occurs between a native and a non-native speaker and that it is due to the non-native speaker's lack of pragmatic competence (Holmes & Brown, 1987). However, non-native speakers are by no means the only ones prone to pragmatic failure and pragmatic failure is not necessarily restricted to interactions between native and non-native speakers. As Kramsch (1993) argues, with multicultural societies on the rise, culture is no longer viewed as national traits, but rather a person's age, gender, social class, and so forth. Pragmatic failure occurs between people of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Thomas, 1983). In this sense, it can occur between a manager and an employee, an English and an American person, or two people from different generations. If we take the notion further and define each individual as a person with his or her own culture, cross-cultural pragmatic failure may occur between two people of seemingly similar cultural backgrounds.

In order to strive for an accurate definition of pragmatic failure, it is essential to distinguish between intentional versus unintentional maxim violations (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). There are "mistakes" of pragmatic nature that are not considered failure. On the one hand, some of these utterances may be unintentional violations, which are many times self-corrected immediately. On the other hand, some of these "mistakes" or rather idiosyncratic differences may be due to the individual or regional differences among speakers. Thomas (1983) categorizes these instances into three groups. The first one is a temporary lapse by a pragmatically competent person, which is called a 'blurt'. In my data base (Edwards, unpublished) such instances occurred when a speaker

accidentally used the inappropriate greeting, for instance said *Good morning* when making a phone call in the afternoon. Blurts are similar to slips of the tongue and are often self-corrected, therefore they are not an area of pragmatic competence that should concern the language teacher.

The second group of utterances that are not considered pragmatic failure in Thomas's terminology is that of 'pragmalects'. Pragmalects may be idiosyncratic differences in the degree of politeness, but in my opinion, can also result from regional differences within the same first language, similarly to dialects. In American English, for instance, people from the South are often considered "traditional" or overly polite in their pragmatic norms. One of the speakers in my database was from the South and used the pragmalect appropriate for his home region. Living in the Midwest, however, he was often considered eccentric and was even misunderstood because of the differences in pragmatic norms. As an example, he used the form *ma'am* to address women of all ages, which is a common feature in Southern American English. In Indiana, however, where this form of address is used more sparingly, some women regarded this address as a reference to their age and expressed their indignation accordingly.

'Flouts', the third group of pragmatic "mistakes", refer to lapses that flout the pragmatic principles of English, yet the speaker remains within the pragmatic system of the language. As Thomas (1983) explains it, it is possible to be impolite, untruthful, and uninformative and still speak "perfect English." The author also argues that the foreign language learner is often expected to be 'hypercorrect', and any deviation from the pragmatic norm is considered pragmatic failure. Native-speakers would rather explain any divergence on the non-native speaker's part as due to lack of linguistic competence,

than to consider the speaker's divergent opinion. Because grammatical errors are easily recognized by non-linguist native speakers and pragmatic errors are more difficult to detect, a non-native speaker with high grammatical proficiency may be mistaken for an impolite or unfriendly person when pragmatic failure occurs. Therefore, raising awareness to pragmatic problems in the classroom is critical, as will be our point of discussion in the next section.

2.6 Pragmatic competence in the classroom

2.6.1 Developing pragmatic competence in the ESL and EFL context

Several studies have investigated the effect of classroom-based instruction on the development of pragmatic competence in areas such as pragmatic routines and gambits (House, 1996), compliments (Billmyer, 1990), apologies (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Olshtain & Cohen, 1990), argumentation skills (Németh & Kormos, 2001), requests, apologies, and complaints (Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh & Fatahi, 2004), suggestions (Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005), and general extenders (Overstreet & Yule, 1999). Research shows that instruction is beneficial in the development of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996; Clennel, 1999; Dirven & Pütz, 1993; Eslami-Rasekh et al., 2004; Kasper, 2001b; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Lam & Wong, 2000, Takahashi, 2005b). Views vary as to what extent this instruction is *necessary* in every aspect of pragmatics (Billmyer, 1990; Tateyama, Kasper, Mui, Tay & Thananart, 1997; Wildner-Bassett, 1994).

Foreign language contexts provide fewer opportunities for developing pragmatic competence than second language environments (Tateyama et al., 1997). In an EFL context the question whether instruction plays a role in L2 learning is not a very relevant one, as learning in a foreign language context is largely (if not entirely) based on classroom instruction. The appropriate question would be whether foreign language (FL) students can develop their pragmatic competence "accidentally" in the classroom, or whether there is a need for instruction - and if so, what approaches and methodology are the most beneficial. Underlining the importance of teaching intercultural communicative competence, Dirven and Pütz (1993) point out that German has a word for "understanding what is foreign" (*Fremdverstehen*), moreover, the phrase "foreign language teaching" is sometimes even replaced by "foreign behavior teaching" (*Fremdverhaltensunterricht*). Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) show that EFL students and teachers lack the resources to identify grammatically correct but pragmatically incorrect discourse as incorrect. Their results prove that pragmatic competence will not develop automatically as a "side effect" in the FL context. The authors therefore highlight the importance of raising pragmatic awareness in the EFL classroom. Bardovi-Harlig (1992) also claims that it is essential to raise teachers' pragmatic awareness as part of teacher education and in-service trainings.

There are two factors that foster the acquisition of L2 pragmatics in any learning environment: universal pragmatic features and first language pragmatic knowledge. As Kasper (1997a, p. 2) attests, adult non-native speakers "get a considerable amount of L2 pragmatic knowledge for free." The reason for this is two-fold: some pragmatic features are universal (see section 1.2.3.4), and learners may successfully transfer aspects from

their first language to the target language (see section 2.4.2 on positive transfer). Takahashi (1996, p. 213) even claims that instruction in L2 pragmatics is of secondary importance: the "primary guiding force is the learners' L1 pragmatic knowledge and their reliance on that knowledge." However, learners are often not aware of this available knowledge or they do not know how to use it. Therefore, in many cases the goal in the classroom is not to convey new pragmatic information, but to encourage learners to use their universal or transferable pragmatic knowledge in order to become successful communicators in the target language.

2.6.2 Different approaches to raising pragmatic awareness in the classroom

After pondering the necessity of instruction, the next logical question is *how* pragmatic awareness can be raised in the classroom. Most research projects in this area compare the effects of explicit versus implicit intervention and argue favorably for the explicit one (Alcón, 2005; House, 1996; Rose, 2005; Tateyama et al., 1997). In some earlier, pioneering studies on pragmatic competence, the authors also take a strong stand for explicit instruction. Thomas (1983) argues that even in an ESL context, language teachers would do grave disservice to their students if they expected them to simply "absorb" pragmatic norms without any explicit instruction. She also points out that the teaching of pragmatic appropriateness cannot be regarded as "the icing on the gingerbread – something best left until complete grammatical competence has been attained" (p. 109). In an ESL context learners "pick up" a lot of pragmatic rules simply due to the fact that they are living in the target culture. However, Thomas encountered

many adults who went to Britain speaking fluent English, yet they were never able to attain a high level of pragmatic competence (although they wanted to), because of pragmatic fossilization. Holmes and Brown (1987, p. 543) express a similar viewpoint:

> A laissez-faire, or osmotic, approach, in which the teacher expects the students to simply "pick up" or absorb relevant knowledge without explicit teaching, risks disempowering learners, depriving them of choice and sophistication in their use of English.

House (1996) and Tateyama et al. (1997) explored the differences between implicit and explicit approaches to developing pragmatic competence with German EFL learners and Japanese as a FL learners respectively. In both experiments one group received instruction providing explicit metapragmatic awareness, while the other one was withheld explicit information and was provided implicit training. House conducted the experiment with advanced learners for 14 weeks, whereas Tateyama et al. investigated beginners (a welcome exception in pragmatics studies) for a 50-minute class period. Despite the different research design, the results in both studies underline the importance of metapragmatic information in order to increase pragmatic fluency. Tateyama et al. also argue that if their "less than optimal" (i.e. rather short) treatment was indeed successful, the future is even brighter for more extensive intervention (p. 170).

Although the results of these studies are promising, researchers had to realize that "metapragmatic information does not directly translate into developing pragmatic fluency in instructional situations" (House, 1996, p. 249) and responding appropriately remained problematic for the students after the treatment. Lee and McChesney (2000), after conducting a training program aiming to transform students' sociocultural awareness into sociocultural performance, also concluded that after a four-step training in basic awareness raising, the improvement the students showed was at best superficial. These

observations point to two directions. First, they reveal the discrepancy between input and intake and highlight the importance of continuous reinforcement in order to reach longer-lasting goals of instruction. Second, we can conclude that raising pragmatic awareness should not be limited to initiating situationally appropriate speech acts. The aim is also to teach the learners to respond appropriately to speech acts addressed to them (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Holmes & Brown, 1987; House, 1996; Jaworski, 1994).

There are few studies to date investigating the effectiveness of different teaching approaches to the acquisition of pragmatic competence. In an early paper on pragmatics instruction, Wildner-Bassett (1984) examined different teaching approaches in a German EFL classroom. She focused on gambits, which, due to their highly conventionalized, formulaic characteristics, may be the kind of language that is represented in the right hemisphere of the brain, rather than in the left like most language. Therefore, Wildner-Bassett examined a method that is directed at both hemispheres (but especially the right), suggestopedia. Her results actually show that the control method (eclectic) is more beneficial for learning the appropriate use of gambits in interaction with native speakers than suggestopedia.

Although approaches and teaching methods are certainly important factors in the efficiency of pragmatics instruction, several authors point to another, even more essential aspect: the danger of the teacher-centered classroom. As Kasper (1997a, p. 8) argues, language classrooms, in their 'traditional' form of teacher-centeredness, are "impoverished learning environments" and do not offer students what they need in order to improve their pragmatic awareness. Language teachers are not and should not be in exclusive control of the language learning process (Allwright, 1984; Bardovi-Harlig,

1997; Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992). Rather, teachers should be assisting their learners to increase their pragmatic awareness, being facilitators as well as co-learners in the classroom (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). Kasper (1997b), Lam and Wong (2000), and Ohta (1997) underline the importance of peer-interaction in the classroom, through which not only student talking time increases, but learners also use more speech acts and practice conversational management.

As to the question *Where to begin?,* Bardovi-Harlig (1996) points out that it is essential that classrooms provide pragmatically appropriate input, yet the acquisitional and the instructional order in the case of pragmatics is not of primary importance as it is with grammar acquisition. The starting point should of course be the needs of the students. One of the earlier works on pragmatic differences of expressions (Borkin & Reinhart, 1978) stemmed from the classroom experience of two ESL teachers, who noticed their students' difficulty with the two formulas, *Excuse me* and *I am sorry*. The other road to take is in the direction of teachers. Lam and Wong (2000) conducted a needs analysis among EFL teachers in order to identify the specific strategies their students needed to become effective in discussions. They identified several strategies (such as seeking clarification or clarifying oneself), which were then incorporated into a strategy training program. My own teaching experience at Pázmány Péter University revealed that advanced students (many of whom had already started their teaching career) lacked understanding of several aspects of pragmatic competence; therefore I integrated awareness raising activities into the syllabus.

Kasper (1997a) mentions two kinds of activities in the classroom that are beneficial for pragmatic development: awareness raising and communicative practice

activities. The former include observation of native discourse, either with a sociopragmatic or a pragmalinguistic focus (i.e. in what conditions a speech act is expressed versus what strategies and linguistic means are employed). Although the aim is not to 'copy' native speaker utterances, students need the appropriate input so they can build their own pragmatic knowledge. The activities for practicing L2 pragmatic abilities require student-centered interactions, where learners can take part in role plays and simulations and focus on different social roles and speech events.

2.6.3 Teaching pragmatics: teaching manners?

The language classroom is an environment where a lot of understanding and tact are required on the teacher's part. Issues in pragmatic competence are especially sensitive in nature, as they reflect the students' perception and personality. Many teachers feel uncomfortable teaching "manners" in the classroom, especially in the case of adult learners (Borkin & Reinhart, 1978; Thomas, 1983). Part of being tactful is the need to convey to students that instruction in pragmatics does not equal dealing with moral questions or discussing how "polite" certain languages or cultures are. The display or even the covert communication of such a perspective would be futile and even harmful in the language classroom. Language teachers need not "indoctrinate" students as to how to "behave" in a foreign or second language context. However, teachers have an immense responsibility in the classroom. The goal in this area is to raise learners' *awareness* to the pragmatic rules of the target language. Teachers need to be "sensitizing learners to expect cross-cultural differences in the linguistic realizations of politeness, truthfulness, etc." (Thomas, 1983, p.110). Language teachers, due to their experience in target language

contexts, many times see a "trap" set by the different pragmatic rules of the target language. What they can do is warn their students before they walk on. Whether, after the warning, the students wish to "explore" and fall into the trap, is their decision. In other words, learners should not be made to copy native speaker speech act production. Rather, they need to be made aware of typical native-speaker language use and left to decide whether or not (or to what extent) they wish to conform to these norms (Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004). What we would like to prevent is the student being unintentionally labeled rude or having bad manners (Grant & Starks, 2001; Thomas, 1983; Wolfson, 1983).

Learners must be enabled to integrate the new input in pragmatic instruction with their own cultural and social values (Holmes & Brown, 1987). As Rose (2000, p. 283) proposes, our aim is not to teach various intricacies of producing different speech acts, "but rather to expose learners to the pragmatic aspects of the target language and to provide them with analytical tools to arrive at their own generalizations concerning contextually appropriate language use." Our tasks is to set realistic goals for pragmatics instruction and to raise students' awareness that pragmatic functions exist in the target language and help them investigate different areas of pragmatics, arriving at their own conclusions as "lay researchers" and coming up with culturally appropriate ways to participate in conversations (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991).

Sometimes language learners will decide not to follow the pragmatic rules or patterns of the target language. Kramsch and McConnell-Ginet (1992) quote examples of non-native speakers of English choosing not to employ the sociolinguistic rules of the target language culture. In one example, a Japanese student bowed to American

professors. When her teacher tried to correct her behavior by pointing out that she did not need to bow, the student was crushed. As she explained, she was aware of the American cultural traditions, but chose to bow anyway, which according to her culture expressed respect. In another example, a Japanese student insisted that he be called by his last name as opposed to using first-names, which is customary in American informal culture. In both cases the teachers felt responsible to "socialize" the students into American culture. How far is this responsibility supposed to go? Kramsch (1993) admits that this is a very difficult question and is ultimately a matter of the teacher's judgment. I believe the teacher's task is to make students aware of the sociocultural rules of the target culture(s) and draw their attention to the danger of "deviations" such as in the above examples. However, it is the students' responsibility and right to make their own choices about these issues.

2.7 Research methodology in interlanguage pragmatics research

2.7.1 The question of fit

What is the best method for collecting interlanguage pragmatics data? Is there a best method? It is essential to answer these questions in order to establish valid and reliable data collection procedures. Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) argues that the "best" method in ILP research is the method that best fits the research question. She quotes a real-life example of going shopping for a dress with her teenage daughter. Choosing the "perfect dress" for the occasion is a question of fit, and there are a lot of factors (size, color, style, etc.) that influence the decision. Choosing the "best" method for ILP research can be

equally, if not more, complex. The factors that play a part in the decision-making process are the research question, the number of participants, the resources available, and many others. In some cases one research method or instrument is not sufficient, and combined data collection methods are required to collect valid data.

Kasper and Dahl (1991) provide an overview of research methods in interlanguage pragmatics, aiming to evaluate the validity of these techniques. As different tasks constrain language use in different ways, the authors argue that researchers have to be aware of task effects induced by the instruments. Kasper and Dahl claim that if raw data are flawed due to the instrument and the observation procedure is inadequate, repair is not feasible and the value of the study is questionable. They also find it interesting that though interlanguage pragmatics is concerned with the validity of the data collection procedures, no tests of reliability have been reported in the literature. According to classical measurement theory, reliability constitutes the upper limit of validity, so if the reliability of the data is questioned, it constrains claims about their validity. Kasper (1992) also draws attention to instrument effects, arguing that different production tasks impose differential processing demands on learners and thus influence the selective activation of pragmatic knowledge. Wolfson (1989) emphasizes that researchers must be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the different instruments to be able to employ techniques that complement each other effectively.

ILP data collection techniques are classified on a continuum of low versus high-constrained instruments. Rating tasks, multiple choice questionnaires, and interview tasks are on the high-constrained end of the continuum, followed by discourse completion tasks and closed role-plays. Open role-plays and the observation of authentic discourse

are on the low constrained end of the scale. In the following sections, I outline the methods that bear relevance for my dissertation, namely discourse rating tasks (DRT), role-plays, and observation of authentic discourse.

2.7.2 Discourse rating tasks

One of the most frequently used techniques in cross-cultural pragmatics research is the discourse completion task (Schauer & Adolphs, 2006), in which participants are asked to provide responses to given situations. The DCT was originally used in the CCSARP to investigate the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural realization of speech acts (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Since then, it has been used in various forms to investigate essentially every question in ILP (e.g., Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992 on rejections; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986 on expressing gratitude; Garton, 2000 on requests). An alternative version of this data collection technique is the discourse rating task, where participants are given a situation, in which they have to rate the responses according to certain criteria. The DRT is not as popular in interlanguage pragmatics research as the DCT and therefore enjoys less attention in the literature. However, the two data collection techniques share many characteristics. Here I will refer to the arguments that I believe pertain to the DRT as well as the DCT.

There are several advantages to using these instruments. Discourse completion tasks "appear to surpass all other instruments in ease of use" (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000, p. 518). They are relatively easy to administer and are appropriate for a large number of participants (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). However, Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) warns against using DCTs as time-savers. The real work for the researchers, she argues, is not

the administration, but the construction of the tasks. Another concern is that DCTs have been criticized for being limited in authenticity, as the data they provide show discrepancies from naturally occurring data (Golato, 2003). Eslami-Rasekh (2005, p. 202) suggests that DCTs are appropriate at the initial phase of learning communicative functions, as they provide "language that is less complex and less variable than natural data, but is similar enough to authentic language."

Despite the convenience, there are a number of guidelines that have to be followed in order to use this research tool successfully. First, in order to construct a reliable DCT, it is important to know the background culture of the respondents. Garton (2000) underlines the importance of preliminary studies in order to exclude situations that would force respondents into an interaction that they are unlikely to encounter. He completed fieldwork in Hungary in order to identify situations (such as standing in line to buy tickets at a train station) that can be successfully used to elicit requesting behavior from Hungarian respondents. Second, it is also necessary that the DCT contain enough details, so respondents are not left to their own devices when they imagine the situations (Lee & McChesney, 2000). Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) notes that non-native speakers are less consistent in their responses than native speakers; therefore they need even more contextual details. Tasks should be easily understood by low-level learners as well. However, there can be a danger in fatiguing respondents with minute details, especially lower-level learners, who need a greater effort to comprehend the contextual information.

For the aforementioned reasons, the video is becoming a very useful tool for elicitation in ILP research. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) carried out a large-scale study using metapragmatic judgment tasks. Their goal was to investigate EFL and ESL

students' and teachers' assessment of pragmatic and grammatical violations in Hungary, the United States, and Italy. Because of their large sample, which included 708 participants altogether, they used a video that participants watched, then marked errors and ranked their seriousness on a questionnaire. Similarly, computer-based interactive DCTs are also a very effective way of data collection. Such a tool was developed by Kuha (1999), who investigated several speech acts (refusal, correction, apology, and thanking) using an innovative, interactive, computer-based DCT, named IDCT. Because respondents were able to take three turns in a given situation instead of only one, the IDCT provided a more interactive and real-life context. As the researcher suggests, these features can place the IDCT as an intermediate form between DCTs and role-plays.

2.7.3 Role-plays

Role-plays have been another frequently-used and efficient method of data collection in interlanguage pragmatics research, as they stimulate real life situations in a controlled environment in the classroom (Gubbay, 1980). They have been used to investigate a number of research questions (Cohen, 1996 researching speech production styles; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993 the execution of speech act utterances; Fraser at al., 1980 requests and apologies; Lam & Wong, 2000 the effects of strategy training). Compared to the DCT, it is clear that role-plays provide a much richer data source. They place speech acts in an interactive discourse context while still allowing the researcher to control situational variables (Kuha, 1999). Role-plays present oral production, full operation of turn-taking mechanisms, and negotiation of meaning. They can be classified as a low or a high constrained data collection instrument, depending on whether they are open or

closed. Open role-plays are relatively controlled, but are still interactive and allow for the negotiation of a speech act (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999b). Closed role-plays, however, provide more controlled data for the researcher. In most research projects, participants are divided into pairs and provided with role-cards that guide them in their roles and the desired outcome of the conversation. In L1 developmental pragmatics research, puppets are used to elicit a role-play with children (Lee & McChesney, 2000).

There are several factors to take into account when constructing a role-play. The first concern is to create culturally appropriate scenarios, which allow participants to identify with the context and negotiate meaning. Selecting the appropriate participants is another issue. In most interlanguage pragmatics studies, one participant is the learner, or non-native speaker. The other participant is not predetermined by the task. One option is that the learner's communication partner is a native speaker (as in the study by Cohen, 1996), who can be more or less prepared – given a script or a prompt similar or slightly different from the learner's. The other option for the researcher is to have two learners perform the role-play (as in the present study described in Chapter 4). The latter approach is more unpredictable, since the partners might participate in unexpected ways, such as helping a fellow learner to construct meaning. As for the former approach, selecting the native speakers for the role-play may prove to be a challenging task as they may have different ideas about language and speech acts, or express themselves in different ways (see section 2.2 for a discussion on this topic).

Using role-plays has several advantages. Unlike DCTs, spoken data is produced in a spoken form, making the data collection procedure more natural. Second, the features of the dialogues, such as turn-taking, back-channeling, and hesitation, are relatively

authentic. Third, role-plays provide a richer data source because the exchanges are two-way rather than single utterances. However, a disadvantage role-plays have is the need for transcribing. Kasper and Dahl (1991) mention that one hour of reasonably understandable text by an experienced transcriber takes about ten hours to transcribe. Also, coding open role-plays is more difficult than closed ones since the illocutionary force and the function of conversation markers often cannot be unambiguously determined. In addition, though the language of the role-plays is more natural than the DCT's, it is still monitored and largely determined by the task. Participants may feel that the task is unnatural, as they have to "play" unfamiliar roles and think about what that person would say in a given situation (Golato, 2003).

2.7.4 Observation of authentic speech

Observation of authentic speech is the least controlled data collection instrument in ILP research, providing the researcher with a rich data source. This naturalistic data collection tool is often used in longitudinal studies investigating language learners' pragmatic development. One notable study was conducted by Ellis (1992), who examined the acquisition of requests observing two boys, ages 10 and 11, who had arrived in London from Pakistan and Portugal, respectively, and spoke no English at the beginning of the observational period. Interestingly, the study includes no utterance in the participants' L1. Schmidt (1983) also focused on early pragmatic development, observing an adult Japanese learner of English, Wes, for three years. Wes had virtually no English skills at the onset of the study and acquired the language through communicative interaction in an English-speaking environment without formal instruction.

The advantages of this instrument are that the data is genuine, authentic, natural, and spontaneous. Also, unlike the DCT and role-play, there is a full discourse context presented, rather than just a few lines of a conversation. For this reason, this instrument can be used to investigate negotiation (i.e. how speech acts are constructed over multiple turns by two or three interlocutors). Another area that this data collection method can be employed for is researching opting out, that is, not performing the speech act under investigation. As the studies by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990, 1993) and Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig (2001) show, observation of authentic speech can shed light on the instances where certain speech acts (rejections and disagreements, respectively) are *not* performed. Another advantage is that if the data are stored on computer, the corpus can be searched and the frequencies of certain utterances can be determined.

However, observation of authentic speech is not frequently used in interlanguage pragmatic research. One reason is the lack of control over the situation and the language produced. Another disadvantage may be the difficulty of collecting natural conversation and transcribing it, which can be extremely time-consuming. In addition, this tool is often not rigorous enough to control all the variables that investigators want to measure. There are obvious ethical considerations as well, that is, the participants have to give permission to the researcher to observe them; which in turn may lead to the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972). Fraser et al. (1980) argue that observation of authentic native speaker discourse works well when the goal is to observe phonological, morphological, or conversational features, but it fails when the aim is to investigate how contextual factors influence the speaker's choice of speech act strategy, as it is unlikely that this method

will yield “enough examples of the same speech act with the contextual variables sufficiently controlled to permit satisfactory speculation on their significance” (p.81).

For these reasons, some researchers, like Ferrara (1994), use both naturalistic and elicited data collection techniques to answer questions in interlanguage pragmatics research. Ferrara investigated how American and Japanese speakers express gratitude and apologies in various situations. Employing naturalistic data collection, the researcher collected data observing meals in private homes. This data collection offered a richer data source, which, complemented with elicited data, provided valuable results.

In the last two chapters I provided a thorough literature review into several areas of speech act theory and pragmatics that bear relevance to the topic of my dissertation. After providing this essential background to my research, I now turn to describing the studies I conducted. The next chapter describes a coursebook study exploring the presentation of openings and closings in two EFL coursebook series. Chapters 4 to 7 present the experimental study conducted with Hungarian EFL students, investigating the teachability of pragmatic competence.

Chapter 3: Openings and closings in EFL materials: a study of two coursebook series

3.1 Introduction

In order to investigate how pragmatic competence is taught in the classroom, one starting point is to examine how coursebooks relate to the issue. This chapter gives an account of a research project investigating how two coursebook series present openings and closings. *Headway* was selected because it was the most widely used EFL coursebook in Hungarian secondary education at the time (Nikolov, 1999). *Criss Cross* was chosen because of its focus on the Eastern European language learning and teaching context (for full references of coursebooks see pp. 214-215).

The idea for the research sprang from an article by Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991), who examined closings in ESL coursebooks in the United States. Using their investigation as a starting point, we tailored our research questions to fit the Hungarian EFL context. The analysis involves qualitative and quantitative aspects, examining how coursebook dialogues present openings and closings, the stylistic variation in these two speech acts, as well as the differences between the approaches of the two coursebook series. In this section I use the terms *coursebook* and *textbook* and *conversation* and *dialogue* as synonyms respectively.

This chapter is based on a joint research project with Csizér Kata (published as Edwards & Csizér, 2001). The data collection and some of the data analysis were done together in order to publish the aforementioned article with joint authorship. However,

this chapter is completely my own work and for all the shortcomings I bear full responsibility.

This chapter is structured into the following main parts. First, I present a review of the literature concerning the role of coursebooks in the classroom (section 3.2) and the representation of speech acts in coursebooks (section 3.3). Then, I outline the research questions and hypotheses (section 3.4) and the method (section 3.5) for the present research. Section 3.6 is devoted to presenting the results from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Finally, I draw the conclusions of the coursebook study and propose pedagogical implications in section 3.7.

3.2 Coursebooks in the classroom

Coursebooks are an essential and highly prestigious source of input, especially in an EFL setting (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). As McGrath (2006, p.171) argues, coursebooks "tend to dictate what is taught, in what order and, to some extent, how as well as what learners learn." The relevance of textbooks in the classroom is also pointed out in the Hungarian context (Hock, 2000; Nikolov et al., 1999). Hock found that in the majority of instructional settings she observed, teachers' main source of linguistic and cultural information about English was commercially published teaching materials. Teachers relied on coursebooks for syllabus design, lesson planning, and classroom activities. Vellenga (2004) arrived at a similar conclusion after investigating EFL and ESL materials. She points out that teachers, even in an ESL context, often take coursebooks at face value because they may not have the adequate knowledge about what is appropriate in certain situations. Echoing what Hock found in the Hungarian context, she writes:

"textbooks do provide the majority of input, and even professional teachers rarely have the time, inclination, or training to include supplementary pragmatic information in their lessons" (p. 14).

There have been some extreme perspectives published about coursebooks in the literature. In his article, "What do we want teaching materials for?", Allwright (1981) presents some views that are based on the assumption that decisions are best made by those people who have the relevant expertise. One view, called the deficiency view, claims that we need teaching materials so that we save learners from our deficiencies as teachers. A possible interpretation of this view can be, then, that there are "teacher-proof" materials, with which even the worst teacher will succeed. Another extreme approach is to treat coursebooks as ancient and out-of-date. O'Neill (1982) shares an anecdote about this view. When he "admitted" to a young colleague that he had used a coursebook with his class, the young teacher looked at him in a way a well-trained doctor would look at his colleague, who, at the end of the 20th century, was still using leeches to bleed his patients. He could not accept the view that coursebooks can serve as useful tools in the classroom.

Rather than going into one extreme or another, a balanced view is needed when approaching coursebooks. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 327) claim:

> … far from being a problem, the textbook is an important means of satisfying the range of needs that emerge from the classroom and its wider context. Education is a complex and messy matter. What the textbook does is to create a degree of order within potential chaos.

I believe that with this moderate view in mind we can treat the coursebook as a strategic tool and guide, and not a list of commandments that we need to follow obediently.

3.3 Speech acts in coursebooks: a bleak situation?

A number of studies have explored how English language coursebooks present speech acts and language functions (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991, on closings; Bouton, 1994, on implicatures; Boxer & Pickering, 1995, on compliments; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004, on speech acts in English for Academic Purposes materials; Edwards & Csizér, 2001, on openings and closings; Gilmore, 2004, on discourse features; Holmes, 1988, on doubt and certainty; Overstreet & Yule, 1999 on general extenders; Vellenga, 2004, on metapragmatic information). All the authors conclude that speech acts and language functions are not adequately represented and the input in coursebooks is different from authentic interactions. What exactly do these observations entail? First, in some cases, a particular speech act is not represented at all. If it is, the input is not realistic and largely different from corpus data. Littlejohn (1992) found no strong link between applied linguistics research results and language teaching materials in England. Mindt (1996) arrived at a similar conclusion comparing grammatical structures in EFL coursebooks published in Germany with corpus studies. O'Connor Di Vito (1991) found that different linguistic structures in French as a Second and Foreign Language textbooks are represented in a strikingly different way from native speaker usage. Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig (2000, 2001), in their longitudinal study investigating the relationship between learners' linguistic and pragmatic competence, found that native-speakers of American English opted out from disagreements far more frequently than non-native speakers. A possible reason is that textbooks often give the same emphasis to agreements and disagreements, creating the impression that native speakers disagree as frequently as they agree.

Second, textbooks present more direct speech acts than real life dialogues do (Boxer & Pickering, 1995). Boxer and Pickering propose that the teaching of speech acts should be based on spontaneous speech in order to instruct the learners how to produce speech acts, how to identify speakers' intentions, how to respond appropriately, how to carry out coherent conversations, and how to manage the situations when their linguistic resources fail them. Learners will not receive adequate input of the rules of speaking through materials based on native speaker intuition, but only those reflecting "how we really speak, rather than how we think we speak" (p. 56).

Third, Lee and McChesney (2000) claim that textbooks often present set phrases, but no context-dependent language, expressing the nuances of particular communicative goals, such as politeness and assertiveness. The "nuances" may be speaker-related (age, gender, etc.) or context-related (function, topic, setting) factors. A possible reason for these shortcomings may be that presenting pragmatic knowledge, or possibly teaching "manners" in the classroom is a delicate matter (as was discussed in section 2.6.3). Coursebooks "tend to shy away from telling learners, particularly adult learners, how to behave" (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996, p. 25).

These substantial differences between authentic discourse and coursebook dialogues may create a false impression in learners' minds about the language they are supposed to master. As Gilmore (2004, p. 368) points out:

> … learners in the classroom are given the impression that spoken discourse is neat and tidy, with interlocutors who say exactly what they intended to say, and nothing more. It gives a model of language which is both unrealistic and unattainable, and might serve to demoralise students who feel they will never reach the lofty heights of perfect speech. And of course, they would be right, since no-one ever does.

As for the speech acts under our investigation, closings have been examined in coursebooks. Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) surveyed ESL textbooks and found that out of the 20 books only 12 contained complete closings, and very few did so consistently. Therefore, learners are not taught how to end a conversation properly and how to recognize signals that the exchange may be terminated. Grant and Starks (2001) examined how 23 coursebooks present closings, and point out that textbook conversational closings have come under criticism because of their failure to replicate natural conversation. They enumerate the shortcomings of textbooks by noting that they do not discuss closings, they focus only on terminal exchanges, use set terminal pairs such as *goodbye*, and they do not use fillers and pragmatically appropriate language. Closings are often simplified and are of one type (making reference to the particulars of the conversation, based on the framework by Schlegoff & Sacks, 1973). A further weakness is the lack of informal terminal exchanges, such as *Ciao* or *Catch you later* (for a good collection see Maisel, forthcoming). Another aspect overlooked is when the conversation involves multiple participants or there are people leaving or joining a topic part-way through.

In order to remedy the situation, Grant and Starks (2001) consider using natural conversation for instruction. Although this type of input would be ideal for providing students with rich conversational input, there are several drawbacks. There may be technical difficulties, the language may change when observed or recorded, and the recording will contain performance errors. As an alternative solution, the authors claim that soap operas are a good source of natural patterns of language, culture, and linguistic behavior. They found that soaps offer a more complete and rich sample of closings,

displaying more variety in informal exchanges (introductory and terminal) and types of pre-closings, including all three types of pre-closings in Schlegoff and Sacks's (1973) framework. There have been attempts at using soaps for classroom instruction. As an example, Grant and Devlin (1996) have made a video and workbook using a soap opera, *Shortland Street*.

Research does present a negative picture about coursebooks, especially in relation to the presentation of speech acts or teaching pragmatic competence. However, Gilmore (2004) offers hope by saying that coursebook writers in recent years have begun to accommodate features of authentic discourse in their dialogues. Similarly, Bardovi-Harlig (1996, p. 25) points out: "The textbook situation is in fact bleak, but it is not hopeless." She argues that it would be an impossible task to provide exhaustive material, representing every speech act in every possible situation. That is not the way how learners acquire language; input serves as a "trigger" for students to acquire more (p. 24). Her comment offers the right perspective on this issue:

> Although I personally consider it unlikely that good textbooks and materials alone will be sufficient for learners to increase their pragmatic competence, I consider it even more unlikely that they will do so without good materials which comprise a significant portion of the positive evidence to which learners are exposed. (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996, p. 28)

In the next sections I present a research project exploring how two EFL coursebook series represent the speech acts of openings and closings.

3.4 Research questions and hypotheses

The main areas of investigation are how coursebook dialogues present openings and closings, the stylistic variation in these two speech acts, as well as the differences between the approaches of the two coursebook series. Therefore, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How many dialogues and conversations are there in the two coursebook series? What ratio of these dialogues contain openings and closings?
2. How can these openings and closings be characterized (complete vs. partial, as well as stylistic variations)?
3. Do the two series include explicit pragmatic instruction for openings and closings?
4. What are the differences between the two coursebook series, *Headway* and *Criss Cross*, concerning conversational models?

Based on the above questions, the research hypotheses were the following:

1. The higher the level is, the fewer conversational models there are for openings and closings in the coursebooks.
2. Most conversations are incomplete (with no or partial opening and/or closing) and the vocabulary of introductory and terminal exchanges is restrictive.
3. There are differences between the two coursebooks in their teaching of pragmatic competence, as they were written for different audiences. *Criss Cross* with the cross-cultural syllabus will put more emphasis on the teaching of openings and closings in different cultural settings.

The first hypothesis was based on the findings of the literature, namely that advanced learners often lack the pragmatic competence that would match their high grammatical competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992b; Omar, 1992a), as well as on data from our teaching experience, which revealed that higher level coursebooks emphasize other aspects of teaching, such as vocabulary, and devote less attention to pragmatic awareness. The second hypothesis expresses the assumption that partial openings and closings are in majority and complete ones are underrepresented in the two coursebook series. This hypothesis follows the findings of the literature concerning the incorrect representation of speech acts in coursebooks (as was discussed in section 3.3). As Grant and Starks (2001) found, 66% of conversations in the textbooks they examined were not complete. Sometimes the terminal exchange is one-way, participants do not shut down the topic, and the vocabulary of terminal exchanges is restrictive considering Schlegoff and Sacks's (1973) framework. For the third hypothesis, we took into account the target audiences of the two series. *Headway* was written for a more general international young adult audience. *Criss Cross*, however, is geared specifically for teenagers in Central-Europe. We were interested in how these differences manifest themselves in the teaching of pragmatic competence.

3.5 Method and data collection

As was mentioned in the introduction, two coursebook series were included in the analysis, *Headway* and *Criss Cross*, because the former is widely used in Hungarian EFL education and the latter focuses on the Eastern European context. The *Headway* series

has five levels from Elementary to Advanced with the aim of helping students speak both accurately and fluently. It is written for an international audience of adults/young adults. The *Criss Cross* series, from Beginner to Upper-Intermediate, targets a Central European secondary-level student population. The coursebooks were written by an international team and are the same for all countries, but the practice books are first language specific and therefore vary from country to country. One of the aims of the series is to provide a culturally stimulating book that recognizes "the need for cross-cultural awareness and a European dimension to education" (*Criss Cross Pre-Intermediate*, 1999, p. 3).

In the analysis the coursebooks, the practice books, the tapescripts and the teacher's books were included as well. Before gathering data, some analytical decisions were made. One was to define conversations or dialogues, which were the foci of our investigation. Where the judgment of the two raters differed, we worked with those texts that the writers called conversations or dialogues. However, in a handful of cases, a one-sentence line was labeled "conversation"; those were not included in the analysis. Conversely, we found some obvious dialogues that were not labeled as such. Those cases were included in the analyses. If a dialogue appeared both in a unit and in the tapescript section, it was counted as one. Also, if an exercise contained two short dialogues (practicing the same structure, for example) we counted it as one but considered all the openings and closings it contained. Another decision was that we would not consider literary texts in the analysis (a dialogue from *Pygmalion*, for instance).

In order to ensure higher inter-rater reliability, data collection had two phases. In the first phase both researchers conducted the analysis individually, as they identified and tallied conversations, openings and closings in the coursebooks. Following this, the two

raters carried out the analysis together. In each case, therefore, a consensus was reached based on the above mentioned analytical decisions. In the data analysis we counted the number of dialogues in the coursebooks, tallied how many of them contain openings and closings, and classified them into groups. Stylistic variation of the two speech acts was also investigated.

As for openings, the main distinction was made between complete and partial openings, based on partial and complete closings in the terminology of Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991). In order to classify an opening as complete, there were two basic requirements. First, it was considered whether the opening was one-way or two-way, that is, whether both participants took part in the opening, or it was only one of them greeting the other. In other words, the adjacency pair was complete if it comprised both initiation and response. The second requirement pertained to post-openings. Post-openings are "the utterances that come between the greeting (*Hello*, *Good morning*, etc.) and the main body of the conversation" (Edwards & Csizér, 2001, p.57). Here we classified elements such as *How are you (doing)?* or *It's good to see you (today)*. Based on these requirements, a complete opening was a two-way opening with a full adjacency pair, including a post opening from both participants, as in the example (Edwards & Csizér, 2001, p. 57):

A Hello, John.
B Hi, Peter. How are you today?
A Fine, thanks. And you?
B I'm OK, thanks.

The phrase *Excuse me* was regarded as an opening if it is was located in the position of a greeting. This decision was based on Coulthard (1985), who points out that there are two main cases when a conversation does not open with a greeting. One is when

the people are strangers, they do not consider themselves co-conversationalists, and they are not on greeting terms. Another case is when two people meet again after having met before on the same day (e.g. two co-workers at a company). In this case there is often no greeting or opening whatsoever.

Closings were also classified as complete and partial (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991). The requirements of a complete closing were two-fold. First, just as with openings it was considered whether the adjacency pair was complete, containing a two-way terminal exchange or terminal pair. Second, closings needed to contain shutting down the topic and preclosing(s), such as *It was great to see you* or *Well, I need to get going*. These elements both serve to signal the intention of the speakers to end the conversation and give a window of opportunity for them to (re)introduce a topic or leave a conversation politely. Based on these requirements, a complete closing was a two-way closing with a full adjacency pair, including shutting down the topic and preclosing, as in the example (Edwards & Csizér, 2001, p. 58):

> A Sorry, Jim, but I must be going now. Can you give me a call tomorrow about the meeting?
> B Yes, sure, I'll call you from work.
> A Thanks very much. Bye now.
> B Bye, Steve.

3.6 Results and discussion

The findings of the coursebook analysis will be discussed according to research questions. The fourth question (differences between the two series concerning conversational models) will not be dealt with separately, but will be included in the discussions of the other research questions.

3.6.1 Dialogues, openings, and closings in the coursebook series

The first research question addresses the number of dialogues in the coursebooks and the ratio these dialogues contain openings and closings. *Table 2* shows the number of dialogues in the coursebooks, as well as how many of them contain openings and closings.

Table 2. *Conversations, openings, and closings in the two coursebook series*
The percentages in brackets indicate the row and column percentages, respectively.

	All conversations	**Openings**	**Closings**
Headway Elementary	64	30 (47%) (45%)	21 (33%) (38%)
Headway Pre-Intermediate	42	14 (33%) (21%)	14 (33%) (25%)
Headway New Intermediate	63	12 (19%) (18%)	11 (17%) (20%)
Headway New Upper-Intermediate	25	6 (25%) (9%)	7 (28%) (13%)
Headway Advanced	25	4 (16%) (6%)	2 (8%) (4%)
TOTAL (Headway)	219	66 (30%) (100%)	55 (25%) (100%)
Criss Cross Beginner	70	24 (34%) (49%)	7 (10%) (30%)
Criss Cross Pre-Intermediate	39	10 (26%) (20%)	8 (21%) (35%)
Criss Cross Intermediate	38	2 (5%) (4%)	2 (5%) (9%)
Criss Cross Upper-Intermediate	63	13 (21%) (27%)	6 (10%) (26%)
TOTAL (Criss Cross)	210	49 (23%) (100%)	23 (11%) (100%)

The first number in brackets shows the percentage of dialogues with openings/closings out of all the conversations. The second number pertains to what percentage of all openings/closings that particular book includes. The conversations in all the books contain a low percentage of the two speech acts: less than one third of them

starts with an opening, and one fourth (*Headway*) and one tenth (*Criss Cross*) ends with a closing. However, although *Criss Cross* contains almost the same number of conversations in fewer books, in proportion the dialogues in *Criss Cross* contain fewer openings and closings than the ones in *Headway* (23% and 30% for openings, and 11% and 25% for closings respectively). Openings outnumber closings in most of the books. One can wonder what the explanation for this phenomenon is. Is greeting your partner more important than saying good-bye to them from a pragmatic point of view? It is unlikely that coursebook writers are of this opinion. Rather, the reason might be that openings are more "in front of our eyes", while conversations can be finished by three dots.

The first hypothesis proposed that the higher the level is, the fewer conversational models there are for openings and closings in coursebooks. Although the number of dialogues does not seem to decrease as the levels increase (both *Headway Intermediate* and *Criss Cross Upper-Intermediate* contain almost as many dialogues as the *Elementary*/*Beginner* books), the hypothesis is verified by looking at the two speech acts. That is, the higher the level is, the fewer openings and closings there are in the books: two-third of all openings and closings can be found in the first two books of the series (66% and 63% in *Headway*, and 69% and 65% in *Criss Cross*, for openings and closings respectively). However, there is significant attention paid to the teaching of pragmatic competence in the higher level coursebooks, as the findings of the third research question will show.

Table 3. *Statistical analysis of the number of conversations, openings, and closings in the two coursebook series (average number per coursebook)*

	Headway	**Criss Cross**	**t-value**
Dialogues	43.8	52.5	0.71
Openings	13.2	12.25	0.14
Closings	11	5.75	1.38

Table 3 shows the results of the statistical analyses on the number of conversations, openings, and closings in the two series. As the two series contain a different number of coursebooks (Headway five and Criss Cross four), I calculated the differences between the average number of dialogues, openings, and closings per coursebook in the two series. The t-test revealed no significant difference in the number of dialogues, openings, and closings per coursebook in the two series. This falsifies the third hypothesis, namely that Criss Cross with the cross-cultural syllabus places more emphasis on the teaching of openings and closings in different cultural settings.

3.6.2 Characteristics of openings and closings in the coursebooks

Although the findings of the previous research question uncovered several facts about the two series, the sheer number of openings and closings does not indicate what kind of conversational models are provided as input for the students. This section aims to give insight into this area by exploring the answers to the second research question, namely the characteristics of openings and closings in the two coursebook series.

3.6.2.1 Openings

Most openings in the two coursebook series are partial, which verifies the second hypothesis. Telephone conversations contain the most complete dialogues – a result that may be due to the stricter formula or the lack of non-verbal communication. Adjacency pairs are often incomplete and one-way, meaning that the response part is missing, as in the example (*Criss Cross Beginner Practice Book,* 1999, p. 13.):

> A Tim, this is Zsuzsa. She is from Hungary.
> B Hello Zsuzsa. This is a nice name. How do you say it in English?
> C Susan.

This phenomenon is very different from real life situations, where not only is the absence of the second half of the adjacency pair noticeable (Coulthard, 1985), but it usually communicates something. It can signify the addressee's unwillingness to respond (due to anger, for example) or the fact that he did not notice his partner. In coursebooks, however, the lack of a full adjacency pair may simply be due to lack of space, where the writers wanted to "get to the point" and present the material of the unit. There are few dialogues that contain post-openings, such as *How are you?* or *Pleased to meet you*.

As for stylistic variation, both formal and informal encounters are represented in the materials, although informal dialogues are in majority. In the *Headway* series the style of the dialogues is different depending on the level of the coursebook. While the lower level coursebooks contain mostly everyday dialogues, 14 of the 25 dialogues in *Headway Advanced* are lengthy radio interviews and only one of these contains an opening and a closing. In most cases, the vocabulary of introductory elements is restrictive (*Good morning/afternoon* in formal, and *Hi* or *Hello* in informal encounters). In all the coursebooks, two *Hi there!* and two *Hey!* greetings were identified (both in the

Criss Cross series). This is surprising considering that the topics – especially in *Criss Cross* – are very up-to-date, involving internet language and mobile phone communication. Some dialogues contain what we called situation-bound openings. These openings, such as *Happy New Year, Mary*! or *Merry Christmas, everyone!,* were dependent on a specific dialogue situation.

3.6.2.2 Closings

The second hypothesis is verified in the case of closings as well, as partial closings far outnumber complete ones. Often the closing itself is missing, but if it is present, it lacks shutting down the topic, preclosing, and/or a full adjacency pair. Similarly to greetings, the vocabulary of terminal exchanges is also limited (c.f. Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Grant & Starks, 2001). As for the two series, Criss Cross contains only one complete closing, while the Headway books provide 15 examples of these. This lack of complete closings may be due to the fact that in most cases the aim of the conversations in the coursebooks is to present new grammar, or to provide texts for reading or listening comprehension exercises where the endings of the conversations are not important because no questions are attached to them.

While this is certainly understandable, Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) point out that it is important for the learners to recognize the structure of English closings (shutting down the topic, preclosing, and terminal pair). The function of preclosings is to verify that both conversational partners are ready to end their interaction, therefore this lack of conversation models on closings might result in students appearing impolite or abrupt. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1992) present 23 different preclosings that can bring a

conversation to a close. However, preclosings in the textbooks often mean one character saying *Thank you* or *Thanks*, as in the example from *Headway Pre-Intermediate Student's Book* (p. 35):

> J It's all right. I will pick you up as well. It's no trouble.
> B That's great! Thanks a lot, Jenny.

The reason for the lack of the shutting down the topic at a lower level is that often the topic itself is missing from the dialogue. Terminal exchanges are often not present or are one-way, lacking the response part. Consider this dialogue from *Headway Intermediate Student's Book* (1996, p. 139):

> Rosie: Thanks very much. Thanks for your help. I'll go to… oh, sorry, I can't remember which hotel you suggested.
> Clerk: The Euro Hotel.
> Rosie: The Euro. Thanks a lot. Bye.

3.6.3 Explicit pragmatic instruction in the coursebooks

The third research question targeted the presence of explicit pragmatic instruction in the coursebooks. In both series there are activities for practicing speech acts and language functions. As for *Headway*, all the books except *Advanced* contain such activities. *Headway Elementary* includes exercises on closings in Units 1 and 3, while *Pre-Intermediate* has an activity on closings (p. 12) and one on situation specific preclosings (p. 118). The most comprehensive exercise on openings and closings is entitled "Beginning and ending a telephone conversation" in *Headway Upper-Intermediate* (p. 57). Here students have to put the parts of telephone conversations in the right order, compare formal and informal conversations, and answer questions about how the partners signal the end of the conversation and how they reach an agreement as to

when and how to part. This is certainly an excellent exercise for raising pragmatic awareness.

In the *Criss Cross* series, *Upper-Intermediate* is the coursebook that contains direct teaching of speech acts and language functions. In each unit there are Language Use sections, which include "activities to practice functions and the use of English" (p. 3.) and Speech Practice sections that involve "activities to recognize and practice aspects of spoken English" (p. 3). These are the two sections of the book that contain the bulk of the dialogues and teach speech acts such as apologizing, agreeing, and disagreeing. In the *Teacher's Book* of *Criss Cross Beginner* (p. 10), there are some notes on greetings, such as *How do you do?*, *Hello,* or *Hi.* In the same book there is a remark on closings (p. 21), explaining the forms *Goodbye*, *Bye bye,* and *Bye.* Unfortunately, the input in both sections is rather restricted, mentioning very few greeting and parting phrases and not including sufficient metapragmatic information (cf. Vellenga, 2004).

3.7 Conclusions of the coursebook study

The aim of this chapter was to examine how openings and closings are presented in two EFL coursebooks series. The results indicate that most dialogues in the coursebooks were incomplete. The majority of openings and closings were partial and one-way, lacking post-openings, shutting down the topic, and preclosings. The findings echo the conclusion of Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991, p. 8.): "The purpose of dialogues is generally to introduce a new grammatical structure and not to provide a source for realistic conversational input." Most differences between the two series were discovered in the number of dialogues and the explicit teaching of pragmatic competence. The

statistical analysis, however, showed no significant difference between the number of dialogues, openings, and closings in the two series. The teaching implications of the research are of high importance. It is the teachers' responsibility to use the materials in a way that they contribute to the pragmatic development of students. The coursebooks serve as a good basis to be utilized by the teacher and complemented by several excellent resources on speech acts and functions (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1992; Jones, 1981; to name just a few).

Examining textbooks is only a starting point in the process of learning about how pragmatic competence is taught in the classroom. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) argue, the development of textbook design will "require more research into what teachers and learners actually do with textbooks and teacher's guides in the classroom" (p. 326). Therefore, the next step is data collection from the classroom, which will be the focus of the following chapters of my dissertation.

Chapter 4: An experimental study on developing pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom: research questions and methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an experimental study that was carried out with 92 Hungarian secondary-school EFL students. The main goal was to find out how the explicit teaching of some aspects of pragmatic competence affect students' performance. The study has a quasi-experimental design, as it involves intact EFL learner groups and contains a treatment and a control group. The treatment group received a five-week training aiming to raise their pragmatic competence, namely how to open and close conversations. The control group followed their regular curriculum and only participated in the pre- and post-test, without being aware of taking part in an experiment.

The inspiration for the project came from the coursebook study (see Chapter 3), which concluded that the presentation of openings and closings in coursebooks is often inadequate to provide students with sufficient input to increase their pragmatic competence. The next logical step was, therefore, to examine the teaching of pragmatics in the classroom (cf. Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Research shows that instruction is beneficial in the development of pragmatic competence (see section 2.6.1), thus the aim of this project was to explore the effectiveness of explicit pragmatic instruction in the Hungarian EFL context.

Chapters 4 to 7 in my dissertation are based on a joint research project with Csizér Kata (published as Csizér & Edwards, 2006 and Edwards & Csizér, 2004). The data

collection and some of the data analysis were conducted together in order to publish the aforementioned articles with joint authorship. However, these chapters are completely my own work and for all the shortcomings I bear full responsibility.

4.2 Research questions and hypotheses

The study has two main areas of investigation. The first research question aims to examine the relationship between students' pragmatic competence and general L2 proficiency. The goal is to find out what effect participants' proficiency levels have on their speech act production as well as their perception of pragmatic violations. The second research question is how the pragmatic training program affects students' speech act production on a post-test and how their awareness toward pragmatic violations changes on a discourse rating task. For this reason, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How does Hungarian secondary-school students' L2 proficiency correlate with their pragmatic competence, more specifically their appropriate use of openings and closings and their perception of pragmatic and grammatical violations?
2. How will the explicit teaching of how to open and close a conversation influence students' speech act production and awareness toward pragmatic violations?

Based on the above questions, the hypotheses were the following:

1. Students' L2 proficiency will positively correlate with their pragmatic competence, more specifically their appropriate use of openings and closings and their perception of pragmatic violations.

2. As a result of the training, students will use more appropriate opening and closing elements in the post-tests and will display an increased awareness toward pragmatic violations.

The first hypothesis assumes that there is a positive relationship between students' overall L2 proficiency and their pragmatic competence. Many studies have investigated this issue in both the ESL and the EFL context (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a; Bouton, 1994; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001; Takahashi, 2005a) and their conclusions vary regarding the relationship between pragmatic competence and L2 proficiency (see section 2.3). Our hypothesis is in accordance with the results of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), who concluded that high proficiency EFL students notice more pragmatic mistakes than their less proficient peers.

The second hypothesis is based on the findings of the literature, namely that classroom instruction is beneficial in the development of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996; Bouton, 1994; Clennel, 1999; Dirven & Pütz, 1993; Eslami-Rasekh et al., 2004; Lam & Wong, 2000). We hypothesized that the same pattern would be observed in this sample of Hungarian EFL students.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Participants

The participants of the investigation were 92 secondary-school students in years 9, 10 and 11, between the ages of 15 and 17. The justification for choosing this age-group is two-fold. First, students in year 8 or younger were not included as they might lack the

appropriate L2 proficiency to understand and carry out the pre- and post-tests and the treatment tasks. Second, 12-year students were excluded in order to avoid interference with the school-leaving examinations. We attempted to control for the following variables as much as possible: students' age, language level, school type, group size, and type of coursebooks used in their EFL classes. By asking the teachers beforehand about the students' level, the coursebook they use, and the number of years they had English instruction our aim was to have students of approximately the same level in both the treatment and the control groups. All students were at intermediate or higher levels. However, as one of the variables was L2 proficiency, it was ensured that there was no significant difference in proficiency level between the treatment and the control groups.

All three schools involved in the study were secondary schools (*gimnázium*) situated in three different localities near Budapest: Esztergom, Érd, and Szigetszentmiklós (see *Table 4*). None of the schools counted as "elite-schools" but all of them had good reputation. Out of the seven classes five followed the regular EFL curriculum (see *A guide to the Hungarian National Core Curriculum*, 1996), using coursebooks published in Great Britain. Two classes (one in the treatment group and one in the control group) prepared for an intermediate language exam. Four classes were in the treatment group (N=66), the other three classes were control groups (N=26), receiving no treatment and continuing with their regular instruction. This sample size (N=92) allowed us to draw statistically meaningful conclusions.

Table 4 introduces the classes and teachers participating in the experiment. As for the teachers, I decided to use first names instead of the impersonal "Teacher 1", yet I changed their real names to protect their identity.

Table 4. *The sample*

	Treatment Group (N=66)				**Control Group** (N=26)		
	School 1			School 2		School 3	
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7
	Edit	Edit	Csaba	Anna	Szilvia	Erika	Erika
Number of students	16	18	17	15	9	8	9

4.3.2 Procedures

There was one alteration that was made in the designing phase of the project, concerning groups. According to the initial plans, three groups would have been included: one explicit treatment group, one implicit treatment group, and a control group (based on House, 1996, who investigated the differences between an implicitly and an explicitly instructed group). The first group was to receive explicit training in openings and closings, the second group was to undergo a general communication training, and the control group no treatment whatsoever. After serious considerations we decided not to include an implicit treatment group. The justification for this decision was that as all teachers taking part in the project were considered experienced and highly competent with up-to-date methodology training, it was assumed that they supply their learners with a communication training in their regular classroom instruction, and having the students undergo a "general communication training" would not place them in a different position compared to the control group. For fear that this fact would distort the results, only two

groups were included in the investigation: an explicit treatment group and a control group.

The selection of teachers was a difficult task, as we did not have personal contacts. Therefore, as a first step we posted a message on a mailing list designed for teachers taking part in English Language Teacher In-Service Training (ELT INSET) events. As a result, three teachers contacted us showing interest in participating in the study. All three of them had been actively involved in the in-service events and they were also recommended by the ELT INSET project manager as experienced and enthusiastic teachers. As we needed at least five teachers, we asked them to recommend other teachers in their schools. Two more teachers were added this way; one of them joined the treatment group and the other one the control group. After the principals granted permission to carry out our investigation at their schools, we proceeded with the project.

Prior to the treatment, the selected teachers were contacted in order to build relationships and inform them thoroughly about the research. The teachers of the treatment groups were given the treatment tasks and were instructed on how to use them. They were encouraged to ask questions and voice any doubts they had. We aimed to answer their questions thoroughly and clear any possible misunderstandings in order to ensure that the treatment would be conducted in approximately the same manner in each class. This purpose was also enhanced by our efforts to thoroughly describe the treatment tasks and to supply all the necessary visual aids and worksheets.

4.3.3 Data collection instruments

In the project a multi-method approach was used in order to increase validity (see Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Foreign language proficiency was measured by a C-test. The main body of data was collected through role-plays, which served as pre- and post-tests in the project. Discourse rating tasks were used after the treatment in order to investigate students' perception of grammatical and pragmatic violations. During the treatment, classes were visited by both researchers, so as to gain insight about how the treatment tasks were implemented, as well as to investigate general classroom issues. Observation of authentic speech was employed in order to complement the other, more restricted, data collection instruments. Finally, as a follow-up to the treatment program, the students were given questionnaires and all five teachers were interviewed, so we could receive feedback about the treatment and explore the participants' views on pragmatic competence and general classroom issues, placing pragmatic competence in the larger context of EFL instruction. In the following sections I describe all seven data collection instruments.

4.3.3.1 The L2 proficiency measure

Students' language proficiency was measured by a C-test administered before the treatment phase (see Appendix A). The C-test is considered a reliable technique to measure overall L2 competence and this particular test was validated among Hungarian EFL learners by Dörnyei and Katona (1992). It was used in the Leeds' project (Németh & Kormos, 2001), and we acquired permission to apply it in our study. However, an important adjustment had to be made. The original C-test consisted of three separate texts

of approximately equal length but of increasing difficulty. We decided that the last text would be too difficult and thus frustrating for students in our sample, therefore, we only administered the first two texts. The omission resulted in the decrease of the maximum score from 63 to 42 points. Students' proficiency measures were calculated by adding up the scores of the two texts in the C-test (21 points each).

4.3.3.2 The pre- and post-test role-plays

The pre- and post-tests comprised role-plays, which is a widespread technique to elicit speech acts (Kasper, 1997a). It was important to have role-plays that resemble real-life situations where openings and closings fit in naturally. Both role-plays included a problem or a conflict that students had to solve, which allowed room for discussion (see Holló & Lázár, 2000). The role-play for the pre-test took place at a rock concert, where one of the students was a rock musician, the other a festival organizer (see Appendix B). The post-test was an exchange between the owner of a house at Lake Balaton and a prospective renter. The role-plays were closed, that is, they provided guidelines for the students about the steps of the conversation and instructed them to greet and say good-bye to their partners. In this way the rubrics allowed for researching openings, closings, and opting out.

Prior to the experiment the role-plays were piloted twice with secondary-school students not taking part in the study. Initially two pairs of students were asked to perform the role-plays and to make remarks concerning the topic, understandability, and any other aspect of the tasks. Having received their permission, the role-plays and the feedback

session were recorded. Based on the participants' suggestions, the role-play tasks were rewritten, and the revised versions were again piloted by a different set of students.

Before the pre-test, students were allowed to choose their partners for the role-play. At the post-test, the same pairs were asked to work together in order to create as similar circumstances as possible. Obviously, due to absenteeism, this was not always feasible, but in the majority of cases students worked with the same partner on both occasions. The role-cards were written in Hungarian, in order to avoid comprehension problems. Students were given time for preparation after they received the role-cards, but they could not discuss anything with their partner, see their partner's role card, or ask questions from the researchers that pertained to the content of the role-plays. Prior to handing out the role-cards to students, we asked for their permission to audio-tape their performance. They were assured that the recordings would not be part of any school-related assessment. All the role-plays were transcribed and checked against the tape before carrying out the analyses. Although students performed the role-plays in pairs, their performance was analyzed individually.

4.3.3.3 The discourse rating task

All students received the discourse rating tasks after the treatment program. The questionnaire comprised eleven short situations that were easy to identify for our sample as they took place at school and contained interactions between school friends or student and teacher (see Appendix C). Some of the items were based on Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). The instructions asked participants to read the dialogues carefully and decide whether the speakers used English correctly or not. We also drew attention to the

fact that there may be mistakes other than grammatical ones. The questions were classified into five categories based on the kind of problem they contained. First, we included items with grammatical mistakes (such as verb tense errors), as in Items 6, 9, and 11. Second, dialogues with general pragmatic violations were present. These comprised stylistic and politeness mistakes, such as Items 1, 3, and 5. As the project focused on openings and closings, some items pertained to these two speech acts: Items 4 and 7 for openings, and Item 10 for closings. Finally, correct items were also included: Items 2 and 8.

The aim with the DRT was to explore students' perception to pragmatic and grammatical violations (based on Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). However, our sample was not asked to rate the utterances on the scale of seriousness, as Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei already conducted a large-scale survey on this subject and we did not wish to replicate their study on a smaller scale. Rather the goal was to triangulate the post-test-role-play. The DRT and the role-plays provided data about different aspects of students' pragmatic competence. Whereas the DRT was geared toward pragmatic awareness and recognition skills (identifying pragmatic violations in a written dialogue), the role-plays elicited active speech act production (performing a dialogue under somewhat stressful conditions).

The questionnaire was piloted twice. First, I asked a native speaker of English to go through the rating. Then, I gave the questionnaires with a different heading to my teacher trainees at Pázmány Péter University asking them to grade the "papers" as if they were written by their intermediate students. Furthermore, they were asked to rate the mistakes according to their seriousness. The follow-up discussions in both pilots provided

valuable insights about the task and prompted some necessary changes. As a side it was interesting to see the teacher trainees rating grammatical mistakes as more serious than pragmatic ones (confirming the findings of Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998).

4.3.3.4 Classroom observation

During the treatment period, each class was observed at least once by one of the researchers. The goals were to observe how the treatment tasks were implemented in the classrooms and to examine class atmosphere, teaching methods, lesson structures, and the like. The observation questions were different in the treatment and the control group classes (see Appendix D). We hoped to be able to justify some of the results with the help of the observation experiences.

4.3.3.5 Observation of authentic speech

I conducted fieldwork in the United States for four years. During this time, I observed openings and closings in authentic conversations in both formal and informal settings and collected field data (Edwards, unpublished). I derived the data mainly from native speakers' interactions, but I also focused on native-nonnative conversations. I concentrated on speakers' openings and closings as well as instances of misunderstandings or pragmatic failure between the partners. I also refer to Maisel's (forthcoming) annotated thesaurus on closings, which is based on observation of authentic speech and student questionnaires. These two sources of authentic speech data provided valuable input when analyzing the pre- and post-test role-plays and comparing native- and non-native speaker speech act production.

4.3.3.6 Student questionnaires

The follow-up questionnaires were administered on the day of the post-test or if there was no time left, they were given to the teachers to distribute later. The aim was to gather background information about the students that was not possible to gain with the other data collection instruments. We asked four questions intending to expose students' attitudes toward the role-plays, as well as different issues of learning English, such as in what contexts they use English outside the classroom, what problems they struggle with, and how they would describe a successful language lesson (see Appendix E). The language of the questionnaire was Hungarian in order to ensure comprehension and to allow the students to express themselves without limitation.

We had decided not to ask the participants specifically about the treatment tasks for two reasons. For one, since we requested the teachers to incorporate the tasks into their regular teaching, we thought it might be difficult for the students to remember them specifically. We also wanted to avoid "putting words in their mouths" by asking about the importance of such tasks, which may have elicited automatic positive answers from most students. The question pertaining to the treatment concerned the role-plays only, which all the participants had experienced and they were easy to remember because of the circumstances (doing it in pairs with the researchers present, being tape-recorded, etc). However, we hoped that some of the treatment activities would come up at the last question, which asked about a successful language lesson they can remember.

4.3.3.7 Teacher interviews

All five teachers were interviewed separately after the treatment in order to explore their impressions about the experiment and their opinion about teaching pragmatic competence (see Appendix F for the interview protocol). The interview was a semi-structured one: the protocol comprised a list of questions, yet allowed for digressions. The treatment group teachers were asked about the most successful task and any problems, questions, or suggestions they had concerning the treatment. The control group teachers received their package of all the treatment task materials and were given a short description of the experiment. They, too, were invited to share their reactions to the tasks as well as the role-plays that their students participated in. We also investigated all five teachers' attitude towards teaching communicative and pragmatic competence.

Two interview questions overlapped with the students' questionnaires: teachers were asked about what contexts their students use English outside the classroom and what problems they struggle with. In the data analysis, I will compare the responses of the students and the teachers in these areas. The interviews were conducted in Hungarian in order to avoid any self-consciousness and to provide free expression. Each interview lasted for approximately 20-30 minutes and, with the interviewees' permission, was tape-recorded and transcribed.

4.3.4 The treatment tasks

This section presents the tasks of the treatment program (see also Edwards, 2003a, 2003b; Edwards & Csizér, 2004). The activities were designed specifically for the

purposes of this study with the aim to provide students with explicit input concerning openings and closings. We wanted to give students first-hand experience in issues of pragmatic competence and to deepen their understanding by letting them discover the rules themselves (cf. Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Rose, 2000). Bachman and Palmer's (1996) definition of pragmatic knowledge was taken into account at this stage, as the activities contained elements with the purpose of enhancing students' lexical, functional, and sociocultural knowledge as well. Each activity provided room not only for the explicit teaching of openings and closings in various real-life situations, but also for student-centered interaction (see Kasper, 1997a). They also contained group discussions about the pragmatic information and any problems that came up while completing the activities (see Appendix G).

Before the treatment we asked a teacher who was not participating in the project to pilot the activities. Based on her suggestions some modifications were made and one of the original activities was omitted, as she considered it too complicated both for teachers and students. After the pilot phase, each treatment group teacher received a package of the activities; containing detailed instructions, the discussion questions, and the photocopied worksheets for the students. Individually, we walked them through the activities and answered their questions. They were asked to set apart a 35-45-minute block in their regular lessons each week to dedicate to implementing the training materials. Teachers were given a five-week period to cover all four activities. The extra week was provided in order to ensure that all classes could finish the treatment in due time. The control group teachers received their package after the experiment, so that they could also utilize the activities in their classrooms if they wished.

The next sections describe the main points and procedures of the activities (see also Appendix G). In addition to this, the teachers were also given the photocopied worksheets and visual aids needed for the activities. As was mentioned above, we conducted observations in order to see how the activities were actually implemented in each treatment group class. I give an account of the insights gained through the observation in sections 7.1.1 and 7.2.1.

4.3.4.1 How would it sound abroad?

The first activity was designed to raise students' awareness in the pragmatic differences between Hungarian and English, especially pertaining to greetings and forms of politeness. It was based on a short dialogue that students had to translate from Hungarian to English. The conversation did not contain difficult grammar or vocabulary, but was completely Hungarian in nature, comprising elements that can not be directly translated into English (such as the formal and informal forms and some greetings). The dialogue provided a very good opportunity for a discussion concerning the pragmatic differences between the two languages. In the lead-in phase teachers encourage students to brainstorm pragmatic differences between English and Hungarian (the lack of formal and informal forms in English, etc). After the translations are completed, the teacher facilitates a discussion in which the following issues are brought up:

1. In English *How are you?* is usually considered a greeting, and not a genuine question. In Hungarian, this phrase (*Hogy vagy?* or *Hogy van?*) may communicate genuine interest in the other speaker's well-being, and the EFL

student might be surprised or worse yet, insulted when not given adequate time or attention to describe his or her stomach problems.

2. Topics of financial state, health, and politics are normally considered "taboo" in English unless close friends are involved. Bringing up these topics, a Hungarian speaker may seem rude to an English native speaker, though the fact is that they speak English with English grammatical rules and vocabulary, but Hungarian pragmatic rules.
3. English greetings, when "imported" into other languages, may take on a different role. In Hungarian, for instance, *Helló!* has a different usage than the English *Hello*. As well as being a greeting, it is a leave-taking. I have seen many astonished English native speakers' faces when Hungarian acquaintances say goodbye to them using *Helló*.
4. English reserves the forms *Aunt/Uncle* for children and family members. In Hungarian a similar form (*néni* and *bácsi*), as well as the greeting *Csókolom!* is used by children and adults alike, addressing older adults outside their family as a form of respect.
5. English closings have an elaborate structure, involving shutting down the topic and pre-closing elements. In contrast, speakers of other languages finish a conversation "more abruptly", which may make the EFL student appear impolite in English.

The piloting phase revealed an interesting observation about this activity. When a group of teacher trainees at Pázmány Péter University completed the translation, one interesting remark the trainees had was that although there were no grammatical mistakes

in the translated dialogue, it still "wasn't English." This observation points to the fact that language proficiency cannot be complete without applying the appropriate pragmatic rules of the target language.

4.3.4.2 We can't say goodbye!

The aim of this activity was to teach and practice the structure of English closings. In the first part the teacher elicits and teaches some phrases for closing a conversation, such as *I've got to go now, I'd better let you go,* or *Take care*. In the next part, the students work on reconstructing an elaborate and jumbled dialogue ending (taken from Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991, p. 12). In the discussion phase, the students talk about who is trying to end the conversation and who wants to chat, how the speakers signal their intention to end the conversation, and how they confirm their arrangement (based on the discussion questions in *Headway Upper-Intermediate*, 1998, p. 57). The follow-up activity is to write a soap opera dialogue where two people in love cannot say goodbye to each other and are trying to maintain the conversation for as long as possible (idea taken from Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1992, p. 39).

4.3.4.3 What are they saying?

This activity is geared towards discussing formal and informal greeting forms. In the warm-up exercise the teacher sticks post-it notes on the students' backs with a different role on each (such as *Mr. Thomas, your new boss; your uncle; your favorite TV-personality*, etc). The students' task is to find out their roles by listening to other people greeting them. The class then discusses the different greeting forms (formal and informal)

and how they were able to express politeness in English. In the second part of the activity students write conversations corresponding to different pictures (taken from Jones, 1981, pp. 5-18). They have to decide whether the situation is a formal or an informal encounter and choose the phrases accordingly.

4.3.4.4 Complete the dialogue!

The goal of this activity is to practice complete openings and closings as well as other conversational elements that make textbook exchanges "come to life". A very short conversation is given to the students, which they expand by adding a complete opening, closing, and other elements. In the procedures, the teacher is to elicit phrases the students can use to expand the dialogue. These include greetings (*Good morning/Hello*), post-openings (*How are you? – Fine, thanks.*), extending the body of the conversation (*Do you like living here? Have you heard that they're building a new store in the neighborhood?*), shutting down the topic (*It was great to talk to you.*), pre-closings (*I've got to go now. / I'd better let you go.*), and terminal exchanges (*Bye. / See you later*). Students are encouraged to come up with their own ideas based on the previous activities of the pragmatic program. After the students are finished working on the dialogues, they discuss the differences between the original and the new conversation, in regards to openings and closings and how the original dialogue became more life-like.

4.3.5 Data analysis

4.3.5.1 Opening and closing elements

In the case of both speech acts, the same analytical decisions were made as in the coursebook study (see section 3.5). We identified two distinct parts in opening a conversation: the adjacency pair of the greeting and the post-opening. Both appropriate greetings and post-openings were tallied and the latter was added up so as to receive a single measure. As a result, the variable of the greeting contained two values: *1* if an appropriate greeting was used and *0* if no or an inappropriate greeting was present in the conversation. The requirements for an appropriate greeting were two-fold. First, it had to be stylistically appropriate. Second, if it was the response part of the adjacency pair, it needed to correspond to the initiation part. The variable measuring the presence of post-openings depended on how many post-openings were uttered by the particular student (ranging from *0* to possibly *3*).

As for closings, we separated terminal pairs, pre-closings, and shutting down the topic. The three elements were not only tallied separately but were also kept separate throughout the analysis. In other words, we created dummy-variables, that is, variables with two values (*0* and *1*) measuring each element of closings: *1* was given if the element was uttered by the student during the conversation, and *0* was assigned if the particular element of the closing was not used.

In the qualitative analysis the same elements of the two speech acts were identified. First, I analyzed students' speech act production in the pre-test, focusing on appropriacy and stylistic variation. Second, I compared participants' production of

openings and closings in the pre- and post-test in order to establish the effect the treatment had on students' speech act performance. Third, I investigated problem areas in speech act production.

4.3.5.2 Statistical analyses

After the pre- and post-test data were transcribed and checked against the tape, the frequencies of opening and closing elements were tallied and computer coded using SPSS for Windows. The scores on the C-test were also entered. Differences were calculated using one-way ANOVA and independent sample t-test to compare the results of the various groups, and the non-parametric versions of these methods were applied where necessary. The scores of the discourse rating task were also recorded and I carried out an item analysis in order to examine students' performance on the various items. A Pearson correlation coefficient test was conducted among the C-test and the discourse rating task variables, aiming to gain insight into the relationship among the various variables. As the sample size is not particularly large, the significance level used throughout the statistical analysis is 5%.

In the following chapters I present both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses of the data. Chapter 5 displays the results of the quantitative analysis according to the research questions presented in this chapter. Following this, Chapter 6 is devoted to the qualitative analysis of the pre- and post-test role-plays as well as my observation of authentic discourse.

Chapter 5: Results and discussion: a quantitative analysis

In this chapter I provide a quantitative analysis of the data. I present the results concerning the main variables of the survey: foreign language proficiency, pragmatic competence, and grammatical competence. Foreign language proficiency is discussed through the results of the C-test in section 5.1. Pragmatic and grammatical competence are examined through an item analysis of the discourse rating task (section 5.2), whereas pragmatic competence is also investigated in the pre- and post-test role-plays.

I discuss the results according to the research questions. The first research question pertains to the relationship between L2 proficiency and pragmatic competence. This issue is investigated by using the data collected with two instruments (see section 5.3). First, data are derived from the correlation analysis of the discourse rating task variables and the C-test (section 5.3.1). Second, participants' speech act production on the pre-test is compared with their C-test scores (section 5.3.2).

The second research question explores the effect of the treatment on students' pragmatic competence (see section 5.4). This area is also investigated from two main angles. First, treatment and control group students' scores are compared on the discourse rating task (section 5.4.1). Second, participants' speech act production is analyzed comparing their pre-test and post-test performances (section 5.4.2). Finally, I draw the conclusions of the quantitative analysis in section 5.5.

5.1 Foreign language proficiency

Participants in all classes completed the C-test before the treatment phase. The sample size here is 88, as four students were absent at the time of testing. The maximum score was 42 points (21 points for each text). As Table 5 shows, students' mean score on the test is 26.53 with a standard deviation of 5.99. The mean score on the C-test was slightly higher in the treatment group classes than in the control ones: 27.29 and 24.64 respectively. However, the t-test shows that the difference between the treatment and the control group is not significant. This result is in accordance with our expectations, as the goal was to have no significant difference in proficiency level between the treatment and the control groups.

Table 5. *C-test scores in the treatment and control group*

	Mean	**SD**	**t-value**
All students	26.53	5.99	
Treatment group	27.29	5.66	1.09 (p = 0.06)
Control group	24.64	6.50	

Table 6 presents the C-test scores broken down according to classes. The table shows that the highest score was the maximum points, 42, achieved by a student in Class 7, which became one of the control group classes. The lowest score, 13, was achieved by two students in Class 4, one of the treatment group classes.

Table 6. *Foreign language proficiency in the sample*

	Treatment Group (N=66)				**Control Group** (N=26)		
	School 1			School 2		School 3	
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7
	Edit	Edit	Csaba	Anna	Szilvia	Erika	Erika
Average on C-test	30	28	25	25	20	23	30
The highest score	35	33	36	39	24	32	42
The lowest score	19	22	15	13	17	16	20

Next, I present the findings concerning the other variables of the survey, pragmatic and grammatical competence, through an item analysis of the discourse rating task.

5.2 Pragmatic competence and L2 proficiency: an item analysis of the DRT

In the item analysis of the DRT I give an account of the facility values of the variables as well as analyzing participants' performance on the various items. The facility value measures the difficulty of an item, namely what percentage of students answered each question correctly. The sample size here is 86, as six students were absent when the tasks were distributed. At this point, the difference between the treatment and control group will not be analyzed. *Table 7* shows the five categories the DRT items are classified into: ones with mistakes in grammar, pragmatics, openings, closings, and correct items (see Appendix C and section 4.3.2.2). Facility values are calculated for every item as well as each category combined.

Table 7. *Facility values of discourse rating task items and categories*

Item type	Name and number of item	Facility value of item (%)	Cumulative facility value (%)
Opening	Item 4: *Shopping*	79.1	87.8
	Item 7: *Summer holiday*	96.5	
Pragmatic	Item 1: *Snack bar*	65.1	69.8
	Item 3: *Class trip*	50	
	Item 5: *Library*	94.2	
Grammar	Item 6: *Homework*	44.2	58.1
	Item 9: *Before class*	77.9	
	Item 11: *Forgetting book*	52.3	
Closing	Item 10: *After school*	38.4	38.4
No mistake	Item 2: *Invitation*	45.3	34.3
	Item 8: *Teacher's book*	23.3	

Students reached the highest score on the items with mistakes in openings. The cumulative facility value for this item type is 87.8%. The item that the largest number of students (more than 96%) answered correctly was *Summer holiday*, which was an exchange between a student and a teacher. Respondents pointed out John's lack of politeness and respect towards his teacher. The other item in openings, *Shopping*, was based on the pragmatic differences in post-openings between English and Hungarian (Edwards, 2003a) and it also yielded a high score (79.1%). Students noted that complaining is inappropriate in this context ("*az angoloknál nem illik panaszkodni"*) and that topics of health, finances, and politics are taboos in English.

A possible explanation for the high facility values in this category is that the items are not very challenging in nature. They contain mistakes that are easy to identify, such as saying *What's up?* to a teacher (Item 7) or responding to *How are you?* with a lengthy

complaint (Item 4). In the case of closings (Item 10), the facility value is only 38.4%, which shows the difficulty of the item. The mistake to be identified was using *Hello!* as a leave-taking, which is a typical pragmatic problem of Hungarian EFL learners (Edwards, 2003a) and it apparently caused difficulty for many respondents. In hindsight, I should have included more items on closings in order to provide more data for generalizability.

The items with general pragmatic mistakes contained two kinds of speech acts: requests (Items 1 and 5) and a refusal (Item 3). In the case of requests the nature of the problem was similar in both cases (using direct utterances such as *I want…* or *Tell me…*). Interestingly enough, the items challenged students to different degrees. Almost all respondents (94.2%) identified the problem in the *Library* situation, whereas only 65.1% scored correctly in the *Snack bar* interaction. The students pointed out the "impoliteness" of the answers and that they sound more like demands than requests. Some respondents described such answers using quite strong adjectives, such as *bunkó* or *alpári*. As for the speech act of refusing, exactly half of the participants identified the item as incorrect. They pointed out the importance of providing reasons for the refusals in order to be more polite. In the cases where students did not identify the pragmatic mistakes correctly, they mentioned the need to make changes in vocabulary or word order. Hardly anyone considered these items correct.

The category with grammatical mistakes posed various difficulty levels for participants, with scores ranging from 44.2 to 77.9% and a cumulative facility value of 58.1%. The item that students solved the most successfully (77.9%) was *Before class* (Item 9), where they had to identify the *Let us to* structure as incorrect. Possibly due to the well-known phrase *Let's go* and the shortness of the utterance, this item did not

present any significant difficulty for the students. Surprisingly, only half of the respondents (52.3%) discovered the incorrect past tense (*didn't brought*) in Item 11. Those who answered this item incorrectly either missed the grammatical mistake altogether and wrote "correct" as their answer, or they pointed out a pragmatic problem, for instance that Maria provided too much explanation. The low facility value of this item may be due to the fact that Maria's response is rather lengthy, therefore participants may have missed the mistake "embedded" in the utterance. Furthermore, I classify using a past tense verb with the auxiliary *did* as a typical Hungarian EFL mistake, which may still manifest itself at this level of proficiency. Incidentally, students admitted in the follow-up questionnaire that verb tenses are indeed the most challenging area of English grammar for them (see section 4.4.7). Last, fatigue effect may have contributed to the low facility value, as this was the last item on the DRT. The most challenging item in this category is *Homework* (Item 6), which only 44.2% of the students identified as incorrect. This item again contained a verb tense mistake (*I haven't been here yesterday*). Many students failed to recognize any mistake whatsoever, others suggested vocabulary changes or less explanation.

The category that proved to be the most challenging is that of correct items (Items 2 and 8). The cumulative facility value is 34.3%, meaning that only a third of the students were able to answer these items successfully. The participants found "mistakes" of vocabulary, syntax (verb tense usage), and pragmatic nature (too polite or formal answer). The possible reasons for this are two-fold. The first is what I call "red pen effect", meaning that when students are asked to correct mistakes in an exercise, they tend to "overcorrect". I have come across this phenomenon in my teaching experience

both in the case of my intermediate and advanced EFL students and with my English native speaker students in the United States. The second possible reason for the low facility value is that both dialogues in this category contain relatively difficult subordinate clause structures, which could have added to the challenge.

All in all, the item analysis provided much insight into the discourse rating task: it supplied information on the difficulty of each item and the examination of students' answers revealed reasons why they may have struggled with some items. In some cases the analysis yielded unexpected results, such as students' different performance on opening and closing items and the varying scores on pragmatic items. The next section explores the relationship between L2 proficiency and students' pragmatic competence analyzing the results of the C-test, the discourse rating task, and students' speech act production in the role-play.

5.3 Pragmatic competence and foreign language proficiency

The first research question relates to the relationship between L2 proficiency and pragmatic competence. The goal is to find out what effect participants' proficiency levels have on their speech act production as well as their perception of pragmatic and grammatical violations. First, I analyze the correlation between the C-test scores and the discourse rating task variables. Second, participants' speech act production on the pre-test is compared with their C-test scores.

5.3.1 Foreign language proficiency and perception of pragmatic and grammatical violations

This section aims to gain insight into the relationship between pragmatic competence and L2 proficiency by correlating the variables of the DRT with one another and the C-test scores. Treatment and control group scores are not analyzed separately, as the goal at this point is to explore the relationships among the variables regardless of the group distinction. As for items pertaining to pragmatic competence, the variable *General pragmatic* refers to the three items with pragmatic mistakes (see section 4.4.2). Since there is only one item in closings, openings and closings were pooled together for the analysis. The variable *Pragmatics sum* refers to *General pragmatic* and *Opening Closing* items summarized.

I examine the relationships with the help of the Pearson correlation coefficient test. *Table 8* presents the correlation grid for all the DRT variables and the C-test. Significant correlations are highlighted in italics and marked with an asterisk. Although the correlation between two given variables is present twice due to the grid structure, for the sake of simplicity I highlighted the significant relationships only once.

Table 8. *Pearson correlation coefficients among the variables of the discourse rating task and the C-test scores*

Item type	C-test	Pragmatics sum	Grammar	No mistake	General pragmatic	Opening Closing
C-test	n/a	*r = 0.39* *p = 0.00**	r = -0.06 p = 0.61	r = 0.19 p = 0.09	*r = 0.49* *p = 0.00**	r = 0.10 p = 0.35
Pragmatics sum	r = 0.39 p = 0.00	n/a	*r = 0.32* *p = 0.00**	*r = 0.44* *p = 0.00**	*r = 0.66* *p = 0.00**	*r = 0.42* *p = 0.00**
Grammar	r = -0.06 p = 0.61	r = 0.32 p = 0.00	n/a	*r = - 0.33* *p = 0.00**	*r = - 0.23* *p = 0.03**	r = - 0.07 p = 0.51
No mistake	r = 0.19 p = 0.09	r = 0.44 p = 0.00	r = - 0.33 p = 0.00	n/a	*r = 0.32* *p = 0.00**	r = - 0.08 p = 0.49
General pragmatic	r = 0.49 p = 0.00	r = 0.66 p = 0.00	r = - 0.23 p = 0.03	r = 0.32 p = 0.00	n/a	r = 0.12 p = 0.28
Opening Closing	r = 0.10 p = 0.35	r = 0.42 p = 0.00	r = - 0.07 p = 0.51	r = - 0.08 p = 0.49	r = 0.12 p = 0.28	n/a

As *Table 8* shows, the statistical analysis revealed significant correlations in nine cases. Here I analyze the results that concern the first research question. First, there is a significant positive correlation both between the C-test scores and all pragmatic items and the C-test and general pragmatic items. This points out that there is a positive relationship between students' overall L2 proficiency and their pragmatic competence, verifying the first hypothesis. The findings are also in accordance with the results of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), who concluded that high proficiency EFL students notice more pragmatic mistakes than their less proficient peers. However, they also pointed out that advanced students recognize more grammatical mistakes than pragmatic ones. This observation is not reflected in our analysis, as there is no correlation between the C-test scores and the items with a grammatical problem. This may be due to several factors, such as the difference in sample size and proficiency measures in the two projects.

Interestingly enough, the C-test variable does not correlate significantly with opening and closing items, suggesting no positive relationship between L2 proficiency

and the appropriate usage of these two speech acts. In order to gain a deeper understanding of this result, I will analyze the relationship between the C-test scores and students' performance of openings and closings in the role-plays in section 4.4.3.2.

As for the relationship between students' grammatical and pragmatic competence, the grid shows that there is a significant positive correlation between items pertaining to pragmatic competence (*Pragmatics sum*) and grammatical items. This suggests a significant positive relationship between students' grammatical and pragmatic competence. However, there is a negative significant correlation between grammar and general pragmatic items (i.e. *Pragmatics sum* without *Opening-Closing* items). It seems, therefore, that the inclusion of opening-closing items into this equation creates a significant change. The correlation between opening-closing and grammar items is negative, although not significant. These results concerning pragmatic and grammatical competence are somewhat controversial (similarly to the findings of other research projects mentioned in section 2.2.1) and I am unable to reconcile them by this single correlation test.

Not surprisingly, there is a significant positive correlation among the variables of pragmatic competence in the DRT. As *Pragmatics sum* is the compilation of general pragmatic items and the opening-closing category, a positive correlation was expected among these three variables. As the grid shows, there is indeed a significant positive relationship between pragmatic sum and general pragmatic items, and pragmatic sum and opening-closing items. This suggests that there is a connection between students' general pragmatic awareness and their appropriate use of openings and closings.

Overall, the correlation analysis yielded relevant results. First, it revealed a significant positive relationship between students' L2 proficiency and their pragmatic competence. Second, the analysis showed a significant positive correlation between pragmatic awareness and the production of openings and closings. The correlation between students' grammatical and pragmatic competence is somewhat dubious at this point. Next, I compare participants' speech act production on the pre-test with their C-test scores in order to analyze the relationship between L2 proficiency and the appropriate usage of opening and closing elements.

5.3.2 Foreign language proficiency and speech act production

In this section I analyze participants' usage of opening and closing elements in relation to their overall proficiency. At this point only pre-test results are investigated, therefore data from the treatment and control group are pooled together (see *Table 9*). Students are divided into three distinct groups according to their L2 proficiency, with each group containing approximately a third of all students in the sample. One-way ANOVA is used to detect any possible differences between the groups. Greetings and leave-takings are not analyzed as the great majority of students used them both in the pre- and post-test role-plays (see section 4.4.4.2 and *Table 12*).

Table 9. *Spearman rank order correlations between the elements of opening and closing and language proficiency in the treatment and control group*

Elements of opening and closing (pre-test results)	**Language proficiency**
Post-openings	.25*
Shutting down the topic	.18
Pre-closings	.17

*p < .05

The use of post-openings shows significant variation across the groups, that is, students with higher L2 proficiency used more post-openings. This indicates that using post-opening elements is more difficult for lower L2 proficiency students. In the case of the other variables, shutting down the topic and pre-closings, no difference was detected in relation to foreign language proficiency. In order to see whether the treatment changed the above-presented picture, the treatment group scores are analyzed separately. *Table 10* shows the correlation between L2 proficiency and opening and closing elements in the treatment group.

Table 10. *Spearman rank order correlations between the elements of opening and closing and language proficiency in the treatment group*

	Language proficiency	
Elements of opening and closing	**Pre-test**	**Post-test**
Treatment group		
Number of post-openings	.32*	.36*
Shutting down the topic	.14	.24
Pre-closings	.22	.08

*p < .05

The scores of the treatment group in the pre- and post-test (*Table 10*) are similar to those displayed in *Table 9*. That is, the use of post-opening elements remained

challenging for students with lower L2 proficiency after the treatment. This indicates that the treatment was not intensive and long enough to provide sufficient input and time for these learners to develop their knowledge of post-openings.

5.4 Effects of explicit teaching on students' pragmatic competence

This section aims to answer the second research question, that is, whether the pragmatic treatment program resulted in any changes in participants' pragmatic competence. First, in section 5.4.1, treatment and control group students' performance on the discourse rating task is compared in order to reveal any differences in the two groups' awareness to pragmatic violations. Second, in section 5.4.2, participants' speech act production is analyzed comparing their pre- and post-test performance, so that conclusions can be drawn about the effect of the treatment on how students open and close conversations.

5.4.1 Effect of treatment on students' pragmatic awareness

In order to answer the question to what extent the treatment was effective, the DRT scores of the treatment and the control group are separated and compared statistically using a t-test. *Table 11* shows the mean and standard deviation for each item type in the treatment and control group, as well as the t-test results with the significant results highlighted. Again, items in openings and closings were kept together for the analysis.

Table 11. *T-test values for discourse rating task variables in the treatment and control group*

Item type	Treatment group		Control group		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Pragmatics sum	6.84	1.55	6.21	1.32	1.76
Grammar	5.38	3.38	6.94	2.77	*- 2.02**
No mistake	3.87	3.78	2.29	3.61	1.76
General pragmatic	7.37	2.97	5.97	2.78	*1.99**
Opening - Closing	7.47	2.06	6.25	2.27	*2.40**

*p < .05

The figures in *Table 11* show that the difference between the performance of the treatment and control group is significant in three cases. The highest significance is observed in the case of opening and closing items: the treatment group outperformed the control group significantly, suggesting that the treatment indeed had an effect on the students regarding these two speech acts. This verifies the second hypothesis. In the next section as well as in the qualitative analysis of the role-play performances (section 4.4.5) I elaborate the specific areas in which the treatment group students developed.

Treatment group participants also performed significantly better on items with general pragmatic violations. This suggests that the treatment was successful in raising participants' awareness to pragmatic issues such as politeness, appropriateness, and stylistic differences. I consider this a very important result. Although the main focus of the treatment was the speech acts of openings and closings, the overall goal was to raise students' awareness to pragmatic issues, and not just to provide information on specific speech acts (see section 2.6.3). The only surprising result in this case is why the t-test did

not uncover a significant difference in the category of *Pragmatics sum*, which is the compilation of general pragmatic items and the opening-closing category.

Oddly, the t-value is negative in the case of grammar mistake items, meaning that the control group performed significantly better in this category, identifying the grammatical violations more successfully than the treatment group. The reason for this may be that because of the five-week instruction in pragmatic issues, treatment group students were prone to searching for pragmatic violations even in cases where their task was to identify an incorrect past tense. The control group students, who had not received training in pragmatics prior to filling in the discourse rating task, must have been more attuned to discovering grammatical violations in the dialogues.

5.4.2 The effect of the treatment on speech act production

In this section I explore the effect of the treatment on students' speech act production, more specifically how they open and close conversations. *Table 12* summarizes the presence of opening and closing elements in the pre- and post-test. The results are broken down according to students' performance in the treatment and control group.

Table 12. *The presence of opening and closing elements in the conversations*

	The given element is present	
Elements of opening and closings	**Pre-test (%)**	**Post-test (%)**
Treatment group		
Greeting	93	91
Post-openings	44	76
Shutting down the topic	63	76
Pre-closings	51	74
Leave-taking	93	95
Control group		
Greeting	83	100
Post-openings	58	78
Shutting down the topic	63	35
Pre-closings	50	70
Leave-taking	96	96

Table 12 indicates that greetings and leave-takings did not present much difficulty for the students, as 83 to 100% of participants used them appropriately in the role-plays. It has to be mentioned that the role-plays included participants of approximately equal status and power within the situational context. It is possible that students' performance would differ in situations where the status or power relationship is more challenging, i.e. unequal status and power relationships are involved.

As for the other elements of openings and closings, *Table 12* shows that the treatment group improved their score of post-openings, shutting down the topic, and pre-closings in the post-test. The control group performed better regarding greetings, post-openings, and pre-closings, but had a lower score on shutting down the topic in the post-test. Some differences are revealed between the two groups, however, based on the

percentages we cannot draw statistically significant conclusions. *Table 13* presents the statistical analysis of the results concerning the differences between pre- and post-treatment performance.

Table 13. *Pre- and post-test performance in the treatment and control group*

	The difference between pre- and post-test[1]	
Elements of opening and closings	**t-value**	**Significance**
Treatment group		
Greeting	0.00	1.00
Post-openings	2.82	0.00*
Shutting down the topic	1.66	0.10
Pre-closings	2.54	0.01*
Leave-taking	0.00	1.00
Control group		
Greeting	1.45	0.16
Post-openings	2.77	0.09
Shutting down the topic	-2.32	0.03*
Pre-closings	1.42	0.17
Leave-taking	0.00	1.00

[1]Apart from the category of post-openings, i.e. for the dummy-variables, t-test for paired sample was used. In the case of post-openings Friedman non-parametric test was applied.
$p < .05$

As for the treatment group, students used significantly more post-opening and pre-closing elements after the treatment period. These results indicate that the treatment was indeed effective in this respect. The lack of significant differences concerning shutting down the topic might be accountable to the fact that during the treatment phase the teaching of shutting down the topic had not received as much emphasis as the

teaching of pre-closing elements. In hindsight, we became aware that relatively few instances were created when the topic itself had to be shut down.

As regards to the control group, no changes were expected, as students in this group did not undergo the treatment. However, concerning the shutting down of the topic, the difference was significant. As *Table 12* shows, students' performance was actually worse on the post-test than on the pre-test. This might indicate that when teaching lacks awareness raising activities, performance may become inconsistent. On some occasions students might even perform better. However, this performance cannot be transferred to other situations, which underlines the importance of instruction in pragmatics.

5.5 Conclusions of the quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis yielded relevant results concerning the effect of the pragmatic treatment on students' pragmatic awareness and speech act production. First, the correlation analysis showed a significant relationship between students' overall L2 proficiency and their pragmatic competence. This result verifies the first hypothesis. More specifically, students with higher L2 proficiency used more post-openings. However, in the case of shutting down the topic and pre-closings, no difference was detected in relation to foreign language proficiency. The data indicates that the use of post-opening elements remained challenging for students with lower L2 proficiency after the treatment, possibly due to the fact that the treatment was not efficient to provide sufficient input and time for these learners to develop their knowledge of post-openings.

The correlation analysis showed that students used significantly more post-opening and pre-closing elements after the treatment period. These results indicate that

the treatment was indeed effective in this respect, verifying the second hypothesis. The lack of significant differences concerning shutting down the topic might be explained by the fact that this area had not received as much emphasis as the teaching of post-openings and pre-closing elements. The analysis of the DRT confirmed these results, suggesting that the treatment indeed had an effect on the students regarding these two speech acts. Treatment group participants also performed significantly better on items with general pragmatic violations. This implies that the treatment was successful in raising participants' awareness to pragmatic issues such as politeness, appropriateness, and stylistic differences.

In the next chapter I provide a qualitative analysis of participants' speech act production on the pre- and post-test role-plays, which will give more details and insight into the findings of this chapter.

Chapter 6: Qualitative analysis of students' speech act production

In this chapter I examine the pre- and post-test role-plays from a qualitative perspective, supporting my arguments from my observation of authentic discourse (Edwards, unpublished). My analytical decisions about the structure of openings and closings are identical to those in the coursebook study (Chapter 3) and the quantitative analysis of the data (Chapter 5). I refer to Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) as I follow their terminology in my investigation of closings. In my observations on strategic competence I take some terms from Dörnyei and Thurrell (1991).

First, I analyze students' production of openings (section 6.1), followed by an account of their closings (section 6.2). Next, I explore the effect the pragmatic training had on participants' speech act production in section 6.3 (sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 presenting my findings on openings and closings respectively). I introduce my insights into an under-researched area of ILP research – non-verbal characteristics of speech act production – in section 6.4. I explore difficulties throughout the role-plays in section 6.5. Finally, in section 6.6 I draw the conclusions of the qualitative analysis and suggest areas for future investigation.

6.1 Students' production of openings

In this section I present my findings concerning students' production of openings in the pre-tests. Dialogues formulated after the treatment will be analyzed separately in section 6.3.1. As the quantitative analysis concluded (see section 5.4.2), greetings did not

present much difficulty for the students, as the majority of participants used them appropriately in the role-plays. Opening exchanges are present in all the dialogues and there are no cases of opting out. Most students used the informal variation *Hi!* or *Hello!*, which is an appropriate choice considering the rock concert situation. One surprising result is that the greetings and post-openings did not include colloquial phrases, such as *Hey (there)!* or *How is it going?*, which are frequently used in the US corpus. I had expected the occurrence of these phrases because students mentioned in the follow-up study how they are engaged in activities such as talking to foreigners or watching subtitled movies.

There are some dialogues where the opening adjacency pair is considered pragmatically incorrect. These utterances contain greetings that are incorrect for the situation. They are stylistically inappropriate, such as saying *Good evening!* or *Good morning!*, as these phrases are regarded too formal for the informal encounter presented in the situation. The latter one (*Good morning!*) also poses temporal problems, as we assume that rock concerts rarely happen in the morning.

The pre-test role-plays offer few cases of complete openings. Extract 1 is an example, containing an appropriate greeting exchange and post-openings from both conversational partners (I use the first names of the students for a more personal account, however, these cannot identify the participants).

Extract 1:

Greeting exchange	Péter: Hello. Márton: Hi. How are you?
Post-openings	Péter: I'm fine, thanks. And you? Márton: Thanks, I'm fine too. What's your name?

Post-openings posed considerable difficulty for the participants. In several dialogues, the post-openings are missing completely. In other instances, one of the participants initiates a post-opening exchange, but does not receive a response from the partner. This observation echoes House's (1996) findings, which revealed that responding to an utterance poses considerable difficulty for students, even after explicit pragmatic training (I will explore the effect of the training on this phenomenon in section 6.3.1). Extract 2 shows an exchange where Emő initiates a post-opening, but Nóra fails to respond, possibly because she is already preparing to phrase her statement of intent, which she summarizes in her somewhat lengthy initial turn.

Extract 2:

Emő: Hi! I'm a famous rock musician. And [laughs] how are you?
Nóra: Hi! I'm … I'm here … at this concert and … [sigh] I'm looking for Hungarian groups for a summer festival. And it's going to be on July … and, could you, do you know some groups I can … eh use on this festival?

Extract 3 presents an uncommon occurrence in the sample. Adél initiates a post-opening, receives a response, but Zsolt does not reciprocate the post-opening by asking *How are you?*.

Extract 3:

Zsolt: Hello.
Adél: Hello. How are you?
Zsolt: Fine, thanks. Where are you from?
Adél: I'm from London.

In a few cases where the post-openings are pragmatically inappropriate, the opening sequence of the dialogue is very abrupt and would certainly be considered rude in real-life settings. Consider these three examples (Extracts 4 to 6):

Extract 4:

Bogi: Hi! *Who are you?*
Kati: Hello! I'm English festival designer and I … and I'm [pause] and I'm searching for a Hungarian rock group and I could pay much money for a good group.

Extract 5:

Gabi: Hi!
Timi: Hi! *What are you doing here?*
Gabi: I'm dancing here. And you?
Timi: I'm an English festival designer, and I'm searching for an English, eh, for a Hungarian rock band.

Extract 6:

Orsi: Hello.
Móni: Hello. *What do you do?*
Orsi: I'm a eh ... eh ... I'm a famous rock star. And what's your name?
Móni: My name is [pause] Mónika H. Where do you come from?

In my authentic discourse data, there is no instance when a speaker (whether native or non-native) uses *Who are you?, What do you do?,* or *What are you doing (here)?* as a post-opening, whereas this phenomenon is quite common in the EFL sample. Similarly, the way Kati, Timi, and Móni "jump into" the topic in their very first utterance would be considered very unnatural and "pushy" in a conversation with a native speaker or a competent non-native speaker.

There is another discrepancy between the dialogues produced by the students and authentic exchanges. In the majority of openings in the US sample it is the first speaker or the initiator of the conversation who introduces him/herself to the other speaker, rather than asking the conversational partner for an introduction, as in Extract 7 where the assistant director of the learning center greets a new parent:

Extract 7:

Assistant director [approaching parent with a smile and extended right hand]: Hi! I'm Jessi.
Parent [takes assistant director's hand]: Hello! I'm Pam.
Assistant director: Pam. It's very nice to meet you.
Parent: Nice to meet you too.

Another problematic post-opening in the Hungarian sample is the phrase *How do you do?*. This greeting/post-opening is used very sparingly and only in formal situations in British English and is virtually non-existent in American English (there is no occurrence of this phrase in my authentic speech data). The few examples of this phrase reveal an interesting phenomenon. First, students use *How do you do?* as a post-opening. Second, responding to this initiation presents difficulty for the conversational partner in all cases. I illustrate this with two examples from the EFL corpus (Extracts 8 and 9):

Extract 8:

Réka: Hello! *How ... how do you do?*
Adrienn: *Thank you, I'm very well. And you?*
Réka: I'm also… eh …[pause] … Where do you come from?

Réka's hesitation in her first utterance indicates that she may have been considering a different post-opening (possibly *How are you?*), but ended up saying *How do you do?* instead. Adrienn replies as if the initiation had indeed been *How are you?*. Then we can observe Réka's uncertainty as to how to respond to Adrienn's initiation: *And you?*

Extract 9:

Zsuzsa: Good evening! How do you do?
Feri: Good evening! [unclear: Are you?] *Thanks, I'm fine. Ja, nem. How do you do? OK.*
[extended pause]

In Extract 9, Feri first seems to be confused by Zsuzsa's initiation, then realizes his inappropriate response (which is also marked by code switching), tries to self-correct and reassure himself – which leads to an awkward silence in the conversation.

In sum, students were successful in their production of greeting exchanges, in most instances presenting complete and appropriate adjacency pairs. Post-openings, on the other hand, posed considerable difficulty for the participants, who in many cases either produced inappropriate utterances or were unable to respond. After a look at closings, I will examine how the above-presented picture changed after the treatment.

6.2 Students' production of closings

This section contains my findings concerning students' production of closings in the pre-tests. Role-plays produced after the treatment will be analyzed separately in section 6.3.2. As the quantitative analysis pointed out (section 4.4.4.2), the majority of students used a terminal pair at the end of their conversations and this last part of the closing sequence did not present difficulty for them. There are few cases of opting out. The analysis also confirms the observation of Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991), who found that when they first introduced activities aiming to raise awareness in closings, students' knowledge was limited to terminal exchanges, more specifically *Goodbye – Goodbye*.

In all but seven cases the terminal exchanges contain the phrases *Bye* or *Goodbye*. In a few instances, participants closed the conversation with more varied choices of terminal exchanges, such as *See you (soon)!* or *See you later!* Closings that were overwhelmingly present in my US corpus, such as *Have a nice day!* or *Nice talking to you/Nice meeting you* were non-existent in the student sample. One student closed the

conversation with the phrase *Have a nice time!*, which, when the context of a rock-concert is taken into account, I consider appropriate. Similarly to the case of openings, I was surprised that the pre-closings and closings did not include colloquial phrases, such as *Cheers* or *Cheerio* and students in all but seven cases stuck to using *Bye* or *Goodbye*. Maisel (forthcoming) lists more than fifty colloquial closing phrases, based on field data he collected. These phrases are obviously not part of our sample's active vocabulary, even though I assume that they are familiar with them from the movies and computer games mentioned by them in the follow-up study (Chapter 7).

There are two instances where the terminal exchanges produced by students are considered pragmatically inappropriate. In Extract 10 Norbert closes the conversation with *Hello*, which is an example of negative transfer and a common problem for Hungarian EFL learners.

Extract 10:

Norbert: Oh, this isn't very good because the summer festival will be in July.
[pause] Okay, Thank you.
Bence: Thank you. Goodbye.
Norbert: *Hello*.

In Extract 11, Csaba and Zoltán shut down the topic successfully, but then the terminal exchanges become somewhat chaotic, possibly as an effect of Csaba's vocabulary problem and the laughter that follows:

Extract 11:

Zoltán: Yes, I will give you the, the name card.
Csaba: OK, OK, thanks. And I will, I will call the best bands from [unclear] and I will … eh … see, eh, nem jut eszembe a találkozó.
[laughter]
Zoltán: *OK, hi!*
Csaba: *OK, hi!* [pause] *Nice to see you! Eh, OK.*

Most students shut down the topic by exchanging phone numbers and arranging meetings, such as in the above dialogue between Csaba and Zoltán. Pre-closings typically contain the phrases *OK*, *Thanks*, or *Thank you* and are present in many conversations. This observation is in accordance with the input of the coursebooks, where preclosings comprise one of the characters saying *Thank you* or *Thanks* (see section 3.6.2.2). Extract 12 is an example for a complete closing exchange.

Extract 12:

Shutting down the topic	Mariann: Maybe we could speak it when we would be together. We could talk about it. Viki: OK, then I give you my number and would you call me? Mariann: Oh, yes, of course and we could have a … time to talk about it.
Pre-closing	Viki: OK. Mariann: OK?
Terminal exchange	Viki: Good bye! Mariann: Bye!

Pre-closings are the most problematic element for the participants. The argument that students often have difficulty leaving a conversation without sounding rude (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991) was justified in my analysis. In several cases students had considerable trouble getting out of the conversation, as signified by long pauses, hesitation, and at times chaotic closing exchanges, as in Extract 13:

Extract 13:

Orsi: And, it'd great and eh … eh … [pause] Have you got a telephone number?
Móni: Yes, I have. 456234.
Orsi: *Oh. Thank you. And I'm very happy. I ... eh ... eh ...* [pause] *Okay ... eh ... so eh ... goodbye.*
Móni: Goodbye.

The participants successfully shut down the topic when Orsi asks for Móni's phone number. They are both ready to terminate the exchange, but because of their insufficient

knowledge of pre-closings, Orsi's closing utterance becomes rather long and awkward and Móni is unable to come to her rescue. Móni's readiness to close the conversation is evident when she eagerly responds to Orsi's adjacency pair initiation and terminates the exchange.

Overall, my analysis revealed that participants produced appropriate adjacency pairs for closings. Students shut down the topic successfully in most cases by exchanging phone numbers and making arrangements for the future. Pre-closings, however, presented considerable difficulty for them. Participants had trouble selecting the phrases that would have enabled them to leave a conversation without sounding rude and abrupt. In section 6.3.2 I will give an account of the effect the pragmatic treatment had on students' production of closings.

6.3 The effect of pragmatic training on students' speech act production

The quantitative analysis in section 4.4.4.2 uncovered some differences between the performance of the treatment and control group. In the treatment group, students used significantly more post-opening and pre-closing elements in the post-test role-plays. In this section I explore these findings from a qualitative perspective.

Overall, post-test dialogues showed considerable improvement compared to their pre-test counterparts. I observed fewer instances of communication breakdown and usage of the mother tongue in order to ask for help. Participants improved in responding to initiations as well. They were also more relaxed during the recordings, creating more verbose utterances and using more humor than in the pre-test. I attribute these improvements to the fact that participants were more familiar with the nature of the task

(which students verified in the follow-up study – see section 7.1.2). Treatment group participants, however, showed greater improvement in their production of the two speech acts than their control group peers. Their openings and closings in the post-test were more complete and they displayed more variety. In the next two sections I present my findings concerning openings and closings respectively.

6.3.1 Openings

The quantitative analysis revealed that the treatment group produced significantly more post-openings after the pragmatic training program. The control group improved their performance in greetings and post-openings, but these results were not significant. In the qualitative analysis my goal was to discover how these findings were manifest in the conversations. I present my analysis of openings in two parts. First, I explore whether the treatment resulted in any change regarding greeting exchanges. Second, I present my findings on the effect of the treatment on students' production of post-openings. I consider the latter question the main focus of my investigation, because post-openings caused considerable difficulty for students in the pre-test.

As for greeting exchanges, I did not uncover a noteworthy difference in stylistic variation between the pre- and post-test. Most participants opened conversations using *Hello* and *Hi*. This result is not surprising after concluding that students' usage of greeting exchanges was satisfactory in the pre-test. Also, due to the assumption that students are familiar with greeting exchanges, the treatment tasks concentrated more on producing complete openings, learning post-openings, and responding appropriately to opening initiations.

Second, my analysis shows that treatment group students' usage of post-openings is more developed in the post-test interactions than in the pre-test. This improvement was both in quantity and quality. I observed more conversations with complete openings and there were very few instances of inappropriate post-openings, providing for more polite and less abrupt opening sequences. Consider these dialogues in Extracts 14 and 15:

Extract 14:

Péter: Hello. Nice to meet you. My name is Peter.
Attila: Hello. I am Attila. How are you?
Péter: Fine, thanks, and you?
Attila: Eh, fine.

Extract 15:

Bence: Good morning. How are you?
Andrea: Good morning. Thanks, I'm fine. And you?
Bence: Fine thanks.

It is also noticeable that, as opposed to the pre-test, more students (such as Péter in Extract 14) initiate an appropriate post-opening rather than start with an abrupt question, such as in some pre-test exchanges.

There are three participants who used *How do you do?* as a post-opening, one from the treatment and two from the control group. Interestingly enough, the students from the control group used this phrase in the correct way (although I still consider it stylistically inappropriate for the situation). As in Extract 16:

Extract 16:

Zsuzsa: Good evening. I'm Susan G. How do you do?
Ferenc: Good evening. I'm Ferenc. How do you do?

Overall, my analysis indicates that the treatment was successful in improving students' production of post-opening elements. Participants used an increased number of complete openings as well as produced more appropriate post-openings. As for greeting exchanges, no considerable development was uncovered by the analysis.

6.3.2 Closings

My aims in the qualitative analysis of closings were three-fold. First, I explored whether there was more stylistic variation in terminal exchanges than in the pre-test interactions. Second, I investigated how students shut down the topic of the conversations in the post-test role-plays. Third, I examined the effect of the treatment on students' production of pre-closings. As pre-closings were the most problematic area in the pre-test role-plays, I consider this question the most important one in my analysis.

As for terminal exchanges, I did not uncover any considerable difference in stylistic variation between the pre- and post-test. In all but four cases participants closed the conversation with *Bye* or *Goodbye*. The welcome exceptions are identical to the pre-test ones, such as *See you (soon)!* or *See you later!* Only in one interaction (Extract 17) did a participant come up with an amusing variation:

Extract 17:

Máté: OK, I'll call you.
Zoli: And we ... OK, OK, so goodbye! Yes, goodbye!
Máté: *See you later ... alligator.*

These results suggest that participants were already aware of the necessity of these exchanges and the treatment did not alter this picture significantly. Also, the treatment tasks may not have devoted enough attention to teaching more varied terminal pairs.

There are two instances of inappropriate terminal pairs in the post-test. Here students closed the conversation with *Hello* (as opposed to one interaction in the pre-test): one control and one treatment group student used this inappropriate closing phrase. Although this does not suggest a wide-spread problem, it indicates that this negative transfer still deserves attention in the EFL classroom.

My second inquiry was into students' shutting down the topic in the interactions. According to the quantitative analysis, the treatment group developed in shutting down the topic, although not significantly, whereas the control group had a significantly lower score on shutting down the topic in the post-test. The qualitative analysis of the pre-test showed that students' performance was already satisfactory in this area and I did not discover any major improvement in the post-test. A possible reason for this is, as was mentioned in the quantitative analysis, that the treatment did not place as much emphasis on the teaching of shutting down the topic as on the teaching of pre-closing elements.

The third, and most important, area I aimed to investigate was pre-closings. My analysis of the post-test role-plays indicates that students' performance regarding pre-closings underwent tremendous improvement. This is a welcome result and points to the success of the treatment in this respect. On the one hand, pre-closings increased in number, which resulted in smoother and less abrupt closing exchanges. While complete closings were scarce in the pre-test sample, they were present in many treatment group students' dialogues in the post-test. On the other hand, there was a much greater variety

in pre-closings. Whereas in the pre-test they were restricted to *OK*, *Thanks*, or *Thank you*, I observed the occurrence of several other phrases in the post-test, as shown in Extracts 18 and 19:

Extract 18:

Adrienn: Oh, thank you very much. Eh, *sorry, I'd love to continue this conversation but I will be late.*
Réka: OK, no problem.
Adrienn: Bye.
Réka: Bye.

Extract 19:

Kata: So, thank you very much.
Zsuzsa: *It was nice talking to you.*
Kata: I will give you a ring too.
Zsuzsa: Goodbye.
Kata: Goodbye.

Other phrases that occurred in the data were *Speak to you then*, *Nice to meet you*, *I have to go*, or *I must be going now*. Students derived these pre-closings from the treatment tasks, particularly *Ending the conversation* (see Appendix G).

Similarly to House (1996), I noticed that responding to the communication partner's initiation still remained problematic in many cases even after the explicit training. Consider Extract 20, in which Ákos initiates two pre-closings, but Márton is unable to respond to these utterances appropriately.

Extract 20:

Ákos: OK. It was nice to meet you.
Márton: *Yeah.*
Ákos: I'd better not take up any more of your time.
Márton: *Oh. Me too.*
Ákos: Eh ... goodbye.
Márton: Goodbye.

In Extract 21 Bernadett produces an excellent pre-closing. First Zsuzsa seems unsure about how to respond, so she just repeats the second part of Bernadett's pre-closing. However, she then comes up with an appropriate pre-closing as well.

Extract 21:

Bernadett: I'd really like to continue this conversation but I must go now.
Zsuzsa: *I must go now. So it was nice to meet you*. Bye.
Bernadett: Thank you. Bye.

In sum, the qualitative analysis indicates that the treatment was successful in improving students' production of pre-closing elements. This difference was observable both in quantity (as the number of pre-closings increased) and quality (students produced a greater variety of pre-closings). As for shutting down the topic and terminal exchanges, no noteworthy improvement was revealed by the analysis.

6.4 Non-verbal means of expressing the closure of the conversation

During my observations of authentic discourse I came to realize how important non-verbal communication features are in closing conversations. These features serve to signify a speaker's intention to end the conversation. They usually occur after shutting down the topic and before pre-closings. This is the time and place for the communication partner to introduce a new topic or reinitiate a previous topic into the conversation. If they do not, it signifies that they accept the initiation to close the conversation. To my surprise, after conducting an extensive literature review for my dissertation, I can conclude that this area has received little attention in interlanguage pragmatics research. Studies in conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, however, do consider non-verbal

communication in connection to speech act production, as I discussed it in the literature review (section 1.3).

Here I present some non-verbal signals that emerged during my observation. Breaking of eye-contact is one of the features to mark the closure of a conversation. In the interactions I observed, speakers either looked at the clock (suggesting that time constraints force them to finish the conversation), at an object they were working with before the interaction, such as their computer screen or lecture notes (hinting that they need to go back to work or study), or their car keys (demonstrating that they are ready to move out of the conversation to the next activity). Another feature was the increase of proximity. In these instances, one or both speakers moved away from the conversational partner(s) towards the door, their cubicles, or their cars. Among the more verbal features I classify decrease of volume, when speakers start talking more and more quietly at the end of an interaction. This feature was always accompanied with pauses in the utterances, which became more and more frequent until one of the conversational partners decided to initiate a pre-closing. In most interactions these features were not observed in isolation, but more than one of them was present in one closing exchange.

I believe this area has interesting teaching implications for two reasons. First, I am not certain as to what extent these features are universal. I have observed them in interactions between native speakers of Hungarian as well, which of course does not necessarily mean that they are generalizable for other languages. Second, even native-speakers and competent non-native speakers may not be conscious of these signals, even though they are essential in closing interactions. These arguments suggest that students need to be made aware of these non-verbal features similarly to their verbal counterparts.

Due to the "covert" nature of these signals, it is important to draw learners' attention to them if we do not want them to be considered communication partners that are "hard to get rid of."

As for observing the non-verbal features in students' pre- and post-test role-plays, there were two obstacles. First, because the interactions were tape recorded and not video recorded, non-verbal features could not be studied. Exceptions are the features of decreasing volume and pauses, which were observable in the students' role-plays as well. Also, in one post-test interaction two boys shook hands at the beginning and end of their exchange. Second, the student interactions were carried out in somewhat artificial circumstances. The two conversational partners started the dialogue while seated next to each other and remained seated after closing the conversations, after which they exchanged a few words with the researchers and returned to their classrooms. The observation of non-verbal features, such as the increase of proximity, would have been illogical under such circumstances.

As my preliminary analysis suggests, this area is worth the attention of interlanguage pragmatics researchers. For future investigations, it would be beneficial to use video recordings in order to develop an awareness to the non-verbal features of speech act production. This in turn could lead to a deeper understanding of this area among language teachers and ESL and EFL learners.

6.5 Problems in students' speech act production

The role-plays posed various difficulties for the participants. Here I discuss three main problem areas: the nature of the task, confusion about the roles in the interaction,

and overcoming lack of vocabulary. First, some of the difficulties stemmed from the nature of the task, mainly the inability to perform a role-play and to say monologues instead. Some students reflected on this issue in the follow-up study (see section 7.1.2). Extract 22 illustrates this point:

Extract 22:

> Richárd: Eh, my name is Richárd, eh, yes … do you like this rock band? Eh, I like Metallica because I was born in Illinois and I'm an American person so I like American rock music. So what about you, where do you come from?

Here Richárd asked me to stop the tape because he did not understand whether he should "just speak" or talk *with* his partner. After I explained to him that the activity was a role-play (which was clearly indicated at the beginning) and that they are supposed to carry on a conversation, he and his partner performed a successful dialogue, which actually is the second longest one in the pre-test sample.

Second, I observed confusion about the roles in the interaction in some instances. Some students seemed to be intimidated by the fact that they had to find out who their partner was. Again, I discuss students' reflections on this issue in the follow-up study in section 7.1. In all but one case students overcame these obstacles. There is one dialogue in the pre-test sample, presented in Extract 23, that contains appropriate opening and closing adjacency pairs, but everything in between reveals the confusion of the participants, who are not able to understand each other's intentions and make an arrangement.

Extract 23:

> Judit: Hello.
> Erzsi: Hello. I'm a pop musiker … eh.
> Judit: What are you doing here?

Erzsi: I make a concert but I don't know eh … I want to make a concert in summer but I don't know when because my pop eh … my group don't … don't have any time.
Judit: And you … [unclear whisper] What the group's names?
Erzsi [laughs]: U2. But I haven't got any time in July but I must, I must make a concert.
Judit: And where do you go vagy when … honnan jöttél?
Erzsi: I live in Hungary. [whisper: Magyarokat keresel?] Why do you … why are you here?
Judit: I love rock and I saw the concert.
Erzsi: Thanks. Goodbye. [pause] Nem köszönsz el?
Judit: Goodbye.

It is especially Judit who seems to be confused about the situation, and we can see Erzsi's feeble attempts at prompting her to reveal her intentions marked by code-switching ("*Magyarokat keresel?*") and, when they both realize their failure to make an arrangement, to close the conversation ("*Nem köszönsz el?*").

Third, some vocabulary items posed difficulty for the students, such as *koncertszervező*, *turné*, and *zenész*. It was not our specific aim to place challenging items in the text, but in hindsight, these instances provided for an interesting investigation. In some cases I observed how the lack of strategic competence caused a communication breakdown: students froze and were speechless, unable to continue their turn. In most problematic instances, however, participants tapped into their strategic competence in order to overcome these difficulties. Some students asked their conversational partner for help, such as Dorka did in Extract 24:

Extract 24:

Dorka: Hello!
Gabi: Hello! What are you doing here?
Dorka: I am a ... [whispering to Gabi] *Mi az, hogy zenész?*
Gabi: Do you have a rock band? Are you here because of this or why?
Dorka: [overlap] Yes. Because I want to go to other cities, countries, but ... I ... don't know my band's program.

Interestingly enough, Gabi realizes that it would be inappropriate to simply provide Dorka with the needed English word, yet she comes to her rescue by asking questions that enable Dorka to continue her turn, which she does eagerly.

In some cases, I observed the effect of other foreign languages on participants' speech production in English. In these dialogues, students resorted to their vocabulary in another L2 or used borrowed words, as in the following example. Here Kriszta also used paraphrase or circumlocution (terminology from Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991) when she could not think of the word *musician* and said *I play on guitar* instead.

Extract 25:

Kriszta: Yeah. *I am a ... I play on guitar* ... eh ...and I would like to *nach America, eh, in America*.
[laughter]
Viki: Eh, maybe I can help you, because we have some ... around the world festivals. I give you my number and you can call me if you have time to speak about this.
Kriszta: OK, I have *Freizeit ... nem Freizeit, I have free time* in summer.

Although Kriszta used two German words in two successive turns (which obviously lead to some amusement), in both cases she self-corrected successfully. In other exchanges, however, participants switched to their mother tongue signifying that they were unable to solve a communication problem. Extract 26 illustrates this phenomenon:

Extract 26:

Bea: Hello, how do you do!
Eszter: Eh ... So I'm ... I want to [pause] *Nem jut eszembe a szó, szervez*. Eh, organizing an ... concert in London. What do you ...doing here?
Bea: Hmm?
Eszter: What do you do here?
Bea: I would like to go to a rock concert. Eh, and I have a band ... *Úristen, hát ez* ... [long pause] And ... I want to ... I want of you ... [laugh] ... *Ez nem jó*.

Here both Eszter and Bea used Hungarian when they encountered a vocabulary problem or realized that they are unable to express their thoughts in English. Fortunately after these turns they overcame their difficulties and carried out a successful arrangement and closing sequence.

In sum, students had to face various problems when completing the pre- and post-test tasks. The cause of these difficulties was two-fold: the nature of the role-plays and students' lack of appropriate vocabulary. In most cases, participants were able to overcome these obstacles successfully. In the post-test role-plays I observed fewer instances where these problems manifested themselves. I attribute this result to both the familiarity with the task and the effect of the treatment.

6.6 Conclusions of the qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis of the pre- and post-test role-plays and the observation of natural speech yielded valuable results in several areas. I can conclude that students were the most successful in producing complete and appropriate adjacency pairs for greeting and closing exchanges. Shutting down the topic was also unproblematic in most cases. Post-openings and pre-closings, however, posed considerable difficulty for the participants. In many interactions they either produced inappropriate utterances or were unable to respond to their partners' initiation. Due to these difficulties, the opening and closing sequences in some cases would have been regarded rude, abrupt, and sometimes unacceptable had they been produced in a real-life setting.

The pragmatic training program had beneficial effects on students' production of openings and closings. My analysis indicates that the treatment was successful in

improving students' production of post-openings and pre-closings, both in quantity and quality. Greeting exchanges, shutting down the topic, and terminal exchanges showed no major improvement compared to the pre-test.

The investigation of difficulties that arose during the role-plays, mainly those calling for participants' strategic competence, revealed important findings about students' use of various communication strategies. Unfortunately the scope of this study did not allow for a thorough analysis, but I plan to explore this area in-depth in a future publication. Another question I am interested in examining further is the usage of non-verbal signals in speech act production, into which I gained some preliminary insight during the observation of authentic discourse.

Finally, my overall impression was that not only did the role-plays provide valuable results for my quantitative and qualitative analyses, they were also beneficial (and possibly even enjoyable) for the students. In the next chapter both the teachers and the learners taking part in the experiment will give an account of their perception of the role-plays and the treatment.

Chapter 7: Follow-up study on pragmatics instruction in the EFL classroom

The follow-up study has two main goals. First, I aim to find out how the treatment tasks were implemented in the schools and explore teachers' and students' views about the treatment and pragmatic competence. Second, my goal is to gain insight into the general classroom issues of our participants, this way placing pragmatic competence in the larger context of EFL instruction.

Following this line of thought, the chapter has two main parts. The first one (section 7.1) pertains to the treatment in the schools, whereas the second part (section 7.2) is devoted to general classroom issues. In section 7.1.1, I describe how the treatment tasks were implemented. In section 7.1.2, I provide an account of participants' feedback on the treatment, while in section 7.1.3 I present respondents' views on pragmatic instruction.

The second part of the chapter starts with a discussion on general classroom issues that came up during the observation, such as class atmosphere, teaching methods, and lesson structures (section 7.2.1). I describe the insights gained from the student questionnaires and teacher interviews in section 7.3 (students' usage of English outside the classroom) and section 7.4 (problem areas in EFL). Finally, in section 7.5, I draw the conclusions of the study.

7.1 The pragmatic treatment program in the classroom

7.1.1 Implementation of treatment tasks

All classes taking part in the experiment were observed at least once. In the treatment group classes questions for the observation centered around how the treatment tasks were implemented (see Appendix D). My goal is to answer these questions in this section. In retrospect I consider it very beneficial that the classes were observed, because much insight was gained about the treatment that otherwise may have been overlooked. The observations suggested that teachers and students enjoyed the treatment tasks, which was confirmed by the teachers in the discussions after the classes. All teachers made an effort to carry out their part of the experiment to the best of their abilities and they showed genuine interest in the effect the tasks had on their students' pragmatic competence.

In some cases the treatment tasks were not implemented in identical ways due to teachers' different approaches. One teacher in particular, Edit, facilitated the tasks in a very thorough and conscientious way. The class discussed important points, metapragmatic information was presented and practiced, and students were attentive. After the first observed lesson Edit expressed how she enjoyed facilitating the tasks. She asked me if she had done everything "according to our plans" and whether there was anything she should change to make the treatment even more effective. She was genuinely interested in the tasks and the input for her students.

Another teacher, Anna, whose classes were visited by both researchers on different occasions, conducted the treatment in a very different manner from what we had expected. She followed the instructions and students seemed to enjoy the tasks, yet little input was given at the lessons. The teacher ignored students' mistakes made in the target language point and the discussions were superficial staying in the realm of what the students already knew. One of the observed classes was conducted almost exclusively in Hungarian and involved lengthy discussions that had little connection with the goals of the lesson. Overall, Anna appeared to be a remarkable teacher who had an excellent relationship with her students, yet concerning the treatment tasks, she did not provide enough metapragmatic information and feedback for the students.

The observations revealed that teachers followed the instructions to the tasks to the best of their abilities, yet they were free to individualize them according to their students and their teaching style. This was exactly what we had instructed them to do in the preparation phase, trusting that teachers knew their classes and students far better than the two "outsider" researchers. This positively influenced the execution of the treatment tasks. An example was the activity *What's on my back?* (see Appendix G), when the teacher put different roles on post-its on students' backs and they had to find out who they were by listening to people greeting them and talking to them. Although we supplied the roles in the teachers' package, both Anna and Edit changed some of them to make the task even more interesting. They included celebrities like Julia Roberts, Kovács Ági, Kokó, and Brad Pitt; knowing that these names would stir up enthusiasm among the students. This was good feedback for the researchers, indicating that perhaps the roles we included were not the most exciting and well-known ones for the participants.

Other instances provided valuable feedback on the treatment tasks as well. First of all, the time allotted to the tasks in the instructions was underestimated in almost all cases. Classes spent more time on the activities than we had expected. Thankfully this was mainly due to students' enthusiasm and willingness to work. In many cases classes were interspersed with interesting comments and discussions, which were hopefully beneficial to students' pragmatic competence. We are also grateful to the teachers, who were flexible enough to cope with the time difficulties and either divided the tasks into two lessons or designated a portion as homework.

Secondly, in some cases the focus of an activity was to some extent different from how we had designed it. For instance, in the mingle activity I mentioned above, in many cases what helped the students find out their roles were not stylistic or pragmatic differences in the way peers talked to them, but factual information the conversational partners supplied. This was not included in the original design of the activity and did not come up in the pilot phase either. This points to the importance of careful design of the treatment, clear instructions to the tasks, systematic preparation of teachers, and thorough piloting. Yet I believe even after taking all these precautions, there were unexpected issues during the treatment that we could not have possibly prevented. They were simply a part of working with "real-life" teachers and students who were different from what we had expected.

7.1.2 Participants' feedback on the treatment

Teachers and students had a positive attitude to the treatment. All treatment group teachers pointed out that they considered the tasks relevant and useful. Edit said she liked

all the tasks because they were well built-up and pertained to openings, the body of a conversation, and closings. Her students liked the tasks that were visual, creative, and integrated different skills; such as the role-plays and the soap opera (see Appendix G). She noticed that the tasks resulted in increased accuracy, fluency, and willingness to communicate even in the case of the weaker students. Anna preferred the tasks that were inspiring for the students and stirred up good discussions, such as *How would it sound abroad?* and *Can't say good-bye!* She also appreciated the ones that raised students' awareness to issues that come naturally for them in Hungarian, but not in English (such as *tegezés-magázás* in the first task). The most successful tasks in all three treatment group teachers' views were *Can't say goodbye!* and *What's on my back?* because they were enjoyable for students and elicited the target structures in a natural way.

As I mentioned in section 4.3.3.6, the students' questionnaire did not directly inquire about the treatment tasks. However, as we had predicted, students did mention the tasks in the last question, where they were asked to describe a successful English lesson. In Csaba's view, students' enthusiasm and enjoyment are in direct relationship with the success of the task. The most popular tasks among the students were indeed the ones that were considered the most successful by their teachers (*Can't say goodbye!* and *What's on my back?*). Students also considered the tasks *How would it sound abroad?* and *What are they saying?* as contributors to a successful and useful lesson.

The least successful tasks in Edit's opinion were the ones that were less life-like and presented the language on a list instead of some creative way. Anna mentioned that the task she considered the weakest was the last one (*Complete the dialogue!*), because it did not inspire the students and did not elicit a variety of responses and target structures

the way other activities did. Csaba echoed Anna's opinion when he mentioned that the last task was the least successful in his class. His reason was not a problem in design, though, but the sheer placement of the task. He said that students had lost their enthusiasm by the end of the treatment. Similarly, he pointed out that the first task did not get the class very involved, as students were not "warmed up" to the nature of the treatment yet.

As for the role-plays, the majority of students gave positive feedback and described them as relatively easy, good, useful, and life-like. Some of them appreciated the fact that the role-plays helped them prepare for the intermediate exam, and some enjoyed them because they could try out what they would say in similar real-life situations. Erika's students suggested that such tasks should be part of their English classes as well. Interestingly enough, during the recordings we noticed that many of Erika's students struggled with the nature of the task: they did not seem to know how to perform a role-play and wanted to say "monologues" instead. This indeed pointed to the fact that such interactive tasks may not be a part of their regular classes.

Students also mentioned some difficulties with the role-plays, which provided valuable feedback for the researchers. The most common problems were the spontaneity and "interactiveness" of the task. Participants struggled with being unable to prepare with their peer, not knowing what their partner would say, not having sufficient time, and having to improvise. Some students complained that they did not like the topics and found the tasks hard because their lack of vocabulary prevented them from expressing themselves (see section 6.5 for an analysis on strategic competence). Other problem areas students brought up were the set topics ("*meg volt adva, hogy miről kell beszélni*"), the

ambiguity of the tasks, anxiety, the presence of the tape, the slowness of the partner, and the lack of opportunity to listen to others' performances (although students admitted that this would have made them even more anxious).

Considering the two role-plays, thirteen participants wrote that they preferred the post-test situation. The problems they mentioned about the pre-test role-play were that they had clarity problems, the situation was not life-like, or it was difficult. I found the latter comment surprising because I assumed that the rock-concert situation (pre-test) would be closer to students' interest and therefore easier than the interaction about renting a house at Lake Balaton (post-test). However, five students pointed out that the post-test role-play may have seemed easier because they were more "warmed up" to the nature of the task and knew what to expect.

Overall, teachers and students considered the tasks and the role-plays beneficial and enjoyable. All teachers expressed their gratitude for receiving the tasks, which they regarded as great resources, and said that they would definitely use them in the future. The participants' responses provided valuable feedback on the tasks, which, together with the insights gained through the classroom observation, shed light on some issues that would have been overlooked had we not included the follow-up study.

7.1.3 Students' and teachers' views on pragmatic instruction

Students made comments about pragmatic instruction when asked about a successful English lesson. Three of them mentioned that they consider learning about the culture, customs, holidays, and everyday life of English people enjoyable and useful. As one of them put it, "*Szeretem, mikor az angol emberek hétköznapjairól, szokásairól*

beszélgetünk, ez mindig érdekes, hiszen ők teljesen máshogy élnek, mint mi." Obviously, because of time constraints, such discussions are limited in the classroom, therefore students welcomed the explicit instruction in issues of pragmatics. As one of them described the usefulness of the tasks: "*Ezek érdekesek és hasznosak is voltak, hiszen egy átlagos angol órán ilyenek nem kerülnek szóba, és ez sokat segít ha az ember kikerül Angliába vagy máshova.*"

As for the relevance of receiving instruction concerning openings and closings, ten students argued that it is very useful to learn about how to start and finish conversations in various social contexts, with people of different ages and status. Two of them admitted their lack of knowledge in this area: one mentioned openings ("*Korábban voltak külföldön gondjaim, hogy hogyan szólítsak meg egy idősebb embert*") and one brought up closings ("*Sokan nem tudták eddig, hogy hogyan is lehet udvariasan, nem lekezelően befejezni egy párbeszédet*"). One respondent explained why he considered teaching closings useful: "*Ezt igen hasznosnak éreztem, mert így udvariasan elhúzhatom a csíkot és senkit sem bántok meg*."

All teachers expressed the relevance of teaching speech acts and language functions. Anna underlined the importance of explicit teaching and argued that pragmatic competence does not evolve by itself. Csaba mentioned that it is very important to teach the cultural differences explicitly, so students can speak with foreigners appropriately. Erika places emphasis on speech act and language function tasks at the beginning of instruction, but the way she introduces these elements of language largely depends on the coursebook and the level. She prefers if these issues come up spontaneously and does not mind devoting time to a good discussion, even if it was not part of the original lesson

plan. Otherwise pragmatic input may become "just an exercise" and students cannot integrate the information into their knowledge.

Even when outside requirements constrain them, teachers try their best to incorporate pragmatic knowledge into their classes. The first such constraint is the washback effect of examinations. An example for this is Szilvia, who needs to prepare her students for a written exam and therefore devotes most of her class time to grammar and writing. She still places emphasis on communication training and was very excited when I gave her the treatment package, saying she would definitely use it in her classes. Another limiting factor is time constraints and the pressure to proceed with the curriculum. Edit thinks that these awareness raising tasks are essential and should be utilized even if they "take time away" from the regular curriculum, because what she "loses" this way she gains in students' increased communicative competence.

Third, coursebooks restrict teachers to some extent. Edit and Erika mentioned that the best way to teach pragmatic competence is when the tasks are incorporated into the regular coursebooks. However, as the coursebook study in Chapter 3 concluded, textbooks may not be the best "partners" in the classroom when it comes to teaching pragmatic competence. Four out of the five teachers mentioned how the books they use are excellent, yet they lack situational activities and need to be supplemented with other resources. Szilvia and her students create dialogues using the narrative texts of the book. Anna and Edit design their own activities and use resource books and videos to make up for the limitations of their coursebooks. Edit even asked me if we could write a book that contained such activities.

Finally, I would like to refer to the remarks of the teacher who piloted the treatment tasks. In our discussion she mentioned how much she liked the tasks and admitted that she feels like she lacks the necessary knowledge and confidence to teach pragmatic competence in her classes. As I consider her a very competent and highly respected teacher, I do not think that this is her individual problem. Though this issue did not come up in the follow-up interviews, this teacher concurs with Wolfson (1989), who argued that this lack of conscious knowledge is a common characteristic among both native and non-native teachers. Nevertheless, this remark and some of the insights gained through the classroom observation underline the importance of pragmatic instruction and awareness raising in teacher training (Bardovi-Harlig, 1992).

7.2 Pragmatic competence in the context of EFL instruction

7.2.1 General classroom issues raised in the observation

All classes were described as having a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, where teachers had very good rapport with their students. The teachers and the students did not seem to be affected by the presence of the observers. The lessons were conducted in an orderly fashion with clear goals to be achieved, yet at each class there was room for funny comments and laughter. As an example, Csaba, who is the youngest teacher in the group and the only male, appeared to be the typical "*jófej*" teacher that students adore. Yet he was in full control of his class and there was no room for any disrespect.

Teachers used a variety of seating and grouping arrangements, such as pair-work and group-work. One exception was Szilvia's class, where the focus was listening and

vocabulary practice in preparation for an exam. Her class was conducted in a teacher-fronted manner the whole way through. All teachers monitored the activities and helped students with language or emotional support. In some cases they encouraged peer-help. Many times students were willing to help each other even without being prompted. I observed this in Anna's class when the two boys sitting in front of me finished their task, one of them immediately said: "*Segítsünk másnak!*" In most classes, especially Anna's and Csaba's, students were willing and eager to stand up and mingle when asked to; which provided for a lively atmosphere. Teachers made an effort to include students that seemed to be shy or less willing to respond. However, in some cases more proficient or louder students dominated the discussions and others were not encouraged to join in.

The language used throughout the classes was predominantly English. Teachers used it for most instructions and classroom management issues. Hungarian was used in some instructions and grammar explanations. Overall, teachers tried to encourage students to use English by showing an example and sometimes asking students directly. Edit, when one of her students kept making funny comments in Hungarian during a task, said: "*This is an English-speaking zone. I'm glad you're so happy, but try and use your English.*"

The observations did not uncover any significant problem issues in the classes. The only conflicts I encountered between the teachers and the students were quite typical, such as the unwillingness to write a test and the reluctance to perform a task, both of which were handled well by the teachers. The general "overloadedness" of Hungarian secondary school students was also apparent in some cases. I observed an instance in Erika's class, where one of the girls was visibly having a difficult time staying on task

and obeying the teacher. She commented that the English class was her eighth lesson that day and she could not concentrate any more. Erika first replied with a sarcastic comment, then engaged Viki in a number of ways, which seemed to redeem the situation.

Overall, the observations revealed some very interesting issues that could not have been otherwise detected. Even though some tasks were not implemented as expected, in general the teachers facilitated the lessons in a way that was beneficial in conveying the necessary pragmatic issues covered in the experiment. The classes provided feedback about the treatment tasks that point to the relevance and application of these activities, as well as some weak points in the design.

7.2.2 Students' usage of English outside the classroom

After the completion of the treatment, 86 students filled in the questionnaires and all five teachers were interviewed (see Appendices E and F for the student questionnaires and the teacher interview protocol respectively). All teachers argued that in recent years students have had plenty of opportunities to use English outside the classroom. The three most frequent activities according to the teachers are watching television (cartoons and movies), using the computer (e-mails and games), and listening to music. Students' responses verify this list, as these three activities are among the most frequently mentioned ones (29, 20, and 29 participants brought them up respectively). However, what most students (58 out of 86) use English for is talking to foreigners. This includes vacationing in a foreign country, having summer jobs and attending camps in Hungary, talking to relatives living abroad, corresponding, and e-mailing. I was surprised that only

one teacher (Anna) brought up this activity, saying that her students talk to tourists in their town.

Other interests the students pointed out were subtitled movies in the cinema and books (17 and 15 students respectively). Ten respondents mentioned practicing English with Hungarians, such as family members and friends. One student speaks English to her younger brother, who taught himself the language watching Cartoon Network. Another respondent mentioned that speaking English is frightening for her, except when she is talking to her Hungarian friends. Reading newspapers and using English for translation (lyrics, poems, interpreting) were mentioned by five and four students respectively. Last, only five participants brought up using English in everyday life (such as reading product labels) and five students mentioned the possibility of using English in their future jobs.

Teachers shared some valuable insights concerning their students' use of English outside the classroom. Edit encourages her students to be open to use English whenever and wherever, such as reading the labels on products in a store (incidentally, hers were the only students who mentioned the everyday use of English). Her goal is to supply the students with strategies that will last beyond the school years ("*életre szóló stratégiák kialakítása*"). Erika's approach is very individualistic to students' use of English outside the classroom. She mentioned that if someone delights in listening to American pop music (which she personally does not take interest in), she will not judge them and force them to read literature instead. On the contrary, she is glad that her students use the language for *their* needs and she is willing to help them in any way. She underlined it several times in the interview that students own their own language learning experience and decisions ("*Hát énnekem kell az a nyelv? ... A nyelvtudás az övéké!*").

Overall, each teacher is very open and flexible about their students' use of English. Szilvia is always willing to devote class time to songs, because she knows that students identify with them and can integrate the words into their vocabulary easily thanks to the catchy tunes. Both Szilvia and Erika mentioned that they learn new vocabulary from students when they bring in words from computer games and popular songs. Anna argued that the computer has a limited vocabulary and structure range, yet it provides regular input for the users, mainly boys in her classes. She suggested that it would be beneficial to build computer language into the syllabus, but she lacks both the necessary resources and the competence to do so. Csaba touched upon the relevance of pragmatic competence in students' usage of English. He pointed out that the pragmatic training may not yet benefit students in their regular activities outside the classroom, as these are largely passive in nature (watching TV, reading), but it does and will in real-life situations, when they have to use English in an active way.

7.2.3 Problem areas in learning English

The student questionnaires revealed three main problem areas. More than half of the sample (38 participants) mentioned vocabulary problems, mainly the lack of words for everyday communication and struggles with how to overcome these limitations. Almost the same number of participants (37) brought up difficulties with grammar, especially verb tenses. As one of them put it, "*Magyar nyelvű számára az igeidők érthetetlenek*." The third problem is speech production; namely fluency in spontaneous speech, which some students indicated as difficulty with the role-plays as well. Students are aware of the fluency-accuracy "dilemma", meaning that they are unable to

concentrate on accuracy when trying to speak fluently. In one of the participants' words, "*Ha nagyon figyelem a nyelvtant, megbénul a beszéd*". Other problem issues mentioned were formal writing, spelling, listening skills, pronunciation, and comprehension of live speech (especially understanding foreigners, native speakers, those who speak fast, and people speaking various dialects). As for areas in pragmatic competence, one student mentioned difficulty with formal and informal styles, and one pointed out greetings as a problem area. Two students indicated that they have no problems when using English.

Teachers brought up different areas of difficulty. Anna regards activating vocabulary and grammar as her students' greatest problem area, which is in accordance with her students' feedback. Her students have difficulty building their knowledge into active speech production. She also mentioned this concerning the treatment tasks, namely that how and when students can apply the learned material is limited. Erika found it hard to come up with a specific problem because all her students have very complex needs. What she mentioned though is a student who is unable to compensate for her weaknesses like her peers who make up for their lack of grammatical competence using their self-confidence and communicative abilities. She considers it part of her profession to assist students in discovering their strengths and weaknesses and "help them help themselves".

Szilvia said that her students have inhibitions about speaking English. On the one hand, this was due to the fact that she had been focusing on written skills because of the washback effect of the exam. On the other hand, some students' academic achievement is weak in other subjects, which obviously lowers their self-esteem. I noticed this when we recorded the role-plays and some of the students were visibly very anxious before performing the dialogues (though as Szilvia mentioned, they were excited about our

coming). We agreed that this lack of self-confidence did not necessarily manifest itself in poor performance, suggesting a problem of psychological nature, which Szilvia is determined to work on with the students. Csaba's main challenge is to motivate his students. As his group has been learning English for a long time and has a high number of classes per week, Csaba sometimes finds it difficult to motivate them to speak English and complete the activities. Yet when something grabs their attention or he finds a way to inspire them (even by giving away some chocolate), the students are willing to do their best. As Csaba put it, "*Be lehet őket lelkesíteni, akkor bármit megcsinálnak.*"

The problem Edit mentioned is mixed-ability classes, where some of the students are very ambitious, yet some are unwilling to speak. In the case of shy students she mentioned that the key is to increase their self-esteem before even starting to worry about their language problems. Another interesting issue that both Edit and Erika brought up is that some students have difficulties with English grammar because they struggle even with their Hungarian language skills. This phenomenon is not unique for the Hungarian context. In the learning center one of our programs catered for the needs of Hispanic people. We noticed that in many cases they struggled in their ESL classes because they lacked the appropriate literacy skills in their mother tongue. For this reason, devoting attention to students' first language skills is essential.

7.3 Conclusions of the follow-up study

Overall, the follow-up study revealed some very interesting issues that could not have been otherwise detected. The classroom observations showed that teachers facilitated the treatment tasks to the best of their knowledge, striving to convey the

necessary pragmatic information. The student questionnaires and the teacher interviews revealed that participants had positive attitudes to the treatment and they considered the tasks relevant and useful. The instances where respondents brought up criticism about the tasks or the role-plays were valuable sources of feedback for the researchers, as they highlighted some shortcomings of task design. Responses concerning pragmatics instruction underlined the importance of this area and revealed teachers' commitment to facilitate the development of students' communicative and pragmatic competence.

I can also conclude that students' attitude to learning English is positive. Several of them made comments about how they consider English useful and take pleasure in learning it. Most of them are motivated to reach a high level of L2 proficiency and they take an active role in selecting the activities outside the classroom that assist them in reaching this goal. Erika mentioned that her students do not treat English as a subject, but something that is useful and needed for their future. In Szilvia's wording, "*Hálás dolog angolt tanítani. Nem kell nekem megértetni velük, hogy ez hasznos.*" As a teacher, I was delighted to see these five excellent teachers at work, striving to provide the best instruction for their students and caring for them in a genuine way.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

In this chapter I summarize the conclusions of the dissertation. First, I give an account of the insights gained into the research questions through both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses. Next, I discuss the teaching implications of the research. Following this, the limitations of the project will be addressed. Last, I propose an agenda for future research.

8.1 Summary of results

The aim of my dissertation was to research the teachability of pragmatic competence in the Hungarian EFL context, focusing on how to open and close conversations. My study had four main lines of investigation. First, I examined the conversational input in two EFL coursebook series regarding openings and closings. The results indicated that most conversations in the coursebooks were incomplete, suggesting that the main purpose of the dialogues is not to provide realistic conversational input but to present new grammar. The majority of openings and closings were partial and one-way, lacking post-openings, shutting down the topic, and pre-closings. Most differences between the two series were discovered concerning the number of dialogues and the explicit teaching of pragmatic competence. The statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between the number of dialogues, openings, and closings in the two series. The coursebook study pointed out the importance of complementing coursebooks with additional materials as well as providing more explicit pragmatic input for the students.

Second, the main line of investigation centered around a five-week pragmatic treatment program, focusing on the effect of the treatment on students' pragmatic awareness and speech act production. The correlation analysis revealed that students used significantly more post-opening and pre-closing elements after the treatment period. The analysis of the DRT confirmed that students' awareness of pragmatic violations increased due to the treatment. The qualitative analysis concluded that the pragmatic training program had beneficial effects on students' production of openings and closings, indicating that the treatment was successful in improving students' production of post-openings and pre-closings, both in quantity and quality. These results verified the hypothesis proposing that as a result of the training, students will use more appropriate opening and closing elements in the post-tests and will display an increased awareness toward pragmatic violations. Greeting exchanges, shutting down the topic, and terminal pairs showed no significant improvement after the training, possibly due to two reasons; namely that students already possessed sufficient knowledge of them before the intervention and that the training did not devote enough attention to these issues.

Third, I examined the relationship between pragmatic competence and foreign language proficiency, namely the effect L2 proficiency has on students' production of openings and closings. The correlation analysis showed a significant relationship between students' overall L2 proficiency and their pragmatic competence. This finding verifies the hypothesis which claims that students' L2 proficiency will positively correlate with their pragmatic competence, more specifically their appropriate use of openings and closings and their perception of pragmatic violations. The data also indicate that the use of post-opening elements remained challenging for students with lower L2 proficiency after the treatment,

possibly due to the fact that the treatment was not effective enough to provide sufficient input and time for these learners to practice post-openings.

Fourth, I conducted a follow-up study aiming to find out how the treatment tasks were implemented in the schools and to explore teachers' and students' views about the treatment and pragmatic competence as well as gaining insight into general classroom issues. The study revealed that participants had positive attitudes to the treatment and they considered the tasks relevant and useful. Teachers strived to facilitate the tasks to the best of their knowledge and were committed to aid the development of students' communicative and pragmatic competence. Most students were motivated to reach a high level of EFL proficiency and they take an active role in selecting the activities outside the classroom that assist them in reaching this goal.

8.2 Implications for teaching

The findings of this study have implications for language teaching. They suggest that pragmatic competence has to be developed through a range of situations and types of activities, including equal as well as unequal power relationships. The results comparing overall proficiency and the production of the two speech acts imply that pragmatic training needs to start at a low level of foreign language instruction, and it can be a natural part of a communicative syllabus. The different findings concerning openings and closings suggest that pragmatic rules pose various degrees of difficulty for the students. What this implies for the teacher is that the forms and pragmatic rules that are non-existent or are different in the mother tongue need to be given emphasis and teachers need to distinguish between the pragmatic elements of varying difficulties.

As the quantitative and the qualitative data analyses showed, the five-week treatment program had beneficial effects on students' awareness of pragmatic violations and speech act production. However, a more thorough and long-term intervention would be needed to produce even more positive and possibly longer-lasting results. This, however, is the language teachers' task to fulfill in the classroom. Therefore pragmatic training should be part of pre-service and in-service teacher education in order to thoroughly equip EFL teachers in this area.

8.3 Limitations of the research

This study has its limitations. As the project was designed as a quasi-experiment, there were some variables that I could not completely control. I attempted to select similar schools, teachers, and students, yet there may be some differences I am unaware of. Furthermore, there may have been more variation in teaching methods and the implementation of the treatment tasks that the classroom observations did not reveal. I am also conscious of the fact that having used different role-plays in the pre- and post-test might have had an effect on the results. Furthermore, participating in the pre-test may have influenced students' performance on the second occasion.

8.4 Agenda for future research

Few research projects have been carried out in the area of pragmatics in the Hungarian EFL context. Although my dissertation attempted to fill this gap, there is still a significant area to cover in this field. Studies need to be conducted examining students'

production of various speech acts. As my results pointed out, students may have varying degrees of difficulty with different aspects of pragmatic competence. Elicited speech production and needs analyses can help to uncover these areas for two reasons. First of all, teachers are in need of more information concerning learners' awareness of pragmatic issues. Secondly, researchers and coursebook writers should be more knowledgeable in this area in order to produce teaching materials that benefit EFL students in the classroom. The relationship between pragmatic competence and language proficiency also needs further investigation in order to receive conclusive results.

Exploring the effects of implicit and explicit instruction on students' pragmatic awareness and speech act production also deserves further attention. This would require studies with an experimental design, either involving a treatment and control group (similarly to the present project) or an explicit and implicit treatment group (cf. Alcón, 2005; House, 1996; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005). As for methodological consideration, the use of the video (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998) and computer-based DCTs (Kuha, 1999) are increasingly recommended in interlanguage pragmatics research. I believe that these two instruments have many advantages despite being more time-consuming and costly than traditional tools. The video enables the researcher to observe non-verbal features, which would otherwise be overlooked. Computer-based DCTs are more interactive than their paper and pencil counterparts and provide for more turns to be examined.

Pragmatics research in Hungarian would also welcome more studies eliciting speech act production in Hungarian as a First Language (Bándli, 2004; Szili, 2004). This would primarily be beneficial for teachers and students of Hungarian as a Second or

Foreign Language. However, establishing the differences between the speech acts in Hungarian and English would also enable EFL teachers to have better insight into the areas of difficulty their students face.

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Appendix A: The C-test used in the study

Kedves Diákok!

Az alábbiakban két szöveget olvashattok, amelyekben hiányzik minden második szónak a második fele. Kérjük, egészítsétek ki a szavakat, hogy értelmes szöveget alkossanak. Ha egy adott szó páros számú betűből áll, akkor a meghagyottal azonos számú betű hiányzik, ha pedig páratlan számú betűből áll, akkor a szó nagyobbik része hiányzik.

Ennek a feladatnak az eredménye nem számít bele a jegyedbe, de az azonosítás érdekében kérjük, írd rá a nevedet a lapra.

Köszönjük!

Kata és Melinda

Text 1

One cool autumn evening, Bob L., a young professional, returned home from a trip to the supermarket to find his computer gone. Gone! All so___ of cr___ thoughts ra___ through h__ mind: H__ it be__ stolen? H__ it be__ kidnapped? H_ searched h__ house f__ a cl__ until h_ noticed a sm___ piece o_ printout pa___ stuck un___ a mag___ on h__ refrigerator do__. His he___ sank a_ he re__ this sim___ message: CAN'T CONTINUE, FILE CLOSED, BYE.

Text 2

There are certain things which no student can do without and others may not be as necessary as you thought. It m__ be wo___ considering so__ small hi___. You m__ find your____ in ne__ of elect_____ appliances su__ as li___ bulbs, adap____ or pl___. These c__ be obta____ from ma__ places. GILL i_ a go__ hardware sh__ but try___ to fi__ it i_ a chal_____. It is hidden in a little alley leading off High Street called Wheatsheaf Yard.

Appendix B: The pre- and post-test role-plays

Pre-test:

ROLE CARD 1A

Helyszín és szituáció: Rock koncerten találkozol egy külföldivel.
Köszöntsd a szituációnak megfelelően. Válts vele néhány udvarias mondatot mielőtt a témára térsz! Érdeklődj, hogy honnan látogatott Magyarországra és hogy tetszik neki a koncert. Te egy amatőr rock zenekar vezetője vagy. Nagyon szeretnél külföldre kijutni a csapatoddal. A nyarad szabad, bár még nem tudod a többi zenész programját. Úgy néz ki, hogy a júliust kivéve szabaddá tudnátok tenni magatokat. A beszélgetés végén búcsúzz el tőle.

ROLE CARD 1B

Helyszín és szituáció: Rock koncerten találkozol egy magyarral.
Köszöntsd a szituációnak megfelelően. Válts vele néhány udvarias mondatot mielőtt a témára térsz! Te egy külföldi koncertszervező vagy és azért jöttél Magyarországra, hogy fiatal és tehetséges rock zenekarokat találj. Londonban szervezel egy fesztivált júliusban, és arra szeretnéd meghívni a csapatokat. Cégednek bőven van pénze arra, hogy a zenekarokat jól megfizessétek. A beszélgetés végén búcsúzz el tőle.

Post-test:

ROLE CARD 2A

Helyszín és szituáció: Ismerős családnál találkozol egy külföldivel.
Köszöntsd a szituációnak megfelelően. Válts vele néhány udvarias mondatot mielőtt a témára térsz! Érdeklődj, hogy mit csinál és hogy miért látogatott Magyarországra. Éppen munkanélküli vagy és szükséged van pénzre, ezért balatoni nyaralódat ki szeretnéd adni egy gazdagabb külföldi családnak. A nyaralód a tótól egy utcányira van, igazán szép környezetben. Az egyetlen hátránya a háznak az, hogy nincs kert. A beszélgetés végén búcsúzz el tőle.

ROLE CARD 2B

Helyszín és szituáció: Ismerős családnál találkozol egy magyarral.
Köszöntsd a szituációnak megfelelően. Válts vele néhány udvarias mondatot mielőtt a témára térsz! Érdeklődj, hogy Magyarországon hova érdemes nyaralni menni. Nyáron szeretnél egy hónapot Magyarországon tölteni a családoddal. Nagyon jómódú vagy, szeretnél szép környezetben nyaralni, közel a vízparthoz. Nagyon fontos számodra, hogy a kutyádat is magaddal vihesd a nyaralásra. A beszélgetés végén búcsúzz el tőle.

Appendix C: The discourse rating tasks

Kedves Diákok! NÉV:

Ennek a feladatsornak a megoldásával kutatásunkat segíted. Köszönjük!
A következőkben rövid párbeszédeket fogsz angolul olvasni. A párbeszédek UTOLSÓ (dőlt betűvel szedett) mondatát kell értékelned, abból a szempontból, hogy a beszélő jól használja-e az angol nyelvet. Ha hibás a mondat, akkor írd oda, hogy mi a hiba benne, vagy hogyan kellene helyesen mondani (nem csak nyelvtani hibáról lehet szó). Ezt magyarul is írhatod! Mielőtt munkához látsz, olvasd el a példamondatot!

Például:
John: Good morning, Anna.
Anna*: Good night, John.*

……Nem helyes, mert Annának „Good morning"- ot kellett volna mondania.....…….
……..……..

---

1. John goes to the snack bar to eat something before class.
   Shop assistant: Can I help you?
   John: *I want a sandwich to eat.*

……..……..……
……

2. Maria invites Anna to her house but Anna cannot come.
   Maria: Anna, would you like to come to my house this afternoon?
   Anna: *I'm sorry, I'd really like to come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.*

……..……..……
……

3. The teacher asks Peter to help to organise the class trip.
   Teacher: OK, so we'll go by bus. Who lives near the bus station? Peter, could you check the bus times when you are going home from school?
   Peter*: No, I can't. Sorry.*

……..……..……
……

4. Two neighbours meet in a shop.
   Mr. Thomas: Hello! How are you today?
   Mrs. Grim: *Oh, I feel very bad. I have a toothache and I couldn't sleep last night. And these prices are too high for me.*

……..……..……
……
.

5. Anna does not know where she can find the library. She asks another student.
Anna: Hi.
Student: Hi.
Anna*: Tell me how to get to the library.*
……..……..……
……

6. The lesson starts and the teacher begins checking the homework.
Teacher: Have you got your homework with you?
Student: *Sorry, my homework is not ready because I haven't been here yesterday.*
……..……..……
……

7. John is meeting his teacher after the summer holiday.
Teacher: Hello John.
John: *Good morning Mr. Gordon. What's up?*
……..……..……
……

8. George asks his teacher for a book.
George: Mr. Gordon?
Mr. Gordon: Yes?
George: *Could I please borrow this book for the weekend if you don't need it?*
……..……..……
……

9. Peter and George meet before class. They want to do something before class starts.
George: We have 15 minutes before the next class. What shall we do?
Peter: *Let's to eat in the snack bar.*
……..……..……
……

10. The lessons are finished and the students are going home.
Peter: I need to go now. Please don't forget to bring the CD tomorrow.
George: *OK. I will not forget it. Hello.*
……..……..……
……

11. Maria forgot to bring back Anna's book and Anna needs it for an important test.
Anna: Maria, do you have the book I gave you last week with you?
Maria: *Oh, I'm really sorry, I was in a hurry this morning and I didn't brought it today.*
……..……..……
……

KÖSZÖNJÜK A SEGÍTSÉGEDET!

Appendix D: Classroom observation questions

School: **Class:** **Teacher:** **Date:** **Time of class:** **Observer:**

Treatment and control group classes:

1. Please write down the detailed structure of the class:

8:00 am
8:05 am
etc.

2. What were the main goals of the lesson?

3. Were these goals accomplished?

4. What skills were practiced during the class?

5. What kind of seating and grouping arrangements did the teacher use (pairwork, groupwork, frontal)?

6. How would you describe the overall atmosphere of the class?

7. How would you describe the relationship between the students and the teacher?

8. What was the ratio of teacher- and student-talking time?

9. What languages were used in class and in what proportion?

10. Did the teacher share anything with you before or after the class that may be relevant?

11. Do you have any additional comments or impressions about the teacher, the students, or the class?

Only in treatment group classes:

1. Which task was implemented today?
2. Please write down the detailed procedure of the task.
3. Did the task go according to the instructions?
4. If not, what was different?
5. What could be the reasons for this? (inappropriate instructions or materials, students' unwillingness to respond, misunderstanding of the task, etc.)
6. How long did the task take to perform?
7. Was this in accordance with our expectations? Shorter? Longer?
8. If there was a significant timing problem, what could be the reasons?

Appendix E: Follow-up student questionnaire

Szia!

Szeretnénk megkérni téged, hogy válaszolj ezekre a kérdésekre! Nincsenek jó vagy rossz válaszok, a személyes véleményedre vagyunk kíváncsiak. Nem kell ideírnod a nevedet, és az iskolából senki nem fogja a válaszaidat elolvasni.

Mégegyszer köszönjük a segítségedet!

Csizér Kata és Edwards Melinda

Az angolórán kívül mire használod az angol nyelvet?

Mi okoz a legnagyobb problémát, amikor az angol nyelvet használod?

Kérjük, írd le, ha van megjegyzésed a szerepjátékokkal kapcsolatban, amikor magnóra vettük a párbeszédet.

Vissza tudnál emlékezni egy angolórára, amit hasznosnak éreztél? Mi tette az órát hasznossá, sikeressé?

Appendix F: Teacher interview protocol

1. Questions to treatment teachers:

- Melyik feladatot tekinted a legeredményesebbnek illetve a legkevésbé eredményesnek? Miért?
- A diákok melyik feladatot/feladatokat élvezték legjobban?
- Amelyik feladat „gyengébben" sikerült, tudnál javaslatot tenni a javításra?
- Kérlek említs meg bármilyen problémát, kételyt, kérdést, ami felmerült benned vagy a diákokban a kísérlet kapcsán.
- (őszintén) Tervezed-e, hogy tovább használod ezeket a feladatokat, illetve hasonlókat? Volt-e hatása a kísérletnek a tanításodra?

2. Questions to all teachers:

- Szükséges-e szerinted ezeket a beszédaktusokat és beszédfunkciókat tanítani explicit módon?
- Mennyire van a diákoknak szüksége erre?
- Hogyan lehet ezeket a nyelvi funkciókat tudatosabbá tenni?
- Milyen fajta feladatok biztosítják ezt a fajta tudást? Hogyan lehet ezeket sikeresen tanítani?
- A diákok mire használják az angol nyelvet iskolán kívül?
- Szerinted mi okozza nekik a legnagyobb gondot a nyelvhasználatban?

Appendix G: The treatment tasks

(shortened version - worksheets and photocopied materials not included)

1. How would it sound abroad?

Idő: 30 perc
Cél: kulturális és funkcionális különbségek megbeszélése (magyar-angol). Köszönés, megszólítás, udvariassági formulák

TO THE TEACHER:

A diákok azt a feladatot kapják, hogy fordítsanak le egy egyszerű párbeszédet magyarról angolra. A párbeszéd nem tartalmaz nehezebb nyelvtant vagy szókincset, de sok olyan kulturális és funkcionális problémát vet fel, ami gondot jelenthet az angolul tanulóknak.

Insrukció a diákoknak:
Egy párbeszédet fogsz olvasni magyarul. A feladat az, hogy *fordítsd le angolra*, és gondolkodj azon, mi lenne másképp, ha nem magyarok beszélgetnének, hanem angolok vagy amerikaiak. Gondolj a köszönésre, megszólításra, a témákra, stb. A megbeszélés után adjátok elő a párbeszédet.

1. A feladat előtt a tanár megkérdezi, milyen különbségeket ismernek a diákok a két nyelv között, köszönéseket, udvariassági formákat illetően (pl. tegezés-magázás, Jónapot – Csókolom, stb.) (6-7 *perc*)
2. A tanár ismerteti a feladatot, ezután a diákok párban dolgoznak. (*6-7 perc*)
3. Egy vagy két páros előadja a párbeszédet, ezalatt a többiek összehasonlítják a sajátjukkal, megjegyzéseket írnak, stb. (5-10 *perc*)
4. A tanár vezetésével az osztály megbeszéli a felmerült problémákat, különbségeket, stb. (*5-10 perc*)

Kérdésjavaslatok a megbeszélésre:

- Hogyan fejezhetjük ki a tegezés- magázást angolul?
- Hogyan fordítottátok a következő szavakat? *Csókolom, néni* (Auntie, Mrs?), stb.
- Mi a különbség az angol *Hello* és a magyar *Helló* között? (üdvözlés vagy búcsúzás, stb.)
- Mi a funkciója a *How are you* kérdésnek angolul? És magyarul? (igazi kérdés vö. udvariassági formula, köszönés része)
- Tudnátok mondani „tabu témákat” angolban? (pl. anyagi helyzet, politikai nézetek, stb.)

TO THE STUDENT:

Szituáció: Egy idősebb asszony és egy huszonéves férfi találkoznak a boltban. Néhány éve szomszédok, de csak felületesen ismerik egymást.

B: Csókolom, Erzsi néni!
E: Szia Béla!
B: Hogy tetszik lenni?
E: Hát, nem túl jól. Mostanában sokat fáj a hátam… és sajnos nem túl sok a pénz az új munkahelyemen, tudod…
B: Igen, igen. Szerintem ez a kormány hibája, XY párt sokkal jobban csinálná…
E: Talán. Na, mennem kell. Helló!
B: Csókolom!

2. Ending a conversation

Idő: kb. 35 perc
Cél: beszélgetés lezárása - gyakorlás, párbeszédírás

TO THE TEACHER:

1. "Beszélgetsz valakivel, és rájössz, hogy indulnod kell. Milyen kifejezésekkel zárod le a beszélgetést?" A tanár a diákok ötleteit és az alábbi listának néhány elemét bemutatja a diákoknak, felírja a táblára. (5-7 p*erc*)
2. A tanár minden párnak kioszt egy borítékot, melyekben egy párbeszédrészlet van összekeverve. Elmondja, hogy a diákok feladata az, hogy sorbarakják a párbeszédet.
3. A diákok párban dolgoznak. (*5 perc*)
4. A tanár megkér két diákot, hogy olvassák fel a párbeszédet. Az osztály együtt ellenőrzi a megoldást, megbeszélik a problémákat. (*5 perc*)
5. "*Can't say goodbye*!" A tanár elmondja, hogy egy érdekes feladatot fognak kapni – egy szappanopera egyik párbeszédét kell megírniuk (a feladat pontos leírását lásd alább) Ez a feladat esetleg lehet házi feladat is.
6. A párok csoportban dolgoznak. (*5 perc*)
7. Néhány pár előadja vagy felolvassa "művét." (*3-4 perc*)

Beszélgetést lezáró kifejezések – javaslat:

I've got to go now / I've got to be going now.
I'd better let you go / I'd better not take up any more of your time.
I hope you don't mind, but …
It's been (very) nice / interesting talking to you.
I (really) must go / must be going / must be off now.
We'll have to get together (again) some time.
Well, I think I'll let you go.
So I'll see you soon/ next week.
Look after yourself.
Take care.

Kérdésjavaslatok a megbeszélésre:

- *Who's trying to end the conversation? Who wants to chat?*
- *How do they try to signal that they want to end the conversation?*
- *How do they confirm their arrangement?*

TO THE STUDENT:

Ezeken a papírcsíkokon egy beszélgetés van összekeverve. Az a feladatod, hogy sorbarakd őket, hogy egy értelmes párbeszéd születhessen.

A: I'd love to continue this conversation, but I really need to go now. I have to get back to the office.
B: Well, let's get together soon.
A: How about Friday?
B: Friday sounds good. Where shall we meet?
A: (looks at watch) You know, I really must be going now or I'll be very late. Can you give me a call tomorrow and we'll decide?
B: Fine. Speak to you then.
A: Sorry I have to rush off like this.
B: That's OK. I understand.
A: Good-bye.
B: So long.

TO THE STUDENT:

Can't say goodbye!

Egy híres TV szappanopera egyik írója vagy. Az előző részben a két főhős végre egymásba szeretett. A következő részben ismét találkoznak egy fogadáson, és beszédbe elegyednek. Mivel a fogadásnak lassan vége, búcsúzkodni kezdenek, de mindketten zavarban vannak, mert nem akarnak elválni egymástól. A feladatod az, hogy írd meg ezt a párbeszédet, melynek címe **Can't say goodbye.**

Használd azokat a kifejezéseket is, amelyeket az órán megbeszéltetek.

3. What are they saying?

Idő: kb. 25 perc
Cél: Formális – informális stílusok gyakorlása, köszöntések, beszélgetések kezdeményezése

TO THE TEACHER:

1. *Bemelegítés: What's on my back?* - A tanár kis 'post-it' lapokat ragaszt a diákok hátára, melyeken egy híres ember vagy egy "szerep" található. A diákok feladata az, hogy körbejárva az osztályban köszöntsék a többieket, illetve kezdeményezzenek egy beszélgetést. (Természetesen tilos a nevén szólítani az illetőt!) A részfeladat úgy zárul, hogy a diákok feedbacket adnak, hogy szerintük kik ők, és, hogy jöttek rá. (*5-6 perc*)
2. Mikor a diákok készen vannak, megbeszélés következik. A tanár kiemeli a formális – informális nyelvezet különbségeit, a köszönésformákat, a variációk felkerülhetnek a táblára. (*5 perc*)
3. A tanár kiosztja a lapokat, amin kis képek találhatók. A diákok feladata az, hogy kis párbeszédet írjanak a képekhez, hangsúlyozva, hogyan szólítják meg egymást, hogyan búcsúznak.
4. A diákok párban dolgoznak. (*10 perc*)
5. A tanár megkér néhány párt, hogy olvassák fel a párbeszédeket, a párok összehasonlítják a megoldásukat. A sokféleség természetesen megengedett, de a tanár felhívja a figyelmet a stílusbeli hibákra, hiányosságokra. (*5 perc*)

A 'post it'- eken szereplő személyek: (ugyanazt a szerepet kaphatja két diák, ha a csoportban többen vannak mint 12)
Mr. Thomas, your new boss
Flora, a 6-year-old girl living next door
Your uncle
Your favourite TV-personality
Your best friend
Mrs. Forth, your primary school teacher (60-year-old lady)
Jim Carrey
Bill Gates
John Paul II
Mr. Árpád Göncz
Michael Jordan
Your neighbour, who has a large dog

Kérdésjavaslatok a megbeszélésre:

- *What differences did you find between formal and informal greetings?*
- *How did you figure out who you were?*
- *What kinds of greetings and leave-takings did you hear? Can you list them all?*

E. g.: informal: *What's up? / What's new? / How is it going? / How are you doing? Nothing new. / I'm doing well.*

Formal: *Hello Mr.(s) / sir…! Good morning /afternoon/ etc.*
Let me introduce myself. / May I speak to you please?

Excuse me…

TO THE STUDENT:

What are they saying? + handout

A lapokon látsz néhány képet. Ezeken emberek beszélgetnek, megszólítják egymást, problémák adódnak, stb. Gondold el, mi lehet a szituáció és írd le a párbeszédet, ami lezajlott az emberek között!

4. Complete the dialogue!

Idő: kb. 20-25 perc
Cél: Hiányos párbeszéd kiegészítése, köszönés - búcsúzás

1. A tanár egy rövid párbeszédet oszt ki a diákoknak. Ez a párbeszéd értelmes, de nincs eleje sem vége. A feladat az, hogy a diákok minél jobban kibővítsék a párbeszédet, elsősorban köszönéssel és búcsúzással, de betoldhatnak más kiegészítéseket is (pl. a "száraz megbeszélésen" kívül a szereplők csevegni kezdenek, stb). Ha a diákok tanácstalanok, a tanár adhat ötleteket az elején, illetve a feladat megoldása közben is. (Lásd az ötleteket alább.) (5 perc)
2. A diákok párokban dolgoznak. (10 perc)
3. Néhány diák felolvassa (ha lehetséges, elő is adja) a megoldását. A csoport megbeszéli a variációkat, a tanár kiegészíti, javítja őket, stb. (5 perc)

A párbeszéd a következő:

Pat: Where do you live, Kim?
Kim: I live next to the library on Main Street.
Pat: How long have you lived there?
Kim: For two years.
Pat: Where did you live before that?
Kim: I lived in an apartment close to the university.

Ötletek a kiegészítésekre:

- *Párbeszéd eleje:*

(greeting) *Good morning / Hello / Hi, John!*
(important after greeting) *How are you? – Fine, thanks. / I am doing well. / Getting on, thanks. / Nice day, isn't it? / Excuse me, can I ask…can you tell me…?*

- *Párbeszéd kiegészítése:*

Do you come here often?
Oh, by the way, it reminds me…
Have you heard the latest about…?
The traffic in this city is simply incredible… / Can you believe it ….?
Oh, really? It's unbelievable! / I can't believe my ears …

- *Párbeszéd vége:*

I've got to go now / I've got to be going now.
I'd better let you go / I'd better not take up any more of your time.
I hope you don't mind, but …

It's been (very) nice / interesting talking to you.
We'll have to get together (again) some time.
Well, I think I'll let you go.
So I'll see you soon/ next week.
Take care.

Kérdésjavaslatok a megbeszélésre:

- *How did they greet each other? Why?*
- *How did they say goodbye? How did they close the conversation?*
- *How did you make the dialogue more natural and life-like?*