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Pragmatic Competence in EFL Context: Suggestions in University Office Hour Discourse

Hatime Ciftci
University of South Florida, hatime@mail.usf.edu

Pragmatic Competence in EFL Context: Suggestions in University Office Hour Discourse

by

Hatime Ciftci

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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Major Professor: Camilla Vásquez, Ph.D.
Amanda Huensch, Ph.D.
Amy Thompson, Ph.D.
Wei Zhu, Ph.D.

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DEDICATION

       I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Ali Kara, who passed away in 2004. He did not witness my journey of becoming a PhD but he had been the greatest support in my life throughout my education. To honor my father, I dedicate this dissertation to him. Love you and miss you so much, Dad.

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ABSTRACT

Office hour interactions at universities are one type of communicative activity in which international instructors and their Turkish EFL students are involved as a form of academic or institutional discourse (Drew & Heritage, 1992). In such real world communication, both parties employ several linguistic strategies and attend to various interactional goals to address the academic concerns at hand (Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Limberg, 2007; 2010; Reindhart, 2010; Skyrme, 2010). Embracing a discourse analytic approach, this study investigated the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions; discourse organization of office hour interactions with regard to the features of participants' contributions (e.g. turn-taking and turn length, verbosity or dominance, etc.); suggestion-response episodes; and successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions. The study utilized the theoretical framework of relational work. Thirty-eight office hour interactions constituted the primary data source. The participants included 3 international instructors and their 34 Turkish EFL students. Post-interaction questionnaires and classroom observations served as secondary data sources in the study. The data analysis demonstrated that office hour interactions have various purposes and topics mostly related to the course content offered by the instructors, their expertise, and their experiences. Additionally, both parties co-constructed the discourse segments of equal and unequal contribution in which they achieved interactional and transactional goals using distinctive linguistic and discourse strategies. The co-constructed suggestion-response episodes included both instructor-initiated suggestions and students' self-suggestory acts. The use of

modals and semi-modals, imperatives, and interrogatives played a key role in instructor-initiated suggestions, whereas the students mostly relied on interrogatives. However, each party made their choices relying on the interactional goals they wished to accomplish through the use of suggestion forms. Finally, both the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students attended to different types of relational work that contributed to the successful and problematic aspects of office hour interactions, and that were mostly connected to suggestions.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Pragmatic competence, the ability to use language appropriately, is important for English language learners. Specifically in English as a foreign language (EFL)[1] contexts, where learners have limited access to communicative practices in English, providing learners pragmatics-rich environment should be an integral component of EFL education (Cohen, 2005; Taguchi, 2011). That is, EFL learners should be exposed to relevant input and have sufficient opportunities to practice English in communicative activities. Developing pragmatic abilities requires not only knowledge of linguistic features but also awareness of what expressions would be appropriate to use in certain communicative activities (Bardovi-Harlig & Hardford, 1990; Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004). Similarly, this applies to EFL learners in Turkey, where English is the major foreign language and a compulsory subject in the national curriculum.

EFL education has become much more important and valued in Turkey in the last decade. With the worldwide influence of English as an international language (Coleman, 2006; Kirkgoz, 2005, 2009), the number of universities offering English medium instruction (henceforth EMI) has increased both in Turkey and throughout the rest of Europe (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Crystal, 2003). Thus, in some state and private universities in Turkey, the language of education is

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[1] EFL refers to a situation whereby students need to learn English in countries where it is not regularly spoken or written as a language of community. Although English is an important educational language, it is not recognized officially such as in Turkey, China, France, and Japan (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Therefore, this study considers the distinction between EFL and English as a second language (ESL) such as in the US, where English is the dominant language.

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English. The spread of English as the dominant foreign language is felt prevalently not only in universities but also in K12 education in Turkey. However, opportunities to use English in authentic situations are quite limited for students. Therefore, this gives EFL learners little opportunity to use English for communicative purposes and they mostly rely on instructional practices even at university level.

As EFL learners, students in many universities in Turkey are still in the process of acquiring several aspects of English language. Even though they possess a certain level of general language proficiency in English, this might not necessarily prevent them from making pragmatic errors in their communication with other speakers of English. Whereas linguistic errors are regarded as deficiency in language proficiency, in some cases, experiencing communication breakdown due to such pragmatic errors in the target language might lead to more serious judgments about speakers such as being considered rude or impolite (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Gass, 1996; Judd, 1999; Wannaruk, 2008). Thus, an examination of macro-level pragmatic competence of language learners, such as the discourse-level strategies they utilize, may facilitate the understanding of how EFL learners use language in certain communicative activities they are involved in. Considering that such communicative activities mostly take place in academic settings, research in this strand might also provide insights into the process of developing pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993) and inform EFL instruction (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010).

It also needs to be highlighted that EFL learners' English use in Turkey might expand well beyond their university education both locally and internationally depending on their prospective individual and professional endeavors. First of all, considering the abovementioned globally escalating role of English, it has become a language of access to information, academic

exchange, science, and technology for Turkish EFL learners as well (Coleman, 2006). This constitutes one of several real world outcomes for Turkish EFL learners both as a university student or graduate. An undergraduate Turkish EFL student might want to have study abroad experience and join Erasmus/exchange programs all over the world. Additionally, having an undergraduate degree from a university offering EMI can facilitate an international graduate degree (e.g. in the US or Europe) that the student wants to pursuit where they will have to communicate with either native or other nonnative, or both, speakers of English. Finally, Turkish EFL learners might also be using English very actively in their future career either in Turkey or other international business or workplace settings by working at multi-national companies.

Pragmatic competence for many EFL learners in Turkey is then an undeniably necessary condition for successfully communicating their meaning in their not only academic but also real-life activities for several reasons. Specifically, pragmatic competence becomes more of an issue when EFL learners participate in communicative activities with interlocutors from different first language and cultural backgrounds. One reason for this assumption is that their interpretations of meaning might be governed by linguistic and cultural differences between the speakers in intercultural communication (Gumperz, 1982a). Thus, participating in such situations makes it necessary for speakers to "acquire both receptive and productive use of pragmatics" (Judd, 1999, p.161). The majority of spoken discourse in university programs is spontaneous, and "socially, cognitively, and discursively complex" both in the context of a classroom, a thesis/dissertation defense, an office hour, or a conference (Duff, 2010, p.178). Therefore, the involvement of Turkish EFL learners in their academic programs as well as their real world activities as mentioned earlier (e.g. Erasmus/exchange program, or communicating with international faculty,

working at an international setting, etc.) necessitates mastery in their pragmatic skills as language learners for effective communication.

One such communicative activity where EFL learners are involved as a form of academic or institutional discourse is office hours with their instructors. The interactions in university-level office hours are usually dyadic because they take place between a professor/instructor and a student. They are also heterogeneous in nature with varying goals (e.g. signing forms, advising students, etc.), and topics (Limberg, 2007). Effective one-to-one communication in this type of speech event is influenced by such variations and contextually situated. Consequently, the dynamics of office hours involves certain communicative skills specifically on both parties (instructors and students). Therefore, it is the main focus of this study to examine how both international instructors and their Turkish EFL learners (as undergraduate students) use English in their office hour interactions.

EFL Learners and Education in Turkey

EFL in Turkey has a significant role in several domains including academia, science and technology, tourism, Turkish media, and job market (Szczepaniak et al., 2013). Yet, English language does not have an official role in the country. With regard to foreign language policy, the Ministry of National Education manages language education together with other branches of formal education during K-12, and organizes the curriculum and textbooks officially (see the official website http://www.meb.gov.tr/ for more information about education system in Turkey). However, the preference for syllabus and a specific textbook to be taught depends on the administrative and educational policies of local schools. Specifically, the fact that there are both public and private schools all over the country leads to a considerable diversity in the quantity and quality of EFL education. As of 2006, EFL education in Turkey starts at 4th grade in public

schools (*MEB Yabancı Dil Eğitimi ve Öğretimi Yönetmeliği*, 2006) as compulsory subject whereas most private kindergartens include English language instruction in their curriculum. In other words, although both public and private K12 curriculum incorporates English as a foreign language, several differences are evident in implementation, such as amount of exposure or credits, starting age, and quality due to lack of sources and sometime overcrowded classes in most public schools. Some private schools, for example, have even started to implement bilingual (Turkish-English synchronously) programs in their curriculum in the last few years. Similarly, variation among EFL instruction remains constant with regard to private and public high schools as well. Except for private high schools and certain public high schools where students are placed through their success in a central exam, students graduate with minimum EFL instruction (e.g. only at the first year of high school for four credits) and their EFL proficiency level is far below others who attend private high schools or those which require compulsory preparatory classes for a year and prioritize quality EFL instruction (Dinçer et al., 2010).

In order to improve EFL curriculum in educational institutions, the Ministry of National Education in Turkey has made several attempts to comply with European Union (EU) standards since 1990s (Kirkgoz, 2007). Some of these attempts were to prolong the duration of compulsory education, start EFL instruction at 4th grade as stated before, and provide specific subjects in English in certain high schools (e.g. Anatolian High Schools as one type of educational institutions where high success in the central post-primary school exam is required). However, such innovations in EFL education have brought several problems together. First of all, the number of qualified EFL teachers has not been sufficient for a while, and those already in the profession have been provided several teacher development seminars by the Ministry of National

Education, British Council (BC), and United States Information Agency (USIA). Thus, this process of EFL curriculum reform has also introduced the communicative function of EFL and student-centered methodology (Kirkgoz, 2008; Szczepaniak et al., 2013). Second, although EFL teachers have been provided a series of pedagogical training, problems with actual EFL instruction have not disappeared at all neither in primary nor secondary education levels. The teachers still implement their established traditional practices heavily relying on grammar, and textbooks do not promote Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) practices. Additionally, specifically in public schools time allotted to teaching is not sufficient and the classrooms are usually over-populated (Kirkgoz, 2007, 2008; Szczepaniak et al., 2013).

Undoubtedly, all these above-mentioned reformative attempts and their accompanying problems have fostered divergence in EFL abilities of university candidates. Different from K-12 schools, higher education in Turkey is governed by the Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YOK, Higher Education Council, see the official website http://www.yok.gov.tr/web/guest/anasayfa) and expectations for language learners are mostly much more demanding when compared to language education at K-12 schools. It is explicitly stated in the publication *Türkiye`nin Yükseköğretim Stratejisi* (*Turkey`s Higher Education Strategy*) (2007) that university students in Turkey must have a full command of at least one foreign language. Although it is suggested to incorporate languages of Balkan, Middle Eastern, and Caucasian neighboring countries as well as other strategically and politically important languages such as Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Japanese, the dominant foreign language in the larger education system is English. In that sense, when we consider the role of English in Turkey, it can be well-situated within Kachru's (1990, 1992) expanding circle, where English is the primary foreign language, and mainly used by nonnative speakers.

Turning to English language education in Turkey, EFL curriculum and instruction at universities with EMI can be considered a gatekeeper for successfully pursuing a university degree and being able to communicate in English effectively in such an academic setting. Similarly, EFL learners in this study are undergraduate students who continue to learn English at an academic level at universities, while completing their disciplinary studies in English. Thus, EFL learning for them is of great importance to become competitive members in the globalizing world. However, as argued earlier, although EFL education is now available at earlier stages of schooling, the chronic problem is that the majority of learners come to universities without sufficient language abilities. As a consequence, it becomes a matter of universities to address the problem of learning English as a foreign language (*Türkiye`nin Yükseköğretim Stratejisi* (*Turkey`s Higher Education Strategy*), 2007).

As of 2014, there are approximately 173 universities in Turkey with 101 state and 72 private ones. The medium of instruction is in English in almost all private and few state universities. These universities have one to two-year English language programs for students who cannot pass language proficiency exams offered by each university independently (Study in Turkey, 2012). After complying with English language requirements for the university, students still take academic English courses in the first two years of their university education. Therefore, EFL learners specifically those attending universities with EMI have to communicate in English not only in classrooms but also in other academic settings because they are being instructed in English, and also because they have international instructors and classmates with varying linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds.

One of the very first missions of universities offering EMI in Turkey is to provide quality English language education to students so that they can catch up with most recent ideas or

developments in their academic field all over the world. However, the long-lasting problem

mentioned above is still relevant in the curricula of many universities. Except for few prominent

or top universities in Turkey, most EMI universities supply skill- or grammar-based instruction,

and oral practice is usually given lesser attention. Additionally, EFL instructors at such

universities are usually ELT majors, and sometimes hold an MA degree as well, several in-

service training certificates, and teaching experience. However, the role of L2 pragmatics in

ESL/EFL teacher education programs has not been addressed in Turkey as it has in other

contexts (Cohen, 2008; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005, 2011; Ishihara, 2011; Vasquez & Sharpless,

2009). In that sense, EFL teacher education programs in Turkey should aim to develop pragmatic

competence of pre-service EFL teachers to better address the problem of EFL teaching. As

Taguchi (2011) states, "teacher training is critical because it inevitably influences the ways in

which instructional methods and materials are utilized" (p. 299). In other words, a clear and

sound integration of pragmatics into L2 teacher education curriculum is likely to be related to the

promotion of L2 pragmatic instruction in language classrooms. Similarly, a well-developed

instructional plan for providing L2 teachers with pragmatic content and pedagogic knowledge,

and the exploration of how they construct their knowledge-base in L2 pragmatics are highly

needed for EFL teacher education programs and curriculum in Turkey as well.

Institutional and Spoken Academic Discourse

Institutional discourse refers to task-oriented interactional talk in various institutional

settings. All professionals and other organizational representatives pursue their daily activities

through talk-in-interaction within an assigned physical setting. However, it is not the setting that

determines the institutionality of interaction since people could talk about non-work related

issues in their workplace – and vice versa. For example, physical settings, such as home, could

be a medium of several work-related interactions. What makes talk-in-interaction institutional is the condition that "participants' institutional or professional identities are somehow made relevant to the work activities in which they are engaged" (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p.3-4). Put differently, it is argued that "not all talk at work is work talk" (Schegloff, 1992, p.117). It is mainly how participants conduct or realize interactional goals in certain institutional settings by orienting themselves gradually and systematically to the doing of talk, the relevance of such institutional settings, and how these contribute to the consequences for the ongoing talk (Schegloff, 1992). Therefore, institutional discourse entails how people organize their interactions with regard to the institutional goals, roles/identities, certain understandings of acceptable way of negotiating, as well as the expected outcome of interactions.

Numerous researchers have studied a variety of institutional discourse within diverse areas of disciplines: courtroom testimonies and talk (Gumperz, 1982b; Philips, 1990); job interviews at an employment agency (Kerekes, 2005); and apprenticeship discourse in medicine (Erickson, 1999). These earlier studies often adopt a conversational analytic approach, and types of interactions are mainly goal/task-oriented with an emphasis on the organization or sequence of interaction. Departing from that strand of research, recent studies highlight interpersonal or relational function of institutional discourse, and features mostly narratives and social identity (Dyer & Keller-Cohen, 2000; Holmes, 2005; Marra & Holmes, 2004; Vàsquez, 2007, 2009). These studies primarily analyze interactions between practicing professionals from distinct fields at their workplace interactions. With regard to the scope of this study, the office hour interactions between international instructors and their Turkish EFL students represent the type of institutional discourse in an academic setting. It is the main purpose of this study to understand

how these both parties use the English language in this type of academic and interpersonal communication.

As a type of institutionalized discourse, academic discourse has been predominantly a concern for learners, educators, and researchers because it is "a site of internal and interpersonal struggle for many people, especially for newcomers or novices" (Duff, 2010, p.170). It incorporates both oral, or spoken, and written language and communication, and is typically concomitant with academic communities such as university programs and classrooms. Yet, research on written academic discourse at university level has outweighed spoken academic discourse (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Leki, 1999; Shi, 2004, 2010; Spack, 1997). Similarly, students at most universities in Turkey also participate in diverse types of academic activities (e.g. writing papers, listening to lectures, reading articles, speaking with teachers and classmates, etc.) in English throughout their program. These activities entail a certain level of competency in the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. However, oral discourse and relevant communicative skills remain the most challenging constituents of institutional discourse at university level (Duff, 2010; Limberg, 2007; Tracy, 1997). One possible reason for this could be the situation that novice EFL learners at university programs often lack prior experiences in authentic interactions in English due to the very nature of EFL contexts and mostly grammar-based language teaching in such contexts. Although they reach to certain level of language proficiency, they usually lack experience in using English language outside the classroom. One of such few authentic interactions that take place outside the classroom is their office hour interaction with international instructors in their programs. Therefore, they might have difficulty orienting themselves in English to such authentic interactions framed by institutional constraints.

Discourse of Office Hours

 The type of interactional talk that takes place during office hours at universities is rightfully situated within institutional discourse when we consider the multilayered definition by Drew and Heritage (1992). The three main characteristics of institutional discourse in their definition is summarized as:

 (a) orientations to institutional tasks and functions;

 (b) restrictions on the kinds of contributions to the talk that are, or can be, made; and

 (c) distinctive features of interactional inferences (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p.25).

 From this three-dimensional perspective, interactions in university office hours are closely informed by prevailing goals of instructors and students, and these goals, or tasks, are typically academic. The range of goals might include questions and feedback about projects and papers, feedback on an exam, suggestions for coursework, and administrative issues such as getting a signature (Limberg, 2010; Skyrme, 2010). Interactional practices when the instructor and student come together for feedback might be different from those when a student needs only a signature. In other words, although every office hour interaction may share a core set of similar features or sequences, there is also likely to be some variation due to the nature of the specific purpose of the visit. As Limberg (2007) has identified in the context of Germany, such goal orientations are mostly linked to the topic of office hour encounters, and dissimilar tasks enact relevant institutional constraints (e.g. topic choice and initiation, turn-taking, control of discourse, etc.). Finally, with regard to the third characteristic listed above, interactions in several institutional contexts (e.g. legal, medical, and new-interview settings) signify a refrainment or constraint on the part of professionals with regard to their expression of surprise, sympathy, or agreement (Drew & Heritage, 1992). Similarly, it might be the situation in this study that how

international instructors handle students' questions or requests, and how they react in office hour interactions are constrained by their institutional roles and the expectations from them. These institutional constraints also apply to university student with regard to what to ask and how much support to expect from the instructor.

One additional institutional restriction in office hour interactions is asymmetrical power distribution between the participating parties. Drew and Heritage (1992) underscore that unlike potentially symmetrical relationships between interactants in ordinary conversations, the relationships in institutional talk are asymmetrical. However, rather than social hierarchical status, Drew and Heritage (1992) define such asymmetries by "differential distribution of knowledge, rights to knowledge, access to conversational resources, and to participation in the interaction" (p.49). Within the discourse of medical encounters, Ainsworth-Vaughn (2001) defines power as implementing one's agenda, and notes that it is likely for doctors and patients to have their own agenda for who will speak, when, and about what. This type of power thus eventually has a control over the emerging discourse[2] with regard to its sequence and "major constitutive speech activities" (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 2001, p.454). Similarly, as an academic communicative practice within the framework of expert and novice interaction, office hour interactions might yield a discourse organization accordingly. University students as information/advice-seekers and professors as potential information/advice-givers might present relatively different interactional goals and expectations, or their own agenda, in office hours, which are likely to influence structuring their talk.

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[2] Ainsworth-Vaughn (2001) makes a distinction between the praxis and discourse literature in discourse of medical encounters. While the first one focuses more on medical praxis and involves functional categorization of language, the second one incorporate analysis of talk itself within its situated meaning. What I have mentioned here is the second one, the discourse literature, and the way it views the relevance of power in discourse (also see Ainsworth-Vaughn, 1995, 1998 for a detailed discussion on power and discourse in medical encounters).

In European and US universities, office hours are established practices and a type of speech event. Hymes (1972) points out that speech events are "restricted to activities, or aspects of activities, that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech" (p. 56). In other words, one speech event might encompass one or more speech acts (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion) that refer to the actions done by saying an utterance (Austin, 1962). In other words, joking as a speech act could be embedded within a larger speech event (e.g. a conversation at a party), and might take place in several other speech events as well. Alternatively, Scollon et al. (2012) define a speech event as spoken or written genre with "fairly predictable sets of speech acts, participants, topics, settings, or other regularly occurring and conventional forms"(p.35). Language use has a primary role in speech events not only for disseminating knowledge but also maintaining relationships between interlocutors. Consequently, office hour interactions are considered one type of speech event that takes place at universities and might involve several speech acts performed by students and professors. One such speech act is suggestions made by both parties since the main goal of office hour interactions is to address students' academic concerns.

Interactions during office hours at universities might also be described in terms of Levinson's (1979) notion of 'activity type'. Referring to any culturally recognized activity, Levinson (1979, also see Levinson, 1992) defines activity type as " a fuzzy category whose focal members are goal-defined, socially constituted, bounded, events with *constraints* on participants, setting, and so on, but above all on the kinds of allowable contributions" (p. 368, emphasis in the original). Some prototype examples are a job interview, a jural interrogation, teaching, a dinner party and so on. Levinson (1979) makes a first-order emphasis on the structure of an activity, and argues that structural components of an activity incorporate several sub-sections such as a

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seminar that is consisted of a presentation first and then a follow-up discussion. Each sub-part within an activity could entail a certain set of organizational sequences and be governed by norms such as turn-taking during interactions. Other constraints may include the roles taken by the participants, time and place where the activity occurs, and topic. All these structural rudiments actually relate to the "*goal* of the activity in question, that is the function or functions that members of the society see the activity as having" (Levinson, 1979, p.369, emphasis in the original). Thus, how structural properties of an activity can constrain the (functions of) verbal contributions that is made towards it becomes the central question.

Another crucial aspect of activity types is that there are constraints on allowable contributions as stated in the definition above, which actually refers to the constraints on the functions of utterances. This is what Levinson (1979) puts forward as "a corresponding set of *inferential schemata*" as a reflection of the constraints on contributions in each clearly delineated activity, and these schemata are linked to and originated from the structural properties of the activity (p.371, emphasis in the original). In other words, utterances realize specific functions depending on where they are located in the structural organization of the activity. Understanding these functions and making conversational inferences accordingly relate to the mutual knowledge of interactants, expectations controlling the activity, and more importantly the structural properties of a conversation (Levinson, 1979). For example, an utterance like "Have a seat, please" by a professor in an office hour interaction could serve as an invitation for a student to come into the room and also willingness by the professor for a talk. However, it might serve a slightly different function before an appointment, when uttered by an assistant or secretary, showing that a certain amount of waiting is necessary.

My understanding of office hour interactions in this study is informed by Levinson's (1979) concept of activity type for several reasons. First, such a framework is potentially helpful in explicating the relationship between the structural organization of office hour discourse, and how international instructors and Turkish EFL students use language or manage their interactions accordingly. Indeed, one central question in Levinson's framework is "*in what ways do the structural properties of an activity constrain (especially the functions of it) the verbal contributions that can be made towards it?*" (Levinson, 1979, p.370, emphasis in original). Second, as it has been discussed before, the main characteristics of institutional discourse are well matched with what Levinson (1979) suggests by 'activity type'. The goal, or the central function, of an office hour interaction and institutional constraints on the participants and setting are dynamic properties in the activity of office hours that contribute to how instructors and their students co-construct their office hour interactions in this study (e.g. using and choosing utterances that have certain functions, turn-taking, topic-switch, etc.). In that sense, the notion of activity type is more comprehensive than the notion of speech event. In fact, the latter one can become a sub-part of an activity such as suggestion-response episodes as one speech event in the activity of office hour interactions, and several other speech acts might simultaneously take place in such episodes.

Turning to EFL learners at universities in Turkey, office hour interactions with their international instructors constitute a unique opportunity for resolving their language-related and content-wise problems, and improving their communicative skills in English. University students can utilize office hours with their instructors to become more knowledgeable through consultation and request information on their academic concerns; to maintain relationship with their instructors and gain guidance in course-related matters; and to seek personal recognition

through their encounters with professors (Skyrme, 2010). However, such spoken discourse can be vulnerable to misunderstandings (Chiang, 2011; Davies & Taylor, 2005). As noted by Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001), mismatches in oral communication can originate from deficiencies in language proficiency and production of improper forms; lack of mutually shared background knowledge and varying expectations that are brought to the spoken discourse; and non-correspondence in sociocultural rues of appropriateness possibly because of pragmatic transfer from learners' first language. The fundamental postulation behind any spoken discourse is to communicate ideas, feelings, attitudes, and deliver information appropriately in a particular situation. Thus, being involved in oral communication in English might require an EFL learner in Turkey as well "to constantly improve his or her mastery of linguistic and sociocultural knowledge, while gaining ample experience in spoken communicative interactions, in order to develop useful speech production strategies" (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001, p.721). One such naturally occurring communication space for most EFL learners at universities in Turkey is their office hour encounters with their professors.

The Phases of Office Hour Interactions

In any study of talk-in-interaction, what is being scrutinized is indeed social action (Schegloff, 1986). 'Action' refers to what people can achieve through the talk. In other words, participants use language in their verbal interactions to do things such as requesting, offering, complaining, asking, inviting, etc. However, whether participants talk in their first or foreign/second language, or whether they are proficient or not, it becomes important to understand "certain issues all participants in talk-in-interaction will find themselves dealing with" such as the way of organizing their participation (Schegloff et al., 2002, p.4). This is applicable to office hour discourse as a form of institutional discourse in order to understand how

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participants orient themselves to the conduct of talk in office hours and how they organize their speech activity.

In comparison with other forms of institutional discourse (e.g. medical encounter), the organizational structure of office hour interactions has not been studied abundantly. A few studies, however, propose certain stages or patterns pertinent to office hour interactions at universities. In an earlier study, Carpenter (1983) offers three stages of display, professor's input, and discussion during office hour meetings that are mainly related to course assignments such as term papers. In the display stage, students present the initial plans for the term project, and then during the professor's input stage, the professor makes comments, clarifications, and offers several forms of guidance. In the final stage of discussion, both the professor and students discuss the project and topic together. However, as discussed earlier, office hour interactions might have varying goal-orientations specifically related to topics under discussion, and this usually enacts different choices in discourse strategies and language use and this may, in turn, affect the stages that occur. In that sense, *The Interactional Organization of Academic Talk: Office Hour Consultations* by Limberg (2010) offers a more elaborated discussion of discourse phases of office hour interactions in two German public universities. In what follows, the structural phases of office hour discourse will be presented as discussed by Limberg (2010).

In his study of office hours in the context of Germany, Limberg (2010) suggests four key phases of office hour encounters with pre- and post interactional moves: *opening, presentation of academic concern, the body of the consultation,* and *closing*. These actual phases are preceded by some preliminary preparations, which Limberg (2007) calls a prefacing sequence of summons and answer: The series of such initial actions does not constitute the actual office hour encounter

but they are significant preparations for opening and subsequent phases. Below, Figure 1 presents the proposed main and sub-sequences of office hour interactions.

A summons and answer sequence "is actually the initiator of the interaction" (Schegloff, 1986). The very first summon is the scheduling of an office hour meeting with a professor. Although conducting an office hour is a two-sided communicative activity and a part of professors' responsibilities, it is mostly a voluntary action and call on the part of students to schedule it because the overall goal of such academic encounters is to ultimately address students' concerns, give them information, guide them and solve their problems in their studies. By showing up at the professor's office, students rejoin the call and show their willingness for interaction. It is now the professor's turn to invite a student into his/her office for a further talk. Limberg (2007, 2010) also underscores the fact that the sequence of summons-answer, whether verbal or non-verbal, exists in every office hour encounter and is managed partially by both the professor and institution.

The first phase, *opening*, is manifested through two basic activities of greeting and identification. Greetings are routinized acts in many cultures at the beginning of a social encounter, and examples of activity-specific items that are only used in greetings would be *Hi*! or *Hello*! in English, and *Selam*! or *Merhaba*! in Turkish . Although they may not be always the very first utterances in an interaction, they function as "attention-getting devices" and form "a shared field of interaction" (Duranti, 1997, p.68). Similarly, the greeting exchanges in the opening sequence in the office hour discourse serve two interactional functions: they convey a routinized polite participation in such interactions and acclimatization towards each party involved; and they indicate a mutual recognition of each other. The recognition of the student by the professor is especially important for smoothing the process of getting into a talk about

Pre-interaction
(with summons-answer sequence)

⬇

Opening
(including greetings, initial identification, and
'settling-in' activities such as moving into
the office, taking a seat, etc.)

⬇

Presentation of academic concern
(with request action; possibly introduced by a topic opener)

⬇

The body of the consultation: Identification, discussion, and treatment
(including activities such as informing, advising,
discussing, and giving feedback)

⬇

Reopening of the topic talk

⬇

Wrapping-up talk

⬇

Closing
(consisting of a ritual exchange of solicitudes, good-byes;
preceded by a pre-closing)

⬇

Post-interaction
(about the same topic; e.g. in another office hour,
in class, via email)

Figure 1. The phases of office hour consultations. (from Limberg, 2010, p.347)

academic business. Thus, the exchange of greetings and identification of and by participants are

intertwined since greeting each other already claims recognition of other person (Schegloff,

1986).

Identification takes place in two forms by either a visual recognition of the student by the

professor, or a verbal self-introduction by the student. Most often, professors recall students

when they see their faces so identification of students does not necessarily involve addressing

students' names explicitly at the very beginning. Yet, it is a part of students' accountability to

ensure the professor has recognized them so that each party can set the expectations clearly

before they start sketching out the academic concern at hand (Limberg, 2007, 2010). The

following excerpt displays one instance of the opening phase in the German context:

EXCERPT 1[3]:

STUDENT: Hello mr *name* Hi
TEACHER: Hello
STUDENT: How're you doing? (closes the door)
TEACHER: I'm doing fine (takes a few notes) How are [you doing today]
STUDENT: [(°xxx°)]
            (0.8)
            Fine too
            (1.2)
TEACHER: Goo::d okay
STUDENT: U:[:h]
TEACHER: [i] know why you're here

(from Limberg, 2007)

In Excerpt 1, the activities of greeting and identification are shown to be inseparable by the very

first line where the student greets the teacher by his name. Although the teacher does not call the

student by his name, the last line shows a mutual recognition of each other has already taken

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[3] Symbols in the transcription : *name*--conceals the name of the teacher; [text] --speech overlap; ° --
whisper; (xxx) --unclear speech; (0.8) --pause; : --prolonged sound.

place and also makes overt statement about his expectations about the student's office hour visit (Limberg, 2007).

In the *presentation of academic concern*, professors and students make an interactional transition to the focal academic matter of office hour talk. It is conjointly structured and constructed by two parties, and involves several interactional moves. The task-oriented nature of office hour interactions ratifies the proposition that such encounters are mainly for addressing students' academic affairs, and fulfilling their requests with an effective handling of their academic problems. Therefore, it is expected and assumed that the student will take an initiative role in outlining the matter to be discussed especially in the absence of any overt verbal hint on the part of the professor. They can make the necessary verbal effort to present their focus for the current academic business, which leaves room for students' own decision-making for prioritizing a topic they want to bring up. However, professors can also perform the interactional move for the topical presentation in an office hour depending on the institutional constraints (e.g. time, social roles, expectations, etc.). For example, one such conventionally used "opener" by professors is the open-ended question "*What can I do for you?*" in the discourse of university office hours (Limberg, 2010, p.138). Such an utterance encompasses both organizational and pragmatic functions by implying a transition to the actual segment of office hour consultations; proving availability on the part of the professor; and showing that introduction of an academic concern is expected.

As the pivotal interactional part of office hours, *the body of consultations* can be more complex and might involve various communicative activities during the unfolding of interactions. However, as Limberg (2010) emphasizes, the interactional and organizational complexity of office hours is closely related to the topic, or concern, that is being brought to

attention. He further discusses three types of students' concern that directly influence the organizational sequence of office hour interactions not only as constraints but also affordances in the course of interaction. These categories are mainly organizational and administrative issues, course- and exam-focused concerns, and overall counseling. Within each topical category, students and professors may go through diverse set of activities and prefer discourse strategies accordingly depending on the goal-orientation of a certain office hour interaction (e.g. receiving feedback on an assignment, seeking advice for a project, or asking for a signature).

One of the key points during these discourse activities is to ensure that a clear understanding of academic matter has been maintained by the professor once it has been outlined by either the student or professor himself (Limberg, 2007). In order to accomplish this, professors undertaking office hours can first ask questions, or perform other interactional moves, to elicit more details and background knowledge about students' academic concerns at the center of attention. Additionally, questioning and answering by advisors or professors in *the body of consultations* might be supportive rather than explicitly telling students what to do (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993; Erickson & Shultz, 1982; He, 1994). As central to the communicative practices in institutional discourse, questioning endorses and reflects institutional goals and values (Tracy & Robles, 2009). However, when advisors, or professors, and students have incompatible goals, motivations, and expectations, students might, for instance, readily take such guiding questions literally as simply yes/no questions. The following excerpt shows how a nonnative student in the US context does so although the advisor uses questions as an invitation to provide a suggestion:

EXCERPT 2:

ADVISOR: Ah,…so what, what courses are, are you planning to do applied linguistics?
STUDENT: Yeah. An … MA?

ADVISOR: MA.
STUDENT: Degree, yeah.
ADVISOR: All right. Uh, what courses, had, *have you looked at the program yet*?
STUDENT: Yeah, I … I looked at the program, and I, I wrote I, I am interest in TESOL
program especially, soon.   Yeah.
ADVISOR: um-hm   *So ah have you looked at the courses that are*
offered this spring?
STUDENT: um-hm
ADVISOR: I think what you would want to take would be ….. L511, which is the…
[papers rustling] ….uh….
STUDENT: Yeah, applied |transformational| English grammar.
ADVISOR: |applied transformational| That's correct.

(from Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993, emphasis in original)

In this advising interaction, questions such as 'What do you want to take?' and 'Have you

looked at the program yet?' by the advisor have a pragmatic function of facilitating student-

initiated suggestions. However, the two instances of implicit requests for suggestion by the

advisor are not recognized as such by the student Later, the advisor himself/herself end up

making a suggestion (e.g. *I think what you would want to take would be ….. L511*) and the

student accepts it (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993).

The question-response sequence for encouraging student-initiated suggestions is not the

only discursive strategy that could take place during *the body of consultations*. Many other

interactional exchanges for securing clarity will immediately lead to a better problem-solving

process in office hour consultations, which also involves a considerable amount of negotiation.

The complexity of the topic could increase the degree of necessity to negotiate not only the

academic concerns but also roles and relationships whereby appropriate language use plays a

central role. If students are not able to communicate their academic concerns or needs lucidly, or

if professors lack clarity in what she/he should do to help students, their interactions might go

through a communication breakdown, or miscommunication, without offering interactively

achieved solutions to students. Thus, the interactional segment of office hours where an

academic need is met is intertwined with this initial negotiations and discussions on the topic. Once a solution is offered, it should be agreed upon by the other party and conceded that it is a sufficiently relevant solution for academic matter at hand. Such an acceptance episode usually precedes the closing of an office hour interaction (Limberg, 2010).

The final phase of office hour interactions, the *closing*, starts with acceptance of proposed solution to the academic issue as discussed above. This pre-closing sequence might lead to either an absolute closing or "wrapping-up talk" by summarizing what has been discussed and making future arrangements (Limberg, 2010, p.303). The finalizing acts in office hour interactions conventionally include minimal exchanges of 'goodbyes' and expressions of gratitude (e.g. Thanks!). Such closing exchanges comply with what Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) discusses as "unelaborated closings" where the student does not introduce a new topic and simply expresses gratitude followed by a terminal exchanges of 'bye bye' (p.100). However, if it goes in the direction of wrapping-up talk, it allows more opportunities to initiate a reopening for a subtopic subsequent to the main concern or topic. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) observed opening-up-the-closing occurrences in 24 of 31 advising sessions in their data through post-session talk. Although it was often the student who opened the new conversation, there are two constraints on whether such reopenings are justified by advisors or not: topic and time. First, not every topic might relate to the goal of advising sessions and some aspect of university life. In such situations, advisors do not usually warrant the topic and might listen to students' concern but do not engage in any conversation. Second, re-openings or starting a new topic is also closely related to time restrictions. If there is not enough time, advisors might again end sessions. Figure 1 on page 19 provides a summary of the phases of office hour consultations.

Statement of Problem

Institutional discourse as a form of social organization provides explanation for several aspects of pragmatics such as linguistic choices and their functions, overall structural organization of interactions as well as establishing and maintaining social relations (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). The goal-orientations, tasks, institutional rules and roles, interlocutors' expectations, asymmetrical power distribution, timing, and topic as previously brought to the attention in this chapter do respectively contribute to the context of talk, and influence how interactants understand and interpret each other's utterances. In that sense, it is the "context-dependency of talk" within institutional interactions (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999, p.31) that provides the major link to the study of pragmatics within these education contexts. Language itself entails and affords contexts for talk as suggested by Duranti and Goodwin (1992) as one of the four dimensions of context. Thus, how interlocutors use language, make their linguistic choices, and negotiate their meaning is constrained and informed by their sociocultural knowledge regarding their institutional settings. For example, every institution is consisted of shared habitual practices, or routines, that are relevant to the conception of institutionally appropriate code of conduct; and certain interactions necessitate and are nested in such procedural knowledge (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). Consequently, participants form and interpret their utterances, and organize their speech activity according to their corresponding sociocultural knowledge-base. Therefore, how and to what extent such sociocultural norms in social groups, or speech communities, are reflected through linguistic choices becomes necessary to understand discourse strategies and situated interpretations in institutional interactions (Gumperz, 1982c).

Considering EFL learners in this study, involvement in institutional discourse and interacting with their international instructors can be a challenging process throughout their pragmatic development. First of all, participating in office hours might be a new academic practice for some university students and requires a certain amount of time and experience in order to orient themselves to such spoken communicative activities. In other words, the process of language socialization or enculturation into local discursive practices might be complicated for newcomers (Duff, 2010; Tracy, 1997). Second, institutional interactions are different from ordinary conversations (Agar, 1985; Erickson & Schultz, 1982), and advising sessions or office hour interactions necessitate both macro- and micro-level pragmatic competence. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) emphasize that students participating in the closing of an advising session must know how to close a conversation and be able to interpret linguistic signals appropriately such as advisor's summary of a schedule followed by a pause. They also must know about appropriate timing and (non)allowable topics during advising sessions. Additionally, nonnative speakers' ability to use language appropriately in specific situations during academic sessions is "markedly different from' native speakers (Bardovi-Harlig, 1993, p.302). As a consequence, the differences or mismatches between native and nonnative speakers' pragmatic comprehension and realizations might result in miscommunication and thus jeopardize nonnative speakers' intentions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990; Kasper, 1997). This could even be more demanding for Turkish EFL students as language learners when they participate in authentic discourse such as office hour interactions with their international instructors for some reasons. First, office hour interactions involve multiple pragmatic features simultaneously taking place (e.g. asking questions, making a request, and giving advice, etc.) (Barlovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005), and this requires certain level of pragmatic awareness or competence. Furthermore,

specifically first-year Turkish EFL university students might not be quite familiar with academic and institutional norms, roles, and expectations, and thus possibly experience difficulty in determining how-to-express-what in office hour interactions.

Another reason for miscommunication or pragmatic failure is that interactants may also come from varying sociocultural and linguistic background (Davies & Tyler, 2005; Gumperz, 1982c) as it pertains to the interactions between native and nonnative speakers of English in this study. For example, Davies and Tyler's (2005) discourse analysis of an interaction between a Korean international teaching assistant (ITA) and an American undergraduate student has revealed the role of different cultural background and expectations in the use of discourse strategies. Similarly, existing research on office hour interactions evidently indicates that some instances of interactions between ITAs and American students might become problematic (e.g. in the question-answer exchanges) and several reformulations might be needed on the part of native speakers to elicit a fulfilling response (Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Skyrme, 2010).

Finally, it is also important to consider fact that the major pathway to learn English in EFL contexts as in Turkey are the instructional programs as discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Overall, language teaching programs in Turkey are mostly form-based and linguistic proficiency oriented. Thus, Turkish EFL learners completing such instructional programs have advanced level of language proficiency but might lack practice or experience in real time interactions. One of the possible reasons for this problem could be explained by the discrepancy between language textbooks used in such programs and authentic interactions as observed in Crandall and Basturkmen (2004), Gilmore (2004), Jiang (2006), and Vellenga (2004). In other words, because English is mainly taught by formal language instruction in EFL settings, learners should be provided adequate possibilities or situations to practice or use language in authentic

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communicative activities in these programs. Otherwise, participating in oral communication will eventually become a source of anxiety for them, and will even prevent them from displaying their actual language abilities (Subaşı, 2010). Paradoxically though, it is essential for language learners to have well-developed pragmatic competence to be able to communicate in their second/foreign language (Kasper, 1997), which constitutes an equally valid assumption for EFL learners in Turkey as well.

Purpose of the Study

In this introduction chapter, I have presented overall EFL education in Turkey and underlined the importance of pragmatic competence for university students specifically within office hour interactions. I have broadly discussed institutional and spoken academic discourse by highlighting various elements influential in such institutional interactions such as goal-orientation, topics and tasks, institutional constraints, and power-related issues. By situating office hour interactions within institutional discourse, I have framed it through speech events and activity types, and presented some potential discursive acts. Finally, I have presented the phases of office hours as discussed in existing literature and described how each phase requires EFL learners to have certain linguistic and sociocultural knowledge as well as communicative abilities.

In what follows, drawing upon what has been presented so far in this chapter, I will elucidate the purpose and context of this research. The main focus of this study is on office hour interactions between university level Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors with L1 and cultural background other than Turkish. Although office hour interactions have received some attention in US and German contexts, to date this topic has not yet been studied in the Turkish context. Considering the role of English and growing practice of EMI in Turkey,

such authentic interactions are becoming more common at universities specifically in big cities where international context through international faculty, students, and activities is facilitated. Thus, this study is interesting in the sense that it provides insights into a genuine communicative activity between international instructors and Turkish EFL students in academic setting and more importantly how they use language in such real interactions. Understanding language use in office hour interactions is also a first-hand access to Turkish EFL learners' pragmatic competence in university setting through their linguistic realizations in authentic communication.

In that sense, the present study first investigates the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors in university setting. Drawing upon these primary topics and functions, the study then examines the discourse organization of office hour interactions with regard to the features of participants' contributions (e.g. turn-taking and turn length, verbosity or dominance, etc.). As the core focus of study, it is also the major goal to analyze the speech act of suggestions in these office hour interactions through the lens of relational work (see Chapter 2 for relevant theoretical framework and empirical studies). When we consider the premise that office hour interactions are mainly for dealing with students' concerns, the speech act of suggestions is more likely to come into play throughout these interactions, making this type of speech act crucial aspect of understanding language use and pragmatic competence. Thus, the study examines how Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors co-construct the sequences of talk where suggestions are initiated, linguistically realized, and responded. Finally, the study also explores successful and problematic aspects while jointly constructing office hour interactions.

In relation to office hour interactions, it is likely that Turkish EFL learners in this study need to access to their communicative competence more than in other forms of academic

interactions (e.g. classroom setting) and exhibit a higher level of pragmatic competence for an effective conveyance or negotiation of meaning. This is mainly because they use English in authentic communication with their international instructors, which is potentially challenging due to the fact that it is naturally occurring. Additionally, aligning with previous work, understanding of office hour interactions in this study as a form of institutional discourse relies on the conception that such interactions are "being reconstructed, maintained, or altered by the participants through a range of specific interactive work rather than as a static layer of institutional features on top of interactional details" (He, 1994, p. 301). However, they are not solely locally situated in the interaction itself but also framed by a larger institutional order and contribute to the achievement of institutional goals. That is, office hour interactions are dynamic and involve discursive linguistic practices both by the instructors and the students. Yet, remembering the expert-novice relationship or asymmetric power in terms of knowledge distribution, such practices imposes usually more on Turkish EFL earners since they still acquire certain aspects of English language. Finally, office hour interactions are not constitutionally the same with some other formally structured institutional settings such as a courtroom or a press conference where discursive acts are customarily preallocated depending on participants' institutional roles (He, 1994). In that sense, office hours have certain structural organization, as presented in the phases of office hour section of this chapter but might be much more complex than other types of institutional discourse in terms of language use and discourse strategies.

Research Questions

In order to shed light on the importance of office hour discourse and understand language use in Turkey, the following research questions guide this study:

1. What are the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions? How do these functions and topics influence the discourse organization of office hour interactions?

2. How do Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors co-construct suggestion-response episodes in English during their office hour interactions?

3. What are the successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors? What functions may relate to their success and problems?

Significance of the Study

With the increasing number of universities in the last two and a half decades, higher education in Turkey has gone through changes and challenges as regard with the nature, structure, and scope of universities. The highly competitive environment in the job market has led to more demands on higher education as well as increase in the number of students (Tural, 2007). In a similar vein, knowing a foreign language, primarily English, has become one major expectation for university graduates in Turkey. By studying Turkish EFL learners' language use in institutional settings, this study will provide insights into how undergraduate students communicate in their foreign language. This is important because understanding specifically how Turkish EFL learners use language in real communicative activities informs not only language learners but also language pedagogy or instruction in Turkey and similar EFL contexts.

Additionally, this study contributes to research on interlanguage pragmatics in authentic interactions. Institutional discourse is a very source of spontaneous or authentic discourse that entails interactivity and consequentiality (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). In other words, participants take turns and have a real-world outcome, or a consequence, in communicative activities in institutional settings. This study examines how Turkish EFL learners

and their international instructors use language in such authentic or naturally occurring conversations with a specific focus on the speech act of suggestion, and contribute to the understanding of linguistic politeness in a certain discourse community. It has to be noted that making suggestions in office hour interactions is an integral part of such communicative activity as discussed earlier in this chapter. In other words, certain activities yield certain speech acts more because of the broader goals of such activities. Additionally, depending on the content, purpose, expectations, and roles of the participants in office hour interactions, making suggestions might require various linguistic strategies to appropriately communicate. In addition to such pragmalinguistic competence specifically on the part of Turkish EFL learners in office hour interactions, the role of social context is also of great importance in the study of pragmatics. Thus, it is necessary to find ways to conduct research into interlanguage pragmatics in natural interactions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005; Tarone, 2005).

Definition of Terms

Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YOK, Higher Education Council): YOK is the higher education council in Turkey, and regulates university education at all levels (e.g. undergraduate, graduate, vocational schools, etc.). Since the enactment of Turkish Constitutional Law in 1982, the council has become the only responsible institution for the higher education in Turkey. Thus, the council governs all the universities in Turkey with their faculties, institutes, conservatoires, and all other types of higher education schools.

International Instructors: The international instructors in this study are non-Turkish university instructors who teach English for academic purposes (EAP) at undergraduate level. They are officially hired by the Turkish universities as full-time instructors.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework: Speech Act Theory and Politeness as an Access to Pragmatic Competence

With the emergence of communicative competence, second language acquisition (SLA) research began to take into account interactional and social aspects of language ability (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1991). The earliest model of communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980) proposes four areas of knowledge and skill: *grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence,* and *strategic competence*. *Grammatical competence* is concerned with mastery of the language code (verbal-nonverbal), which incorporates features and rules of language like vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling, and linguistic semantics. Grammatical competence emphasizes the knowledge and skill necessary to grasp and express correctly the literal meaning of utterances. *Sociolinguistic competence* refers to both sociocultural rules of use/discourse. Sociolinguistics competence addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in divergent sociolinguistic contexts in relation to such factors as social status of participants and purposes of interaction. *Discourse competence* is related to mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres. *Strategic competence* consists of mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to compensate for breakdowns in communication and to enhance the effectiveness of communication (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980).

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Although pragmatic competence is addressed within mostly in sociolinguistics competence in Canale and Swain's (1980) model, Bachmann (1990) has provided a clearer categorization of language competence. *Pragmatic competence* and *organizational competence* constitute the two major areas of Bachman's (1990) model of language competence. Whereas organizational competence refers to the knowledge of linguistic rules at a sentence level and incorporates grammatical and discourse (textual) knowledge, pragmatic competence involves both illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence. In other words, pragmatic competence includes both knowledge of communicative action as well as how to implement it, and knowledge of context to use language appropriately.

These two facets of pragmatic competence also resonate with the distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics by Leech (1983). Pragmalinguistics refers to linguistic resources for conducting communicative acts and relational or interpersonal meanings. Pragmatic strategies, such as directness/indirectness, routines, and several linguistic forms that can be used to escalate or mitigate communicative acts, represent these linguistic resources. Sociopragmatics is concerned with "the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action" situated in a certain social context (Kasper, 1997, p.1). For example, language learners' knowledge of available semantic formulas (e.g. *I can't lend you my car for the weekend*) and lexis to refuse a request in the target language is associated with pragmalinguistic aspects. However, sociolinguistic aspects refer to the ability to assess whether such a refusal strategy is appropriate or not with regard to contextual factors in that specific interaction. These two aspects of pragmatic competence are central to this study of suggestions in office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students.

In examining suggestions in office hour interactions, this study explores such pragmalinguistic and socipragmatic aspects by linguistically demonstrating how these two facets of pragmatic competence are intertwined in the realization of this speech act. As it has been briefly brought up in the previous section, Turkish EFL students at EMI universities are supposed to have pragmatic competence in English not only for in-class interactions but also other forms of academic interactions outside the class. As one essential type of such interactions, office hour discourse might be challenging for them while they try to convey their meaning to their international instructors, seek a solution to their academic problems, and communicate throughout the tasks in hand. This usually requires awareness of and competence in both linguistic resources and social context. In other words, Turkish EFL students are expected to display pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge and also orient themselves to the institutional norms throughout their interactions with their international instructors. Thus, in this study, office hour interactions are considered as a socially situated speech activity and constrained by institutional goals, roles/relationships, as well as the purpose and type of task.

That said, it needs to be clearly stated that it is essential for foreign and second language learners to have well-developed pragmatic competence to be able to communicate in their second/foreign language (Kasper, 1997). As the key concept in this study, pragmatic competence has been operationalized by utilizing certain theories and perspectives. Thus, the notion of pragmatic competence in this study entails three main facets: a) speech act theory, b) im/politeness from the perspectives of relational work, and c) institutional discourse. Since the main tenets of institutional discourse have already been argued in the previous chapter to frame office hour interactions, the main focus in this section of theoretical framework is, therefore, on the first two layers.

In what follows then, I first provide a brief overview of speech act theory and how it contributes to my understanding in this study. Then, I sketch out key tenets of relational work as a recent theory of im/politeness that underpin my theoretical conceptualization in this study. Prior to that, I provide an overview of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory as one of the most influential earlier models to pinpoint both similarities and differences between these two approaches to politeness. As O'Keeffe et al. (2011) put it, "no consideration of theories of linguistic politeness or impoliteness, or indeed pragmatics in general, can proceed without a full understanding of the building blocks used to construct it" (p.80). Thus, it is crucial to be aware of insights from different disciplines and their contributions to the understanding of these two distinct models of politeness.

Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory is attributed to two philosophers, J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle. The central assumption of speech acts is doing by saying, or speakers can do several things by words and sentences. According to Austin (1962), there are three levels of speech act analysis: the *locutionary act*, *illocutionary act*, and *perlocutionary act*. The *locutionary act* is the production of a meaningful linguistic expression. In other words, it is the act of saying a certain word, phrase, or a sentence with a particular meaning, and mainly an issue of form and what is said. The *illocutionary act* is the function speakers aim to accomplish while producing the words or utterances, such as promising, requesting, apologizing, joking, ordering, refusing, and thanking. The same illocutionary act can be performed through various locutionary acts. The following examples demonstrate how the speech act of request is accomplished in different ways:

(At ticket office in railway station)
a. A day return ticket to Oxford, please.
b. Can I have a day return ticket to Oxford, please?
c. I'd like a day return ticket to Oxford.

<div align="right">(Huang, 2007, p.103)</div>

The third facet of speech acts, the *perlocutionary act*, refers to the effects of the utterance or linguistic expression on the addressee. Therefore, a perlocutionary act designates a consequence of an illocutionary act.

Although the differences between the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act are not usually clear in practice, it is still possible to provide a conceptual distinction between the illocutionary force of an act and what the addressee does as a result. First of all, it is the speaker who aims an illocutionary act whereas the speaker has no control over a perlocutionary act. Second, an intended illocutionary act is evident in the speaker's words or utterance but this does not warrant a perlocutionary act. That is, the recognition of the illocutionary force of the speech act by the hearer, which is also called 'uptake', might be a success or a failure. A successful uptake does not necessarily mean the hearer takes an action. Rather, it is the recognition of the function of speech act by the hearer. For example, if the hearer takes the speech act of offer as an offer, it is the successful uptake of the illocutionary force of that utterance but whether the hearer accepts the offer or not is a perlocutionary act (Allot, 2010; Cutting, 2008; Huang, 2007).

In his work *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin (1962) also expands on five categories of speech acts: *verdictives, exercitives, commissives, expositives*, and *behavitives*. His classification, however, has been criticized for the emphasis on illocutionary verb rather than the purpose of act itself. Among several attempts to reconceptualize Austin's speech act classification is Searle's (1969) typology of speech acts as the most influential one. Searle (1969) categorizes speech acts into five types: *representatives, directives, commissives, expressives,* and

declarations. Among these five categories of speech acts, *directives* are the most relevant one to this study. By definition, *directives* are the speech acts by which the speaker attempts to make the addressee do something such as advice or suggestions, commands, orders, questions, and requests. By using a directive, the speaker expresses his/her desire for the addressee to do something. (Allot, 2010; Cutting, 2008; Huang, 2007).

A great deal of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) research on speech acts has been conducted in linguistics with a main focus on illocutionary acts and force. Their common goal is usually to form taxonomy of these illocutionary acts or types. These studies have studied several speech acts such as apologies (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Kondo, 1997; Olshtain & Cohen, 1990), compliments (Rose & Ng, 2001), requests (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Otcu & Zeyrek, 2008; Schauer, 2009), refusals (Beebe et al., 1990; Chang, 2009; Wannaruk, 2008), and complaints (Trosborg, 1995). Basically, these studies examine the notion of linguistic politeness through the use of direct and indirect strategies, and show how speech act research intersects with politeness by mostly hinging on direct and indirect politeness strategies. The studies on refusals, for instance, were able to trace the instantiations of negative transfer from EFL learner's L1 in refusals strategy choices (Beebe et al., 1990; Wannaruk, 2008). Similarly, the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students might possibly employ several speech acts during office hour interactions, and one of them is the speech act of suggestions. Considering the role of office hour interactions at universities (e.g. to find a solution to an academic concern), suggestions become the salient aspect of these authentic interactions; and seems to be a key to understand how both the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students realize linguistic politeness in office hour discourse. Thus, I now turn to politeness strategies, the notion

of face, and other main aspects of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, which has informed speech act and linguistic politeness research in the last two decades.

Politeness: Brown and Levinson Model

Researchers have made several attempts to provide a detailed account of linguistic politeness and its manifestations. Fraser (1990) outlines four major perspectives on what constitutes politeness: the social-norm view; the conversational-maxim view (Grice, 1975; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983); the face-saving view (Brown & Levinson, 1987); and the conversational-contract view (Fraser, 1975). Amidst these theories of politeness, Brown and Levinson's model has flourished remarkably in the last two or more decades. Many studies have employed their model as a theoretical framework in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics research. It is necessary to acknowledge that Brown and Levinson's seminal work has contributed immensely to our understanding of pragmatic competence and specifically politeness strategies used by both the native speakers and learners of a language from a varying linguistic and cultural background.

The characterization of their model draws mainly upon Goffman's (1967) notion of face and their definition asserts that face is "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p.61). In his oft-cited definition, Goffman (1967) considers face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (p. 5). Face is "an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (Goffman, 1967, p.5). Although there is an emphasis on self-image and self-representations both in Brown and Levinson's and Goffman's definition of face, the first one considers it essentially attributed to individual whereas the latter views it more of a discursively constructed social attribution in each interaction. In other words,

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'the line others assume' in Goffman's definition indicates the context-boundedness and expectations of a certain kind of behavior from the speakers (Dippold, 2009; Locher & Watts, 2005; Mao, 1994).

Brown and Levinson (1987) further conceptualize face or face-wants that individuals attribute to each other in two aspects: *negative face* and *positive face*. Negative face denotes to the claim for freedom of action and freedom from imposition. Positive face refers to a positive self-image and the desire of that self-image for being appreciated and approved by others. In interpersonal communication, maintenance of positive face is closely linked to the desire or need for acknowledgement that we are liked, accepted and understood by others in a speech community. On the other hand, from the viewpoint of negative face, people want to be independent in their actions rather than being imposed by others. The consideration of negative and positive face in everyday interactions thus influences linguistic behavior. Therefore, speech actions that threaten or do not respect speakers' and hearers' face-wants are considered face-threatening acts (FTAs). For example, some specific speech acts such as orders, requests, advice, and suggestions are considered to be face-threatening for the hearer's negative face since these speech acts impose on the hearer and impede the hearer's freedom of action. Other speech acts such as expressing thanks or gratitude, and apologies are more likely to be FTAs for the speaker because they assert imposition to the speaker's negative face. In that sense, Brown and Levinson (1987) consider linguistic politeness as mainly mitigation of FTAs and make a distinction between polite and impolite behavior.

They also offer five communicative choices, or superstrategies, for the performance of FTAs with an emphasis on directness and indirectness: *off record*, *bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness,* and *avoidance of FTAs*. Above all, speakers first have to decide

whether or not to perform the FTA. If they decide to say something, they can either go on record or off record. The strategy of performing a FTA *off record* means doing or expressing it indirectly. For example, when someone needs help for finding a website, she/he can simply talk to herself/himself 'where on earth this website is. I wish I could remember the address'. Although such an act seems a question that the speaker is asking himself/herself, it might be interpreted as an indirect request for help by the hearer (Cutting, 2008). Metaphor, irony, rhetorical questions, understatements, or hints also constitute strategies of performing a FTA off record (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). Second, if speakers go *bald on record,* they need to perform a FTA either with or without *redressive action.* In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, redressive action relates to speakers' modification of their utterances to satisfy hearers' face-needs. Thus, redressive action involves mitigation of a FTA. However, if speakers go bald on record without redressive action, they do not mitigate or downtone their utterances. Brown and Levinson (1987) consider it *bald FTA*, which usually takes place in intimate relations (e.g. family interactions).

Positive politeness lessens the social distance and attends to the hearer's positive face-wants. It is a strategy for maintaining solidarity by showing approval, sympathy, and using more friendly addressives (e.g. sweetie, honey, etc.). Brown and Levinson (1987) lists 15 strategies to avoid threatening positive face, and some are paying attention to a hearer's interests, wants, or needs; using in-group identity markers; avoiding disagreement; joking; giving (or asking for) reasons; and assuming reciprocity. *Negative politeness* incorporates avoidance of imposing on the hearer's negative face-wants, and acknowledges the hearer's freedom of action. While using negative politeness strategies, speakers aim to create and keep a social distance with other interlocutors. Finally, *avoidance of FTA* refers to not doing a FTA, and is considered the least threatening strategy.

At this point, it has to be articulated that some central notions in Brown and Levinson's (1987) linguistic politeness framework are relevant to this study. Similar to their conceptualizations of FTAs and mitigation of such acts, the speech act of suggestions is a FTA since the speaker imposes on the hearer even though it is for the hearer's benefit or advantage. Depending on the social context and roles as well as the relationship between the interlocutors, making suggestions might involve different degrees of mitigation. In that sense, when we consider the expert-novice roles of the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study, how they make suggestions might require different linguistic choices and mitigation strategies in their office hour interactions.

Recent literature, however, highlights several caveats with respect to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and reconceptualizes politeness with an emphasis on their notion of face (Dippold, 2009; Kasper, 1990; Locher, 2004; Locher & Watts, 2005, 2008; Mao, 1994; Watts, 2003). It has been acknowledged that their politeness theory has contributed immensely to research on ILP, and it would not be possible to consider the concept of politeness in depth without Brown and Levinson's theory. The comprehensiveness and thoroughness of their conceptualization of politeness has given a wide range of insights into human behavior, which has not been offered by any other theory yet. Nevertheless, Locher and Watts (2005) claim that despite its solid description, Brown and Levinson's theory is mainly a theory of facework and concerned with the strategies for mitigation of FTAs, rather than a theory of politeness (Locher & Watts, 2005). Another assertion is that more emphasis on speakers' face-wants and actions in Brown and Levinson model ignores hearers' assessment despite the discussion of negative and positive face of hearers. Consequently, it has been claimed that its top-down strategy-based approach neglects speakers' perceptions of social situation (Dippold,

2009; Mao, 1994). In other words, it is not solely individuals' linguistic utterances but social context that makes interlocutors evaluate whether it is polite or impolite language. This may change from one language or culture to another, even a group of people to another, rather than inherently possessed by linguistic choices. Thus, as a new way of conceptualizing facework, Locher and Watts (2005) propose relational work with an emphasis on "discursive dispute" in which interlocutors reproduce forms of behavior and evaluate these forms along the continuum of polite/politic/appropriate and impolite/non-politic/impolite verbal behavior (p.16). The next section will provide an overview of relational work with its main tenets that inform the understanding of linguistic politeness in this study.

Im/Politeness: Relational Work

One of the most intriguing aspects of Locher and Watt's (2005) relational work is that their reconceptualization of facework is in the form of a continuum of verbal behavior. Unlike Brown and Levinson's (1987) model that makes a distinction between polite and impolite language, this continuum incorporates both polite/appropriate and impolite/inappropriate forms of social behavior (Locher, 2004). Embracing Goffman's perspective, Locher and Watts (2005) argue that interactants are involved in the negotiation of face in any interpersonal interaction. However, participants will perceive and evaluate such relational work that is situated in the social context of interpersonal interaction as polite or impolite only if it is a marked, or salient, behavior. There are both negatively and positively marked behavior. Negatively marked behavior can be evaluated as either "impolite/non-politic/inappropriate", or "over-polite/non-politic/inappropriate (Locher & Watts, 2005, p.11). Put differently, the perception of impolite behavior by the addressee will be similar to his/her perception of over-polite behavior. By the same token, positively marked behavior will be assessed as polite/politic/appropriate. However,

Locher and Watts (2005) underline the lack of clear boundaries between these categories since polite behavior is always politic but politic behavior can be non-polite depending on the social context of the interaction. For example, it is possible to use the utterances '*Pass it to me*!' and '*Could you please pass it to me*?' in different interactions. At a first glance, the first expression would sound too direct but be appropriate, and it would not be impolite in a routinized dinner with family members. Similarly, the second utterance first would sound more polite but would only be appropriate with someone socially distant rather than a family member. Therefore, the utterances might be too direct and sound less polite but appropriate in many social contexts, or vice versa. The discussion of politeness as a discursive concept and its negotiation by the participants in a social context is the underlying idea of what Locher and Watts (2005) propose in their 'relational work' framework.

In their discussion of politeness, Locher and Watts (2005) define it "as a discursive concept arising out of interactants' perceptions and judgments of their own and others' verbal behavior" (p.10). Emphasizing the importance of seeking new ways of conceptualizing linguistic politeness, they argue that speakers and addressees work together for a common understanding among themselves in their interactional exchanges. Thus, employing a discursive approach to politeness encompasses not only the speakers' production of specific utterances but also the hearers' evaluations and interpretations within longer fragments in genuine interactions rather than short examples produced by the researchers (Kádár & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2010). Watts (2003) elucidates such verbal interaction as:

> An utterance made by a speaker and directed at an addressee is a social act, and an addressee deriving a set of inferences from that utterance to enable her/him to respond some ways is carrying out another kind of social act. But both acts are essential to socio-

communicative verbal interaction, and both acts are embedded in the ongoing emergent

development of an interpersonal relationship. The goal of a theory of linguistic

politeness…..should aim to explain *how* all the interactants engaged in an ongoing verbal

interaction negotiate the development of emergent networks and evaluate their own

position and the positions of others within those networks (p.271).

The work that is involved in the negotiating of the relationships with others and in the

doing of these social acts as described is what relational work refers to in the conceptualization

of politeness by Locher and Watts (2005), and politeness constitutes just a small portion of this

relational work. Thus, within the whole continuum of verbal behavior ranging from direct,

impolite, or rude interaction to polite one, relational work comprehensively includes both

appropriate and inappropriate forms of social behavior. These appropriate and inappropriate

forms can be understood by examining how interlocutors negotiate their expectations in the

ongoing talk (Locher, 2004; Locher & Watts, 2005). From a perspective of relational work, such

an understanding requires either metapragmatic comments or post hoc evaluations of the hearers

to index their perceptions or judgments of what is appropriate or polite in the ongoing talk.

In a similar vein, another main principle of relational work is embedded in its openness to

varying interpretations in the unfolding of verbal interaction across situations, languages, and

cultures. Watts (2003) calls such various interpretations of politeness and impoliteness "folk

interpretations" or "lay interpretations" (p.4). Thus, the emphasis on folk/lay interpretations of

im/politeness is articulated through a distinction between the terms of first-order (politeness1)

and second-order (politeness2) politeness (Locher, 2006; Watts, 2003; Watts et al., 1992). First-

order politeness is defined as "the various ways in which polite behavior is perceived and talked

about by the members of sociocultural groups" (Watts et al., 1992, p.3). In other words, as stated

above, the evaluation of a participant's behavior as polite or impolite relates to the interpretations of the behavior throughout the flow of that social interaction rather than solely an issue of the use of linguistic forms. There is "a discursive struggle" over the notion of im/politeness among the ordinary members of a society (Watts, 2003, p. 8), which emphasizes a wide range of positive and negative attributions of polite behavior (e.g. socially appropriate behavior and considerateness towards others, or insincerity, etc.) in any speech communities. Therefore, Watts (2003) claims that such a discursive struggle and relational work from the first-order im/politeness perspective must be the main source of developing a social theory of politeness.

Second-order im/politeness, however, refers to "a term within a theory of social behavior and language use" through scientific and systematic analysis (Watts et al., 1992, p. 4). Regarding the study of im/politeness, Watts (2003) affirms that we should not aim to create a universal concept that can be applied into any socio-cultural group at any time, as in Brown and Levinson (1987). Instead, understanding of politeness by the members of a speech community should be at the very center of the study of im/politeness. A theory of politeness should be concerned with the ways in which im/politeness is perceived, evaluated, and commented by the participants of a social interaction. However, such metapragmatic comments, or lay interpretation in Watts' (2003) terms, or manifestations of the hearer evaluations, might not be accessible easily in the ongoing interactions. That is, the understanding of im/politeness in discourse also necessitates an empirical analysis and interpretation of how interlocutors negotiate meaning through their use of language rather than solely their meta-commenting on how they perceive what is being told. That means the analysis or interpretation of actual interactional data by empirically validating this analysis or interpretation through the manifestations of language use in the interaction itself (Arundale, 2006; Haugh, 2007; Grainger, 2011).

The first-second order distinction in politeness research is also reflected in emic-etic approaches on analyzing language suggested by anthropological linguistics. Whereas emic perspective refers to the insiders' or participants' judgments of a phenomenon, etic perspective rests within the outsiders', namely a community of scientific observers', judgments. In other words, emic perspective encompasses indigenous meanings, conceptualizations, expectations, and beliefs constructed by the native members of a culture in its local ongoing verbal interaction (Haugh, 2007, 2012). Thus, emphasis on first-order or emic approaches is manifest in recent approaches to the study of im/politeness (Locher, 2008; Locher & Watts, 2005), and foregrounds a closer analysis of evaluations of this concept delineated by the speakers and interpreted by the addressees as the interaction among them unfolds. However, participants' evaluations, understandings, and interpretations might not be explicitly agreed upon by them but might require inferences from their interactional conduct (Haugh, 2007, 2012). In other words, as presented earlier, the participants might not provide explicit evaluations or comments on what they perceive is polite or not.

In the context of this study, first-order politeness plays an important role to understand what is appropriate or polite and what is not in office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. However, it is anticipated that such evaluations or judgments by the addressees might not appear in the data very often for certain reasons. Specifically with regard to Turkish EFL students in this study, they might not have such metapragmatic awareness of English language while communicating in the actual interaction. Therefore, aligning with second-order politeness as well, this study aims to provide empirical analysis of office hour interactions through examining how the international instructors and

Turkish EFL students use language. As Grainger (2011) puts it, the interpretation of the data in this study is justified relying on "what participants make relevant in talk" (p.172).

As noted above, relational work indeed aims to reconceptualize what Brown and Levinson (1987) define as facework from discursive perspectives of politeness. Thus, the notion of face constitutes a primary role in relational work as well. It could be said that such recent conceptual insights into the definition of face incorporate much broader perspectives. Spencer-Oatey (2007), for example, argues that face as an interactional phenomenon involves the assessments of others, and is only connected with attributes that are affectively sensitive to the person himself/herself. Put differently, face is associated with both positive attributes that someone wants to be ascribed to by others and negative attributes that someone does not want to be linked to by others. Arundale (2010) takes it a step further and conceptualizes face "as a social phenomenon arising in the conjoint co-constituting of human relationships, rather than as an individual phenomenon involving person-centered attributes" (p. 2085). In other words, rather than simply a social want or public self-image, face is shaped and achieved cooperatively by participants through the flow of social interaction. Face is one major key aspect of such a co-constructed relationship whilst the participants collectively reconstruct meanings and interactions in talk-in-interaction.

Similar to the definition above, Locher and Watts (2005) underscore that face is discursively constructed and socially attributed in every single instance of interaction. As in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, face is grounded in Goffman's (1967) seminal article *On face work* and his oft-cited definition of face that has been stated in the previous subsection. As the key to the interpretation of face within relational work, the term *line* in his definition refers to "a pattern of verbal and non-verbal acts by which [a speaker] expresses his

view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself"

(Goffman, 1967, p.5). To illustrate, the line we are expected to take in the hallways of a market

in North America would be to give enough space to the other customers, and say 'Excuse me' if

we walk past closely or stand in their way. This is the politic behavior in social activity of

shopping in the US. If we fall out of this line, our verbal or non-verbal behavior is likely to be

perceived either positively or negatively marked. In other words, we will be perceived either as

polite/appropriate/politic or over-polite/impolite/inappropriate/non-politic, but only in

accordance with the interpretations or perceptions of the other participants in social interaction.

Thus, Goffman (1967) states that "a system of practices, conventions, and procedural rules

comes into play which functions as a means of guiding and organizing the flow of messages" in

interactions in any society (p.33). Watts (2003) argues that such a system of practices,

conventions, and procedural rules pointed out by Goffman indeed constitute politic behavior in

social activities. These are constantly reproduced and appraised by the participants through

verbal interaction.

Watts (2003) thus claims that face is a socially attributed aspect of self in interaction

depending on the line/lines that we adopt, and we might need to adopt different faces in different

interactions. Faces are like masks lent to us for the duration of several instances of ongoing

social interaction, and can comply with our interpretation of the ritual role to be played.

Similarly, O'Driscoll (2010) states that face, specifically referring to face-to-face interaction, is

not possessed by people "in the way that they have legs or bicycles" but they have faces only

when they are involved in interaction (p.24). However, it does not imply that participants enter

each interaction with completely blank faces. They bear the building blocks of face construction

with their histories outside the current encounter. Therefore, an interactant's face in the present

interaction often has a connection with his/her face constructed in the earlier encounter, specifically those with the same interlocutors.

In this study, the understanding of the notion of face through the lens of relational work offers several implications for the analysis of office hour interactions between Turkish EFL university students and their international instructors. First of all, as one certain activity type, the office hour discourse frames the type of interaction because the participants' institutional roles are known to each other. In other words, the status difference and expert-novice relationship from the overarching framework of institutional discourse will have an impact on how international instructors and Turkish EFL students use language. Yet, depending on the situations, the participants might tend to attend to interpersonal level of office hour interactions as a part of their instructor-student relationship. Meanwhile, certain speech acts such as making a suggestion and/or responding to a suggestion might be FTAs for either side of the participants in certain cases. In another interaction, however, the very same act of suggesting, or responding to a suggestion, might be face-enhancing or face-maintaining for either international instructors or Turkish EFL students. Therefore, such negotiations of face wants or needs between the participants will be reached through the analysis of segments of ongoing talk and how they co-construct office hour interactions in this study.

Consequently, the role of social context is important and influential in employment of politeness strategies. Whether traditional perspectives or more recent frameworks of politeness, social factors, such as roles, power distribution, social distance (deference and solidarity), and level of imposition, have always been center of attention in the relevant literature. It is equally important for this study to understand how such factors influence language use, specifically enactment of speech acts and politeness.

Review of Literature

In this section, I review the relevant literature in four broader areas of research pertinent to the purpose and scope of this study. First, there will be a section on suggestions with a theoretical and operational definition as well as research on suggestions in order to situate what suggestions are in the context of this study. It is important to delve into theoretical and empirical considerations with regard to suggestions in previous research since suggestions are the focal speech act in this study. Then, speech act and politeness research in institutional discourse are discussed to provide a big picture of how speech act realization, or politeness, and institutional discourse intersect. This part specifically helps understanding the functional role of office hour interactions, as this was explored through the second research question in this study. Next, I discuss research on office hour discourse, which is the focal speech event in this study. Finally, the last section is devoted to few studies that are limited to spoken academic discourse, specifically those on university students' oral communication skills.

Suggestions

Suggestions are central to the understanding of pragmatic competence in EFL context such as this study. A closer examination of the use of suggestions specifically in office hour interactions is of great importance for several reasons. First of all, when we consider the goal and role of such an institutional discourse, suggestions in office hour interactions are likely occur abundantly since office hours constitute interactional space for the students and instructors to collaboratively seek solutions to academic concerns. It is particularly important for the students to get help or advice on various issues from an expert during this communicative activity. In that sense, suggestions in office hours in this study play a crucial role to display the dynamics of how international instructors and Turkish EFL students use certain linguistic choices for giving and

receiving suggestions. In alignment with previous discussion of institutional discourse, it is anticipated that several aspects in the social context of office hour interactions, such as the status difference, specific purpose and topic or content of office hour interactions, will have an impact on how they perform and respond to suggestions. Specifically for Turkish EFL learners, making a suggestion in office hour interactions is considered to be noncongruent with their status (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993) in the light of the discussion of asymmetrical power distribution in institutional discourse in the introduction chapter. Additionally, as dyadic interactions where two parties are involved, it is quite likely to capture the moments of how international instructors and their Turkish EFL students attend to interpersonal functions in the ongoing interaction and contribute to relational work. Thus, examining suggestions in office hour interactions in this study is salient in order to understand the interplay between language use and social factors or constraints in such naturally occurring academic discourse.

Theoretical and operational definition.

Suggestions are considered to be a type of directive (Searle, 1976), in which the speaker's purpose is to get the hearer to do a future action. In other words, "the speaker asks the hearer to take some action which the speaker believes will benefit the hearer" (Rintell, 1979, p.99). Thus, while performing suggestions, the speaker presumes a kind of response from the hearer and the response depends on how the speaker conveys his/her suggestion (Martínez-Flor, 2010). Similarly, Koike (1994) describes suggestions as complex speech acts by three conditions. First, either the hearer states a problem or the speaker is aware of the problem, and the speaker makes a suggestion. Second, the speaker believes that the proposed action in his/her suggestion will help the hearer to solve the problem as the primary beneficiary. Third, the hearer is expected to give a verbal response or abide by the suggestion.

Rintell (1979) notes that several social variables influence the linguistic performance of suggestions and actually any other speech acts. These social factors encompass the characteristics of the speaker and hearer (e.g. gender, age, and social status), the type of the proposed action, the speaker's need for the action to be taken, the level of imposition on the hearer, and the nature of conversational setting (e.g. degree of formality). Presumably, these social variants interact with each other in social interactions in a complex way, and how they do so is mirrored through interactants' linguistic choice. Other factors that affect how people make suggestions can be listed as the urgency of it, social distance and power, and the degree of embarrassment in the situation specifically in personal situations (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Likewise, in office hour interactions in this study, certain topics (e.g. procedures to follow or requirements to meet for an assignment) might require a higher degree of urgency or immediacy as well as emphasis, and thus possibly more direct language use in such interactions. In other words, depending on such factors, the imposition of the illocutionary force of suggestions as the focal speech act might differ with various linguistic choices. Additionally, the status difference between the instructors and students in office hours could be reflected through linguistic choices and communicative styles of the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study. This might not only be influenced by institutional constraints or dynamics but also the participants' own perceptions of their roles as well as culturally situated understandings.

Together with the hearer-oriented aspect and social factors in play, suggestions are potentially FTAs and mostly involve mitigation as long as speakers are not intimates, or do not have close relationships (Koike, 1994). Performing suggestions are face-threatening not only for the speaker but also the hearer. As one type of directive, the illocutionary point of suggestions is different from other speech act categories (e.g. representatives and commissives) in the sense

that the speaker tries to get the hearer to do an action rather than commit himself/herself to do it (Searle, 1976). Thus, she/he interferes with the hearer's world by saying what she/he should do next, in other words imposes on the hearer to some extent. Depending on the social distance and power as well as above-mentioned social factors in interactants' relationship, the speaker might need to downtone his/her suggestion by using certain politeness strategies in order to maintain the relationship with the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Likewise, in order for the speech act of suggestions to be performed as stated in Koike's (1994) three conditions, the hearer is supposed to supply a sort of reply, which may vary from acceptance to rejection in an appropriate way. In the context of acceptance, the hearer might need to address the speaker's positive face by showing appreciation or cooperative attitude whereas she/he would need to employ negative politeness strategies and redressive action when refusing a suggestion. Consequently, it could be argued that EFL learners might find it difficult to recognize the intention of suggestions made for their own benefit as well as to respond to it appropriately in their interactions, which requires certain amount of pragmatic competence. Otherwise, failure to address "the push-and-pull forces of positive and negative face" in social interactions might lead to misunderstandings or a communication breakdown (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988, p.316).

Another important facet of defining suggestions is although they fall into the group of directive speech acts, they are different from other speech acts in the same category. First of all, suggestions have lesser degree of imposition when compared to other directives such as requests and orders (Haverkate, 1984; Koike, 1994; Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Schmidt et al., 1996). This can be explained by Haverkate's (1984) differentiation between two subgroups of directives: impositives and non-impositives, where requests and orders belong to the first subgroup and suggestions to the second. Haverkate (1984) asserts that the beneficiary in

impositive speech acts as in orders and requests is exclusively the speaker. However, non-impositive directives refer to the situation where "the result of the action that the hearer has to carry out is supposed to primarily benefit the hearer himself" as in suggestions or invitations (Haverkate, 1984, p.18-19). Additionally, the level of deference conveyed through speech acts is considered to be another difference between suggestions and requests (Rintell, 1979). Deference is defined as a symbolic means for the speaker's appreciation of the hearer as a component of activity (Goffman, 1971). It is hypothesized that utterances for requesting convey higher degree of deference than utterances for suggesting and confirmed by research in the context of adult native speaking Spanish learners of ESL (Rintell, 1979).

In addition to differences above, the overlap between suggestions and advice acts is presented by speech act research since the key beneficiary of advice-giving is the hearer as well. As Martínez-Flor (2005) notes, several studies on suggestions have actually used these two terms interchangeably (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993; 1996; Hinkel, 1997; Jiang, 2006; Koester, 2002; and see Tsui (1994) for the discussion of *advisives*). Therefore, regarding what has been discussed about suggestions so far, the operational definition of suggestions examined in this study refers to any utterance or a component of utterance that;

- addresses the hearer with the intention or belief that it is useful or advantageous to do it,
- is initiated by either the instructors or their students for various interactional purposes,
- might also entail any instances of advice-giving, recommending, and suggesting throughout office-hour interactions.

As in other speech acts, suggestions can use various linguistic forms in their realization. Koike (1994), for example, divides suggestions in Spanish and English into three main subgroups: *declarative*, *interrogative*, and *imperative*. Among these three types, declaratives

involve various syntactic choices for making suggestions (e.g. modals, performatives, *if* clauses, etc.) whereas interrogatives are basically *yes/no* and *wh-* questions.

In a similar vein, Martínez-Flor (2005) provides an elaborated taxonomy of suggestions based on the review of literature on suggestions. The basic assumption for such taxonomy is that different linguistic resources can be used while performing suggestions. Drawing upon two relevant theoretical frameworks of politeness theory and speech act theory, the taxonomy addresses direct and indirect speech acts (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996), on-record and off-record politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987), maxim of congruence (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1996), and previous research on cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. The proposed taxonomy of linguistic strategies of suggestions is divided into three focal types: *direct*, *conventionalized*, and *indirect* forms. *Direct* suggestions refer to strategies by which the speaker distinctly expresses what she/he means, and include performative verbs, a noun of suggestions, imperatives and negative imperatives. *Conventionalized* forms of suggestions provide a more variety of strategies such as interrogative forms, expressions of possibility/probability, suggestions through *should* and *need*, and the conditional. The strategies in this group are not as direct as the first group but the hearer can still recognize the intention of the speaker since the illocutionary force indicator is available in the utterance. The third group of suggestions is *indirect* strategies that incorporate impersonalized expressions (e.g. *A good idea would be…*) and hints (e.g. *I've heard that…*) where the actual intention of the speaker is not clearly stated. Such indirect forms do not show the suggestive force in the utterance and require the hearer to make inference about the proposed suggestion (Martínez-Flor, 2005).

The definition and classification of suggestions in the relevant literature has some implications for this study. First of all, it needs to be emphasized that this study examines

suggestions produced by both the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, and more specifically how they co-construct suggestion-response episodes, in office hour interactions. Considering the status difference between these two parties, how each party makes and responds to suggestions is quite likely to be influenced by such difference. That is, the international instructors might be expected to be more direct, or even boost their suggestions to their Turkish EFL students whereas the second party might need to consider how to make a suggestion more carefully because of this status difference. This might also potentially facilitate the use of various and divergent linguistic choices on the part of the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. However, depending on the topic and propositional content of suggestions, similar strategies or certain level of indirectness might be necessary in instructor-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions in this study. One such linguistic resource is mitigation in suggestions office hour interactions.

Research on suggestions.

The first empirical studies on suggestions in academic settings as well as office hour interactions were conducted by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990, 1993, 1996). This series of studies analyzed advising sessions between graduate students and the faculty advisors in the Department of Linguistics at Indiana University from an interlanguage pragmatics perspective. The shared goal of all the advising sessions was to decide the students' class schedules for the following semester. The interactions during advising interviews took place between native speaker advisors, and both native and nonnative speaker graduate students.

In the first publication on this topic, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) examined the role of status in the realizations of suggestions and rejections for the successful handling of this type of institutional encounter. In the context of advising sessions as discussed in the previous

chapter, the advisors are regarded as higher status interlocutors than the students since they are

faculty members, familiarized with the institutional context, and have expertise in their field. The

students, on the other hand, experience the tension between a subordinate role and expectation to

display their independent opinion as graduate students. That said, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford

(1990) define congruence as "the match of a speaker's status and the appropriateness of speech

acts given that status" and state that suggestions are status-congruent for advisors but not

students in advising sessions (p.473). Nonetheless, when students need to use noncongruent

speech acts, they must employ status-preserving strategies (e.g. mitigation) to politely express

their opinions and not to risk their relations with advisors. Thus, the analysis of suggestion

episodes yielded that native speaker students preferred to initiate suggestions although nonnative

students chose to give responses to advisor-initiated suggestions. The number of suggestions was

also higher for native speaker students throughout the whole advising sessions. The absence of a

suggestion or a 'wait-and-agree' strategy was also observed in the data and considered as a

missed opportunity to actively participate in the construction of students' own schedule or to

exhibit their independent thoughts. Pertaining to the use of status-preserving strategies

specifically for student-initiated suggestions, native speaker students attended to such strategies

more than nonnative speaker students by employing downgraders. These downgraders included

modality (*would*), minus-committers to show uncertainty (*I don't know*), the past tense, marking

tentativeness (*I was thinking*), a downtoner (*think*), and instances of *you know* (House and

Kasper, 1981). All in all, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) conclude that employing status-

congruent speech acts do not always relate to the success of interactions. However, in the case of

noncongruent speech acts, it is important to effectively negotiate them by appropriate status-

preserving strategies for a reciprocal fulfillment.

As articulated in the previous section, status difference between the interlocutors is considered to be an important factor in linguistic choices of the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in this study as well. In other words, having a lower status when compared to their instructors, Turkish EFL students in this study, specifically as freshmen university students, might need to prefer less direct suggestions or attenuation/mitigation in their suggestions. In the case of responding to suggestions, again they might be more willing to align with their instructors and mostly accept their suggestions. Yet, it is noteworthy to emphasize that even though advising sessions and office hour interactions have several commonalities, the context of this study was different from the US since it took place at two private universities in Turkey. That is, it is also anticipated that the perceived understanding of such roles as well as institutional expectations might yield distinctive features with regard to suggestion-response episodes in this study.

Furthermore, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) adopted a longitudinal approach to their analysis of pragmatic change throughout academic advising sessions. They examined both early and later advising sessions with a focus on the frequency, type, use of mitigators and success in suggestions as well as rejections by native and nonnative graduate students. The study showed that nonnative students acquired some pragmatic competence throughout advising sessions. For example, their suggestions, especially student-initiated ones, increased in the number and rate of success (the acceptance of the advisor's suggestion) but nonnative speakers still kept responding to questions more than native speakers. Moreover, the form of their suggestions did not change, and specifically incorporated less mitigation and more aggravators (e.g. future modals such as *will* and *going to* without a chance of uncertainty, or *just* as an intensifier) than native speakers. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) explain what components

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of pragmatic competence have developed whereas some aspects of it have remained same in academic advising sessions in the following excerpt:

> What they primarily learn is the institutional rules. That is, they learn what the advising session is for and how it is generally structured. To acquire this competence, they have to learn at least two specific things: They have to learn to make suggestions and they have to learn not to make rejections. Although NNSs improve noticeably in this area, they still differ in the realization of the speech acts themselves. (p. 298)

In that sense, their study provides not only insights into the acquisition of interlanguage pragmatic competence but also empirical validation for instructional pragmatics on speech acts.

Additionally, Jiang (2006) conducted a corpus-based examination of suggestions in two forms of authentic discourse. The study examined how suggestions were realized in office hour interactions between professors and students, and study group interactions among students. A closer examination of the use of *Let's…,* modals, performative verbs, conditionals, and pseudo clefts indicated some deviations in these two contexts. To start with, although both students and professors performed suggestions with *Let's…* frequently, it signaled a joint action in the student-to-student study groups whereas such inclusive suggestions by professors were hearer-oriented in office hour interactions and aimed to sound collaborative or less authoritative. Second, modals such as *have to, need to*, and *should* were the most common ones in the corpus data. What is interesting about the use of modals pertains to the role of mitigation or the choice of hedges. For example, students in study groups employed more aggravators (e.g. *do, really, must*, etc.) to display the urgency of their suggestions whereas hedging in professors' suggestions functioned as lessening the degree of authority, urgency, or imposition. In contrast with modals, performative verbs were observed only in office hour interactions and professors used them to

sound more authoritative or forceful since they strongly believed the hearer should do it. Finally, conditionals as possibility markers and pseudo cleft sentences were more frequent in office hour interactions than student study groups. Jiang (2006) explains such indirect suggestions strategies by professors as a way to show more politeness and decrease the face-threatening aspect of suggesting. Consequently, the essential factor for syntactic preferences in suggestions is considered the social status of the interlocutors in these two types of authentic interactions. As discussed above, the social status of international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study is equally important in their suggestion performance and strategy use. Additionally, one further argument pertaining to office hour interactions in this study could be the impact of goals, outcomes, topics at hand, expectations, or other institutional constraints as it has been discussed in the first chapter. In other words, in addition to the participants' understanding of their roles and/or status, they might need to be more direct/indirect and even mitigate their suggestions as FTAs depending on these factors.

Suggestions in academic setting as a directive type were also examined in a sequence of studies by Thonus (1998a, 1998b, 1999). Thonus's studies examined native speaker-nonnative speaker interactions in academic writing tutorials between tutors and tutee at Indiana University, the same university setting as Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's studies (1990, 1993). As one of the most comprehensive studies, Thonus (1998a), for instance, investigated 12 writing tutorials in her doctoral dissertation with a focus on discourse phases, volubility, overlaps, backchannels, laughter, directive type and frequency, mitigation frequency and strategy, and negotiation of evaluations and directives. The analysis of directives and mitigation in Thonus (1998a) as the most relevant aspect to this study was conducted relying on Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) directness scale of request strategies and their Cross-cultural Speech Act Research Project

(CCSARP) coding manual. The findings demonstrated that first person and second person modal use (e.g. *I would suggest…* and *you can be…*) was the major syntactic choice in tutor directives (50%). Additionally, imperatives played an important role as the second most frequent linguistic strategy (29%) employed by tutors in academic writing tutorials in the study. With regard to mitigation in directives, even though the percentage differed among tutorials, both tutors and students utilized a variety of mitigation strategies. The most common mitigation strategies included downtoners (e.g. *maybe, probably, somehow*, etc.), cajoler (e.g. *you know*), hedge (e.g. *kind of*), and subjectivizer (e.g. *it seems to me*). The analysis of negotiation sequences of directives also indicated that whereas tutor directives initially received rejection and then ambivalent acceptance in some cases, the most common outcome of these sequences were acceptance and mutual agreement. Finally, the study evidenced the occurrences of self-suggestions by the students in academic writing tutorials.

The examination of suggestions in academic writing tutorials presents a certain degree of relevance to this study in many aspects. First of all, as the main focus in this study, suggestions are investigated in another type of academic and institutional discourse, which is namely office hour interactions. Considering various purposes of students for attending to their instructors' office hours at universities, it is quite likely for them to seek opportunities for feedback on assignments, projects, and a writing draft. Thus, it is anticipated in this study that the international instructors and Turkish EFL students might have similar interactions in terms of the purpose and content, which is likely to be reflected through their language use in their suggestion-response episodes. However, the status-differentiation between a tutor and student might not necessarily be the same as the relationship between a course instructor and his/her student. Put differently, even though they both involve a parallel asymmetrical expert-novice

power distribution and relevant expectations from each other, their perceptions of roles and these expectations might yield some variation because Turkish EFL students in this study are also the students in the international instructors' courses throughout the study (i.e., they know each other and have an ongoing relationship, and thus no social distance). Such social variables become crucial specifically in terms of the main tenets of relational work framework embraced in this study. More specifically, as discussed earlier in this chapter, how these participants negotiate appropriateness, or politic behavior, and address each other's face wants or needs as well as their interpretations in office hour interactions might yield differences in their language use and contribution to the ongoing interaction. Finally, given the fact that the participants' perceptions or interpretations are socially and culturally situated, this study also delves into a context where sociolinguistic factors might differ from US context.

To conclude, research on suggestions as one type of directive speech acts provides us with some preliminary insights into how they are performed in academic or institutional discourse. However, it is also argued that suggestions specifically from discourse-based perspectives have not been studied sufficiently in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics when compared to other speech acts (Jiang, 2006; Martínez-Flor, 2005; Schmidt et al., 1996). Similarly, in *Interlanguage Pragmatics: Exploring Institutional Talk*, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005) call for studying institutional interactions as authentic discourse not only from speech act framework but also other discourse features. Likewise, it is main purpose of this study to explore the subtleties of how international instructors and their Turkish EFL students use language, with a specific emphasis on suggestion-response episodes, in office hour interactions as one such type of institutional discourse. By embracing a discourse-analytic approach and the framework of relational work, the study aims to eliminate overreliance on isolated analysis of

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utterances that involves a certain type of illocutionary force or speech act. To do so, the analysis involves how both participant groups give and receive suggestions while co-constructing larger discourse segments of office hour interactions. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the next section presents speech act research in institutional discourse including both workplace and academic settings.

Speech Act and Politeness Research in Institutional Discourse

Research on speech act realization and politeness in institutional discourse examined numerous contexts. Studies utilized distinct instances of interactions in radio advice programs (DeCapua & Dunham, 1993); an office, a hospital, a laboratory, shops, student dining halls and adult education classes (Ervin-Tripp, 1976); a university medical facility (Flores-Ferrán, 2010); a dental laboratory (Saito, 2011); editorial, sales, and account offices in small business context (Koester, 2002, 2004) as well as business meetings (Ladegaard, 2012; Stubbe et al., 2003); writing center tutorials (Williams, 2005), and teaching sessions as a component of teacher training qualification (Yates, 2005). Additionally, Vine (2004, 2009) examined interactions among managers in two government departments in New Zealand by using the data from the Wellington Language in the Workplace Project corpus (see www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/lwp for details of the project and methodology). Finally, Clyne (1994) investigated interactions in several multicultural workplace settings in Australia (see Appendix A for an overview of participants and settings, methodologies, and main findings in these studies).

The main foci in these studies, as reflected in their research questions, are equally varied and emphasize several levels of speech act performance and politeness in institutional discourse. Many of these studies paid close attention to how several social factors or variants in the context of interactions are influential in speech act realization or use of other politeness markers.

Predominantly, this line of research unveiled interactional styles and strategies in directives (DeCapua & Dunham, 1993; Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Koester, 2002; Saito, 2011; Vine, 2009). As one of the earliest and oft-cited studies on directives, Ervin-Tripp (1976) justified her choice rather than other speech acts through three main reasons. First, directives are commonly used at all ages. Second, they are addressee-sensitive because of their hearer-oriented nature. Finally, they usually result in action, and thus easy to identify. More importantly, highlighting the role of social variants in directive use and interpretation, Ervin-Tripp (1976) investigated how such social features as age, sex, rank, familiarity, sincerity, presence of others, and expected roles might influence the form and social distribution of directives in several institutional contexts.

Similarly, it is important to understand directives in various types of discourse because suggestions as the focal speech act in this study belong to this broader category (Searle, 1976). It is also quite likely to observe co-occurrences of suggestions with other speech acts in authentic interactions. Therefore, the following overview of relevant research on several speech acts including directives, advice, complaints, commissives, as well as mitigation featuring politeness in institutional discourse informs this study in many ways. First of all, by depicting how they are performed in naturally occurring or real interactions, these studies facilitate identification of suggestions in office hour discourse in this study, and help me understand how speech act realization in authentic interactions might include certain linguistic features and fits into the unfolding interaction. In addition to identification, these studies also inform my analysis of suggestion-response episodes in the dataset where it is also equally important examine for what functions they fulfill in office hour interactions in this study. As stated before, these studies also display how social and contextual factors are influential in speech act realization and politeness. Therefore, zooming into relevant research is supposed to enhance my awareness of the role or

impact of such variables between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in office hour interactions in this study.

In the context of New Zealand, Vine (2009) examined the role of social context in the frequency and expression of directives. Different from Ervin-Tripp (1976) where directive utterances were identified or selected, Vine's study embraced a broader level of discourse analysis through interactions between managers in governmental departments by attending to what was actually going on within the discourse itself. Thus, Vine (2009) emphasizes that it is not only power and social distance but also the purpose of interactions, such as problem-solving versus discussions, that influences the distribution and density of directives. For example, imperatives were typically used at the end of a long discussion in a problem-solving task but also in the case of an urgent directive depending on the goal or task orientation of interactions. As it is the main focus of the first research question in this study, the purpose and the task-orientation of office hour interactions might also yield differences in how they contribute to the ongoing interactions. Finally, studies on directive discourse also examined gender-based variations in interactions between male and female managers (Vine, 2009) or superiors and subordinates (Saito, 2011); directness/indirectness and linguistic variety in content-based language classrooms in Austria (Dalton-Puffer, 2005); modality to mitigate or augment the force of directives, and the role of status difference in writing center tutorials (Williams, 2005).

As one form of directives, advice-giving and requests for advice have also drawn attention in institutional settings. Koester (2002) provided important observations on how framing a communicative activity through meta-statements at the very beginning of conversations (e.g. *I got a suggestion*) was signaled through linguistic choices. Although the advice-giver did not actually perform the speech act itself, she/he built "an advice frame that is

played out in the entire pattern of the interaction" (Koester, 2002, p.175). Similarly, DeCapua and Dunham (1993) highlighted the role of transitional topics, narrations, elaboration, and several other discourse strategies that can help set up the scene for a request of advice in radio broadcasts. The study also portrayed how communicative goals and roles of interlocutors as advice-seekers or -givers could allow them to manipulate different interactional strategies. Finally, Koester (2004) explored how relational sequences and turns in requesting acts could be merged into the generic organization of workplace communication.

As noted in theoretical framework section, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), mitigation is one of the key aspects of politeness in performing face-threatening speech acts and upholding relationships. Thus, it has been at the center of attention in many studies on speech acts and politeness in institutional discourse (Flores-Ferrán, 2010; Ladegaard, 2012; Marra, 2012; Yates, 2000, 2005). In Spanish discourse of two 45-minute psychotherapeutic motivational interviews between a therapist and a client, Flores-Ferrán (2010) provided both macro- and micro-level analysis of mitigation devices in numerous indirect speech acts such as providing instructions; expressing frustration, doubt, or conflict; complaint; and accusation. Finally, the researcher argued that the use or choice of mitigation devices specifically by the therapist was closely linked to his communicative intention (e.g. to have the client continue treatment), and his being wary of role as a guide in this interaction. Most strikingly, Flores-Ferrán (2010) proclaimed that mitigation devices did not necessarily function as face-saving strategies.

Mitigation might also be performed in different ways depending on the discursive features of workplace interactions. As a case study, Ladegaard (2012) analyzed a business meeting conducted in Hong Kong Chinese where two females possessed a superior position when compared to other female and male interlocutors. From a community of practice

perspective, the study discernibly shows how the notions of leadership, power, gender, and impoliteness/rudeness do have a control over discursive strategies of the participants in this Chinese context. Similarly, Yates (2005) investigated both group and individual variations in verbal mitigation between Australian and Chinese teachers over a 2-year teacher training certificate program. The study is highly important with its cross-cultural and in-group comparisons and longitudinal data that enabled the researcher to have users' profiles in terms of their language use. The findings suggest that several factors, such as sociopragmatic aspects in communication, perceived roles in certain communities, and interlocutors' expectations of role relationships in the context, should be taken into consideration in the use of mitigation. In that sense, it is hypothesized in this study that such sociopragmatic factors in office hour interactions are considered to have impact on how international instructors and their Turkish EFL students perform suggestions and utilize mitigation strategies. In other words, their socially and culturally situated perceptions and understanding of status and role as well as expectations from each other will be enacted through their linguistic choices and discourse strategies in their co-constructed suggestion-response episodes in the dataset.

Another speech act that has been examined in workplace communication is the performance of a complaint as a face-threatening act in an interaction between a superior and a subordinate (Stubbe et al., 2003). The data comes from the same project as in Vine (2009) in the context of New Zealand, and the main purpose of the study is actually to show how different discourse analytic approaches contribute to understanding and interpreting the same data. When considering the scope of this study, the section where Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is applied to the data yields the most relevant findings. That said, Stubbe et al. (2003) exemplified how two interactants employed negative and positive politeness strategies in a

status-congruent way and did care about each other's face needs in face-threatening situations. As stated earlier, speech acts might concurrently take place in authentic interactions. Likewise, suggestion-response episodes in this study might also involve other FTAs, such as complaints, and this might have impact on how the participants make linguistic choices in such embedded interactions.

Speech act and politeness research in institutional discourse or workplace communication have also been intensively discussed in several books or book chapters (Clyne, 1994; Holmes & Stubbe, 2003; Koester, 2006; Locher, 2004; Locher & Limberg, 2012; Vine, 2004). In the following, I will briefly discuss three of these books.

In *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication*, Locher (2004) examines the interface of power and politeness in the context of disagreements in naturally occurring interactions. The book starts with the discussion of several theoretical considerations for power, communication and relational work, and politeness. The corpus of the data includes three types of authentic discourse where the main focus is on the management of disagreement: a family dinner, a meeting in a conference room of a nuclear physics lab, and a political radio interview during the 2000 US presidential election. Locher (2004) provides a detailed analysis for each speech situation in separate chapters but includes comparisons of how power is exercised in each interaction.

With regard to the scope of this study, the most relevant section is the second context, which is a recording of a business meeting as a part of the institutionalized process of decision-making for experiments to be accepted. There is a high degree of competition for the use of facilities in such research institutions since only one third of proposals are accepted. Thus, disagreements or conflictual situations are likely to occur. The participants represent different

professional areas *within* the same research institution, and not surprisingly they carry their own professional knowledge base or expertise into the meeting (Locher, 2004, emphasis in original). Those who participated in this meeting are the chair, two associate directors, three hall leaders, and two relatively less influential but institutional representatives. The main purpose of this pre-schedule meeting was to collect information about the schedules of three halls where the experiment would be conducted; report the problems they encountered or anticipated for the future; and offer a schedule for conducting the experiment. Thus, three hall leaders took the floor and made the highest contribution in alignment with the purpose of meeting and as a part of their expected roles. Although the two associate directors had higher status, the exercise of power through disagreement took place among these three hall leaders, thus suggesting that power and status are not synonymous (Locher, 2004).

The methodology of Locher's (2004) analysis incorporates a background questionnaire, word counts and duration of contributions, or talk, by each participant, who the actual interactants are, and their linguistic choices during the meeting. She presents the interplay between the participants' linguistic fulfillment of power and relational work in instances of disagreement, and how power comes into play in the flow of the meeting through the roles of committee members. To exemplify, hall leaders as a part of their roles in this meeting might propose changes in the schedule, and one of them actually attempted to exercise power by offering some major changes. This resulted in prolonged negotiations, and introduction of a face-threatening disagreement with a hedging by another hall leader by expressing his status as a newcomer. Thus, Locher (2004) suggests that such an attempt to propose controversial changes, whether intentionally or not, restricted the action-environment of other participants since they were somehow involved in the discussion. Finally, it also resulted in a clash of interests since

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other hall leaders and participants do not necessarily believe those changes have any priory at that moment.

Consequently, Locher (2004) provides a well-articulated account of how power, language, and politeness interact with each other through negotiations of varying degree as a part of relational work in an institutional context. Another strength of the study also relies on the discussion that factors, such as the purpose, setting, the participants' backgrounds and relationship to each other, their familiarity with the topic and different level of involvement in it, are momentous at speech events.

Vine (2004) in *Getting Things Done at Work: The Discourse of Power in Workplace Interaction* explored directives, requests, and advice in workplace communication in New Zealand among managers, senior, and administrative staff. By examining 52 face-to-face interactions at a government workplace, Vine (2004) explored the linguistic expression of power within this organizational setting. As for the type of tasks in interactions, the interlocutors were involved in problem-solving, providing and pursuing advice, and update sessions or meetings where participants provided feedback to each other. Methodologically, the researcher incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods, and used the notion of control acts as "a blanket term which covers a range of acts" such as directives, requests, and advice (Vine, 2004, p.27). The analysis of control acts was built upon Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) segmentation of head acts and supportive moves, and implemented a functional approach. Head acts were identified as either explicit or implicit at the level of content (e.g. if the required action was stated or not). Thus, several explicit control acts (e.g. declaratives, imperatives, and interrogatives) according to their form, and implicit ones as well by using the surrounding context were identified in the data (e.g. partial head act with no agent or verb as well focus on

beneficiary or other elements). All in all, with regard to language use and role/relationship in this workplace, the findings suggest that mitigation is evidently employed not only in control acts directed to managers by subordinates but also in those from managers to subordinates. The managers have always diminished status differences by considering interlocutors' needs and building good relationships rather than exercising power with overt linguistic choices. Power relations are observed in the number of control acts through managers' explicit and frequent directives to their executive assistant and senior staff but mitigation is predominantly employed in almost all interactions including symmetrical or equal status interlocutors. The degree of explicitness has been influenced by social distance, in other words, how long or how well the participants know each other or worked together.

When we consider the roles or relationship between international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in this study, it is quite possible to draw a parallel line between Vine's (2004) study and this study. In other words, it can be easily argued that the status difference or power relations between managers and subordinates as well as assistants are similar to the one between the instructors and their students. Therefore, it is anticipated that such a difference will play a key role in how the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students' linguistic choices and more specifically perform suggestions in office hour interactions. Additionally, as the main focus of third research question in this study, the status difference or power distribution in office hour interactions is likely to be traced in how they attend to relational work in their ongoing interactions. Yet, it needs to be underlined that in alignment with the theoretical framework in this study, such factors are not stable but indeed negotiated through verbal interaction.

In *Advice in Discourse*, an edited volume by Locher and Limberg (2012), fourteen original papers examine advice-giving and advice-seeking practices in various social and interactional contexts. Scholars present their work on languages such as Cantonese, English, Finnish, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish by utilizing mostly authentic and elicited data in both written or spoken language. At the center of theoretical conceptualization of advice in this edited book is the speech activity perspective. Thus, studies primarily aim to investigate how interlocutors in different institutional settings orient themselves to the speech event of advice-giving and advice-seeking in their data. The interactions where advice practices are under examinations come from academic, educational, and training settings; medical and health-related settings; computer-mediated settings; and cross-cultural and corpus linguistic comparisons. Most of them feature conversation analytic perspectives in their methodology.

The oral interactions in academic, educational, and training contexts exemplify advice-giving practices in Finnish academic supervisions for feedback purposes; advising sequence and preferred structures in graduate peer tutoring at an American university; peer advice in the UK higher education from the perspectives of role or relationships and same or different level of study; and feedback to migrants in New Zealand for mentoring purposes in order to help them socialize into their workplace. Those in medical settings also provide empirical insights into advice-giving on medical issues by British community nurses to first-time mothers of newborns in their visits to the new mothers' homes; patient-initiated advice during a screening program from Down Syndrome in a Hong Kong hospital; and the advice-seeking in phone calls to US peer support lines in the northeastern Unites States.

Likewise, embracing the speech activity perspective as in these studies and several abovementioned institutional contexts, this study examines office hour interactions as another

activity type and institutional context. It is crucial to understand how directives are performed in institutional discourse for the purpose of this study since the speech act of suggestions as the primary emphasis in this study fall into this broader category. Additionally, the literature review on speech act and politeness in this section incorporated not only directives but also other speech acts occurring in various types of institutional discourse. Even though the focal speech acts do not directly relate to suggestions in this study, how sociopragmatic aspects in authentic interactions influence their realizations informs my understanding of the role of such factors in office hour interactions in this study.

Intercultural communication.

With regard to the scope of this proposed study, one aspect of speech act and politeness research to be understood is intercultural communication. Since this study will include participants from different first languages and cultures, a review of discourse analytic studies in multicultural workplace settings will inform my understanding of how social factors play a role in communicative activities in such institutional context.

Clyne (1994) provided a comprehensive analysis of intercultural communication in English between immigrants from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in Australia (e.g. Central and South European; South east and South Asian). In his book *Inter-cultural Communication at Work*, Clyne (1994) exemplified data to show what constituted and promoted both successful and unsuccessful intercultural communication at varying workplace settings. The study examined several speech acts that are observed in the corpus: complaints/whinges, directives (requests and instructions), commissives (promises and assurances), and apologies. The important contribution of this earlier study originates from its postulation that cultural values as well as sub-cultural and individual differences, such as gender, age, and social status, are

intertwined variables in verbal interactions; and that communication takes place not only in a social but also a cultural context.

Directives identified in this study, and also as the most relevant category to this study, were diverse in their degree of explicitness, and also divided into positive and negative ones. They can be basic imperatives to simply give some basic information, or simple imperatives and a politeness marker/downtoner. Similar to complaints, directives were mostly produced by European men (to women) and the type of addressee was influential in how they were performed. Additionally, directive sequences seemed to have more complexity than complaints; might precede a complaint sequence; and contained a cluster of directives as well as a smaller complaint sequences, promises, and justification. What was common about directives and complaints in Clyne's (1994) data was that they were both performed in order to obtain and keep control and power through language.

Complaints were the second most frequent speech acts after directives in Clyne's (1994) work. He also reported instances of 73 commissives and 25 apologies. Complaints identified in this study were grouped into two: whinges as non-goal oriented statements of displeasure, and complaints as goal-oriented power practice. Whinges were common in the social discourse of workplace interactions in this study and specifically performed when there was slight social distance among colleagues. They were in a way means of maintaining solidarity through repeated or parallel discourse. However, complaint sequences across workplaces were usually more complicated in the sense that they included other speech acts, such as directives, apologies, and commissives. Particularly the accusation part of a complaint was softened through modal, explanation or justification, or implicit directives. With regard to the restricted cultural and workplace variation found in the corpus, Clyne (1994) stated that complaints were common

among European men and interactants with higher status whereas whinges were gender-free among Europeans.

Commissives, in contrast to complaints and directives, were found to indicate less complexity since they were mainly responses to or parts of other speech acts (e.g. directives or a complaint). For example, commissives might come after a clarification question or be just one of several commissives in a complex apology sequence. As for cultural and gender variations, the distribution of commissives reflected power relationships and were mostly used by women specifically in conversations with European men. As the fourth speech act in Clyne (1994), apologies were typically made by the superordinate to the subordinate with the intention of getting justification, assurance, or support, and offering an explanation in situations where either communicative actions were predicted or the addressee had no choice but to admit the apology. Europeans, both males and females, were the group who commonly performed apologies in a way not to lose face.

Similarly, Marra (2012) focused on the sociopragmatic factors in intercultural communication by analyzing the migrants' workplace interactions with their New Zealand colleagues during their internships. Building upon earlier studies from the same project and setting (Holmes & Stubbe, 2003; Marra, 2008), the study mainly focused on disagreement episodes paying attention to shared and negotiated considerations of how to ratify disagreements in a specific community of practice. The findings in different interactions where the migrants enacted disagreements indicated that one New Zealandinian colleague used multiple repetitions as a source of authority whereas the other showed reluctance to engage in a disagreement. Additionally, participants in another interactions were involved in longer arguments or negotiations to come to the same point and sometimes used a sense of humor to mitigate a

refusal that later developed into a disagreement. Thus, the management of disagreements in this certain workplace was highly important and collaboratively maintained. In other words, disagreements were realized if the participants accepted and negotiated the intention behind them. Such negotiations also contributed to participants' accomplishment of professional identities. Finally, the study also highlighted the process of language socialization for newcomers into an institutional environment. Such processes were context-dependent and usually challenging for the some of the participants as the migrants to New Zealand from varying first language and cultural backgrounds in this study.

Research on Academic Office Hour Interactions

As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, office hour interactions in English constitute one of the few unique opportunities for EFL students in Turkey in order to communicate with their international instructors outside the classroom. However, as in any interpersonal communication or forms of institutional talk, office hour discourse is also complex by nature, and constrained by several social factors, institutional roles/relationships, expectations, goals, and how participants orient themselves into such factors. Keeping such contextual factors in mind, this section of literature review examines relevant research in office hour discourse since it is the main focus of this study. Although some studies have already been discussed briefly in the first chapter, they are revisited from different vantage points in order to better inform this study. Finally, similar to earlier sections of literature review, I focus only on those studies that rely upon discourse-based data paying particular attention to how social and contextual dynamics are reflected through language use in office hour interactions and articulating how these studies are relevant to this study.

Research on office hour discourse has been mostly conducted in US contexts as noted earlier. Specifically, ITAs' communicative abilities in their interactions with ACSs have been the center of attention in several studies (Axelson & Madden, 1994; Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Tyler & Davies, 1990). By comparing ITAs and ACSs office hour interactions with other contexts, such as interactions in classrooms and labs, Axelson and Madden (1994) reveal that each context requires different discourse styles and interactional strategies but ITAs have difficulties recognizing and utilizing such context-specific styles and strategies. Similarly, Tyler and Davies (1990) investigate that the way an ITA answers an ACS's question results in misunderstanding on the part of the ACS because of their dissimilar preferences in discourse strategies. Whereas the ITA use an inductive style to make an explanation, the ACS seek for a more deductive and direct reply for her question about grading an assignment.

Before providing more details on research on ITAs and their communication in office hour interactions, it is noteworthy to underline that these studies display few similarities but mainly differences when compared to this current study in certain key aspects. First of all, even though office hour interactions are the type of institutional discourse under scrutiny as the case in this study as well, the university settings in the US and Turkey contexts might yield variations with regard to the perceived roles of and expectations from instructors and their students as well as institutional constraints. To exemplify, the aspects pertaining to office hours, such as power relations or distribution as well as the type and amount of help or support expected from the university instructors might be framed differently in a US and Turkish university. Additionally, although the role of ITAs with regard to English language use corresponds to Turkish EFL learners in this study, their social and institutional statuses are different in terms of office hour interactions. In other words, this yields a reversed expert-novice roles between the participants in

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two contexts because ITAs are the course instructors in these studies and thus have certain level of expertise whereas Turkish EFL students are considered novice in this study. However, when we consider the sociocultural background of Turkish EFL students and their familiarity with Turkey context, it can be argued that they are in a more advantageous situation compared to ITAs in US context in terms of social norms. Finally, the role of English language in Turkey, as discussed in the first chapter, is totally different from US context. All in all, such contextual differences are considered to be important in this study.

In another study of ITA and ACS office hour interactions, Chiang (2011) identifies problematic exchanges where ACSs try to get information about course content. In the case of a yes/no question by an ACS, an ITA as the course instructor keeps silent or performs pause fillers although he is expected to give a response. However, it takes him a series of turns and two self-reformulations by the ACS to give a two-step answer. Similarly, in a request for explanations in the form of indirect non-question, another ITA shows non-understanding marked by "*huh?*" and initially fails to provide an explanation for the indirect request. Only after two reformulations, the ITA provides a response formulated as a suggestion that is completed by the ACS. Chiang (2011) explains the ITAs' inability to provide immediate response or explanation in these cases with the indirectness of the question and request produced by ACSs. For example, the yes/no question by the ACS is actually in the form of a declarative sentence with a rising tone but it functions as a question. Similarly, a change in the reformulations of ACSs has been observed from an ambiguous question or request to a more specific one, suggesting that ITAs might not have pragmatic knowledge of indirect speech acts but each party orients themselves into their interactional needs.

Although these studies were conducted in the US context and certain contextual differences have already been discussed above, the findings are relevant to this study in some aspects. First of all, the main focus is on office hour interactions as in this study, and this will give opportunity to make comparisons between the findings in this study and such previous work. For example, it is expected to observe the cases of non-understanding and strategies to remedy such cases in office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in this study. Second, the findings in ITAs-ACSs office hour interactions exemplify potentially problematic encounters, and how two parties use language differently in certain situations. Similarly, problematic office hour interactions are the one side of the third research question in this study. Finally, even though more differences were highlighted previously, it is likely to find both similarities and differences between office hour interactions in US and Turkey contexts.

Using the corpus in the same context, Chiang and Mi (2008) put more emphasis on intercultural aspect of such ITA-ACS interactions during office hours. They acknowledge that such pragmatic failures (Thomas, 1983) are like to occur since interlocutors come from different linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds. Rather than merely underscoring the problems, the researchers aim to exemplify how mutual understanding could be attained in these interactions. One such instance of it is understanding and managing uncertainty when they undergo such a situation. Understanding uncertainty in a certain interaction is defined as "a self-perceived likelihood that something in the preceding utterances has not been accurately grasped" rather than a sheer failure in meaning-making (Chiang & Mi, 2008, p.271). Six broad categories of reformulations performed by ACSs are identified in ITA-ACS office hour discourse with varying functions in understanding and managing uncertainty: elucidative reformulations to explain what

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has just been said more explicitly; elaborative reformulations to acquire a more corresponding understanding of what is meant; inductive reformulations to summarize or draw a generalization from what has been said; replicative reformulation to warrant what is said is indeed what is meant; transpositional reformulation to make sure more lucidly what is said refers to what is meant; and finally explicative reformulation to draw inference from what has just been told. Hence, the study confirms that deficiencies in ITAs' pragmalinguistic competence, such as word choice or sentence structure, can only be one source of misunderstanding but may not be a major handicap on the part of ACSs in their interactions with ITAs. Moreover, interactional problems might be identified or noticed, and interactionally managed in intercultural communication.

The studies that have been reviewed so far in this section provide significant insights into ITA office hour interactions in the US context. The findings do not simply identify interactional difficulties but also probe potential sources of such communication failures as well as how they are handled in some contexts. As stated earlier, these studies allow me to make comparisons between this study and office hour interactions in the US context. Methodologically, it would be appropriate to classify them as small-scale studies because of their scope and the number of interactions included. Thus, the following part expands the review of literature to broader ones in size, scope, and context, incorporating a doctoral dissertation, book chapter, and publishes article with its comprehensive analysis. Although only one study uses ITA corpus, these studies actually shift the focus of attention from ITAs to office hour interactions between university professors/advisors and students, which is more relevant to this proposed study[4].

In her doctoral dissertation, Nair-Brodeur (1995) examined the types and functions of questions and power asymmetries in office hour interactions between professors and students.

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[4] There are actually more studies in the German context (Boettcher &Meer, 2000; House &Levy, 2008; Meer, 2003; Zegers, 2004, as cited in Limberg, 2010) but since these studies are in German and my academic language competence is limited to English and Turkish, they are excluded from this literature review.

The study with its qualitative ethnographic discourse analytic perspective (Ferrara, 1994) also provides a thick description of sociolinguistic and ethnographic context. The data came from forty office hour interactions collected over four weeks between 6 professors from varying academic disciplines and their students at a large Midwestern university in the US. Additionally, the researcher utilized interviews with students and field notes. The three main phases of greetings, topic transition, and closings emerged from the data, and the sub-types of office hour interactions have been identified as the service encounter, academic office hour encounter, and pedagogically-oriented office hour encounter. Similarly, office hour interaction in this study were examined to identify broader purposes or functions and topics, and how these aspects yield certain discourse features with regard to turn-taking, turn length, volubility, amount of overlaps and backchannels in the flow of interactions. Additionally, Nair-Brodeur (1995) analyzes conducive and furthering questions (e.g. rhetorical, *wh-* or *yes/no* questions) in the construction and mitigation of power during office hour interactions. The findings suggest that the intersection of power and discourse strategies is vague in office hour interactions in the sense that such interplay is dominant in some interactions but the aim is to build rapport in another. The use of questions, in another terms interrogatives, constitute one of the syntactic categories of suggestions in office hours in this study (see the Coding the data subsection in the Methodology chapter). Therefore, it is anticipated that interrogative suggestions by both parties are likely to serve various functions in office hour interactions in this study, and one potential area could be how power is enacted or negotiated through the use of this type of suggestions.

The discussion of asymmetrical interactions in office hour discourse actually underpins the role of institutional constraints previously noted in the first chapter (Drew & Heritage, 1992). Similar to other institutional settings, office hour interactions are subject to contextual dynamics,

such as the goal, task at hand, time limitations, and perceived roles/relationships between professors and students. Additionally, as Limberg (2010) argues the blended nature of formality and informality, office hour interactions are less structured in terms of sequential organization when compared to other forms of talk at universities. Some of them are, for example, classrooms, oral exams and presentations, defenses, etc. where participants are involved in a certain sequence of turn-taking, or use specific discourse strategies.

Turning to Limberg (2010) then, "in educational contexts, questioning is taken to be primary instrument of interactional control" on the part of professors or teachers (Limberg, 2010, p.37), which is actually highlighted by findings in Nair-Brodeur (1995). In other words, students usually expect their professors to give advice, help to solve their academic concerns, make suggestions or recommendations as they perceive them the source of knowledge and their access to the institutional practices. Similarly, even though students in German universities actually show a vigorous and voluntary pursuit of advice from their professors during office hour consultations, they mostly accept relatively passive roles as advice-seekers. Most of the time, advice-giving is initiated by professors in an explicit fashion, making the course of action obvious to students. Analyzing the interactional space in advice-giving activity in office hour interactions, Limberg (2010) asserts that the amount of advice-giving might vary from larger sequences of turns to isolated instances, and that it is closely linked to the degree of explicitness/implicitness of a request for advice made by students.

Reinhardt (2010) examined spoken directive language use in office hour consultations between ITAs in the process of training in comparison with practicing academic professionals. Different from Nair-Brodeur (1995) and Limberg (2010), the methodology relies on both quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the data come from two corpora: ITA corp as a learner

corpus of advanced ESL and ITA preparation corpus of a large northeastern American university, and MICASE (the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English) as an expert corpus because of the participants' native or native-like proficiency.

The overall results pertaining to modal and directive vocabulary constructions have already been referred to in the previous sections (see Chapter 1). In a similar vein, modality is considered to be an important linguistic feature or source for the participants in this study in the co-construction of suggestion-response episodes as the subcategory of directives (see the Coding the data subsection in the Methodology chapter). What makes Reinhardt (2010) noteworthy is that the study portrays individual variation, in addition to group comparisons, by employing a qualitative in-group comparison and assessment of experts and learners, and then creates individual learner profiles of three ITAs.

To start with the in-group differences of experts and learners, the first group shows much variability in the frequency and form whereas learners use lesser linguistic resources for directive language. Some ITAs even stick to certain forms and display over-reliance. When we consider language competence and expert-novice relationship between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, such differences with regard to their linguistic sources are expected specifically in their suggestion performance. In the case of experts, Reinhardt (2010) explicates the variability among them with the difference in professors' academic discipline. For example, the four most frequent users of '*you have to..*' are professors of hard sciences, such as computer science, economics, heat and mass transfer, and statistics. These academic disciplines are usually considered as having more rigid rules and procedures when compared to social sciences and humanities. Finally, individual differences in the depiction of three ITAs directive use with regard to frequency, form, mitigation and hedging are considered to be linked to contextual and

social factors, such as length of stay, actual experience of office hour interactions, instructional history, gender, and the development of identity as an academic professional. Such contextual and social factors might have impact on office hour interactions between Turkish EFL students and their international instructors in this study.

As discussed previously, office hour discourse might be situated in the larger category of consultation, and possess some similarities with advising sessions as well as differences. Thus, it would be helpful to consider studies on university academic counseling sessions for a further understanding that informs this study. The studies that examine specifically suggestions and interlanguage pragmatics in academic advising sessions have already been discussed in the earlier section (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993, 1996; Jiang, 2006). Similarly, Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) have been presented in the discussion of phases of office hour discourse as they examine the closings of academic advising sessions. The other three studies that are briefly argued in this section provide insights into the interrelation between institutional roles/relationships and language use in academic advising sessions (He, 1993, 1994; He & Keating, 1991).

To start with, He and Keating (1991) investigate how counselors and students establish, negotiate, and reproduce their expert and novice roles through linguistic devices such as the polarity, modality, superlatives, and adverbials of certainty/uncertainty as well as discourse devices of topic control, repair, and reported speech. For example, it has been argued that modality is used to index expert and novice status at different levels of stance in various institutional tasks. The counselors use modals of high value (e.g. *need to* or *must*), or present a more marked stance, to express what some requirements to be fulfilled whereas they employ modals of low value (e.g. *can, could, might*) to provide suggestions for such requirements. Such

linguistic and discourse features are quite likely to pertain to language use in office hour

interactions in this study as well. Additionally, the researchers assert that the counselors practice

withholding personal opinions and judgments to create a zone of proximal development for the

students so that they can make their own decisions and develop expertize in such situations.

Thus, they allow students to improve decision-making skills by socializing them into a certain

way of thinking.

He (1994) also exemplified how withholding certain information or opinion was

interactionally organized, and explored the purposes behind such practices by counselors in the

case of advice-giving. One such prototypical request-advice adjacency was the interaction where

the student asked for a recommendation about which professor or class to choose. However, the

counselor did not provide any direct answer to such a request for advice as matter of his

institutional role and duty. In the context of this study, even though the main goal of office hour

interactions is to give-receive help or support on an academic concern, it is still at the

international instructors' discretion to decide the extent of help or support to be provided, which

is also framed by the institutional context and roles. In that sense, we can consider the role of

counselor and the student in advising sessions different from the international instructors and

their Turkish EFL students in office hour interactions because the instructors in this study offer

courses to these students and it is their ultimate goal to facilitate clarification and information in

many aspects of their course requirements. Furthermore, the nature of relationship between the

international instructors and their Turkish EFL students might also be different because they

usually establish such relationship throughout their in-class encounters.

In the same context with He (1994) and He and Keating (1991), He (1993) provided

much more detailed examination of academic advising sessions at an American university.

Essentially, He (1993) examined how social, institutional, and interactional context and talk mutually constituted each other in academic counseling sessions. The study mainly focused on the relevance of context in terms of identity construction in the opening of encounters; delivery and reception of advice; interpersonal relations through the linguistic construct of modality; how the participants practiced avoidance to make their identities relevant; how they also framed facts and stances through others' voices; and finally how they closed academic advising encounters. Not surprisingly, the study integrated an elaborated methodology and analysis as a doctoral dissertation and hinged upon conversational analysis, functional systemic linguistics, and ethnographic methods (e.g. being a participant observer as an academic counseling assistant at the time of study).

The main findings in this research suggested that students and counselors constructed their identities reciprocally and discursively during the openings of advising sessions. The students did so by mentioning their majors, number of units completed requirements to be met and other concerns pertaining to their visit. The counselors also built their identities through greetings and introduction by clarifying their institutional identity as service-providers and framing the student as the advisee. As in the case of requesting advice, students utilized stories as evolving requests for advice where counselors were also actively involved in. However, the reception of advice relied on who initiated the advice sequence and how relevant it was perceived by students with regard to their stated problem. Additionally, He (1993) embodied students' use of modality in two ways: the use of high modality when talking about university rules or requirements, and low modality when requesting, expressing personal preferences, and offering solutions to their own problems.

Another important outcome of this study relates to the assumption that as a matter of conversation analytic framework, every single move by the participants is context-bounded and contributes to the ongoing interaction. Thus, the analysis should encompass not only what is said but also what is *not* said (He, 1993, emphasis in original). One example of such interactional practices is the counselors' avoidance of providing information or expressing attitude at the expected turn as also examined in He (1994). Likewise, the international instructors in this study might contribute to the co-construction of office hour interactions not only by talking but also avoiding certain information as a matter of their institutional roles. However, different from the series of studies abovementioned, this study delves into such interactional and interpersonal functions of office hour interactions through relational work lenses and a discourse-analytic approach. In that sense, it is the purpose of this study, specifically through answering the third research question, to display the forms of relational work as broader social acts by empirically analyzing language use in larger stretches of discourse.

Research on University Students' Oral Communication Skills

As noted in the introduction chapter, academic discourse at university level requires language competence both in written and spoken forms of communication. Although oral and written language skills are equally important for academic success, the first one has been long ignored in the field (Duff, 2010; Biber et al., 2002). However, Stokoe (2000) argued that with the increasing emphasis on social theories of learning, a body of research has started to pay more attention to oral interaction and its role in education. Edited by Davies and Corson (1997), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education Volume 3: Oral Discourse and Education* brought together several interdisciplinary studies, and provided insights into talk in educational settings. This specific volume devoted to spoken discourse explored oral language as a field of study and

considered numerous ways of theorizing talk in education as well as how talk was produced in educational settings. There are three main sections in this volume that mostly delve into classroom talk: theorizing talk; oral language, culture and identity; oral language and curriculum.

Not surprisingly then, the earlier literature on spoken discourse in educational settings have paid more attentions to classroom talk and mainly focused on rhetorical organization of classroom discourse (Cazden, 1988), or discourse organization of lectures (Flowerdew, 1994) as well as linguistic features related to the dimensions of variation among spoken and written registers. More recent research has shifted focus to language socialization in spoken academic discourse by examining oral language socialization of Japanese students at a Canadian university (Kobayashi, 2004, 2006); discourse socialization in oral activities at a TESL graduate program (Morita, 2000); and academic discourse socialization and identity work among graduate students, visitors, and professors at two US universities (Tracy, 1997). In what follows, I discuss few studies that scrutinize interactions or speech activities where university students are involved either in or outside the classroom. Pertinent to the scope and purpose of this study, these studies provide insights into overall language use in English by university students.

In terms of methodology, researchers employed qualitative and discourse analytic approaches in their examination of university students' interactions in discussion groups, tutor meetings, classrooms, academic seminars and other forms of oral communication in university settings. The three-part exchange structure of initiation, response, and feedback (IRF) articulated by Sinclair et al. (1975, 1992) was largely employed to understand the discourse pattern of seminar or group discussions in universities (Basturkmen, 2002, 2003). In addition, Tapper (1996) utilized a case study approach to explore exchange patterns in university education context. The researcher incorporated questionnaire and observation but the main source of data

came from four academic contexts, such as lectures, lab sessions, writing classes, and student-teacher writing conferences. Employing a conversation analytic approach that is ethnomethodologically informed, Stokoe (2000) examined topicality in small group discussions in a thirty different university classes. Finally, other studies adopted a qualitative discourse analytic framework to analyze the discourse structure of ITAs' spoken discourse (Tyler, 1992), and the concept of listenership in tutor-student meetings (Farr, 2003). Similarly, the type of analytic approach embraced in this study is discourse analysis that draws upon interactional sociolinguistics. The study investigates what linguistic choices the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students make in office hour interactions with an emphasis on the realization of speech at of suggestions, and how these choices contribute to the interactional and interpersonal goals in the ongoing interactions. The empirical analysis of language use also aims to reveal the levels of relational work between the participants in this study.

Basturkmen (2003) examined exchange patterns of a small group discussion with regard to the tutor's being present or absent in the context of English for academic purposes (EAP). The findings revealed that in student peer group discussion where no tutor was involved, students organized the discourse by eliciting each other's response without assuming the role of a leader. The students' sequential organization of their discussion showed that they were mostly concerned about contributing or adding to the topic or subject matter in hand rather than actually interacting with each other. Throughout the discussions led by the tutor, simple exchange patterns of 'initiating move followed by a responding move' (IR) were predominantly observed, and sometimes this included a follow-up move as well. The initiation of exchanges was equally distributed between tutors and students. In other words, the presence of the tutor did not necessarily govern the interaction as a figure of authority. However, it influenced the small group

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discussions in two interconnected ways. First, there was a solution-based focus in the tutor-led discussions, and second, such discussions were more mutually constructed. Rather than basically adding up to the content or simply expressing ideas as in the student peer discussions, they incorporated mutual other-orientation, which was "enacted through the co-operative exchange of ideas and information through interactive routines such as initiation and response" (Basturkmen, 2003, p.30-31).

One important implication of Basturkmen (2003) for EAP context is that any type of speech events at universities may encompass multimodality or different forms of speaking. In other words, speech events, such as lectures, small group discussions, or student-faculty meetings, might not necessarily comprise one form of discourse depending on the contextual factors. For example, the type of activity or stages of events is relevant to such variation in the forms of speaking or language use. Such an implication might pertain to the context of this study in two ways. First, office hour interactions between instructors and students is one form of speech activity EFL students are likely to experience as lectures or group discussions in universities. Second, depending on the task or purpose of office hour interaction as well as other social factors, the instructors and students might also deviate from certain way of speaking or topics.

As a study of active listenership in dyadic meetings, Farr (2003) also scrutinized tutors' interactions with their graduate students whereby the purpose was to review and critically assess a practice teaching lesson that was given by these students. The analysis indicated that the listenership in tutor-student meetings was accomplished in three ways: through minimal response tokens (e.g. *yeah, mm hm, yes, okay, no*), non-minimal response tokens (e.g. *right, exactly, sure, really, fine*, etc.), and overlaps and interruptions. The analysis of minimal response tokens

revealed that the most frequent one was *yeah* and such tokens were used as markers of convergence, acknowledgement, agreement or confirmation, including *no* in eight instances. Farr (2003) concluded that such a result had some pragmatic matters because the speech genre was professional and instructional where co-operation and continuous engagement during the interaction was ascendant in such a context. With regard to the use of non-minimal response tokens, language variation was reported between tutor-student interactions and casual conversation in British and American English. For example, unlike American and British English, *gosh, certainly*, and *quite* were not used in Irish English; and *wow* was observed in the corpus of the study and usually affiliated with American English. As for overlaps and interruptions, the frequencies of tutor-initiated and student-initiated ones were almost equal in the data. The tutor-initiated overlaps and interruptions were used to restrain student self-criticism, elicit student reflection, provide relevant information and feedback, justify student performance, and close a topic. By the same token, the student-initiated overlaps and interruptions were performed in order to confirm or agree, answer a question by the tutor, pursue clarification or advice, and provide humor.

Such linguistic features as minimal/non-minimal response, overlaps, and backchannels are considered essential in the co-construction of office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in this study. They gain importance specifically in understanding how each party responds to another interlocutor's contribution to the ongoing interaction, and what function such discourse features serve in the flow of office hour talk.

In the UK context, Stokoe (2000) investigated the production of topicality in university seminar sessions during which both undergraduate and postgraduate students were involved in

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small group discussions. In the analysis of openings in three discussions, it was suggested that participants started with negotiation of topicality through clarification of task requirements, and integrated the tutor's words as initiation of a topic. Alternatively, the opening sequences of discussions displayed that they might also talk about the absent group members and the activities of the day, suggesting that participants actually hinged on their shared knowledge of people or group members. In addition to openings and topicality in educational talk, the researcher also examined the formation of appropriate and inappropriate discussion topics. The reorientation sequences were identified as the markers of the participants' perception of what on- and off-task topics were, and such sequences were usually preceded by topic shifts.

Collectively, the strength of the study rests in its analytic approaches or frameworks. Stokoe (2000) examined educational talk-in-interaction by highlighting the participants' own perspectives and perceptions of topicality. Thus, the understanding of student discussions was accomplished through students' own terms or expressions throughout the talk. Such an analytic approach also resonates with relational work as a theoretical framework that informs this study in the sense that the lay or first-order interpretations of politeness are important in understanding office hour interactions in this study.

All in all, as Biber et al. (2002) put it, research on spoken academic discourse is not only limited but also mainly investigates classroom discourse. However, for the success of international university students in the context of the US or EAP, it is important to examine all sorts of university tasks for real world implications. In other words, several communicative activities in English such as office hour interactions in this study take place in real life situations, and research on real or authentic interactions can provide insights into how language is used in these interactions specifically for English language learners. Similarly, in the context of EFL

university students, it is necessary to understand different speech activities that they are potentially exposed to in actual situations rather than only relying on their classroom instruction and/or activities in English. Research in this strand will also inform EFL instruction and help familiarize students to various speech events.

Summary

In this chapter, the multifaceted theoretical framework has been presented. The conceptualization of pragmatic competence has been made through speech act theory and relational work to present the underlying theoretical consideration in this study. Next, because of the main focus on suggestions, a theoretical and operational definition followed by relevant research has been provided. Additionally, review of literature that informs my understanding of research in this strand has been discussed in detail and important aspects, such as research questions, participants, setting, methodology, and major findings, have been outlined involving intercultural perspectives. Finally, research on office hour interactions as well as university students' oral communication skills have been brought up into attention to better inform this proposed study.

The literature presented in this chapter has numerous implications for this study in the sense that office hour interactions between Turkish EFL students and their international instructors need to be investigated in order to form an understanding of language use by EFL learners in such goal-oriented authentic situations. Hence, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of literature with regard to EFL learners' appropriate language use, pragmatic competence, and language strategies specifically in intercultural communication where they communicate with interlocutors from varying L1 and cultural background. Methodologically, the studies included in this section have utilized interactional data and qualitative research methods

with a variety of approaches, such as corpus analysis (Jiang, 2006; Koester, 2002; Reindhart, 2010), a case study approach (Marra, 2012; Flores-Ferrán, 2010), and conversation analysis (Limberg, 2010) combined with a genre analysis (Koester, 2004), interactional sociolinguistics and ethnographic approaches (He, 1993; Thonus, 1998a) as well as several approaches to discourse analysis (Carpenter, 1983; Locher, 2004; Nair-Brodeur, 1995; Stubbe et al., 2003; Vine, 2009). Similarly, this study includes naturally occurring interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors during university office hours. However, different from mostly employed conversation analysis in these studies, this study methodologically draws upon discourse analysis informed by interactional sociolinguistics (see Chapter 3 for more detail on analytical approach embraced in this study). Additionally, the main focus on suggestions in this study as one of the most prevailing areas in the study of pragmatic competence and politeness complies with research presented in this section as well. The use of office hour interactions as the specific type of authentic interactions is important for its real world implications. That is, analyzing language use in such actual speech activities for Turkish EFL students and their instructors becomes even more meaningful since it provides insights into how the participants utilize linguistic strategies at discourse level and how their language relate to the ongoing interaction as well as how they form and maintain their relationships through language use in such real communication. Indeed, several earlier studies have examined office hour interactions with different research questions (e.g. Carpenter, 1983; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992; He, 1993,1994; He & Keating, 1991; Limberg, 2010; Nair-Brodeur, 1995; Reinhardt, 2010). Nevertheless, it is still necessary to gain much more recent insights into language use in office hour discourse because of the abovementioned fact that this type of speech activity takes place in everyday life of Turkish EFL students and their international instructors. Finally, office

hour discourse in the US context has drawn much attention with regard to ITAs communication with American college students (e.g. Axelson & Madden, 1994; Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Tyler & Davies, 1990). However, it is still an understudied area in EFL contexts. As a consequence of literature review in this chapter, this study aims to fill this gap and delve into pragmatics of office hour interactions in an EFL context with potential implications for EFL instruction. In the next chapter, several components of methodology will be presented.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

As articulated in the first chapter, examining language use in office hour interactions is significant for several reasons. First of all, these interactions are one of the major components of authentic communicative activities that take place at universities. Therefore, in such genuine or real life situations, both instructors and students need to express their concerns, opinions, purpose, etc. in order to pursue the task at hand. Framing office hour interactions as a form of institutional discourse, it has to be highlighted that they involve certain topics and purposes that directly influence the ongoing talk. Several features, such as turn-taking, volubility, keeping the floor, and linguistic strategies (e.g. the use of questions), with regard to the participants' organization of, or contribution to, the interactions might change depending on these purpose s and topics at hand in office hour interactions. Additionally, office hour interactions as one type of communicative activity are dynamic and complex in the sense that the participants manage several interactional goals by using different strategies and acts while also working on interpersonal or relational aspect. One such act frequently occurring in office hour interactions is making and responding to suggestions where the instructors and students jointly construct the ongoing talk. In order to examine office hour interaction with these characteristics in mind, the following research questions were investigated in this study:

> 1. What are the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions? How do these
>
> functions and topics influence the discourse organization of office hour interactions?

2. How do Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors co-construct suggestion-response episodes in English during their office hour interactions?

3. What are the successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors? What functions may relate to their success and problems?

This study utilizes a discourse analytic approach in order to analyze office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors, and to address the research questions above. Mainly, the primary topics and functions with relation to discourse organization of these interactions, and the suggestion-response episodes from the framework of relational work are explored. Additionally, implications for both EFL and broader contexts are discussed. Analyzing suggestion-response episodes in office interactions from the perspective of relational work implies that performing suggestions is negotiated and co-constructed by Turkish EFL learners and their instructors in the unfolding of office hour interactions. Moreover, the framework of relational work allows us to locate what is pragmatically successful and problematic aspect based on interlocutors' responses to each other's utterances rather than simply making judgments based on native-speaker norms or other priori lists of linguistic strategies because it locates both the speaker's and hearer's interpretations. As Locher (2004) puts it, "the process of defining relationships in interactions is called *facework* or *relational work*" (p.51, emphasis in original), and politeness is only a part of this relational work (Locher & Watts, 2005). In other words, the participants negotiate their relationships through their interpretation of what is appropriate and what is not in the ongoing interaction relying on their expectations. This process is mirrored through their language use. Therefore, the interpretation of appropriate verbal behavior, which refers to successful aspects in this study, involves not only

what the speaker articulates but also how the hearer responds to his/her message. Similar to successful suggestion-response episodes, problematic ones, or pragmatic failure, in office hour interactions are also identifiable through participants' turns and responses.

The definition of discourse is informed by applied linguistics, sociology, philosophy, anthropology, communication, social psychology, etc. (Gee & Handford, 2012; Johnstone, 2008; Schiffrin, 1994; Schiffrin et al., 2001). Thus, there exist different approaches to defining discourse, originating from diverse paradigms. Two such contrastive definitions deriving from different paradigms in linguistics are structural (Stubbs, 1983; van Dijk, 1985) and functional (Brown & Yule, 1983) approaches to discourse. Schiffrin (1994) makes a comparison of formalist (structural) and functional views of language. The first one is interested in smaller linguistic units and their relationships with each other whereas the second approach mainly focuses on the social functions of language and analyzes language use. In that sense, I embrace a functional view of language in this study by primarily focusing on how both Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors use English, more specifically suggestions, throughout their office hour interactions.

In *Approaches to Discourse*, Schiffrin (1994), for example, discusses six major approaches to discourse analysis in the sense of wider topics that these approaches have adopted in analyzing the utterances. These are namely speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, the ethnography of communication, pragmatics, conversational analysis, and variation analysis. Her comparison of these approaches portrays the differences in their theoretical and methodological origin that might lead to diverse assumptions and beliefs about language use. However, Schiffrin (1994) underscores that all these approaches ultimately consider "language as social interaction", and all address the overall goal of discourse analysis from different

vantage points: how utterances are related to each other (p. 406, 414). In this study, I drew

primarily upon interactional sociolinguistics to inform my understanding of discourse analysis

fundamentally because it complies with the tenets of relational work that constitutes the

theoretical underpinnings in this study. One such point of convergence of these two perspectives

is that social context is the key to understanding how meaning is constructed in real interaction

through language use. Additionally, both relational work and interactional sociolinguistics

emphasize the jointly constructed nature of interaction by the speaker and hearer through their

language use (Tannen, 2004).

Developed by linguistic anthropologist Gumperz (1982a), interactional sociolinguistics

assumes that social groups have their own way of expressing meaning in their language. Thus, it

is the primary goal to study language use in real interaction by which interlocutors create

meaning and form their social relationships (Tannen, 2004, 2005). Furthermore, Jaspers (2012)

also discusses the role of interactional sociolinguistics from social-constructivist view of

discourse where language use in face-to-face interaction is the primary resource of the

interlocutors as "social actors to shape and re-shape their social surroundings actively and

creatively" (p.140). In this study, I examine how Turkish EFL learners and their international

instructors use English with a particular focus on suggestions to achieve their interactional goals.

To do so, I analyze utterances where both Turkish EFL learners and their international

instructors realize these suggestions; how the other party responds to these suggestions; and how

their linguistic choices contribute to the ongoing interactions as well as their maintenance and

negotiation of relationships by considering both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of

discourse (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983).

That said, the definition of discourse that complies with the methodology of this study is that it is the analysis of language use. In other words, discourse analysis is "the study of meanings we give language and actions we carry out when we use language in specific contexts" (Gee & Handford, 2012, p.1). Hence, such a perspective asserts that the study of language use is not limited to language forms only but entails the purposes or functions which all these forms fulfill in social life (Brown & Yule, 1983). By using language in verbal interactions, people not only say things but also do things through language. They use language to communicate, convey meaning, make connections, build and maintain (or destroy) relationships with each other (Gee, 2011a, 2011b). As such, the role of the social contexts in which people use language becomes crucial in understanding the functional uses of language, what topics they prioritize, how they construct and share knowledge, and how they develop relationships in certain speech events or activities.

Returning to Schiffrin's (1994) conceptualization of language as social interaction, this study is methodologically informed by the perspective of interactional sociolinguistics to discourse analysis. First of all, linguistic form and meaning are interdependent of each other, and accompanied by social and cultural meanings as well. Second, discourse analysis is empirical, and interpretations of how people use language are derived out of the data rather than what the researcher thinks or assumes about it. Finally, how people or speakers choose various linguistic resources –how they say, mean, or do something– is directed by the interaction among several factors. Some of them are speaker intentions and conventionalized strategies for expressing such intentions, the sequence of other utterances, discourse mode (e.g. narratives, description, etc.), the social context, and culturally situated beliefs and actions.

In the context of this study, understanding how Turkish university students as EFL learners and their international instructors used language in office hour interactions was based on an empirical examination of spoken language in office hour discourse. Thus, the analysis included a focus on the organization of spoken text, linguistic choices made by participants and how they co-constructed meaning through such language structures. In other words, the analysis involved longer sequences of talk where certain utterances were made, and a closer look into such segments with regard to how both parties concomitantly produced the ongoing talk. By examining the larger sequence of spoken discourse with a focus on the form-and-function relationship, the study also explored how Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors established and maintained relations. In analytic terms, this required an examination of not only how one interlocutor made a certain utterance but also how each party interpreted another's utterance within the certain segment of office hour talk. In what follows, the research design, setting, participants, data collection and analysis, trustworthiness as well as limitations and my role as a researcher are detailed.

Research Design

This study examined naturally occurring talk during university office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. The data were collected and analyzed in an EFL setting involving two private universities in Turkey. As presented in the previous section, this study embraces a discourse analytic approach that is informed by interactional sociolinguistics and relational work. These theoretical and methodological perspectives underpinning this study are closely linked in terms of their main tenets. First, they all rely on the social interaction and naturally occurring data as it is in this study. In that sense, it is the social context and factors that have impact on how participants use language to form their

social relationships. Second, the expectations and conventions are culturally situated and such shared knowledge of social context facilitates the participants' interpretations in the interactions. Finally, meaning in social interaction through language use is not created by the speaker only but it is co-constructed and negotiated by all participants in the ongoing talk (Locher, 2004; Tannen, 2004, 2005).

In speech act research, the research design and type of data have always been a focus of discussion. As argued by Kasper (2004), researchers have utilized numerous types of data, such as natural, elicited, interactional, non-interactional, self-reported, and several other forms. As in all empirical research, "a good method is one that is able to shed light on the question(s) under study" (Kasper & Dahl, 1991, p.245). Put differently, methodology is most related to the purpose and scope of the study. If the study aims to explore how participants respond to each other in real-time interactions, how they make meaning throughout their interaction, or how they interactionally organize their actual language use, the most appropriate type of data would definitely be naturally occurring or authentic data (Golato, 2003).

Likewise, the use of authentic or naturally occurring discourse is crucial in this study because the purpose is to understand how Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors use English language in their office hour interactions. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005) argue that researchers fulfill the desire or need of the field by integrating authentic discourse into interlanguage pragmatics. As explained below, numerous methodological advantages of employing institutional talk as a form of authentic discourse in L2 pragmatics have been outlined in *Interlanguage Pragmatics: Exploring Institutional Talk* edited by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005). Similarly, these advantages and considerations inform the choice of office hour interactions as a practice of institutional discourse in this study. First and foremost, the use of

naturally occurring data and real office hour interactions in this study provides a paramount opportunity to understand pragmatic competence in an EFL context by adhering to the appropriate type of data source from the methodological and theoretical frameworks of relational work, discourse analysis, and interactional sociolinguistics. Understanding the speech act of suggestions as the main focus in this study in authentic interactions allows us to see how such utterances are initiated and responded, what their function are in the ongoing interaction, and what other language features co-occur with them.

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005) also conceptualize collecting authentic data through the framework of institutional talk "as a natural experiment" and point out several methodological considerations. Authentic data from institutional discourse fulfills three key facets of L2 pragmatics research: comparability, interactivity, and consequentiality, which applies to office hour interactions as well. First of all, it is possible to anticipate topics, certain speech acts, and some other attributes, such as the participants' roles, in the discourse because of the goal-oriented nature of office hour interactions as one type of institutional discourse (e.g. problem statement and requests for help by the students in writing tutorials); and they are iterative in the sense that different students coming to office hours, for instance, are likely to have similar concerns, agendas, and purposes. In other words, similar conversations repeatedly take place with the same or different participants. Secondly, these interactions are interactive because they take place between either two or more interlocutors, making it dyadic or multi-party talk where participants take turns. Finally, office hour interactions have real world outcomes or consequences because they are actual communicative practices occurring in academic settings. In addition to these major tenets, institutional talk comes about in predictable locations and times, and thus allows the researcher to make necessary preparations and plans

before the speech event under investigation occurs. The participants in an institution are normally known to others, and this enables the researcher to provide some descriptions of them and their relations.

As well as methodological advantages of using institutional discourse as a source of authentic data, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005) also highlight major areas that could be examined for a deepened understanding of L2 pragmatics. Some of these areas are:

- Understanding language in context as participants in institutional discourse involve in meaningful interactions and negotiations rather than being exposed to researcher-produced scenarios.

- Understanding various pragmatic attributes that take place conjointly in one encounter or speech activity (e.g. ask questions, make suggestions, request information in one office hour interaction).

- Studying both pragmatic development and the socializing into institutional rules together in a contextualized way.

Office hour interactions between Turkish EFL students and their international instructors are situated within institutional discourse, as discussed in the introduction chapter (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). Therefore, all these methodological considerations with regard to institutional discourse outlined by Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (2005) pertain to the research design in this study. The primary data for this study is the audio-recorded office hour interactions between Turkish EFL students and their international instructors at two private Turkish universities. The two types of secondary data also support the analysis of primary data. These subordinate data sources are namely classroom observations and a post-interaction questionnaire. These 3 data types will be detailed in the following sections.

Setting

This study was carried out at two private universities in the northwest of Turkey, for which I use the pseudonyms The City University (CU) and The Town University (TU). These universities have several commonalities as well as some differences. First of all, both universities offer EMI programs fully and students are expected to meet certain language proficiency before they start their undergraduate program. In alignment with the role of English discussed in the first chapter, these universities have several international collaborative research, academic, and educational projects specifically within Bologna orientation process. Additionally, they offer many study abroad programs all over the world but mainly in Europe. As of August 2015, CU maintains 8 faculties, 4 graduate schools, and 2 vocational schools; and TU involves 5 faculties, and 3 graduate schools. Under the school of languages, both universities offer their own English language preparation programs and undergraduate English courses (see University entrance process and EFL competence in Turkey section for more details). As for the specific setting in this study, the office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors took place in instructors' offices, or in a meeting room allocated by faculties for such purposes.

Participants

Two groups of participants were recruited in this study: the international instructors and their undergraduate Turkish university students who are considered EFL learners. In what follows, I present detailed information about both groups of participants in this study utilizing the demographic information section in the post-interaction questionnaires. Since the international instructors were initially contacted and then they provided access to the students, I start with this participant group.

International Instructors

As for the sampling purposes, two criteria were employed: L1 and cultural background other than Turkish, and offering courses to first year undergraduate Turkish students since they take English language related courses and thus are institutionally designated as English language learners. The rationale for having international instructors with an L1 and cultural background other than Turkish was related to the fact that these instructors communicate with the students in English outside the class as well. Even though most of these instructors can speak Turkish at varying degrees, they prefer to use English in their interactions with students for both institutional and personal reasons. Thus, the interaction between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students constitute the instances of intercultural communication in Turkey as well.

The potential participant candidates for the study were, however, limited to only the ELT department at CU, the department of Modern Languages at CU, and undergraduate English program at TU because of three main reasons. In other words, I was not able to work with all the programs and faculties in these two universities for the following reasons: first, not every program in these faculties or schools had international faculty at the time of data collection; second, even if they did so, it was usually the case that those with a PhD degree (e.g. Assistant, Associate, or Full professors) were not teaching the first year undergraduate courses[5]; third, some international instructors were part-timers so they were at universities only one or maybe two days, which was difficult to follow up. Therefore, I only worked with and recruited international instructors and their students from certain departments and programs. These include the departments of English Language Teaching and Modern Languages at CU, and

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[5] This is not a rule or established practice and it was just a coincidence at the time of data collection.

undergraduate English language program at TU. In the case of CU, not only English language courses but also some other content-based compulsory courses (e.g. Introduction to Psychology, or Introduction to Statistics, etc.) for certain departments were offered by the international instructors in the department of Modern Languages. Thus, at the time of data collection, there were 6 international instructors in total at these two departments at CU, and 5 international instructors in total at TU. In other words, the entire population of potential instructors to recruit for this study included 11 international instructors.

Considering the small-scale population of international instructors, I tried to follow recruitment procedures with all these instructors at two research sites. At CU, 4 instructors out of 6 initially seemed to agree to participate in the study. However, one of them did not follow up the procedures and pursue further communication. Another international instructor agreed to participate, followed up all the recruitment procedures but no data came out of his office hours since students did not attend his office hours. Similarly, I was able to obtain consent from 3 international instructors out of 5 at TU but only one of them followed up the procedures and completed the study. As a consequence, there were 3 international instructors who participated in this study: Mike, Maria, and Amelia (pseudonyms).

Mike is a North American native speaker of English and cannot speak or understand Turkish at all. As shown in Table 1, at the time of the data collection, he had been an instructor at the department of ELT at CU for 2 and a half years. He had been living in Turkey for 7 years when the study started and had university teaching experience in Turkey for 7 years. His entire teaching experience involved the last 9 years. His undergraduate major was in English/Latin, and he had two MA degrees in Classical Humanities and Applied Linguistics. In the last 2 years, he offered courses, such as *Oral Communication*, *Advanced Reading and Writing*, *Introduction to*

Literature, *Foreign Language Teaching Methods*, *Introduction to Linguistics*, and *Educational Principles* to first and second year ELT students.

Maria is an Italian non-native speaker of English. She is a native speaker of Italian and Friulian (a Romance language), and also speaks several other languages. She is fluent in Turkish with a B2 level according to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF or CEFR), and had been living in Turkey for 8 years when the study started. She also knows German at B1 Intermediate level, and French at A2 Elementary level, Romanian and Norwegian at A1 beginner levels. She completed an undergraduate degree in Foreign Languages and Literatures, and an MA in Italian Literature. At the time of data collection, she had been an instructor at the department of Modern Languages at CU for the last 5 years. Her entire teaching experience consisted of 7 years at university and 3 years at high schools. During the last 2 years, she had taught *Communication Skills and Academic Reporting* to freshmen students, and *Italian* to sophomores.

Amelia is a Bosnian-Herzegovinian non-native speaker of English. She is a native speaker of Bosnian and also speaks Turkish with B2 level according to CEFR, French, and Italian at pre-intermediate levels. She holds undergraduate and MA degrees in Economics. She also pursued a second postgraduate degree in Journalism. At the time of data collection, she had been completing a PhD in Political Science. Amelia had also been teaching *English for Academic Purposes* for last 10 years in Turkey including three different private universities in the northwest of Turkey. At the time of the study, she was at TU for one and half years. Each of these 3 international instructors was recorded interacting with their Turkish undergraduate students during office hour interactions in this study.

Table 1

Summary of Background Information for International Instructors

	Origin	Institution & Duration of Employment	Teaching Experience	Residence in Turkey	Additional Language(s)	Education	Courses Taught during The Study
Mike	North American	2,5 years at CU	9 years	7 years	Latin	• BA in English/Latin • MAs in Classical Humanities and Applied Linguistics	• Oral Communication I in Fall 2014, • Advanced Reading and Writing II in Spring 2015
Maria	Italian	5 years at CU	10 years	8 years	Turkish, German, French, Romanian, Norwegian	• BA in Foreign Languages and Literature • MA in Italian Literature	• Communication Skills and Academic Reporting I in Fall 2014, • Communication Skills and Academic Reporting II in Spring 2015
Amelia	Bosnian-Herzegovinian	1.5 years at TU	10 years	10 years	Turkish, French, Italian	• BA in Economics • MAs in Economics and Journalism • PhD (ongoing) in Political Science	• ENG101 in Fall 2014, • ENG102 in Spring 2015

Turkish EFL Students

The student participants in this study consisted of 34 Turkish freshmen students taking courses from three international instructors presented above during Fall 2014 and Spring 2015. During these semesters, Mike offered *Oral Communication I* and *Advanced Reading and Writing II* courses to the same group of students in the ELT department in 2 sections; Maria offered 6 sections of *Communications Skills and Academic Reporting I and II* each semester; and Amelia offered 3 sections of ENG 101 with specific content on the environment and the business world as well as emphasis on advanced academic writing skills. Therefore, Turkish students in these sections during Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters constituted the student participant pool for this study. The number of Turkish students in each section of these courses was between 20-25.

Two criteria were applied in the recruitment of student participants: first, they had to be Turkish origin, and second they must be taking an English language course that was offered throughout the first year of their program since this made them institutionally designated English language learners. Having such criteria assumed relatively similar English language abilities for the student participants at B1 Intermediate level according to CEFR, and thus a greater language variance among participating EFL learners was minimized.

The age range of the student participants in this study was 18-24 years old. There were 15 females and 16 males out of 31 students who submitted their questionnaires[6]. These post-interaction questionnaires aimed to obtain background information and information on their language learning experience. The purpose of giving the post-interaction questionnaires was also to understand their overall perceptions of their completed office hour interaction. Thus, with

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[6] Thirty-eight office hour interactions were recorded in this study, and the 34 students participated in the study. That is, three students had more than one office hour interactions with their instructors. For example, one student had three interactions with his instructor, and the other two were involved in two interactions throughout the data collection.

regard to their high school background, 18 students had attended a state high school with various types of English language instruction (see EFL Learners and Education Turkey section in the first chapter); 10 students had attended private high schools. Only two students were graduates of French high schools in Turkey and Turkish-French bilinguals, whereas one student completed his high school outside Turkey, and he was a Turkish-Russian bilingual. Additionally, 20 students out of 31 attended the English preparatory program either for a semester or two offered by their universities. Ten students had study abroad experience in the US, Canada, or European countries. Finally, prior English language learning experience ranged from 4 to 18 years among these 31 Turkish EFL university students.

Before proceeding with recruitment and data collection/analysis procedures, the next section presents information about university entrance process as it relates to the EFL competence in Turkey.

University entrance process and EFL competence in Turkey.

The Turkish university entrance system has been revised several times over the last decade. Until 1960, the universities used to select their own student. However, with the rapid increase in the number of young population in Turkey and a greater need for a university degree, country-wise standardized tests have been used since 1960s. Therefore, there are two general requirements for all Turkish and international students: completing secondary school either in Turkey (or equivalence in another country), and receiving a certain score in a series of exams necessary for university entrance[7]. In other words, university candidates are assessed based on their secondary school success and university entrance exam scores (Günay & Gür, 2009). All these standardized exams are prepared and given by Student Selection and Placement Center

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[7] The policies for foreign or international students who wish to pursue an undergraduate degree involve different procedures than for Turkish citizens. The related information on admissions for international students to undergraduate programs is available at http://www.studyinturkey.com/content/sub/undergraduate_admissions.aspx .

(Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi, ÖSYM, in Turkish, see the official website http://www.osym.gov.tr/ana-sayfa/1-0/20140323.html), which is a subdivision of Higher Education Council (Yükseköğretim Kurulu, YÖK, in Turkish) in Turkey.

As of 2010, ÖSYM has revisited university entrance procedures that were followed between 1980 and 1999, and has begun to implement a similar model. According to that, there are now two layers of university entrance exams in Turkey: a higher education exam (Yükseköğretime Geçiş Sınavı, YGS, in Turkish), and an undergraduate placement exam (Lisans Yerleştirme Sınavı, LYS, in Turkish). The YGS, as the first leg of university entrance exams, taken by students in one entire session (typically in April), and the content areas include Turkish, basic math, social sciences as well as natural and applied sciences. Students must get a certain score in order to take LYS as the second step of the process. If they are eligible to do that, forty percent of their score in the first exam is added to the assessment after taking the second exam. Those with scores above the minimum can still be accepted to universities, but the number of programs they apply to is highly limited, when compared to those who score higher on the second exam.

In LYS, the second leg of university entrance exams, students take a much more comprehensive exam which is usually given in June. There are five different sessions in this second step with several areas of specialization. Thus, this exam is considered more area-specific and requires more in-depth knowledge in these areas. However, students do not have to sit for all five sessions. Rather, they must take only those sections that are required for and included in the assessment procedures for their areas of specialization, which is actually chosen at the very beginning of high school education. The followings are the five sessions and subject areas involved in this exam:

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a. Session 1: Mathematics, Geometry, Natural and Applied Sciences

b. Session 2: Physics, Chemistry, and Biology

c. Session 3: Turkish Language and Literature, and Geography

d. Session 4: Social Sciences (e.g. History, Geography, and Philosophy)

e. Session 5: Foreign Languages

(*Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Sınavı Kılavuzu*, (*Student Selection and Placement System Guide)* 2014).

The university entrance process is challenging at each level, and requires a rigid preparation in several content areas. In a way, students have certain amount of initial education that will form a basis for the university programs they plan to choose. However, having such basic background knowledge in relevant areas and making choices accordingly may not be sufficient specifically when they enter universities offering EMI. As explained previously in the introduction, students are expected to have a certain level of English language proficiency to start undergraduate programs in such universities. Nevertheless, there is usually a greatly varying degree of English language abilities among students, depending on the type of secondary schools they have attended as well as the overemphasis on grammar and proficiency tests in the overall system. Thus, both state and foundational universities where the most of the programs are offered in English tackle the problem of language competence through intensive English language programs.

Once students enter such universities after going through a multi-layered written assessment, they must take a language proficiency exam for the purpose of placement and promotion to the department. These exams are prepared according to overall purpose, mission, expectations, and requirements of programs at universities. If students show the required level of

language proficiency, they can start their programs immediately[8]. However, those who score below the minimum take English classes at least for a semester depending on their placement or level (e.g. beginner, intermediate, upper-intermediate, or advanced, etc.). Based on my own insider knowledge (as a former student and current instructor) in several universities in Turkey, such English language preparation programs are mostly skill-based, proficiency exam oriented, and in some cases undervalue oral skills in their curricula. Thus, as presented in literature review pertaining to ITAs and other nonnative speakers of English, being involved in authentic interactions in English and English language use in intercultural settings is often challenging for EFL learners in Turkey as well.

Considering the dilemma between the global or international role of English language and deficiencies in EFL education in Turkey, this study becomes important in many aspects. As stated before, office hour interactions represent real life practices for Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors. In this way, this study uncovers how both parties use language in a real communicative activity by analyzing the linguistic choices and features as well as discourse strategies in authentic interaction. Therefore, examining language use might inform EFL instruction, specifically EMI in universities, in Turkey and thus the study becomes important not only for instructors and Turkish EFL learners but also EFL curriculum and program designers to re-examine their content and scope. Finally, the study highlights the fact that such communicative activities in English with an emphasis on oral skills are quite likely to take place in real life situations where Turkish EFL learners actively use English language. Therefore, the

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[8] The required language proficiency score to be exempted from English language preparatory programs is very similar in universities where the medium of instruction is in English. For example, the universities where this study took place require 60 in their own language proficiency exam, or alternatively 74 in TOEFL IBT and/or 6 in IELTS for all the students. However, those who enroll in the programs of American Culture and Education, and English Language Teaching need the scores of 80 in the universities' language proficiency exam, 79 in TOEFL IBT, and 6,5 in IELTS.

study also informs not only the EFL curricula but also assessment procedures in similar EFL contexts.

Recruitment Procedures

As presented in the Participants section, the study included 3 international instructors and their 34 Turkish EFL students in two private universities in the northwest of Turkey. Hence, certain procedures in the recruitment of these participants were followed from the beginning of the study. The steps below were followed for the recruitment purposes:

1. Receiving IRB approval. One of the initial steps was to obtain IRB approval, both in Turkey and in the US, for this study (see the section of Process of Institutional Review Board for details and see Appendix B for IRB Approval Letter). Immediately after doing so, I communicated with the head of the department of ELT and coordinators of undergraduate English language programs where international instructors offer undergraduate classes to express my intention to conduct a study with these instructors and their Turkish students in these courses. In order to contact the department heads, I first emailed them, and then had a face-to-face meeting.

2. Providing a short summary of the study. I prepared a short summary of overall purpose, significance, and methodology of the study to use in the recruitment of participants. This summary was initially directed to the head of the department of ELT and coordinators of undergraduate English language programs in two universities. Upon receiving their approval, the short summary was provided to the international instructors and then their Turkish students in the courses they were offering at the time of data collection. For both participant groups, there were the options of 'Agree to

participate' and 'Don't agree to participate' on this summary sheet for recruitment purposes (see Appendix C for short summary).

3. Contacting instructors and students. As stated above, once the department head or program coordinator approved my research in their programs, I then contacted the international instructors one by one. To do so, I again emailed or called them to request a face-to-face meeting to explain the study and/or introduce myself. As stated above, before I had the face-to-face meeting with them, I provided them with my short summary via email.

4. Getting consent from instructors. When I met with the instructors, I first introduced myself and then explained the details about the study. I also answered their questions if they had any. Then, I gave them the informed consent form since the purpose of this meeting was also to assure that they were willing to participate in this study. Once I obtained their voluntary acceptance for participation, I requested their schedule and contact information so that I could visit their classrooms for announcement purposes. Finally, we negotiated the possibilities of appropriate timing for data collection with regard to their office hour interactions. With all international instructors participating in this study, I was also able to arrange short classroom visits in those face-to-face meetings.

5. Recruiting students. As stated before, one of the two participant groups in this study included Turkish university students, who were EFL learners. After obtaining international instructors' agreement with participation in the study, I had access to their students by visiting their classrooms. I personally announced the study, delivered my short summary, and provided my contact information. While announcing the study in

the classes, I usually had immediate questions from the students for further details. After answering the questions, I left the classroom and their instructors collected the summary papers that included the options of 'Agree to participate' and 'Don't agree to participate'. I decided to do so just to envision the potential number of volunteers. All further processes of obtaining informed consent from the participating students were completed when they actually came to the office hour. Since I situated myself near the international instructor's offices, I first gave the informed consent to the students who volunteered to participate.

Process of Institutional Review Board

The procedures to get approval of the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) were initiated immediately after the dissertation proposal. An electronic application for IRB was submitted, and all the suggested changes or requested clarification were provided throughout the approval process. Meanwhile, the paperwork in Turkey approving the conduct of research at two research sites was completed and submitted to IRB as well. Certain recruitment procedures, as explained above, were also followed in order to ascertain voluntary participation. As a requirement of IRB, all the participants were given an informed consent form before participating in the study. Thus, it was assured that all the participating international instructors and Turkish EFL students in the study had sufficient information about the study and provided their consent at the very initial stage. The details for recruitment and informed consent form have already been provided above.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

The data collection methods in this study included both primary and secondary sources. The recorded and transcribed authentic interactions between the international instructors and

their Turkish EFL students in their office hours constitute the primary data source. Additionally, field notes during classroom observations and two forms of post-interaction questionnaire were utilized to supplement the primary data source in this research. Hence, this portion of data collection methods formed the secondary data sources in this study. In the next section, I provide details about each data collection method and procedures.

Authentic Interactions

As the main data source in this study, naturally occurring office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students were audio-recorded over 4 months (from November 2014 to the end of February 2015). An up-to-date digital Olympus DM 620 audio-recorder was used in order to record office hour interactions at varying lengths. The option of video-taping office hour interactions was not considered in this study for a few reasons. First and foremost, this study primarily focuses on verbal communication in office hour interactions so audio-recording was sufficient for the purpose of the study. Second, it was assumed that video-recording would be more intrusive and thus be less comfortable for the participants to be video-recorded. Third, it was not practical to use video-recording when compared to using an audio-recorder with regard to transcribing process since these authentic interactions were the main source of data and the quality of their recordings were vital.

A total of 38 office hour interactions were recorded as presented in Table 2 below. The number of interactions in this study is consistent with the relevant research that has been discussed previously (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993; He, 1993; Nair-Brodeur, 1995). That is, 38 interactions totaling approximately 432 minutes represented a sufficient amount of data to answer the three research questions in this study. Additionally, since I transcribed the primary data on a weekly basis (see Data Preparation section for more details), I was able to

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familiarize myself with the data. That is, since I had to listen to the recordings repeatedly while transcribing, I was able to remember who was talking to whom and what the content of each interaction was by transcribing them weekly. As a result, I recorded office hour interactions until I reached data saturation (Ary et al., 2010). That is, once I realized that data was repeating itself and no new information was coming (e.g. topic or content, and the purpose for coming to the office hour), I stopped recording office hour interactions deciding no more data was needed.

Table 2

Timeline for Data Collection

Timeline	Number of weeks	Number of hours spent in the field	Number of interactions
November 2014	3 weeks	27 hours	8 interactions
December 2014	4 weeks	60 hours	17 interactions
January 2015	2 weeks	30 hours	6 interactions
February 2015	4 weeks	45 hours	7 interactions
Total	12 weeks	162 hours	38 interactions

The data collection period took around 4 months including the recruitment procedures above. The process started in November 2014 and lasted till the end of February 2015. I spent around 3 hours for each instructor's office hours. This was the amount of time I spent situating myself near their offices but not the actual time of recordings. This involved all three international instructors and their office hour sessions with the Turkish EFL students as well as the one from whom I had no data[9]. Additionally, Amelia had office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays as an institutional practice at TU. Therefore, I allocated more time (e.g. 3 hours per

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[9] As stated earlier, ten students from that instructor's Fall 2014 classes agreed to participate but none of them came to talk to him during his office hours while I was actually in the field. As a consequence, I did not collect any data from this instructor in Spring 2015.

day, or 6 hours per week) to collect data from her office hour sessions than I did for Mike's and Maria's sessions.

I completed the recruitment procedures explained in the previous section in less than a week at CU, where I initially started to record office hour interactions. In other words, I spent all three weeks in November as shown in Table 2 at CU, and then I began to collect data with Amelia at TU in December. The main reason was that as a nature of qualitative study, I came to understanding thanks to transcribing the data on a weekly basis that the data being collected at CU appeared to be quite interesting; and that it might be even better to have another private university context rather than only one university with regard to office hour interactions. This was also methodologically consistent with the comparability feature of institutional discourse (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005), as discussed previously. Also, it was the case that no data were collected from the third international instructor and his students at CU.

The number of recorded interactions differed per week or month. For example, the months of November and December as the second half of Fall 2014 were much busier than January and February 2015, since students tended to visit their professors more at those times for a major assignment/exam/project, and feedback. I had anticipated these patterns based on my own knowledge and experience as an instructor in Turkey. Additionally, the data collection process took place at only CU in November, whereas the study included one more international instructor and her Turkish students in December. Therefore, I had the highest number of recorded interactions during that month. In contrast, at the very end of Fall 2014 (e.g. early January 2015) and beginning of Spring 2015 (e.g. February 2015), a relatively smaller number of interactions took place and were recorded at both research sites. All in all, I spent 162 hours in the field to record 38 interactions in this study.

As stated above, I spent about 3 hours at the international instructors' office hours at CU and 6 hours at TU per week to record interactions with their students. During that time, I positioned myself near the instructors' offices to make sure that the recordings were safely done. Prior to these interactions, as explained in the recruitment procedures, the students who agreed to participate were informed that their office hour talk would be recorded and their consent was obtained. The international instructors had been given a list of those participating students after I collected the in-class recruitment summaries so that they could be informed about who was participating and thus know when to start the recorder. This procedure also insured that participating students would be given the informed consent forms right before the office hour interactions. Therefore, my presence around the instructors' offices also reminded those students again that there would be recording inside. Additionally, I gave the post-interaction questionnaires to both immediately after the office hour interactions in order to determine the return rate. In the case of this study, around 95% of recorded office hour interactions were pre-scheduled or arranged by the students. In other words, the majority of Turkish EFL students in this study informed their international instructors that they wanted to talk during office hours prior to their arrival. I observed that practices were a bit different at the two universities with regard to flexibility in scheduling such arrangements. Even though the instructors at CU allocated and announced certain time intervals for their office hours, they were expected to accept students at other times if it was requested, as long as they had time to do so. However, the case was more rigid at TU, where Amelia was the instructor, and where the students were required to make an online appointment by choosing among time slots using the university's online course management system. Consequently, all this process at CU facilitated a much smoother data collection process in this study.

As shown in Table 3, out of 38 recorded office hour interactions, 12 interactions belonged to Mike and his students at CU; 14 interactions belonged to Maria and her students at CU; and 12 interactions belonged to Amelia and her students at TU. The entire duration of office hour interactions in the dataset is 432 minutes 8 seconds. The office hour interactions between Mike and his students lasted 123 minutes 15 seconds, and Maria and her students had 104 minutes 5 seconds of office hour talk in total at CU. However, Amelia and her students had longer interactions with total duration of 204 minutes 48 seconds at TU.

Table 3

Overview of Office Hour Dataset

	Duration of Office Hour Interactions	Number of Office Hour Interactions
Mike and his students	123 minutes 15 seconds	12
Maria and her students	104 minutes 5 seconds	12
Amelia and her students	204 minutes 48 seconds	14
Total	432 minutes 8 seconds	38

Classroom Observations

As presented earlier, this study incorporated classroom observations as one of the secondary data sources. The main purpose of classroom observations was to gain insights into classroom interaction between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, specifically with regard to how they used language or what specific linguistic strategies were employed, and what type of interactional goals and patterns they attend to. Merriam (2009) states that researchers' decision on what to observe depends on many factors. Her suggested list of what to observe include the physical setting, participants, activities and interactions,

conversation, subtle factors (e.g. informal/unplanned activities, or non-verbal communication, etc.), and researcher's own behavior depending on his/her behavior. However, the researcher's purpose, the theoretical framework, and the research questions of interest are the most influential ones.

In this study, classroom observations were conducted in three participating international instructors' classes in December 2014. The observations of 6 class hours in total, that was 2 hours per instructor, served two broader purposes. First of all, classroom observations fostered an overall understanding of general discourse strategies employed by the instructors and their students (e.g. asking questions, making clarifications, shifting the topic, etc.). Second, they provided background information about in-class language use, communicative activities, and amount of contribution to the classroom discourse by the international instructors and their Turkish students as well as the current content of the courses. With such overall understanding, it was possible to inform my interpretations of office hour dataset in this study. First of all, the activities or tasks that took place during the observations enabled me to understand the content in certain office hour interactions. Additionally, my observation notes included similar discourse strategies and patterns with some interactions, such as the use of questions, expressing opinions, and contributions to the interaction (e.g. amount of talk).

Post-interaction Questionnaires

The purpose of the post-interaction questionnaires for both instructors and students in this study served two purposes: to get background information about the participants and gain insights into their perspectives of the recorded office hour interaction (see Appendix D for two versions of the questionnaire). Having demographic and background information about the participants facilitated detailed descriptions of the participants in this study. As for the perception

of office hour experience, they served as the participants' post hoc interpretations that were utilized while analyzing certain excerpts when it was relevant to refer to these interpretations. Thus, the post-interaction questionnaires in this study were given to both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students[10] each time they completed an office hour meeting, and were administered in English. The instructor version involved two sections of demographic information and office hour experience, and each instructor filled out the demographic information part only once. The student version, however, included the section of language background as the second part in addition to those two sections in the instructor version. Both parties completed the questionnaires immediately after their recorded interactions.

In order to obtain demographic information about the participating students, questions 1 and 2 asked about their age and gender; and questions 3 to 6 provided information about their overall educational experience and language use. For example, question 3 asked their current department and program, and question 4 required high schools they attended. In the same section, question 5 was related to if they used English in environments other than school. If they did, question 6 asked them to name these contexts. Similarly, questions from 1 to 8 in the instructor version of the questionnaire elicited information about their language, educational, and professional background. For example, questions 1 and 2 asked their country of origin, native language, and any other language(s) they spoke. The third question in this section was about their areas of specialization. Finally, questions from 5 to 8 asked their teaching experience including Turkey and their current institution. This type of background information facilitated the descriptions of participant profile and contributed to my understanding of the participants of this study.

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[10] Because of the fact that 3 students out of 34 did not return the questionnaires, demographic and language background information includes 31 Turkish EFL students relying on their questionnaires. This is presented in the data collection section.

In the language background section of the student version, questions through 7 to 12 aimed to gain insights into participants' language abilities. For example, question 7 asked if there was a third language they knew in addition to Turkish and English. This item was considered relevant since the foreign language(s) other than English, such as German and French, are offered in K12 education in Turkey. I anticipated that knowing a third (or more languages) might have facilitated their English language learning. If there was one, then question 8 probed into their self-reported language proficiency level in that language. Questions 9 and 10 turned to their English learning experience, and asked how many years they had been learning English and also if they had attended the English language program in their current university. Next, the purpose of question 11 was to obtain information if they had any study abroad experience in a country where they spoke English. Finally in this section, question 12 asked them to order the four skills in English according to their confidence level. Complying with EFL education in Turkey as presented in the first chapter, this question seemed relevant because of the fact that specifically speaking among four skills is usually ignored in language curriculum whereas verbal interaction constitutes the primary data source in this study.

The sections of office hour experience both in the instructor and student versions aimed to gain insights into the perceptions of participants on their recorded interactions. The four questions (questions from 13 to 16 in the student version, and questions from 9 to 12 in the instructor version) elicited the purpose of the office hour interaction; if the newly completed office hour interaction was helpful or not; if yes, an explanation of what was specifically helpful; and finally what they thought about the current interaction. With regard to the post-interaction questionnaire data, the international instructors completed the questionnaire for all their recorded office hour interactions whereas 3 out of 34 student participants (9%) offered to complete the

questionnaires later but they did not return them. As stated previously, three students in the study were involved in more than one office hour interaction with their instructors during the data collection period.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis in this study was composed of a process that involved numerous stages. First and foremost, it involved immediate and iterative contact with the recorded data. In other words, the recorded office hour interactions as the primary data source were frequently monitored starting from the very beginning of data collection period. It was also necessary to file and organize different data sources, carefully re-examine relevant discourse analysis studies, double-check coding, compare and contrast the findings with previous research, and establish grounding for interpretations, etc. Therefore, the process of data analysis incorporated several steps, and in what follows, I explicate these steps and procedures.

Transcribing the Primary Data

Transcribing the audio-recorded office hour interactions was the first step of not only preparing but also analyzing the data in this study. The process of turning the spoken discourse into a text is crucial in discourse studies where the primary data is the audio-recorded interactions. It requires considering the goal, theoretical framework, and scope of the research study in order to decide what and how to transcribe the spoken data (Du Bois, 1991; Edwards, 2003; Ochs, 1979). In this study, as the researcher, I completed all transcriptions. This enabled me to immediately acquainted with my primary data source in this study. Verbatim transcriptions of all the recorded office hour interactions were made since the research questions in this study involved the examination of all the phases or stages of office hour interactions. While transcribing the recorded data, several discourse features, such as overlap, backchannelling,

hesitation devices, false starts and latching, reformulations, and prosodic features, such as intonation and stress, were included since they help to understand "how participants mobilize resources to plan and produce utterances, and to how they negotiate with each other the ongoing social interaction" (Du Bois, 1991, p.73). Moreover, I listened to these recordings as immediately as possible after recording them to see if there were any problems with audio-recording or audibility. I also checked if the transcription of an interaction was complete. The transcriptions were conducted on an ongoing (weekly and sometimes daily) basis, while the data collection was underway. This regular activity of transcribing starting from early stages provided me with immediate access to the data; and initial understandings of what was appearing in the dataset as well as ideas about how to best proceed with the analysis. I utilized the transcription conventions by Du Bois (1991) with slight adaptations and additions considering his readability principle. The transcription codes and conventions are given in Appendix E.

Organizing the Data

Another preparation step was related to the questionnaires as the secondary data source in this study. Since the questionnaires were anonymous, it was necessary to file each instructor and student questionnaire for a specific interaction together with the corresponding transcription. In order to maintain this anonymity, I first sorted out the data by writing the corresponding recording numbers on the questionnaires and then attached them as the front pages of the transcriptions. This enabled me to assure background knowledge about who is talking in the interaction as well as the purpose, their perceptions of the success and problems in the transcribed office hour interaction, and how they felt. Additionally, I triangulated data by comparing and contrasting the student questionnaire, instructor questionnaire, and the transcription of actual office hour interaction. This was specifically helpful in addressing the first

and third research questions in this study. In addition to this action of matching the data sources, I entered the questionnaire data in an excel worksheet to better understand the participant profile in the study and also save the data electronically. As for the classroom observation notes, they were filed and kept again together with the corresponding set of transcriptions and questionnaires for each set of data (e.g. one set for each instructor and his/her students) to allow another compare-and-contrast opportunity during analysis of the dataset.

Coding the Data

Following the transcription and data preparation processes, the coding of the office hour transcriptions as the primary data source was conducted in many steps and a layered analysis of the data. The process involved a manual data coding through color-coding, sticky notes, keeping a log, and took around two months to complete. I first started with the second research question – the co-construction of suggestion-response episodes. First of all, the second question in this study was the main research question that guided this research, and so it involved a close and detailed examination of the transcriptions. Moreover, it was my anticipation that such detailed coding and analysis of transcriptions would allow me to fully grasp the features of the entire dataset, and thus inform my analysis for the first and third research questions in this study. Therefore, I color-coded and highlighted suggestions in the transcriptions. While coding, I identified how these suggestions were initiated and responded to so that I could mark suggestion-response episodes in the dataset. Additionally, I added sticky notes on certain suggestion-response episodes that I thought would be representative excerpts to present and analyze in detail in the findings chapters. Throughout the process, I also kept a log to take notes on certain repeating features in the office hour interactions, such as linguistic forms that conveyed the illocutionary force of suggesting, who was initiating the suggestion and how they were

responded to, mitigation, and types of relational work the participants attended to. The following step-by-step explanation presents my analytic procedures in this study:

Step 1: As stated above, I first identified and color-coded utterances that conveyed the illocutionary force of suggesting according to the coding scheme shown in Table 3. The coding of suggestions on transcriptions was important because it enabled me to know the type and amount of suggestion strategies employed in the dataset.

Step 2: For a more precise categorization of suggestions, I created an MS Excel worksheet per each set of data (e.g. Mike and his students, Maria and her student, and Amelia and her students), and inserted these suggestions into relevant syntactic category. Meanwhile, the student-initiated suggestions were represented in bold to differentiate them from the instructor-initiated suggestions. Therefore, this step allowed me to see the type and amount of two types of suggestions in the data as well as making comparisons within and between each set of data.

Step 3: Then, I returned to the transcriptions to identify what was appearing around these suggestions, and to mark suggestion-response episodes (e.g. who was initiating the suggestion, how it was initiated, if it was solicited or not, etc.). I mostly focused on the most frequent three syntactic categories while examining these suggestion-response episodes.

Step 4: Once I decided to use the representative excerpts with regard to the use of the most frequent three syntactic categories, I started to analyze these excerpts in much more detail in order to explore how they were situated in that specific discourse segment. My goal at this step was to explore the form-function relationship with regard to suggestion realizations, and how they contributed to the ongoing interactions.

Step 5: Meanwhile, I realized that several modification strategies were utilized in these suggestion realizations. Therefore, in order to quantify these namely mitigation and boosting

strategies, I utilized the MS Excel worksheet once more. Then, similar to step 3, I returned to the transcriptions to identify suggestion-response episodes where these strategies were employed and analyzed them in detail.

Step 6: Another feature that was evident in the transcriptions and my notes was the repetitions in office hour interactions. I examined the transcriptions again this time to code the repetitions in the entire office hour interactions.

Step 7: As the next step, I worked on transcriptions again to code the purpose(s) and topic(s) of each office hour interaction. I also examined if there were certain discourse patterns repeating in the data with regard to these purposes and topics because I anticipated that different topics or goals might yield different interactional patterns in office hour interactions, such as turn-taking, turn-length, volubility, discourse strategies, etc.

Step 8: Finally, I re-visited the transcriptions to code the types of relational work, or social acts, the participants were attending to. I labelled these manifestations according to their interactional goals first. Then, I categorized these instances of relational work between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students under successful and problematic aspects relying on how both parties interpreted each other's utterances.

In order to identify and code suggestions in office hour interactions, I pursued a comprehensive review of previous studies on suggestions in English, which included various data sources, such as discourse completion tasks (DCTs) and/or multiple choice data (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; BU, 2011; Hinkel, 1997; Matsumura, 2001), oral or written questionnaires (Koike, 1994, 1996), role plays (Hinkel, 1994; Li, 2010), corpus data (Jiang, 2006; Reinhardt, 2010), and naturally occurring interactions (Alcón, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993; Thonus, 1998a, 1998b, 1999, 2002; Locher, 2006). Overall, all these studies assured my understanding of

how to recognize, code, and categorize the syntactic choices that were used by the participants in this study as well as the directness and indirectness levels of each syntactic type. I explain these syntactic choices and directness/indirectness of suggestions below.

Although directness/indirectness of suggestions played a crucial role in my analysis as well, I preferred to categorize syntactic choices by considering their mood types similar to Koike (1994), Li (2010), and Locher (2006). The notion of mood types refers to the directness or indirectness scale of suggestions in this study. In other words, it is "the length of the inferential process needed for identifying the utterance" as a suggestion (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p.18). In some syntactic choices, such as imperatives, it is possible to derive the illocutionary force from the linguistic structure (e.g. *read through the articles*, or *include a topic sentence*). However, as for hints, the interpretation of the utterance as suggestion relies greatly on the context. Therefore, the mood types are linked to the directness or indirectness of the illocutionary force depending on the linguistic choice to realize suggestions.

The main concern while categorizing the suggestions in this study according to their mood types was the compliance between the theoretical framework for linguistic politeness utilized in this study and the co-construction of suggestions by considering the immediate context and discourse excerpts as asserted above. In that sense, I prepared a multilayered coding scheme drawing upon these studies specifically for the purpose of this study. The first layer or level of my coding scheme was the mood types, which included imperatives, declaratives, and interrogatives, or the grammatical form of the verb that conveyed the illocutionary force as a suggestion, as shown in Table 4. The second layer involved further coding of the subcategories of declaratives since this broader category involved a wide range of syntactic choices (e.g. performatives, semi-modals, modals of probability/possibility/obligation, *will/would/going to*,

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Table 4

Coding Scheme for Suggestions and Examples

Mood Types	Syntactic Forms	Examples
Imperative	Imperative	• *Start trying to find more sources on that particular issue.* • *Just practice it as well.* • *So please check which referencing style you're using for that class.*
Declarative	Performatives	• *I suggest you put an extra source such as a dictionary or an encyclopedia maybe, okay?* • *So my advice is that you train at home first so that you learn how to manage time.*
	Want/need statements	• *So you wanna have a topic sentence.* • *You do wanna add that second u::h source from LMS.* • *You need the publisher.*
	Modals and Semi-modals	• *And that would be your counter-argument paragraph.* • *I would summarize that into one little paragraph about five sentences long.* • *You'll have a better idea of what there is to talk about.* • *If you're still having problems, you can even change u:h to something else other than play-based learning.* • *You have to fill each part of the form.* • *But still I mean you need to have some support to it.*
	Pseudo cleft	• *What you need to do is prove that this is true.* • *What I would do is I would go and read.*
	Extraposed to	• *And therefore, it's useless to try to paraphrase.* • *And it is very easy to correct it.*
	Hints	• *The problem is that you're not arguing.* • *You are not there to give an overview, okay?*
	Elliptical	• *Ten sources with the little summary of each.* • *Just a little bit more extensive.*
	Other (formulaic expressions, such as *If I were you, I would..*, and *Let's*)	• *So let's just agree to discuss the introduction, conclusion, and the transition tomorrow.* • *And let's just see the list of references.*
Interrogative	Yes/No questions Wh- questions	• *Have you found anything that (0.3) has given reasons why uh the expensive is worth it?* • *But how can you connect that to consumerism?*

want/need statements, *Let's*, formulaic utterances such as *If I were you*, pseudo cleft, extraposed *to*, and hints, etc.), as exemplified in Table 3. With regard to directness/indirectness, imperatives are considered direct, and interrogatives are indirect forms of suggestions. However, in declaratives, it is the preferred syntactic form, or subcategory, that determined the directness/indirectness level of a suggestion. For example, if a speaker used a performative "*I suggest…*", this would be more direct and forceful when compared to a hint.

I first used previous literature to help me identify utterances as suggestions in which the speaker believed it was beneficial to do. Then, I coded the mood as imperatives, declaratives, and interrogatives including the subcategories of declaratives. Finally, following (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Caffi, 1999; Fraser, 1980; Holmes, 1984), I also examined the mitigation, hedging, perspectives of suggestions (e.g. speaker or/and hearer dominance, impersonal, etc.) and this constituted the third layer/level of my coding and analysis. It has to be emphasized at this point that directness/indirectness is inseparable component of suggestions and linguistic politeness in office hour interactions. However, it is not the ultimate way to make arguments for instances of linguistic politeness in my data because the understanding of politeness underpinning this study asserts that it is not only what the speaker conveys but also the interpretation of the hearer in the ongoing interaction (Locher, 2004).

Coding and analyzing the transcripts for the second research question, and completing the write-up of the related section enabled me to see the larger patterns in the dataset, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, I was able to have an overview of the content, organization and several discourse strategies utilized by the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in office hour interactions. Yet, in order to answer the first research questions, I coded the purposes and topics of the office hour interactions. Following this, a broader analysis of each party's

contribution to the ongoing interaction was conducted with regard to discourse and interactional features, such as turn-taking, verbosity, level of interactivity, and amount of contribution (e.g. minimal response). The classroom observation notes were also utilized for compare-and-contrast purposes while answering this research question. I utilized these notes as annotations on the transcriptions when I identified similar discourse strategies or patterns (e.g. who was asking questions and what the function was, or who was keeping the floor and how long he/she did so).

Following the analysis and write-up for first research question, I then analyzed the data for the third research question in this study –the successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions. The purpose of this last step of data analysis was to identify discourse level strategies (e.g. giving justifications, expressing encouragement, making jokes) utilized by both groups of participants in this study. In other words, drawing upon the previous work (Locher, 2006; Watts, 2003; Watts et al., 1992), the analysis for the third research question examined how relational work is co-constructed by the instructors and students through such acts that was embedded into larger segments of office hour interactions, and even sometimes within the entire interaction. While doing so, the section about office hour experience in both the instructor and student questionnaires were triangulated with the interpretations to see if the perceptions of the instructor and student on either successful or problematic aspects match with each other. That is, I first identified the instances of relational work and termed them according to their interactional goals. Then, I checked both the instructors' and students' answers to the questions about successful and problematic aspects pertaining to the specific office hour interaction where a certain type of relational work was attended. The data analysis then was completed by answering the third research question and writing the relevant chapter for this research question in the study.

Trustworthiness

To know if research yields trustworthy findings is closely related to the rigorousness of

its implementation. Handling such issues in research pertains to the underlying epistemology and

ontology a researcher accepts. The epistemology refers to what constitutes knowledge and how

we can get it; and ontology means how reality is formed and how we understand it. These

philosophical perspectives are then reflected in the methodology and the research design. One

such epistemology underpinning (social) constructionism, which asserts that meaning is

constructed but not discovered, and that different people may construct meaning in different

ways even if it is related to the same phenomenon by their own interpretive strategies. Culture is

an indispensable guide to human behavior and the construction of meaning. Social

constructionists emphasize that human beings produce the society and social worlds actively and

creatively (Crotty, 1998). Such approaches to language analysis in context underscore the

constantly changing and developing dynamics of social interaction (Holmes, 2005). Social

constructionism is the underlying epistemology in discursive approaches to linguistic politeness,

proposing the analysis of entire range of relational work. Thus, the standards for defining

rigorousness in qualitative and quantitative research are usually different. In this study, I

assumed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) perspective and used relevant terms below in qualitative

research accordingly. As a result, in order to discuss the aspects of trustworthiness in this study,

the notions of credibility, transferability, and dependability were used as the qualitative research

terms that replace internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998;

Merriam, 2009). In the following, I briefly argue how each aspect was handled in this study.

Credibility

As argued by Merriam (2009), credibility or internal validity is how trustworthy the findings are when the collected data is considered. In other words, it is the validity of the researcher's observations or interpretations. As Gee (2011a) states, "humans *interpret* the world" and language is a tool to make this interpretation (p. 122). Therefore, doing a discourse analysis is itself an interpretative work. The underlying multilayered theoretical framework and a detailed multilayered analysis, which was discussed in the previous sections, warranted the rigorousness of interpretations in this study.

In addition to the theoretical framework and methodology in this study, there were several ways to increase credibility. First of all, the authentic data were analyzed, and supported my interpretations in this study with real evidence from the data for a grounded analysis. In order to do that, the entire dataset of audio-recorded office hour interactions were transcribed and turned into texts. Then, a detailed analysis of linguistic features or how the participants used language was conducted by incorporating their own responses, negotiations, and interpretations of what was being said. As stated above, this was achieved through the empirical analysis of the transcribed office hour interactions in the dataset. The interpretations were based on the linguistic choices and features employed by the participants in the transcribed data, and a sufficient number of excerpts were presented along with the fine-grained linguistic analysis in the findings chapters. Moreover, a total number of 38 interactions were considered sufficient according to the notion of data saturation (Ary et al., 2010). This also facilitated the transparency of data analysis in this study. Another aspect in this study related to the credibility was also including office hour interactions from two university contexts. Finally, my experience of several years in teaching EFL at universities in Turkey as well as my institutional role as an instructor at

CU enabled me to have emic or insider perspectives. I was also able to come together with two participating international instructors at CU and the students at the Department of ELT since I was teaching at the same department and institution, and thus had opportunity to do member checks with them. Thus, maintaining an emic perspective afforded comprehensive description and specific details in this study by allowing the ability to reveal tacit knowledge, or implicit knowledge and understandings, with regard to the context of this study (Tracy, 2013).

Furthermore, another way of boosting credibility or validity in qualitative research is achieved through the triangulation of data (Merriam, 2009; Tracy, 2013). In the context of this study, although the primary data source was the authentic office hour interactions, my interpretations to address the research questions were also informed by supplementary data sources as well. Hence, in addition to office hour interactions between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students, I utilized classroom observation notes and post-interaction questionnaires for both groups of participants in this study to further validate my interpretations.

Transferability

The notion of transferability, or external validity, in qualitative research is analogous to what is referred to as generalizability in quantitative research traditions. In other words, it is linked to the extent to which the results of a study can be applied or transferred to other situations. Merriam (2009) defines the understanding of transferability as "to think in terms of the reader or user of the study" (p.226). In other words, it is the readers' decision to determine the extent to which findings can be applied to his/her own situations. Likewise, it is the readers of this study who can evaluate the transferability of the interpretations by comparing it to their own contexts rather than agreeing with my assumptions as a researcher (Duff, 2008). In order to do so, readers can observe similarities between the findings in this study and office hour

interactions at other EFL/EMI contexts. The provision of ample descriptions of the context, participants, and analysis with a detailed presentation and excerpts from the corpus as discussed in the previous section can facilitate the transferability of the findings in this study. Finally, the discussion of similarities and differences between the findings in this study and other office hour studies conducted in different contexts might facilitate such readers' considerations for transferability.

Dependability

The criterion of dependability is conceptualized as similar to reliability in quantitative research. Reliability concerns in qualitative research are closely linked to the extent to which findings can be replicated, and the assumption that the repeated study will produce the same results. However, in social sciences or qualitative research, reliability is replaced with dependability or consistency, and is concerned with whether the findings of a study are consistent with the collected data (Merriam, 2009). In other words, rather than yielding the same results through replication, dependability is the researcher's own concern if the findings make sense to the readers when the presented data is considered. That is, the core of dependability rests in if the findings in the study are consistent with the data collected. Therefore, the dependability or consistency in this study is quite related to what has been discussed in the subsection of Credibility such as adopting theoretical and methodological frameworks to inform research questions, analysis, and interpretations in the study. As stated above, credibility refers to the validity or accuracy of the interpretations, and how this was maintained in this study explained in the earlier section. Dependability, however, pertains to the process of the study and assessing the quality of this process throughout the design and analysis (Patton, 2001). Additionally, it is the researcher's ability to persuade the readers that the study and the findings are important. In that

sense, detailed descriptions of the process of this study were provided at many stages throughout the chapters. It was also the goal to portray specifically the data collection and analysis procedures in greater detail so that future research with similar scope and context can benefit from these fine-grained descriptions and analysis in this study. Furthermore, dependability was also enhanced by thorough instrumentation that complied with the theoretical framework and research questions, data collection and analysis procedures in this study. As discussed previously, the data was recorded, transcribed according to the purpose of the study, and description of the process was provided to show how the researcher arrived at the presented interpretations or findings. Additionally, the use of office hour interactions in this study as one type of institutional discourse fulfilled several methodological considerations with regard to dependability or consistency of the interpretations and the type of data such as comparability, interactivity, and consequentiality (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005, see the Research Design section for the discussion of methodological considerations).

Limitations and Delimitations

This study took place at two private universities in Turkey, both of which were EFL settings. It is the main assumption that the findings of this study are descriptive and provide insights into the setting and population under examination. Therefore, rather than having the goal of generalizability of the findings to the other contexts, the study aimed to gain an understanding of language use and pragmatic functions in office hour interactions taking place in English between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. It was also the focus of this study to examine how these participants negotiated their relationships by using English language. In other words, it was concerned with language use primarily in the setting in this study.

However, the findings may be informative, and transferable as discussed above, for similar studies and contexts in the field.

Furthermore, the findings and interpretations relied on certain number of participants and interactions. Although these were considered adequate amount of data and informants when compared to the relevant literature to gain insights into office hour interactions at universities, it should be stated that further understanding could be achieved through additional data. The study also utilized one primary data source that mainly informed the findings or interpretations. In other words, the data were limited to authentic interactions although there were supplementary data sources. Finally, since these interactions were audio-recorded, nonverbal features of interactions were not included. This is a limitation in this study because nonverbal features, such as facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, also contribute to the ongoing interactions.

My Role as Researcher

All forms of qualitative research emphasize the researcher as the primary and ideal instrument for data collection and analysis, or the human instrument. Embracing the similar underlying perspective, I myself collected, transcribed, organized, and analyzed the data to facilitate my understanding better (Merriam, 2009). However, it should be articulated that the role of researcher as the primary instrument in discourse analysis is different from other types of qualitative studies. For instance, in an ethnographic study, the researcher closely observes the process and takes notes depending his/her purpose. Likewise, in an interview data, the researcher has prior questions to guide the flow of the interview. Moreover, the researcher's understanding or findings rely on more than one primary data source. In the case of discourse analysis, it is the naturally occurring data that constitutes the primary source even though there are guiding research questions and the secondary data sources facilitate the understanding of the data and

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interpretations. In that sense, I consider myself as the outsider because I had no control over the authentic interactions, such as pre-determined questions as in interviews or observations during these dyadic interactions, but it was naturally occurring talk in office hour interactions.

Throughout this process, I also possessed the role of insider both at the institutional level and broader social context of university education in Turkey. First of all, being a former language learner and the instructor of EFL for many years in Turkey enriched my background knowledge about the dynamics of university contexts in many aspects. This also warranted my familiarity with communicative activities between instructors and their students. As I originally anticipated before starting the study, such understanding of university setting facilitated my interpretations and implications of this study.

Additionally, because of the fact that I myself have had several office hour interactions with university students, I had background knowledge about their goals, topic orientations, perceived roles of instructors and students, certain outcomes, timing, and durations in such interactions. In other words, the knowledge of office hour interactions with Turkish students in our common L1 allowed me to consider sociopragmatic aspects and L1 cultural norms that were likely to be influential, or even transferred, in the ongoing interaction. Research on cross-cultural comparison of several speech acts has indicated that performing speech acts vary by language and culture, and speakers from different cultural backgrounds perform these speech acts differently, in terms of their degree of directness, frequencies, sensitivity to social variables, and performance with respect to the content of strategies (Al-Issa, 2003; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Kwon, 2004; Liao & Bresnahan, 1996; Nelson et. al., 2002). Similarly, even though the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students use English language, they might pertain to their L1 and cultural understandings while communicating in English rather than adopting the

target language and culture norms. However, they might also pertain to the social norms in Turkey with regard to their perceptions of instructor-student relationship since they have certain amount of prior experience in the social and institutional contexts in this study, and Turkish EFL students are even natives to the social context and factors.

Another important layer of carrying the insider role involved my role as an instructor at Faculty of Educational Sciences at CU as one of the research sites. I had collegial relationships that enabled me to have access to potential participants and the research site. As I initially anticipated, knowledge of institutional context enabled me to obtain permissions or approvals, have access to key informants in the study, and recruit participants. Moreover, teaching at one of the research sites contributed to my understanding and interpretation of the institutional setting and its parameters. I was familiar with the general student profile, as well as their expectations, and perceptions with regard to their relationship with instructors. Thus, all this contextual awareness in both institutional level and country-wise EFL education at universities helped inform my understanding and analysis by applying first-hand knowledge into the research.

Consequently, what I aimed as a researcher in this study was to gain insights into English language use in university office hour interactions. In EFL contexts, speakers usually have a limited number of authentic speech activities in order to use English language communicatively. One such opportunity at universities is the students' office hour talk with their international instructors from different L1 and cultural background. The value of such authentic interactions for language learning has been underestimated and taken for granted. However, conducting discourse-based studies to understand actual language use can be helpful in EFL settings. In addition, the focus on pragmatic competence in office hour discourse in this study shifted our attention to the consideration of how EFL speakers can use language appropriately (or not) in

real social situations. Thus, my goal as a researcher was to create awareness in the interrelation between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of pragmatic competence by studying politeness, relational work, and intercultural communication in office hour interactions from the framework of institutional discourse. It is expected that the study may offer some implications for interlanguage pragmatics and interlanguage communication with regard to EFL context. I revisit these themes in the final chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRIMARY FUNCTIONS, TOPICS, AND DISCOURSE ORGANIZATION

Office hour interactions at universities are dynamic, and likely display idiosyncrasies as well as commonalities with regard to the discourse organization of such dyadic talk between instructors and their students. As presented in the first chapter similar to other forms of institutional discourse, they are highly goal-oriented, and the contributions by both parties are, therefore, governed by this very nature of goal-orientedness. In other words, both instructors and students jointly construct the ongoing interaction to pursue a mutually agreed purpose of solving the students' problems or concerns at hand. Additionally, how they collaboratively work towards achieving these goals is subject to several other factors, such as social and institutional setting, roles, expectations as well as topics among several others. Although all these factors collectively influence how both parties use language in office hour interactions, very often it is specifically the broader function or purpose and the topic that impacts the way they organize their contribution. Therefore, this chapter answers the first research question below:

- What are the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions? How do these functions and topics influence the discourse organization of office hour interactions?

The overarching goals and topics of office hour interactions have actually been investigated in a few studies in the European context. As discussed earlier, Limberg (2010), for instance, gives a detailed account of office hours in two public universities in Germany and offers three main topic categories: 1) organizational and administrative business, 2) course-exam

related business, and 3) counseling business. Adopting a conversation analytic framework, he examined how the sequence of turns is used to construct the activities and interactional organization of office hour talk. Thus, current relevant literature in office hour interactions (Carpenter, 1983; Limberg, 2010; Nair-Brodeur, 1995) has addressed the goals and content, common interactional strategies (e.g. asking questions, requesting information, advice-giving, etc.), main activities and phases in office hour interactions.

However, although the institutional function of office hours at universities is similar, some goals and topic areas for individual interactions might differ depending on the instructors' and students' expectations in this study as stated above. Considering the social and institutional contexts, it can also be argued that their perceptions of roles might also differ in these two private universities in this study. This also relates to negotiation of relational work between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, which in return will have impact on the goals and topics and more specifically how they use English language and interactional strategies in their office hour interactions. In that sense, this study aims to contribute to the existing research by uncovering these features of office hour interactions from a discourse analytic approach. Therefore, in this section, I first examine all of the functions and topics that appeared in the data, in order to gain insights into the primary goals of office hour interactions in two research sites in this study.

Because prior research has examined the organizational structure of these interactions (a sequence-oriented analysis or analysis of phases), I instead adopted a more discourse-oriented approach while looking at the discourse organization of office hour interactions. To do so, I operationalized discourse organization in the first research question in terms of turn-taking,

length of turns, level of verbal contribution by both parties, level of interactivity, and overall cohesion or how ideas were connected within a certain pattern.

In what follows, I first discuss the primary functions and topics of office hour dataset in this study. In order to do that, I examined the transcriptions of entire office hour interactions by labeling sequences introducing the purpose for the office hour visits, initiating a topic, and involving topic shifts. Additionally, I checked both the instructors' and students' responses to the item related to the purpose of the office hour meeting in the post-interaction questionnaire (item 9 in Part II for the instructors, and item 15 in Part III for the students). Then, by drawing upon these findings, I examined the discourse organization; how both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students co-construct certain discourse patterns; and the relevance to the purpose or function of the office hour interaction, the specific topic at hand and interactional goal in the discourse patterns.

Primary Functions and Topics

The main purpose of the students for making the office hour visits and the topics to be discussed during the interaction constitute an essential role in the nature of verbal communication in this type of speech activity. These two elements obviously determine the content and flow of interaction. Likewise, the goal and topic of an office hour interaction is crucial for making relevant linguistic choices, discourse strategies, negotiating roles, and establishing expectations for both interlocutors. Therefore, I examined the primary functions and the topics in office hour interactions in this section, as shown in Table 5.

With regard to the broader purposes of office hours, the data yielded three main categories: to receive/give information, to receive/give feedback, and to negotiate academic or course-related concerns. They have also been confirmed by cross-checking the responses to the

Table 5

Overview of Primary Functions and Topics

Primary Functions	Topics
To receive/give information	• Erasmus/exchange programs and requirements • Attendance/absenteeism • Course assignments and tasks • Language proficiency exams
To receive/give feedback	• Argumentative essay organization • The use of outside sources • APA style • MS Office reference tool • Language use in academic writing • The use of library sources • Oral presentations • Speaking anxiety • Exam results • Online course management system • The content of course materials
To negotiate academic or course-related concerns	• Topic selection for a project • Requirements for course-related tasks • Expectations for the course • Language-based course content • Make-up for a course • Previous language learning experiences

relevant item in questionnaires by each student and the instructor's responses for each office

hour interaction. Thus, these wider categories of office hour functions should be seen as two-

sided since not only students have concerns or issues to talk about but also instructors use this

time space for constructing and maintaining their roles or identities towards their students. On

the one hand, the students have either immediate or future concerns, and expect their instructors

to provide advice or interventions. On the other hand, the instructors assume their role as

supporters or helpers, while also deciding to what extent they should be providing help or support.

As Table 5 shows, under each broader category, there are several topics that were discussed in office hour interactions in this study, and most of the office hour interactions (30 out of 38) in this study involved multi-topics or topic shifts initiated either by the students or instructors. As can be seen, each category of function and the topics are intertwined, and might potentially constrain language use, contributions, and discourse organization of office hour interactions. Additionally, it needs to be pointed out that the purpose for coming to the office hour and its content was closely linked to the courses offered by the international instructors as well as their administrative roles if any. In that sense, all of Amelia's sessions were about the major writing task that the students were supposed to complete throughout the semester. The students used her office hour mainly to get feedback on their academic writing as well as the content of their drafts. Except for students' oral presentations and speaking anxiety, her 12 sessions contained all the other topics listed for the category of 'to receive/give feedback'. Amelia's office hours with her students also included discussions of requirements for course-related tasks and few students' previous language learning experiences.

As for Mike's and Maria's sessions, students also came to receive feedback on many of the topics listed in Table 5. Yet, their office hour interactions with the students involved a broader range of content. Moreover, students tended to see Mike and Maria to receive information about issues or topics about which these instructors had specific expertise, administrative duty, or experiences. For example, students in Mike's case asked information on Erasmus/exchange programs and requirements because of his additional administrative role as the exchange programs faculty coordinator. Similarly, Maria's students requested information, or

even suggestions from her about language proficiency exams, most probably because she herself had to take such exams to demonstrate her language proficiency as a nonnative speaker of English and several other languages.

In what follows, I discuss several excerpts to show how certain purposes and topics might display patterns of exchanges between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. Although some strategies utilized in different phases of office hour interactions have been mentioned in previous literature (Limberg, 2010; Nair-Brodeur, 1995), I aim here to provide a more in-depth analysis of how participants use language and common discourse features which appear in such segments of office hour interactions.

Discourse Organization

As argued in the previous chapters, office hour interactions are one dyadic form of institutional talk. Such interactions are thus institutionally constrained in various aspects. Likewise, the role of the instructors and students at Turkish universities are framed by mutual expectations at both institutional and interpersonal levels. The two private universities in this study are highly student-centered and value the students' satisfaction not only with regard to their educational goals but also their identities. Most of the students at private universities, except for a limited number of those on scholarship, in Turkey pay a considerable amount of tuition each year when compared to state universities. This might make the role of academic faculty more demanding and challenging since they have to give priority to their students' needs and requests. In that sense, the instructors should be available or have a quick access for their students as much as possible. In the same way, the students can come to talk to their instructors whenever they need help as long as they make mutually agreed time arrangements. Yet, the content and nature of office hour interactions are context-bound in the sense that how both

parties contribute to the ongoing interaction and use language depends on the purpose of the visit and their expectations of each other.

In this subsection, I delve into how the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students constructed their office hour talk in English and how much each party contributed. Keeping in mind that the way they did so was potentially relevant to the purpose, content, or topic of ongoing interaction, I examine certain segments of office hour interactions with regard to their discourse features, such as volubility, turn-taking, backchanelling, overlap, interruption, etc. While examining these discourse segments, I also checked classroom observation notes to compare and contrast linguistic strategies in these two data sources. Similar to equal contributions, the use of question-and-answer format was utilized specifically by Maria and Amelia as an instructional strategy. Additionally, all three instructors attended to unequal contributions with uninterrupted lengthy turns, such as mini lectures, throughout their sessions. However, the co-construction of classroom interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students was closely linked to the task, topic, or content at hand. Therefore, with that mindset, I present these repeating sequences or patterns of talk in two categories: equal contributions and unequal contributions.

Equal Contributions

This type of interactional pattern can be defined as any segment of office hour talk where each party provided equal verbal contributions to the interaction. In other words, both participants jointly constructed this specific piece of talk in uniformity and by (almost) even distribution of turn-taking, turn length, amount of words, etc. By examining the following two excerpts, I provided two typical examples of such segments of office hour interactions.

One such segment where both interlocutors co-construct a segment of office hour interaction in unity is presented in Excerpt 1 below. The office hour interaction takes place between Maria and her student[11], and involves two primary functions because of two topics or concerns were addressed. Maria's student is a 22-year old female student majoring in Interior Architectural Design. Attending a private high school, she has reported that she knows German at the beginner level. She has study abroad experience where she used English but she has not stated how long. Additionally, it was the first time she was taking a class from Maria at the time of data collection. The initial purpose of the student is to be clarified or to receive clarification on one of the course assignments. Then in the mid-interaction, the student initiates a topic shift by stating that she has another question. Excerpt 1 is what follows. In the excerpt, Maria and her student negotiate a possible solution or compensation for a future class the student will not attend.

We can see that Excerpt 1 consists of several short turns between Maria and her student. Neither of them keeps the floor for a relatively long time. In other words, there is not an observed dominance both in the distribution of turns or holding the floor. The sequence involves 25 turns in total (13 turns by the student and 12 by Maria). Turn-taking is then almost evenly distributed between Maria and her student. The word count is 138 in this specific segment of interaction (60 words by the student and 78 words by Maria).

Excerpt 1:

93 S01:   next week I can't come on Monday. Can I came to your another
94   lesson?
95 Maria: of course!
96 S01:   another day
97 Maria: Is it just for Monday or?

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[11] I use numbers to identify the students in the excerpts. In the label S01, for instance, the letter S refers to the student and the number 01 to his/her identification number. The numbers are used sequentially as excerpts numbers unless the excerpt is from the same office hour interaction with the same student.

```
98   S01:    just for Monday
99   Maria:  okay. So, you can come if you want to Tuesday class. Eight thirty.
100  S01:    okay same hour.
101  Maria:  yes, the same hour.
102  S01:    oh cool!
103  Maria:  < @ > yeah. If you want on Wednesday, I have a class at three
104          thirty.
105  S01:    but Wednesday, I have whole day full lessons.
106  Maria:  So, you wanna make it Tuesday?
107  S01:                              [Tuesday] yeah.
108  Maria:  Tuesday.
109  S01:    same class?
110  Maria:  No. It's in uh (0.2) A207.
111  S01:    °write this?°
112  Maria:  yeah, you can write here.
113          (0.5)
114  S01:    eight and half. ((nervous)) < @ >
115  Maria:  It's eight thirty in A-2-0-7.
116  S01:    huh okay. I understand.
117  Maria:  ok, so next week, I'll see you there.
118  S01:    Uh maybe I can learn my attendance later?
119  Maria:  if you send me an email, it would be better.
120  S01:            [if it is possible]        [uh okay]     okay.
```

The sequence begins with the student's statement of her inability to attend the next class

on Monday. She also offers a compensation for that to-be-missed class by using an interrogative

for permission (*can I came to your another lesson?*). This is responded to by Maria with a very

certain and welcoming *of course* in line 95. The student follows Maria's positive reply with an

ellipsis – *another day* − without repeating her original question but she does not specify a time.

Maria then asks a clarification question to find out if it is for only Monday class in her next turn

(*is it just for Monday o::r?* in line 98), which is confirmed by the student with a repetition[12].

Between lines 96 and 105, Maria and her student negotiate a possible day and class time that the

student can come and compensate for her absence in the Monday class. In this excerpt, we can

see an orderly turn-taking pattern where both parties almost equally maintain their turns. It is

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[12] Repetitions were one of the common features in the office hour interactions in this study, and are analyzed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

also evident that this negotiation sequence involves several strategies such as repetition by Maria in line 101 to confirm her student, offer of alternative by Maria again in lines 103 and 104, and indirect refusal by the student in line 105 by giving an excuse. In her next turn in line 106, Maria uses a statement with a rising intonation to determine if the student is clear about coming to Tuesday's class. As has already been signaled in line 102 by saying *oh cool,* the overlap of *Tuesday* by the student in line 107 displays her eagerness to accept that day*,* which is also immediately followed by the agreement token *yeah* in the same turn. With regard to the exact day of a make-up class, Maria gives a final confirmation and acknowledgement of the student's decision by repeating *Tuesday* in line 108. Starting from line 109, the student solicits more details such as classroom number and aims to confirm the previously mentioned exact class time. Each time, Maria provides a response with new information in lines 110 and 115. Meanwhile, the student uses a five-second interturn pause to take a note about what Maria says with regard to class time and number. After both parties are clear about the details, Maria's student attempts to switch topic to attendance status by asking *Uh maybe I can learn my attendance later?* in line 118. The use of the hesitation marker *Uh* and lexical downtoner *maybe* allows us to identify the uncertainty in her question. In addition, the time expression *later* at the end of her question shows her readiness to postpone this new topic. In return, Maria verbalizes her preference by saying *if you send me an email, it would be better* in line 119 as a response, which is then accepted by her student with a repeated *okay*.

Excerpt 1 above demonstrates that the negotiation of a specific day for compensation is co-constructed by Maria and her student through their mutual linguistic efforts and contributions over several turns. While doing so, they both use several strategies such as questions, repetitions, overlap, etc. Therefore, such co-constructed segments of office hour interactions involve equal

contributions by the interlocutors. The use of interactional strategies above and the analysis of the excerpt display that it is a pretty smooth interaction between Maria and her student where they both orient themselves clearly to one another's turn in a synchronous fashion. Their linguistic efforts to negotiate an appropriate prospective class hour for the student to compensate her absence in Maria's class appears to be influential in co-constructing such an equal contribution.

Another typical pattern appears in the segments of office hour interactions where the instructors utilize question-and-answer format. One such excerpt comes from Amelia's office hour sessions. In what follows, I examine how Amelia relies on questions in facilitating her student's comprehension of the course content in Excerpt 2. The student is a 19-year old female student at the Department of Psychology. She has reported in the post-interaction questionnaire that she does not use English at all in any environment other than school, and does not speak any third language. Even though she has been learning English for 10 years, she has attended the university's English language preparation program.

Although Amelia is the one who keeps asking questions, the student provides responses each time, and contributes to the ongoing interaction. The excerpt below involves 24 turns (13 by Amelia and 11 by her student), and the word count for this excerpt is 121 (69 words by Amelia and 52 by her student). In addition to overlap, soft laughter, and interturn pause as in the previous excerpt, there is also another discourse feature in this one, and this is the student's interruption to fill in her instructor's turn and express her own understanding in lines 34 and 51. More importantly, this sequence consists of Amelia's use of frequent questions in almost every single turn. Each time Amelia asks a question, her student provides an answer, and thus they

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jointly construct the student's process of understanding one of the course readings they are supposed to use in their argumentative essays.

Prior to the excerpt above, the student has explained that one of the main ideas in Friedman's position for business ethics is clear to her but the second one is not. They both first clarify if the idea of pricing through competition is clear to the student or not. Then, Amelia, just before listing her questions, creates an example situation and assigns her student as the producer or the manager of a company. Once the student's role in the given context is determined, Amelia links it to the content of reading material by asking *but then what is the point of the hurricane example?* at the very beginning of this sequence in line 27.

Excerpt 2:

```
27  Amelia:   but then what is the point of the hurricane example?
28  S02:      There aren't others producers.
29  Amelia:   uhm
30  S02:      only me
31  Amelia:   okay
32  S02:      So I can a:h purchase what they were, I want
33  Amelia:   you can charge
34  S02:                      charge whatever I want is
35  Amelia:   and according to Friedman, should you charge the highest possible
36  S02:                      [hmhm]
37  Amelia:   price?
38  S02:      yes because I'm business
39  Amelia:   yes
40  S02:      woman < @ >
41  Amelia:   and your job is to do what for the owner?
42  S02:      (0.2) my all aims is maximize my profit.
43  Amelia:   okay, very good! And what does Friedman say?
44           (0.3)
45  Amelia:   who would you be hurting?
46  S02:      I hurt myself, my own company.
47  Amelia:   yourself and the owner?
48  S02:                  [a::nd]
49           (0.3)
50  Amelia:   are you hurting yourself or
51  S02:                      [but I'm] also owner. I own the company.
52  Amelia:                              [you're not]
```

53		no you're the manager of the company.
54	S02:	hu::h
55	Amelia:	okay?
56	S02:	hu:h okay.

In lines 28 and 30, Amelia acknowledges the student's two answers to the same question with agreement tokens, *uhm* and *okay*. The student then follows Amelia's turn with a further explanation in line 32. Amelia repeats her student's utterance in her next turn with a recast *you can charge* in order to signal the correct verb is *charge*, not *purchase*. The student's interruption in line 34 indicates her immediate uptake of this recast since she repeats her previous utterance with the correct verb *charge*.

After this initial turn-taking sequence, Amelia poses several questions to help her student to make the connection between Friedman's hurricane example of business ethics and the role she assigns to her student through a sample situation. Amelia asks 5 questions to accomplish her interactional goal of clarifying the content of a course reading to her student between lines 35 and 47. The conversation in the form of question-and-answer between Amelia and her student flows quite smoothly until the end of line 42 because the student is able to answer the questions each time. However, when Amelia takes this student's co-constructed comprehension process and asks *and what does Friedman say?* in line 43, she gets no answer but a five-second interturn pause. Then, Amelia reformulates her question since the student is not able to provide an immediate response. A similar instance of inability to answer on the part of Amelia's student repeats between lines 47-49. Although the student gives an answer to Amelia's reworded question in line 46, this does not make her instructor discontinue to ask. Amelia takes her next turn in line 47 to ask one final clarification question (*yourself and the owner?*) in this excerpt to elicit a different answer from her student. Following another interturn pause for three seconds,

Amelia and her student again jointly clarify non-understanding on the part of the student between lines 50-55. Meanwhile, we can observe several discourse features: interruption introduced by an overlap by the student in line 51; overlap by Amelia in line 52 to correct what her student has just said; and an alerter *okay?* by Amelia in line 55 to confirm her student's understanding.

Examining these two excerpts in this section demonstrates that the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study can contribute equally to the ongoing talk at certain stages of office hour interactions. This is usually achieved by (almost) equally distributed turn-taking patterns and word count. In such sequences, both parties also take relatively shorter turns. It is also possible to notice several discourse features in such segments of office hour interactions, such as overlaps, repetitions, interruptions, interturn pauses, backchanelling, etc. The segments of office hour discourse in which equal contributions take place in this study are also linked to the interactional goal and topic of interaction. In the analysis of excerpts in this subsection, we have seen a negotiation of attending to the instructor's another class (Excerpt 1) and negotiation of meaning with regard to the course content (Excerpt 2). Therefore, it could be argued that equal contributions in office hour interactions in this study usually take place when the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students need to negotiate academic or course-related concerns, which is the third category of primary functions in Table 5. When both parties simultaneously have expressive needs on relevant topics for this category (e.g. topic selection for a project, requirements for course-related tasks, expectations for the course, previous language learning experiences, etc.), they tend to contribute equally to the ongoing interaction.

Unequal Contributions

Different from previous excerpts, unequal contributions are also evident in office hour interactions in this study. These can be defined as segments of office hour discourse where one interlocutor keeps the floor for a long time while the other provides either minimal or no verbal contribution. I examine one such excerpt below in two steps to show how one party displays dominance in such parts of office hour interactions.

The following Excerpt 3 takes place between Mike and a student from his *Oral Communication* class. Mike's student is an 18-year old male student majoring in ELT. Attending to a state high school, the student has opportunity to use English with international students from Europe and Asia in summer camps where he works every summer. He has reported that he knows German at elementary level. He has been learning English for 8 years and did not attend the university's English preparatory program. Yet, he does not consider speaking in English as one of the four skills he feels comfortable. Prior to the excerpt, the student explicitly states the purpose of his coming to the office hour: To get information about Erasmus or exchange programs. When Mike asks him what specifically he wants to find out, the student inquiries about requirements for joining an Erasmus program and being an exchange student. This is followed by the sequence shown in Excerpt 3.

Notably, the discourse features with regard to being verbally involved in the interaction are different from what we have seen in Excerpts 1 and 2 in the previous section. The excerpt between lines 7-18 below only consists of 2 turns (Mike's uninterrupted turn throughout the excerpt with two backchannelling moves in lines 10 and 14 by the student, and the student's agreement turn in line 18). When we compare these two turns, it appears that they are remarkably different from each other in length. In other words, Mike maintains his turn for

evidently longer time by producing 104 words in total whereas his student provides only two

backchannels, in lines 10 and 14. Not until many line after in line 18 does the student take an

actual turn to show his agreement. Similar to his two earlier backchannels, he says *uhm* in his

only turn. Otherwise, it is Mike who keeps talking and provides information with regard to the

requirements for an exchange/Erasmus program.

Excerpt 3:

```
07   Mike:    (0.2) Well, if you want to be part of Erasmus, there are some (0.2)
08            certain guidelines you have to meet like you have to have certain
09            GPA uhh it's uhh you can get that information from Erasmus office.
10   S03:          [uhm]
11   Mike:    Now, if your GPA is fine and everything else is fine, uhh you have
12            to also pass a language exam. Once you pass all that and you're
13            accepted, then it comes down to choosing where you wanna go. Our
14   S03:          [uhm]
15   Mike:    faculty has agreements with uh I think four schools now. Uh one is
16            in England, uh one is in Bulgaria and two in Germany, and one in
17            Greece actually.
18   S03:    uhm
```

The sequence between lines 7-18 starts with Mike's two-second pause followed by the

discourse marker *well* to frame his participation in this sequence (Fraser, 1999; Schiffrin, 1987).

Mike's use of a short pause and *well* right at the beginning of this sequence is notable here for

some reasons. He does not only frame his single turn between the lines 7-17 but also signals a

transition to this type of pattern where his student produces only minimal response with

acknowledgement token *uhm* (Zimmerman, 1993) and where Mike dominates almost the entire

conversation. Put differently, it can be argued that Mike prepares himself and possibly his student

as the hearer to a transactional interaction where he delivers his expertise as solicited by his

student. Thus, Mike starts his delivery with a conditional clause to set the code of conduct for

becoming an exchange student (*if you want to be part of Erasmus, there are some (0.2) certain*

guidelines you have to meet like you have to have certain GPA) by stating a must-possess criteria,

and then adds a possible source of information for more information (*uhh it's uhh you can get*

that information from Erasmus office). As stated above, his student signals his listenership with

only one instance of backchannelling (*uhm* in line 10), letting Mike keep the floor. In the same

way, Mike continues to list the requirements in a step-by-step manner in lines 11-13, which

continues until line 18 where Mike finishes providing information about what to do for becoming

an exchange student or joining an Erasmus program in various places in Europe. Consequently,

this one single turn by Mike (that is accompanied by few acknowledgment tokens from the

student) contains a lot of information to process. In that sense, the avoidance of any interruption

or question on the part of the student can be interpreted in two ways: the student is either

processing this information and/or everything is clear to him.

Until now, I have examined two examples of equal contributions and the first piece of an

example for unequal contributions in office hour interactions. As articulated above, some factors

(e.g. the goal or function of interaction, the topic or concern at hand, interactional goals being

achieved, etc.) influence the occurrence of these equal and unequal contributions. Such segments

of office hour discourse can take place at various points of interactions except for the openings

and closings depending on these factors. In other words, equal and unequal contributions are the

components of the same office hour interaction.

Considering the whole dataset in this study, it can be said that the instances of unequal

contributions are more frequent than equal contributions (80% and 20% respectively), and it is

almost not the case, or very rare, that any student has kept the floor for a longer time when

compared to his/her instructor. Additionally, the topics where the international instructors and

their Turkish EFL students negotiate academic or course-related concerns yield equal

contributions more often when compared to the topics where they aim to give/receive information and/or feedback. In other words, it is more likely for unequal contributions to appear in the interaction when the goal is to give/receive feedback and information on topics, such as programs, requirements, assignments and tasks, exams, academic writing conventions or drafts, etc. In such unequal contributions, the international instructors mainly deliver information to their students and/or display their expertise in alignment with the expert-novice role or asymmetrical distribution of knowledge in institutional discourse (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 2001; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Locher, 2004) and office hour interactions (Nair-Brodeur, 1995; Reindhart, 2010). That is, it is interplay between the function/topic and nature of office hour interaction (e.g. negotiation or delivery of expertise or knowledge) that guides the segments of discourse in which equal and unequal talk contributions occur.

Returning to the second phase of the same interaction, the interaction between Mike and his student continues as a one-way communication. As can be seen below, the interaction between Mike and his student comes to a halt for a while with a four-second interturn pause. Upon no response by the student, Mike takes over a much longer turn that actually seems like "a long-winded monologue" and dominates the rest of this specific segment of office hour interaction (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p.90). This given opportunity to the student with an interturn pause can also be interpreted as independence strategy to allow the student to become expressive and gain the next turn but the student remains unresponsive. Mike then keeps the floor for a longer time, by producing a total of 221 words in total in lines 20-36.

```
19   (0.4)
20   Mike:   You can look those schools and see if they offer classes that will fit
21           in your program u:h (0.2) and choose that way, or if you find
22           another school that u:h you would rather go to and we don't have an
23           agreement but they have classes that would meet our program
```

24		requirements, then bring that name of the school to me u:h and the
25		information about it. I'll contact them and try to create an agreement,
26		and uh if they accept then you can go to that school as well. So u:h
27		you can just go online, and on our website, if you go to the Erasmus
28		program, you can find out what schools we have an agreement and
29		just check it, you know, pick one you like, see if they have a
30		program. Once you pick the schools you like and you look at the
31		program, you need to go to u:h the chair of your program, which in
32		this case would be Emel[13], and make sure that she approves the
33		courses that you wanna take because some of the courses might not fit
34		with the requirements here. Once she approves it, she'll sign off on it.
35		Then you'll come to me. I'll sign off on it and then you'll take it to
36		the Erasmus office, and (0.2) you're good to go.
37	S03:	[that's it ⟨@⟩]

From a content perspective, Mike obviously transmits a great deal of knowledge with regard to becoming an exchange student in his lengthy monologic turn. Between lines 20-24, he still clarifies the steps to take on the part of the student. While doing so, he uses several strategies. By making his student aware of possibilities by using if clauses and *or* conjunction (*You can look those schools and see if they offer classes that will fit in your program u:h (0.2) and choose that way, or if you find another school that u:h you would rather go to*), Mike indeed voices his expertise or experience in his administrative duty as an Exchange/Erasmus Coordinator in the faculty. This is confirmed by his use of pronouns (*we* in line 22, *our* in line 23, *me* in line 24, *I* in line 25, *we* in line 28, *me* and *I* in line 35) in his following utterances that enables him to construct his institutional identity as well. Similar to initial stage of this prolonged and uninterrupted account of possibilities and requirements, Mike again offers a set of procedures to follow at both personal and institutional planes in the rest of this sequence (lines 22-36). While constructing this entire transactional move in his lengthy turn, Mike employs five different subject pronouns several times (*you* for 16 times, *we* and *I* for twice, *she* for 3 times,

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[13] pseudonym

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and *they* for 4 times). His frequent shift between these subject pronouns portrays the distributed responsibility of engaging in the process of becoming an exchange student or joining an Erasmus program among their own university (e.g. *we don't have an agreement…* in line 22, and *...schools we have an agreement* in line 28), the corresponding university (e.g. *they have classes that would meet our program requirements* in lines 23-24), the program/department chair (e.g. *make sure that she approves the courses that you wanna take…* in lines 32-33), Mike himself as the coordinator (e.g. *I'll contact them and try to create an agreement* in line 25, and *I'll sign off on it* in line 35), and most obviously the student himself (e.g. *you can look those schools* in line 20, and *once you pick the schools you like and you look at the program, you need to go to uhh the chair of your program* in lines 30-31). Following this extended talk by Mike, only in line 37 does the student makes a verbal contribution, which overlaps with Mike's final words in the previous line. By saying *that's it*, the student signals his perception that all these procedures accounted by Mike are not difficult to do. His satisfied and happy tone in his utterance is then followed by a soft laughter.

The analysis of second half of Excerpt 3 indicates that unequal contributions in office hour interactions in this study can take the form of a monologue in which the instructor keeps the floor and the student does not signal any response until his/her instructor terminates his/her turn. Even though the one-way communication in the excerpt above took place between Mike and his student, similar segments of discourse have been observed in Amelia's and Maria's office hour interactions with their students. In that sense, when the office hour dataset between these three international instructors and their Turkish students are compared, it is quite possible to observe some differences with regard to the overall occurrence of equal and unequal contributions. In alignment with the previous discussion of goal-topic impact, the monologue type of interaction

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in Excerpt 3 can easily be linked to Mike's administrative role; and in Amelia's case, the reason can be related to the fact that all her office hour interactions were about academic writing rules and feedback on students' drafts. However, it can be argued that it is also the speaker's communicative style because Mike had quite a bit variety in the topics when compared to Amelia. That is, Mike and Amelia tended to be involved in unequal contributions more often by keeping the floor than Maria who usually preferred to take relatively shorter turns.

The analysis of equal and unequal contributions in the office hour dataset also demonstrates how both groups of participants attend to relational work in this study. One such aspect of relational work that is most relevant to the analysis in this chapter is the negotiation of power and status. Embracing the perspective of relational work, the notion of power in this study is considered to be negotiable and dynamic. The exercise of power is also closely related to status but these two relational aspects are not necessarily tantamount. In other words, higher status does not necessarily mean the exercise of power towards the low status interlocutor (Locher, 2004; Watts, 1991). In that sense, by mutually orienting themselves to each other's turns in Excerpt 1, Maria and her student negotiates their power and status by co-constructing this equally distributed talk. When we consider her higher status or institutional role as the instructor in office hour interactions, Maria does not exercise power over her student even though she has the freedom of action to directly tell her student what to do. Instead, she shows involvement in her student's concern by offering her options. However, it does not mean that every equal contribution in office hour interactions yield similar instantiations. In Excerpt 2, for example, Amelia and her student are involved in another manifestation of equal contribution but it is Amelia who controls the flow of interaction by assuming the role of question-asker in alignment with the previous discussion of expert-novice role or asymmetrical distribution of

knowledge in institutional discourse (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 2001; Drew & Heritage, 1992). In that sense, even though the analysis of these two excerpts showcases how equal contributions are co-constructed in office hour interactions, the international instructors as the higher status interlocutors and their Turkish EFL students as the lower status interlocutors negotiate the exercise of power differently. Moreover, in Excerpt 3, Mike and his student are involved in unequal contribution in which Mike dominated this segment of office hour interaction. Since such a linguistic dominance in interaction is linked to the exercise of power, it could be considered Mike imposing power onto his student at a first glance. However, from the perspectives of relational work, I would argue that Mike's dominance in this excerpt is acknowledged by his student, and does not impose on the student. Indeed, even though he has the higher status, he does not have the freedom of action to refuse his student's request for information as the part of his administrative duty (e.g. Erasmus/exchange programs coordinator). He fulfills his administrative duty as 'information-provider'. He even might be seeking solidarity by providing a lengthy explanation or a lot of details considering his student's expectations in this vein. As Tannen (1994) puts it, dominance in talk might actually be the exercise of solidarity or rapport among the interlocutors.

Summary

In this chapter, findings with regard to the following first research question in this study were presented: What are the primary functions and topics of office hour interactions? How do these functions and topics influence the discourse organization of office hour interactions? The purpose of this research question was to give the big picture of office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students at two private universities in the northwest of Turkey. In order to do so, I embraced a content-wise and turn-distribution

perspective while examining the data. Therefore, the findings included the primary functions and topics as well as how these interactions displayed certain typical discourse features, such as turn-taking, turn length, amount of contribution, word count, and level of interactivity.

In sum, the analysis of office hour dataset in this study yielded three main functions or purposes and several topics governed by these primary goals. It was the common situation that the purpose and content of Turkish EFL students for coming to the international instructors' office hours in this study was closely related to the courses they offered, tasks and assignments in those courses, and in some cases their administrative duties and language learning experiences. In relation with these broader functions and topics of office hour interactions, two main patterns emerged with regard to discourse organization of interactions: equal and unequal contributions. Through excerpts from the dataset, it was demonstrated that the verbal contributions of the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students could become evenly and/or unevenly distributed at equal and unequal contributions of office hour interactions through their turn-taking, amount of keeping the floor, verbosity, etc. All in all, this chapter provided a macro-level analysis and findings with regard to the office hour dataset in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUGGESTION-RESPONSE EPISODES

In this chapter, the speech act of suggestions from both the international instructors and

their Turkish EFL students during thirty-eight office hour interactions was examined as the scope

of the second research question in this study. In this chapter, I first present a broader picture of

how suggestions are realized in office hour interactions with a focus on both instructors' and

students' suggestions, in order to understand how interlocutors used linguistic realizations of

suggestions in office hour interactions. I examine these linguistic forms by analyzing excerpts

from the dataset and analyze how suggestions are initiated and responded to in the flow of

interactions. Focusing on the function of utterances that involve suggestory acts and how these

utterances fit into the surrounding context, I present how the international instructors and their

Turkish EFL students co-construct suggestion-response episodes throughout the ongoing

interactions. Drawing mainly upon Locher's (2006) work, the analysis focuses on not only

utterances that deliver the illocutionary force of suggesting but also how these utterances are

related or situated in the ongoing talk through various discourse segments or phases of office

hour interactions.

Overview of Suggestions

In this section, I present overall findings of suggestions in office hour interactions by

utilizing a syntactic categorization of possibilities for suggestion realizations. As I presented in

the methodology chapter, these categories came out of the extensive research literature on

suggestions. However, in order to comply with the theoretical framework, I mainly drew upon

Koike (1994), Li (2010), and Locher (2006) for the three main categories of suggestion forms: imperative, declarative, and interrogatives. These studies were most relevant ones because they all included clear examples of suggestion realizations and facilitated the analysis of suggestions (e.g. identifying, coding, and categorizing) in office hour dataset. Specifically, Locher (2006) provided insights into how to examine suggestions in discourse from the perspectives of relational work.

The speech act of suggestions falls into the category of directives (Searle, 1976) but they present some differences from other speech acts in this category. Suggestions are non-impositive according to Haverkate (1984) because the beneficiary in suggestions is the hearer, whereas it is the speaker in impositive speech acts such as requests and orders. Even though giving and receiving of suggestions has less imposition when compared to requests and orders as other types of directives (Haverkate, 1984; Koike, 1994; Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Schmidt et al., 1996), this speech act might become a FTA depending on the context where it is used. Accordingly, suggestions in this study were operationalized as utterances that addressed the hearer when the speaker believed it was beneficial to do it[14]. They were initiated either by the instructors or their students for various interactional goals and might also involve manifestations of advice-giving, recommending, and suggesting throughout office-hour interactions.

As shown in Table 6, the office hour corpus in this study yielded a total of 1,411 suggestions in thirty-eight interactions, which indicates that this speech act frequently occurs in this context. More than half of these suggestions (N=880) were produced as declaratives (62%). The second most frequent category was imperatives (N=376 or 27%). Finally, interrogatives were the least frequent category of suggestion realizations in office hour dataset (N=155 or

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[14] In the case of student-initiated suggestions, the beneficiary was the student himself/herself because they mainly self-suggested for their own academic or course-related concerns. This group of suggestions was, therefore, called self-suggestory acts, which is analyzed in detail in the subsequent subsection of this chapter.

11%). That is, the participants in this study used direct (e.g. imperatives) or conventionally indirect suggestions more than indirect ones.

A closer look at Table 6 also shows that a great amount of all suggestions were produced by the instructors (N=1335 or 95%), whereas the students produced only 76 suggestions (5%) in the dataset. Again, declaratives were the most frequent forms in both groups (N=824 or 58% by the instructors, and N=56 or 4% by the students). Although imperatives were the second most frequent category, as stated above, none of the students used this suggestion form in office hour interactions. In other words, the students avoided the most direct form in their suggestions. Finally, interrogatives as suggestions were also mostly used forms by the instructors (N=135 or 10%) when compared to the students (N=20 or 1%). Yet, when we consider the total number of students' suggestions, the use of interrogatives as suggestions appear to be one of the two most frequent categories.

Table 6

Overall Number and Frequency of Suggestions

	Instructors		Students		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Imperatives	376	27	0	0	376	27
Declaratives	824	58	56	4	880	62
Interrogatives	135	10	20	1	155	11
Total	1335	95	76	5	1411	100

The overall analysis of the suggestions in office hour interactions indicates that the act of giving/receiving suggestions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students is abundant in their office hour interactions. However, as it might be expected, it is very often the

instructors who make suggestions (95%) in the total of 38 interactions. This broader analysis also presents implications for how the participants in this study understand and negotiate their roles and power relationships. That is, the prevalence of suggestions by the instructors indicates the social norm in office hour interactions that the instructors have the right, or are expected, to give an ample amount of suggestions in this type of communicative activity. This aligns with their expert role or higher status and the asymmetrical power distribution in institutional discourse (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 2001; Drew & Heritage, 1992).

To gain more insights into the dynamics of the suggestion-response episodes in each set of office hour interactions by Mike, Maria, Amelia, and their students, I now turn to two main types of suggestions in office hour interactions in the next section. These are instructor-initiated and student-initiated suggestions. Thus, I presented how three instructors and their students used various forms of three categories of imperative, declarative and interrogative suggestions within the course of office hour interactions. While doing so, I present brief excerpts from the data to exemplify the overall trends found in the dataset.

Instructor-initiated Suggestions

Looking at Table 7 immediately shows that all three instructors initiated a remarkable amount of suggestions (N=1335). Furthermore, all three instructors used a variety of suggestion realizations, though in differing amounts. The use of modals and semi-modals as the subcategory of declaratives was frequent in instructor-initiated suggestions among all types of syntactic categories (39%). These were then followed closely by imperatives as the second most frequent suggestion type (28%). Interrogatives were next including both *yes/no* and *wh-* questions (10%). Although Table 7 covers all these suggestion forms, my goal at this point is to focus on these three most frequent suggestion types by the instructors. Such a difference in the instructor's use

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of suggestion forms might relate to the purposes and topics of office hour interactions as well as their communicative style.

Table 7

Number and Type of Instructor-initiated Suggestions

	Mike	Maria	Amelia	Total	
	N	N	N	N	%
Imperatives	104	85	187	376	28
Performatives	2	4	16	22	2
Modals and Semi-modals	214	69	244	527	39
Want/need statements	16	9	64	89	7
Pseudo cleft	8	1	15	24	2
Extraposed *to*	1	3	7	11	1
Hints	17	13	28	58	4
Elliptical	11	11	35	57	4
Other (formulaic expressions)	4	2	30	36	3
Interrogatives	30	15	90	135	10
Total	407	212	716	1335	100

Closer attention to the distribution of instructor-initiated suggestions, however, indicates that the frequency of these realizations is not the same for each instructor. Imperatives, for instance, were the top suggestion form for Maria, whereas it was not the case for Mike's and Amelia's suggestions. In other words, Maria used more imperatives when compared to other subcategories in her contributions whereas Mike and Amelia used more modals and semi-modals than imperatives when producing suggestions. Figure 2 below also represents the distribution of linguistic forms in instructor-initiated suggestions.
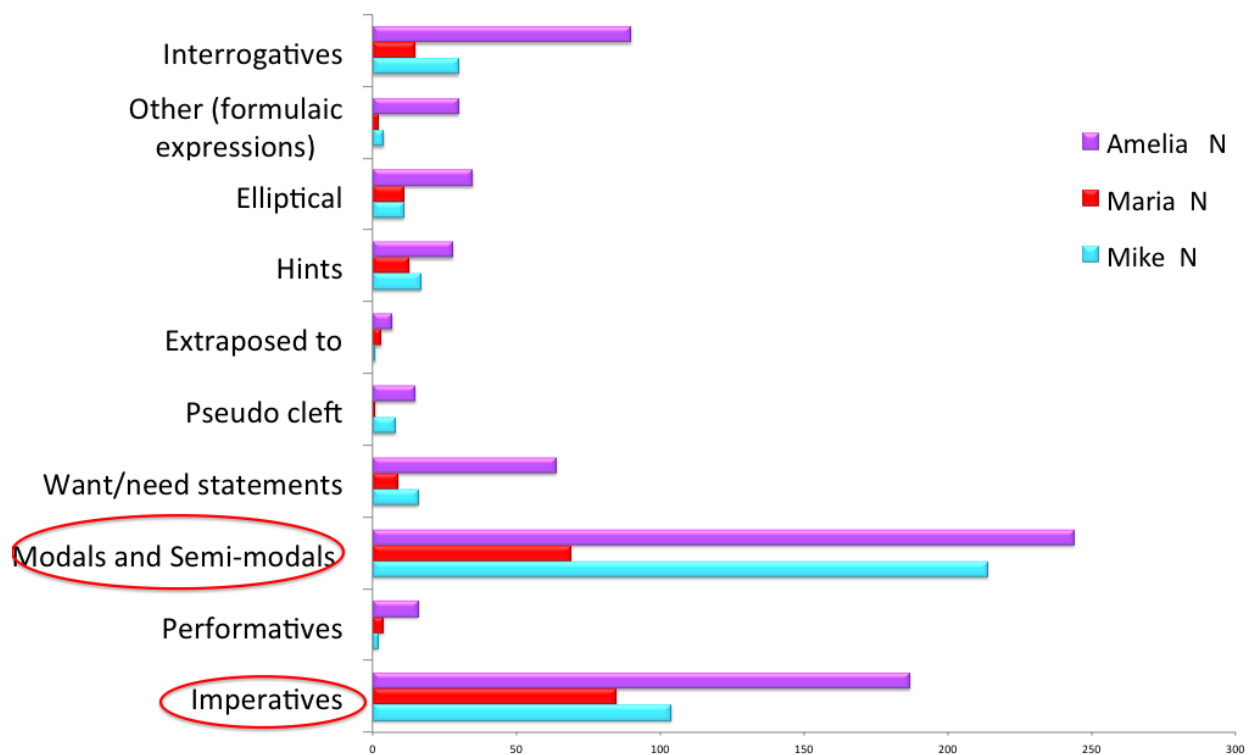
Figure 2. Distribution of linguistic forms in instructor-initiated suggestions.

In order to account for these differences, I next consider what triggers these suggestions, how they fit into the surrounding context in the flow of office hour interactions, and what some potential factors that might be influential in choosing a certain suggestion form. I also consider how these suggestion types are responded to. It is my intention in what follows to present what is appropriate or politic behavior so that it can be possible to trace evidence for positively marked behavior, or polite behavior, through linguistic choices (Locher, 2004). To be more specific and support my interpretations or observations, I ask questions such as 'How does the use of certain forms of suggestions contribute to the ongoing relational work between the instructor and the student?', or for example, 'Does the use of unmitigated imperatives mean to be more direct and thus less polite?' or 'Is it the appropriate or expected linguistic behavior in office hour

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interactions?'. That said, I present my analysis of the use of modals and semi-modals, imperatives, and interrogatives respectively in what follows, since these were among the most frequent suggestion forms used by all three instructors.

Modals and Semi-modals

As presented in the previous section, instructor-initiated suggestions in this study involved a high degree of modality, and the use of modals and semi-modals were classified as a subcategory of declaratives. Modal verbs in English have various semantic meanings, such as possibility, necessity and obligation, ability, permission, volition, prediction, and hypotheticality (Collins, 2009; Cook, 1978; Palmer, 1990). What is more, several different modals and semi-modals can be used for the very same purpose or meaning as in the case of this study. In other words, modals and semi-modals are also often used in speech acts. Similarly, they are important in suggestion realizations as well (Jiang, 2006; Reindhart, 2010) in order to convey various semantic meanings mentioned above. Perkins (1982) names two broad categories of English modals as primary modals (e.g. *can, may, must, will*, and *shall*) and secondary modals (e.g. *could, might, ought to, would*, and *should*). Adding also the semi-modals *going to*, *need to*, and *have to* to the list, I examined the suggestions in office hour interactions with regard to the use of these modal auxiliaries. Table 8 presents an overview of the number and overall frequency of the modals employed in instructor-initiated suggestions.

Expressing possibility can be accomplished by using different modals in English, and such modals involve *can, could, might*, and *may*. In addition to this semantic meaning, these modals fulfill the pragmatic function of giving suggestions in office hour interactions. In other words, telling the students what to do as a possibility is one common way of instructor-initiated

Table 8

Number and Overall Frequency of Modals* in Instructor-initiated Suggestions

	Mike	Maria	Amelia	Total	
	N	N	N	N	%
will	26	9	7	42	6
would	23	2	9	34	5
going to	13	2	9	24	3
should	8	6	22	36	5
need to	31	4	29	64	8
have to	11	14	30	55	7
can	85	25	113	223	30
could	8	4	9	21	3
might	4	0	16	20	3
may	5	3	0	8	1
Total	214	69	244	527	100

*negative forms of modals were also included in the numbers. However, they were not as frequent as the affirmative forms of modals (e.g. less than 10%).

suggestions in this study. As can be seen in Table 8, the modal *can* appears as the most frequent among all other types of modal auxiliaries (30%). The international instructors use *can* to express the possibilities or optionality of what to do with regard to their students' concerns or problems. Although other modals of possibility (*could, might,* and *may*) are also observed in instructor-initiated suggestions, the instructors typically use *can* for that purpose, and it is the most frequently used modal for all three instructors. It is also quite common to see *can* in suggestions with the second person pronoun *you* but these suggestions sometimes include the inclusive *we* or non-agentive subjects. Moreover, in some cases, the instructors employed *can* to express ability while internally completing their suggestions by using subordinate clauses (e.g. conditional clauses, time clauses, *because*, and *so that*). Amelia, for instance, uses a time clause in her suggestion, *once the bibliographic information is there, you can use it for both in-text*

citation and references; and Mike realizes his suggestion, *if you're having trouble getting more specific, you can come and talk to me,* utilizing a conditional clause.

In the following excerpt, which is quite typical of how Amelia formulates suggestions, she uses *can* to tell her student some ways of how to improve her grade with regard to her essay (she has already lost several points). The student is a 22-year old female majoring in Industrial Engineering. She has reported that she has been learning English for 12 years. Prior to this excerpt, the student asks how many points she has lost due to not providing an accurate list of references with essay by formulating the *wh-* question, *how many points did I lose from references?*

Excerpt 4:

```
342  Amelia:  Half a point. That's I think quite generous. Half a point for this and
343  S04:                  [hmm]
344  Amelia:  this.
345  (0.3)
346  Amelia:  Four points for thesis. Support definitely can be improved.
347  S04:                                          [hmhm]
348  Amelia:  Organization can be improved. Linguistic level, I'm sorry, there
349          are so many language mistakes. Please correct it. I mean read
350          through it once again
351  S04:          [yeah I never] read it. I just wrote it.
352  Amelia:  I know but you don't wanna do that again. So, you can do a lot of
353  S04:                                  [yeah sure]
354  Amelia:  this stuff tonight and come tomorrow with the rewritten
355          version of it so that tomorrow you can just focus on
356  S04:                          °[that's kind of impossible] because we
357          have physics midterm°
358  Amelia:  Well, I don't know. I'm just saying.
```

The sequence starts with a quick account of the missed points. Then, Amelia makes two suggestions in sequence by using *can* for possibility in lines 346 and 348. These suggestions both have non-agentive or inanimate subjects (e.g. support and organization) and passive sentence construction. This can be easily associated with lowering the level of imposition on the hearer

because of the fact that the doer or the agent of the action is not emphasized in such utterances. Instead, it is the action itself that is being focused (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983). Thus, it can be argued that indirectness is doubled in these two suggestions with the use of *can* instead of a more direct strategy (e.g. imperative) and a lack of explicit agent. However, the illocutionary force of the first suggestion as a possible action to take is also boosted with the adverbial intensifier *definitely*. In the second set of suggestions with *can* in this excerpt, Amelia introduces her suggestion with the connector *so* and switches to the second person pronoun *you* in line 352, which makes it more direct too. This happens after the student's confession that she never reads what she writes in the previous turn. In her longer sequence of suggestions, Amelia comes up with two connected suggestions of how the student might proceed to revise her essay (e.g. *do a lot of this stuff tonight* and *come tomorrow with the rewritten version of it* in lines 352, 354, and 355).

As illustrated here, *can* is, by far, the most frequent modal auxiliary in instructor-initiated declarative suggestions in office hour interactions. In combination with an agentive/non-agentive subject, it mitigates or softens the illocutionary force of suggestions when compared to more direct syntactic forms (e.g. imperatives) for instructor-initiated suggestions. Additionally, it sometimes co-occurs with several internal modifiers, such as lexical downgraders (e.g. *a little bit, stuff, kinda, maybe*, and *just*), and intensifiers/upgraders (e.g. *very, definitely, easily, usually*, and *actually*). I examine such mitigation and hedging in more detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter. In other words, depending on the context of giving/receiving suggestions or their communicative and interactional goals, the international instructors either mitigate or boost the illocutionary force of their suggestions. Overall, the use of *can*, *might*, and *may* allows the

instructors to give options or alternatives to their students. Without directly imposing on their students, the instructors tell them the possible paths to follow future actions.

Returning to Table 8, expressing obligation more directly is also common in instructor-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions. However, unlike modals of possibility, the affirmative form of such modals strengthens or aggravates the illocutionary force of suggestions (Williams, 2005). As can be seen in Table 8, *must* is not included because the international instructors in this study never use it; instead they employ *have to, need to,* and *should* to express necessity. All three instructors use *have to* and *need to* mainly for emphasizing the expectations or requirements for their students with regard to assignments, exams, procedures, and other academic issues. In contrast, they employ *should* when it is a more opinion-based suggestion.

In the following Excerpt 5, Maria and her student talk about the TOEFL exam because the student plans to take it soon, but he is unsure about how to prepare for it. He is a 22-year old male student majoring in Energy System Engineering, and attended the university's English preparation program. He has been learning English for 10 years and stayed abroad for about 7 months, where he could use English. At the beginning of the office hour interaction, Maria's student expresses his intention of taking the TOEFL exam by saying, *u:h, (0.2) I like to take TOEFL exam and uh there are some sections, reading, listening, speaking, writing*. Following Maria's acknowledgment that she herself took the exam before, the student continues and indirectly seeks advice on the TOEFL exam *–u:h but I don't know how to study or how can improve*. Prior to the excerpt, Maria shares her opinion and experience with the exam and already gives a couple of suggestions making connections to her course.

The sequence starts with a six-second interturn pause followed by the student's taking a new turn. The student's turn (*so you got TOEFL, or IELTS? or both?* in line 46) starts with his

restating the fact that Maria took the TOEFL exam, and then turns into an inquiry into if it was

also IELTS or both. Following this, Maria repeats her student's utterance and once again

acknowledges that she took the exam by also adding new information; her experience with the

GRE exam as well (*I got the TOEFL first and then I got GRE* in line 47). Then, Maria ends her

turn by implying that she is an experienced test-taker (*so I kind of have everything you need*),

which invites her student to seek more suggestions on taking such standardized exams.

Meanwhile, the student's overlapping utterance (*GRE yeah* in line 48) shows his familiarity with

or acknowledgement of this exam too.

Excerpt 5:

```
45  (0.6)
46  S05:    so you got TOEFL, or IELTS? or both?
47  Maria:  I got the TOEFL first and then I got GRE. So I kind of have
48  S05:                                    [GRE yeah]
49  Maria:  everything you need.
50  S05:             [everything] yeah
51  Maria:  but as I said, it's more about how you manage your time.
52  S05:    hmm
53  Maria:  It's very long. So you need to take some break because it's very
54          very long.
55  S05:    Is it long and easy? Or not?
56  Maria:  No, you have to use uh (0.1) your brain. So you kind of get tired
57          by the end of it, and you have to be very concentrated through
58  S05:             [oh]
59  Maria:  all the exam.
60  S05:    hmm
```

In line 50, the student's overlapping repetition of *everything* also shows his agreement

with Maria's utterance, followed by the agreement token *yeah*. These initial turns between Maria

and her student functions as a warm-up to Maria's two additional suggestions on taking the

TOEFL exam in this interaction, prefaced by her utterance *but as I said, it's more about how you*

manage your time in line 51 and the student's agreement again (*hmm* in line 52). Following this,

Maria initiates her new turn with a statement of fact about the TOEFL exam (*it's very long* in line 53), and links it to her suggestion by using the connector *so.* Maria then makes her suggestion (*you need to take some break because it's very very long* in line 53-54) by using the same fact in her prior utterance as a reason, this time with the repeated intensifier *very.* The student inquires into the relationship between its length and difficulty level by asking, *Is it long and easy? Or not?* This is responded to by Maria negatively first to preface her implication that it is not difficult but tiring (*No, you have to use uh (0.1) your brain. So you kind of get tired by the end of it* in lines 56-57). The student's overlapping *oh* in line 58 shows his surprise with probably this new information for him. These statements of facts are again utilized by Maria to introduce her next suggestion in this sequence (*you have to be very concentrated through all the exam* in lines 57 and 59), which is then agreed to by the student (*hmm* in line 60).

Relying on the analysis of Excerpt 5 above, the international instructors increase the force of the suggested act when they make suggestions on certain course-related requirements or expectations from the students in language-based exams. As can be seen in the analysis of the excerpt between Maria and her student, the use of semi-modals to express such requirements or expectations is also supported by giving reasons and justifications with regard to the suggested act. While delivering their expertise and experience through the act of giving suggestions, the instructors increase the level of imposition on their students.

In addition to commonalities in the use of *have to, need to*, and *should* in terms of their function in instructor-initiated suggestions, a closer look into each instructor's preferences reveals some divergence. Mike and Maria, for instance, use lexical and phrasal downgraders (15/50 and 5/24 respectively), such as *kinda, maybe, I think, you know, just, well*, and *I mean*, whereas Amelia uses them less frequently (4/81) despite her relatively overall higher number of

occurrence in these modals. Instead, she often employs passive sentence construction with *have to*, *need to*, and *should* (17/81) when compared to Mike and Maria. This was also different from her use of other modals while making suggestions.

In the office hour session that Excerpt 6 below belongs to, Amelia's student comes to talk to her about his argumentative essay that is one of the major assignments in her course. The student, however, has a problem with the organization of ideas and details. This almost monologue-like excerpt takes place towards the end of a twenty-minute session after a longer stretch of turn-taking sequences, and it is even preceded by a negotiation of disagreement, which is then realized to be a misunderstanding.

Excerpt 6:

```
315  Amelia:  okay, physical health. This needs to be structured according to
316  S06:                         [hmhm]
317  Amelia:  (0.1) the hamburger principle. So, you need a topic sentence.
318           The support goes here. You talk about cancer, and u::h you know
319           all these diseases I guess there is some mentioning (unintelligible)
320           and so forth. Okay, so all the physical stuff is in this one, and the
321           psychological stuff is here.
322  S06:                         [this one]
323  Amelia:  hmhm. Again, body paragraph structures are problematic. So you
324           need a topic sentence. You need a concluding sentence. You
325           need all these supports. So, the paragraphs, first of all the thesis
326           statement has to be written. The second thing is the topic
327           sentence has to be rewritten, and then the third thing is each
328           paragraph has to be structured according to that hamburger
329           principle. I'm sorry I'm teaching almost like a formula but if you
330           know how to use this formula, then you can expand it, then you can
331           go experiment it, and be creative and, and you're creative here as
332           well.
333  S06:     okay (very low)
```

One such suggestion involving a passive construction comes at the beginning of the sequence (*this needs to be structured according to (0.1) the hamburger principle* in line 315 and 317). This is immediately followed by another suggestion with the second person pronoun *you*

and active construction (*so you need a topic sentence* in line 317). Even though these two suggestions convey necessity, a *need* statement (e.g. *need* + a noun) does not involve the illocutionary act, whereas *need to* requires a verb that specifies the suggested act. The second set of suggestions takes place in lines 323-329. After listing three suggestions with *need* statements (*so you need a topic sentence* in lines 323-324; *you need a concluding sentence* in line 324; and *you need all these supports* in lines 324-325), Amelia shifts to a passive construction in three more sequential suggestions in the same turn in lines 325-329. All these suggestions that contribute to her lengthy turns are again accepted by the student at the end of the sequence (*okay* in line 333). Amelia maintains her turn by "bombarding" the student with many aspects to be considered (e.g. a topic sentence, support, concluding sentence, and structure). She does so by switching from active to passive voice in her suggestions and producing "lists" of features for the student to attend to.

Last but not least, the instructor-initiated suggestions included *will, would*, and *going to* (14% of total). The international instructors in this study use *will* and *going to* typically to express certainty, and thus they strengthen the force of their suggestions. Some interactional functions or goals achieved by the instructors' use of these forms include stating the outcome of an action or condition, suggesting a future action, and conveying a necessary action to be done. The following Excerpt 7 provides instantiations of suggesting a future action to be taken in instructor-initiated suggestions. The office hour interaction takes place between Mike and his student in his Advanced Reading and Writing II class offered at the Department of ELT, in which the student is expected to narrow down her topic for an argumentative essay.

The sequence starts with Mike's two sequential questions (*Do you have the topic for certain? Did you choose the topic?* in line 48) because his main concern is to ascertain that the

students have certain topics for this major task at this initial stage of the course. Upon the

student's response that involves her choice of certain topic, Mike asks further questions in his

next turn to see if the topic is narrowed down or not (*What about bilingual education? What are*

specifically you gonna about? in lines 50-51). This is responded to negatively by the student (*I*

didn't know in line 52) implying that she does not know she is supposed to narrow it down. Mike

then takes a new turn where he produces a set of suggestions on how to proceed with narrowing

down the student's topic. The two of these suggestions involve a future action to be taken (*U:h*

so you'll just have to, once you give your ten sources, we'll look at it next week in lines 53-54,

and *we'll narrow it down* in line 56). Mike uses inclusive *we* in his suggestions lowering the

imposition on his student in these suggested future actions.

Excerpt 7:

```
48  Mike:  Do you have the topic for certain? Did you choose the topic?
49  S07:   Yes. Bilingual education I choose.
50  Mike:  What about bilingual education? What are specifically you gonna
51          about?
52  S07:   I didn't know.
53  Mike:  okay, that's fine. You don't need to know yet. U:h so you'll just
54          have to, once you give your ten sources, we'll look at it next week.
55          U:h and if you're having trouble getting more specific, you can come
56          and talk to me and we'll narrow it down…
```

As for the use of *would*, the international instructors in this study employ it in their

suggestions mainly in two ways: hypotheticality and tentativeness (Palmer, 1974; Perkins, 1982).

In a conditional situation in English, the meaning is communicated through conditional clauses

(e.g. *I would talk to him if I saw him*). However, as argued by Perkins (1982), the conditional

meaning is sometimes implicit when it is not realized through an explicit use. Similarly, the use

of *I would* without an explicit *if* clause is not uncommon in instructor-initiated suggestions

(10/23 for Mike, and 5/10 for Amelia).

The following excerpt shows how Mike uses *I would* as a reminder of what to do for the student's end-of-semester project, or even as a mild warning. The sequence takes place in an office hour interaction where Mike's student comes to talk about his final project but his topic is still too broad, and he is not quite sure about what to do for such a project. Prior to Excerpt 8, it takes Mike and his student 22 turns of total to clarify the expectations and frame the requirements and steps to take.

Excerpt 8:

```
67  Mike:  So, (0.2) yeah you can tie that in with your own experience.
68  S08:   hmhm
69  Mike:  Uh or experience of other people that maybe you interview, or how
70          you intend to do it, but I would come down, I would kinda skim
71          those chapters or read them. Uh (0.2) and think about what you're
72          gonna do, and come back and talk to me when you have something
73          (0.2) uh a little bit more narrow.
74  S08:   okay
75  Mike:  Like I would even come up with the thesis statement.
76  S08:   Uhm
77  Mike:  Uh this is what I'm specifically gonna look at.
```

The sequence starts with the connector *so* and a short pause functioning as turn-framing devices. Then, Mike makes a suggestion (*yeah you can tie that in with your own experience* in line 67), and this is accepted by his student (*hmhm* in line 68). Following this, Mike takes another turn; and different from his previous suggestions, he switches to *I would* in his next suggestion and even downgrades it by using *kinda* in lines 70-71. Interestingly, Mike then goes on with a direct style by using imperatives (*uh (0.2) and think about what you you're gonna do, and come back and talk to me when you have something (0.2) uh a little bit more narrow* in lines 71-73) to finish his very same turn. Following this, Mike again switches back to *I would* once more in her final suggestion in this sequence (*like I would even come up with the thesis statement* in line 75). Considering the fact that the student has some vague ideas about his final project,

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Mike's choice of implicit conditional conveys his effort to tell his student what to do as a starting point. By using the first person pronoun *I*, Mike still lessens the imposition on the student when compared to other alternatives (e.g. the second person pronoun *you*).

The analysis of excerpts demonstrates that the use of modals and semi-modals plays an important role in instructor-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions. As the most frequently used linguistic form, modals and semi-modals contribute to the instructors' interactional goal of 'helping their students' through their suggestion realizations in office hour interactions. In other words, the international instructors in this study fulfill their institutional role by showing their readiness or willingness to give suggestions to their Turkish EFL students through the use of modals and semi-modals as the most frequent declaratives. Additionally, when compared to other types of suggestion realizations, such as imperatives and performatives, the use modals and semi-modals is considered conventionally indirect in research literature on suggestions (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; Koike, 1994; Martinez-Flor, 2005) because the illocutionary force of suggestion is apparent in the utterance but modified with the use of modals or semi-modals. However, rather than their being conventionally indirect, it is the function of suggested act through these modals and semi-modals and the type of modification in these suggestions that determines the force of suggested acts. That is, the instructors' use modals and semi-modals in their suggestions are multifunctional (e.g. expressing possibility, obligation or necessity, certainty, and future actions to be taken, etc.).

Imperatives

As Zanuttini (2008) argues, one well-known syntactic property of imperatives in English is that they typically involve a certain addressee or a set of addresses in the relevant context, and there is a close relationship between the subject of imperatives and the projection of certain

addressee. She lists four types of imperatives subjects: null subjects (e.g. *look at the picture!*), the overt pronoun *you* (e.g. *You go there!*), certain quantificational subjects (e.g. *Nobody speak loudly!*), and bare noun phrases (e.g. *Kate sit down, Mary stand up!*).

With regard to the functions or illocutionary force of imperatives, Downes (1977) explains that imperatives can be employed to perform several acts other than commands, such as expressing a wish, or permission. Literature on speech acts has also indicated that imperatives can be use to make a request or a suggestion, as in the taxonomies of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Martinez-Flor (2005).

Instructors use imperatives in giving suggestions to their students. In the corpus of office hour interactions, most of the 376 instructor-initiated imperatives including both unmitigated and mitigated imperatives with null subject (77%) and overt pronoun *you* (23%). Amelia used the overt pronoun *you* most frequently (13%), whereas Maria and Mike had lower percentages (6% and 3% respectively). However, different form Zanuttini's (2008) classification, Amelia also used inclusive *we* in two of her imperative suggestions (e.g. *and then we go to 'update it'*, and *so we go, we go and say you know 'consumerism is negative because of ... whatever a, b, c, those three reasons, okay?*).

In the following excerpt, Mike uses imperative mood to give some immediate generic suggestions when his student expresses his concern about making mistakes. The office hour interaction originally starts with the student's request for information about Erasmus and other exchange programs, which is a continuation of the same interaction in Excerpt 3 in the first chapter (Mike was the exchange program coordinator of the faculty at the time of data collection). After the student receives sufficient information about possibilities and procedures,

he switches the topic to his feeling shy and nervous while speaking in class. Right after this topic

shift and Mike's initial suggestion, the conversation continues with more suggestions from Mike:

Excerpt 9:

```
52  S03:   I care about if I'm make a mistakes a lot.
53  Mike:  Well don't worry too much about that.
54  S03:   okay.
55  Mike:  I mean because basically when you're speaking in front of people,
56  S03:                                              [hmhm]
57  Mike:  your goal is to communicate some information. And as long as that
58         information is being communicated, even if you make some mistakes
59         along the way, that's okay because the goal is communicate. Always
60         think of the goal, you know. Don't think of being perfect because
61         nobody is perfect. Even native speakers who do it as a career still
62         make mistakes.
63  S03:   yeah
64  Mike:  Uh so don't worry about the mistakes so much. Focus on 'am I
65         communicating my ideas well?' And then next semester when you
66         take Oral Com 2, I'll actually talk about how to do this in the formal
67         speech, but I mean you can uh research this…
```

The sequence in Excerpt 9 displays how Mike uses five imperatives in lines 53, 59-61,

and 64-65 to produce suggestions about overcoming his concern about making mistakes. Mike

employs both affirmative and negative imperatives to suggest what to do and what not to do for

his student. While doing so, he uses the discourse marker *well*, intensifier *always*, and hesitation

marker *uh* in combination with the connector *so* to introduce his three suggestions in imperative

moods, and the other two are unmitigated. Meanwhile, his student responds to Mike's

suggestions with the agreement tokens of *okay* in line 54 and *yeah* in line 63.

To sum up, imperative form in instructor-initiated suggestions in all forms (e.g.

mitigated, unmitigated, the null subject or overt pronoun *you* to emphasize the addressee,

upgraded with an intensifier, etc.) are well-suited contributions to different instantiations of how

interlocutors achieve certain interactional goals in office hour interactions in this study. These

include, but not limited to, finding quick solutions to a student concern as in Mike's realizations as well as explaining step-by-step paths to follow (e.g. using MS word for APA citation), giving a short summary of what has been just mentioned to assure the student's understanding, and giving encouragement to the student with language-related problems. This is confirmed by the students' minimal responses to such suggestions in imperative mood, with their apparent agreements. As discussed before, imperatives are the most direct form in suggestions and other speech acts (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Martinez-Flor, 2005). Therefore, the use of imperatives as the second most frequent category of mood type in instructor-initiated suggestions combined with the students' agreements shows that directness is also an appropriate behavior or what is expected in office hour interactions between the international students and their Turkish EFL students.

Interrogatives

Question forms are considered indirect forms of suggestions in the relevant literature (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Locher, 2006; and Martinez-Flor, 2005), especially when compared to imperatives and declaratives. In that sense, there are mainly two categories of interrogatives in the office hour dataset in this study: *yes/no* questions and *wh-*questions. However, these questions are coded as suggestions only when their function is obviously one of suggestion, which is determined by the context of utterance.

Although interrogatives are indirect in nature, this does not yield a straightforward relationship with politeness. In other words, there must be a mitigating effect or linguistic modification in these questions in order to lessen the illocutionary force of suggestions. At this point, I refer to Blum Kulka et al.'s (1989) framework for interrogatives as a syntactic downgrader. Obviously, not all the suggestions in the form of interrogatives are downgraded but

only when "the interrogative is an option with a clear mitigating function" (Blum Kulka et al., 1989, p.281). That said, the following Table 9 presents the overall number of interrogatives functioning as suggestions only and syntactic downgraders with mitigation in these interrogative forms of suggestions.

Table 9

Number of Interrogatives as Suggestions and Syntactic Downgraders

	Mike		Maria		Amelia	
	N	Syntactic Downgrader	N	Syntactic Downgrader	N	Syntactic Downgrader
Yes/No Questions	14	2	9	0	42	5
Wh- Questions	16	3	6	4	48	5
Total	30	5	15	4	90	10

Looking at Table 9, it can be easily argued that interrogatives as syntactic downgraders are not frequent in instructor-initiated suggestions in the dataset of office hour interactions. Amelia uses interrogatives as syntactic downgraders more frequently (N=10) than Mike and Maria (N=5 and N=4 respectively). However, Maria typically employs the conventionalized way of suggesting in a question form by preferring *why don't you* (Koike, 1994; Martinez-Flor, 2005) three times out of four whereas Mike and Amelia have never used that strategy.

Excerpt 10 below takes place between Amelia and her student who wants to talk to her about Amelia's comments on her essay before she makes revisions. The student is a 20-year old female studying International Relations. She has been learning English for around 10 years. The sequence takes place towards the middle of office hour interaction, which means Amelia and her student have already reviewed the comments and mistakes in the essay, involving several

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instances of giving-receiving suggestions. Right before this excerpt, Amelia expresses that the main challenge is about coming up with reasons to support the thesis statement.

Excerpt 10:

```
114            (0.3)
115  Amelia:  So, "by the way some European countries are more advanced".
116            Which European countries? And in what they are advanced? Can
117            you find examples of u::h European countries that have
118  S09:                      [hmhm]
119  Amelia:  recycling programs? How is this helping their sustainability and
120            so on? So, what I mean by support is this, okay?
121  S09:     hmhm
```

This short sequence starts with a three-second interturn pause, and then Amelia initiates her turn by reading the student's supporting detail or claim in one of her body paragraphs in line 115. Following this, Amelia asks two questions in sequence to elicit more details about her student's claim before she suggests finding examples of European countries the student is referring to (*Can you find examples of u::h European countries that have recycling programs?* in lines 116, 117, and 119). Amelia continues to ask after producing an interrogative suggestion in the same turn to enable the student make a connection between her claim and examples to be found (*How is this helping their sustainability and so on?* in lines 119-120) The student's overlap in line 117 and turn in 121 confirms her agreement with Amelia's suggestion. The interrogative in this excerpt is considered a suggestion because it presents the act of finding a relevant example (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988).

As presented earlier, the use of interrogative suggestions by the instructors is less frequent than the more direct forms of instructor-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions. That is, the international instructors tend to be indirect less often in the act of giving suggestions. Moreover, the analysis of interrogative forms of instructor-initiated suggestions demonstrates

that even though this category is regarded indirect, the interrogative suggestions do not necessarily involve syntactic downgraders.

Student-initiated Suggestions

As presented in the previous section, the international instructors produce a great deal of suggestions in office hour interactions in this study. In contrast, student-initiated suggestions constitute a very small portion when compared to those of the instructors (5%). As defined in Chapter 2, while making suggestions as one type of directives, the speaker tries to get the hearer to do an action rather than commit himself/herself to do it (Searle, 1976). In other words, suggestions are given to the hearer because the speaker believes it is the hearer's benefit to do the suggested action. Not surprisingly, the great amount of suggestion realizations by the instructors complies with the goal of office hours because of the fact that it is mainly the student's concern or problem to be discussed or brought to the table during these dyadic interactions. Likewise, the Turkish EFL students in this study make suggestions only for their own benefit instead of the instructors' as their addressees in the office hour dataset of this study. Therefore, before presenting the excerpts of student-initiated suggestions, I prefer to term these suggestions *self-suggestory acts* because of their very nature that the student participants in this study employ these suggestions for their own concerns in office hour interactions.

The fundamental goal of office hour interactions in this study is to help the students with their academic problems, needs, and concerns. Therefore, the role of instructors and students during office hour interactions is defined by this main goal, and thus two parties establish their expectations accordingly. In that sense, it is quite likely that the students make suggestions for themselves or their own academic concerns in order to facilitate this problem-solving process. However, their contributions, more specifically how they make suggestions, and their

understanding of the institutional roles are situated in the social context. Keeping this in mind, I examined these *self-suggestory acts* in this section with regard to their linguistic realizations as well as how they contribute to the ongoing interaction between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study.

As stated previously, the Turkish EFL students in this study employ suggestions much less frequently when compared to their international instructors. Additionally, they utilize a relatively narrower range of syntactic choices in their suggestions. Table 10 presents these varieties with their numbers and Figure 3 displays the distribution of linguistic forms in these *self-suggestory acts*. However, it has to be emphasized that such *self-suggestory acts* cannot involve certain syntactic forms (e.g. imperatives) because the suggested act is for the benefit of the speaker. Thus, *self-suggestory acts* by the students include only some declarative forms and interrogatives.

Table 10

Number and Types of Student-initiated Suggestions

	Mike's Students	Maria's Students	Amelia's Students	Total
Performatives	0	0	1	1
Want/need statements	1	0	0	1
Modals and Semi-modals	8	3	29	40
Hints	2	2	0	4
Elliptical	1	3	6	10
Interrogatives	8	0	12	20
Total	20	8	48	76

Similar to instructor-initiated suggestions, the Turkish EFL students primarily rely on modals and interrogatives in their realizations. However, their interactional goal is usually different from their instructors in the sense that the students typically seek approval from their instructors while self-suggesting. Although they express their ideas and propose an action to take in their self-suggestions in some cases, they even expect permission in some cases by acknowledging the instructor as an authority who has the final word. In other cases, they might be seeking clarification or more elaboration on the requirements, expectations, etc. Therefore, these divergences in the use of the very same syntactic forms underscore the shades of relational work carried out by the Turkish EFL students in this study.
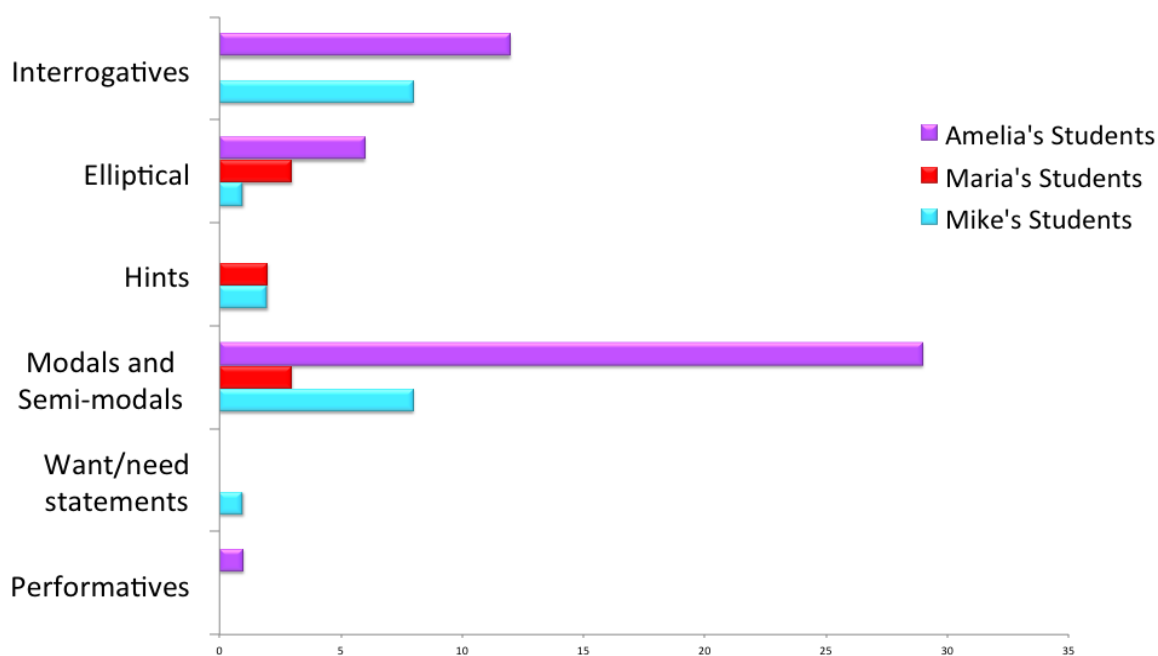
Figure 3. Distribution of linguistic forms in self-suggestory acts.

That said, I now turn to two typical examples for soliciting approval and even permission from the instructor. In these subsequent excerpts, the students utilize interrogatives, modals, and elliptical forms either independently or concurrently to voice their suggested actions and also get a clear-cut response to their concerns. The excerpts come from Amelia's and Mike's office hour

interactions with their students. In the first one, Amelia and her student are talking about how to make one of her body paragraphs more convincing, which takes place at an earlier stage of the office hour interaction in Excerpt 4. Prior to Excerpt 11 below, Amelia articulates the idea that it might be better to have more examples specifically from Turkey to compare with what she already has in her body paragraph, and indeed Amelia already names the example TEMA[15] from Turkey. Then, the following sequence takes place:

Excerpt 11:

```
154  S04:      If I find something from TEMA, but in Turkish?
155  Amelia:                              [okay no problem!] You translate
156            that part you know so most of it
157  S04:                              [okay,] may I also code it?  Is it still
158                                                     [yes yes
159  S04:       accounting?
160  Amelia:   you are. It's a] Turkish source. You're going to put Turkish in
161            but you're going to use in the text. Translate it you know. Most
162            probably you wouldn't quota it I guess u::h unless you find
163  S04:                                     [paraphrase?]
164  Amelia:   Paraphrase, yes. Paraphrase. Paraphrase, translate it. Paraphrase
165            let's say.
166  S04:       [okay]
167  Amelia:   but you
168  S04:      [Should] I also mention that it has been translated?
169  Amelia:   If it has been translated, then
170  S04:          [in, in the parenthesis?] No?
171  Amelia:   I'm not really sure. I have to look up what the APA says about
172            that. I'm not really sure.
```

The sequence in Excerpt 11 is triggered by the student's use of an interrogative form that involves a condition. By repeating Amelia's initial suggestion (*If I find something from TEMA*) in the conditional clause, the student attempts to ask if she can use a source in Turkish (*but in Turkish?*) with a rising intonation in the word *Turkish*. The student utilizes the same strategy throughout this excerpt by asking questions in elliptical form or with omissions (*paraphrase?* in

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[15] TEMA stands for The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion.

line 163; *in, in the parenthesis?* and *No?* in line 170). Similarly, by asking two more questions in lines 157 and 168 (*may I also code it?* and *Should I also mention that it has been translated?*), the student expects to receive either a positive or negative response to her concerns about using a Turkish source in her argumentative essay. Conforming to what the student tries to achieve by asking questions, Amelia provides quick answers each time (and incorporates repeated suggestions) to assure her student. This sequence is also marked with frequent overlaps (lines 155, 158, 163, 168, and 170) that either resulted in taking over the turn or an immediate response to what is being asked as well as backchannelling chiefly with the use of *okay* to show approval (line 155) and agreement or comprehension (lines 157 and 166).

Likewise, as presented in Table 10, the use of modals and interrogatives by the Turkish EFL students is apparent in Mike's office hours as well. Although the students utilize such strategies for the common purpose of seeking information, approval, or permission at certain situations while also suggesting an action, they may not be able to receive as straightforward information as in Excerpt 11 from the instructor. In other words, despite the high number of instructor-initiated suggestions, the instructor might prefer not to disclose every detail about an assignment or task depending on their goals or expectations. To illustrate such cases, three such self-suggestory acts are examined in the following excerpt. Mike's student came to talk to him about the difference of assigned tasks for two sections of oral communication course offered by Mike. The student's main concern is that his section is assigned a short story to present but his friends in the other section of the course are not. Therefore, the office hour interaction is framed by the student's questioning of this situation. Mike responds by giving a detailed account of why he has changed his mind about the task but could not tell them. After that segment of the office hour interaction, they start to talk about the details of what kind of a story could be presented.

However, Mike expresses his unwillingness to provide much detail about the activity because his

goal is not to allow them to be too prepared but to have some spontaneous talk or discussion on

their stories. However, the student does not give up and inquires about more specific details for

the activity.

Excerpt 12:

103   S03:   I mean for example **can I tell (0.2) Allan Poe stories (0.2) like**
104   (0.2)
105   Mike: Yeah, yeah! Now, something like that. That will be too long to tell
106   in detail. Uh summarize it. Yeah, yeah don't read it. I want you to
107   S03:   **[Can I read or]**   **[or just]**
108   Mike: tell the story.
109   S03:   **tell the story, okay?**
110   Mike: Yeah
111   S03:   Thank you.
112   Mike: So if you wanna summarize or tell a short version of a Edger Allan
113   Poe story, that would be fine.
114   S03:   **Can we use a::h some (0.3) imagine things or (0.2) pictures?**
115   Mike: Uh (0.3) for this, no, because it's not really a presentation or
116   S03:   [just talk]
117   Mike: Yeah, just I want you to get up and tell a story, or be able to tell a
118   story, but without props, or visuals, or anything else.
118   STD: yeah, it's simple. Okay, thank you.

    Again, the sequence in Excerpt 12 is framed by the student's questions, and this gives

direction to what Mike has to say about telling a story as well. Put differently, the student

skillfully uses questions to get the type of information he wants. First of all, all three questions

by the student bring up a new idea with regard to the story-telling activity in class (*tell Allan Poe*

stories, read or just tell the story, and use a::h some (0.3) imagine things or (0.2) pictures in

lines 103, 107, 109, and 114). Yet, the student does not only come up with these ideas but also

uses the interrogative forms to get approval or disapproval of what he plans to do in class as well

as clarification on the presentation. In line 103, the student introduces his question by using the

discourse marker *I mean,* and the transition word *for example* to add on to his previous

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information-seeking efforts. Formulating his questions in lines 103 and 107 using *Can I…?,* the student wants to make sure if he complies with what Mike, his instructor, expects. To the first interrogative, Mike responds with a repeated *yeah* indicating the idea of telling Allan Poe stories is acceptable but he tends to circumvent specific information (*Now, something like that* in line 105), conforming to what he has already stated prior to this excerpt about not giving a lot of details about the activity. Although he reminds his students of summarizing with his preceding justification (*That will be too long to tell in detail. Uh summarize it* in lines 105-106), he repeats the same idea in the student's interrogative (*Yeah, yeah don't read it* in line 106; *I want you to tell the story* in lines 106-107; *Yeah, just I want you to get up and tell a story, or be able to tell a story* in lines 116-117). What is also interesting in the student's last interrogative self-suggestory act *Can we use a::h some (0.3) imagine things or (0.2) pictures?* in line 114 is that he switches from *I* to *we*. Locher (2004) notes that the use of pronouns *he, they*, or *we* other than *I* displays the attempts to voice disagreements since this strategy is used "to either shift or spread responsibility" in her dataset. In this sequence, however, I argue that the student acknowledges a shared responsibility by including other members of the very same community, and they are his classmates in the context of this study.

Modification of Suggestions

Similar to the various linguistic realizations of suggestions in the dataset, both the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students also utilize certain strategies to modify their suggestions. As Holmes (1984) puts it, modifying the illocutionary force of a speech act is bidirectional in the sense that it involves mitigation (attenuation) and boosting. Whereas mitigation refers to softening or reducing "the unwelcome effect" of a speech act, boosting works the other way and is used to increase the force or strength of a speech act (Fraser, 1980,

p.343). Therefore, such strategies are important components of linguistic politeness, and ways to understand what is appropriate/accepted or not in certain context.

As well as being manifested in several different ways, these two strategies also have various functions in ongoing interaction. The instances of mitigation, for example, might function as hesitation or reluctance for the asserted proposition of a speech act while boosting might be utilized to emphasize the degree of the speaker's commitment to the proposed social act. They both contribute to the relational work that speakers engage in by increasing either solidarity or social distance depending on the type or effect of the speech act (Caffi, 1999; Fraser, 1980; Holmes, 1984). Thus, in order to understand the role of strategies for modifying the force of a speech act, it should be noted that the use of these two strategies and how they are linguistically manifested depends on many factors.

One such factor, as stated above, is the type of illocutionary act. Earlier, I argued that the speech act of suggesting is hearer-oriented and thus potentially face-threatening specifically on the side of the speaker even though the hearer is asked to do something for her/his own benefit. Therefore, as long as the interlocutors are not intimates or unless they have a close relationship, it is quite likely to soften or mitigate the force of suggestions (Koike, 1994). Likewise, mitigation might come into play as well when the hearer wants to reject or does not agree with the suggested action. Yet, as I noted previously again, the speech act of suggesting is not as impositive as other directives, such as requests or orders. However, viewing politeness through relational work in this study, I would argue that the choice of either downtoning or boosting suggestions depends on mainly the shared knowledge or understanding of roles, goals, and expectations by the instructors and students in office hour interactions as well as topics or concerns at hand, and urgency or importance of what is being suggested. Accordingly, how these

either mitigated or boosted suggestions are responded to, either by the Turkish EFL students or their international instructors in this study, reveals what is appropriate or accepted, or "politic" behavior, in these office hour interactions. Thus, in what follows, I examined how mitigation and boosting, the two facets of modifying suggestions, are utilized in the office hour dataset by focusing on the most frequent linguistic choices.

Hedging in Suggestions

In order to examine mitigation in suggestions in office hour interactions, it is necessary to understand hedges and how they contribute to the ongoing interaction between the Turkish EFL learners and their international instructor. Hedges are lexical or phrasal devices that are used to downtone or soften the illocutionary force of a speech act (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Fraser, 1980; Holmes, 1984, 1990). Some of these devices are *kind of, sort of, maybe, a little bit, possibly*, etc. The mitigation effect by using hedges in English can be accomplished with several different linguistic forms as well as prosody, as presented by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Additionally, Holmes (1990) explains that certain "pragmatic particles usually regarded as hedges" can also be used as boosters to stress or emphasize the force of certain utterances (p.185). Some of them include *just, you know, I think, very, quite, well,* etc. Therefore, it is important to closely examine specific utterances within the context to be able to decide if such particles function as a hedge or booster (Holmes, 1985; Locher, 2004). I examined the dataset in order to find out how hedges are used for mitigating purposes in each individual utterance that involves a suggestion. To do so, I utilized the lists or examples in several similar studies (e.g. Holmes, 1984; 1990; Lakoff, 1972; Locher, 2004). The following table presents the overview of hedges for mitigation in all instructor-initiated suggestions and student-initiated suggestions, or self-suggestory acts.

As Table 11 presents, both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study employed varieties of hedges to attenuate or mitigate their suggestions. Notably, they utilized such lexical and phrasal devices mainly to display hesitation, express uncertainty, and soften the force of their suggestions. Both instructor-initiated suggestions and self-suggestory acts by the students involved all three functions through hedges. However, the students resorted to more hesitation and uncertainty when compared to instructors as might be expected due to differences in both status and expectations. Additionally, both parties tended to use several hedges in combination. In the following excerpts, I examine how the interplay of these hedges is evident in suggestion-response episodes in the dataset.

In Excerpt 13, Maria and her student from the Faculty of Engineering talk about the possibility of a specific class where the students can learn certain terminology in English so that he can better understand the area-specific content. The office hour interaction is initiated by the student's willingness to talk about his previous language learning experiences during the English language preparation program of the university. He explains that although they learn basic communication skills, they still cannot follow departmental courses easily due to the content-based vocabulary in English. The episode involves both instructor-initiated suggestions and the students' self-suggestory acts.

Excerpt 13:

```
68   Maria:   yeah what's your idea?
69   S10:     a:h maybe a:h (0.3) there is some class just about that. (0.2)
70            Maybe
71   Maria:   So for each department, we should have a specific class
72            teaching the technical jargon that they're using?
73   S10:     Yes maybe yeah.(0.2) We have five class in one day. Maybe one
74            class just one class about that.
75   Maria:   Okay.
76   S10:     because a:h when we start the undergraduate program, we really
77            start the words.
```

78	Maria:	hmm
79	S10:	We don't understand the (0.2) <u>class</u>.
80	Maria:	hmm. (0.2) So, what do you want me to do about it?
81	S10:	**maybe, (0.2) maybe we can do something {course name}**
82		**because it's the, starts from the (0.2)**
83	Maria:	the first semester or the beginning?
84	S10:	**first semester.**

The sequence starts with Maria's question to elicit the student's idea for a possible solution to his stated problem of not being able to understand the content of area-specific undergraduate courses. Her question is responded to by the student's suggestion of offering a class for that purpose with repeated use of hesitation marker *ahh* as well as uncertainty (*maybe* and *some*) in lines 69 and 70. The student also uses two short pauses while wording his suggestion. Maria then rephrases her student's idea in a much more specific way (*a specific class teaching the technical jargon* in lines 71 and 72) with a rising intonation in the final word *using* to confirm what she is suggesting. After agreeing with Maria, the student repeats his suggestion with a similar uncertain attitude by using *maybe in* line 73. Upon Maria's confirmation in the next turn, the student then continues to give reasons to ground his suggestion. In line 80, Maria knowing that this is out of her control but willing to hear more from her student asks again what he expects her to do about this stated problem. With the similar uncertain and doubtful tone (*maybe,* short pauses, *something*, in lines 81 and 82), the student asks to do something about his concern in one of the existing language-based classes. Although he tries to provide a reason again, his utterance remains incomplete until Maria asks if he wants to start such a class first semester or the second semester.

In office hour interactions in this study, both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students used hedges to signal hesitation and/or uncertainty in many cases. As stated earlier, almost every self-suggestory act by the students involved such hedges perhaps indicating

Table 11

Overview of Hedges for Mitigation in Suggestions

Hedges	Mike N	Maria N	Amelia N	Students N	Total N	%
*uh/uhm**	23	6	32	37	98	21
just	25	12	27	8	72	16
some / somebody / something / thing	10	4	19	12	45	10
I mean	15	1	22	3	41	9
you know	17	5	10	2	34	7
little / a little bit / a bit	14	3	12	0	29	6
sort of / kind of / kinda / type of	17	3	6	2	28	6
maybe	5	6	5	11	27	6
let's	5	0	13	0	18	4
or	5	1	5	4	15	3
stuff	2	0	9	1	12	3
I don't know	2	3	4	0	9	2
possibly/probably	5	0	2	2	9	2
for example / by the way	0	3	1	3	7	2
well	3	2	0	0	5	1
whatever	0	0	3	0	3	1
more or less / less	0	2	0	0	2	0
simply	0	2	0	0	2	0
so on / so forth	0	0	2	0	2	0
Total	148	53	172	85	458	100

*the vocalization of uh/uhm by the Turkish EFL students in this study was usually different most of the time (e.g. prolonged *ah*)

their uncertainty about whether or not their propositions are acceptable. Some instructor-initiated suggestions also exhibited hesitation and/or uncertainty typically either when they did not have a straightforward opinion or idea on a matter, or when addressing something that is not part of their role, or when they reserved their personal opinion. We see this as Maria elicits from the student and paraphrases what he tries to come up with in Excerpt 13.

Hedges also fulfilled the function of softening the force of suggestions in office hour interactions. This was predominantly the case in instructor-initiated suggestions. Turning to Excerpt 14 now, I examine how Mike uses hedges to alleviate his student's concern about giving an oral presentation in front of the classmates. Although she has already given her presentation, she expresses the fact that she is shy while speaking in English although that is not the case in Turkish. Similar to a few other first-semester students, she explains that she feels quite nervous during oral presentations. Mike's suggestions that involve hedges to reassure the student are in bold below.

Excerpt 14:

117	Mike:	U:h and when I get nervous, I do the same thing. I actually get
118		nervous. I've been teaching almost twenty years and I still get
119		nervous sometimes.
120	S11:	right
121	Mike:	So, it's <u>normal</u>.
122	S11:	< @ >
123	Mike:	what you what you learn to do is to be used to it and you'll get
124		over it quickly. But again (0.2) uh the more you speak the easier
125		it'll be, **and so even though you're little bit nervous, and little**
126		**bit shy, try to force yourself to. You know you don't have to do**
127		**it all at once** and you don't have to talk for thirty minutes but in
128		class for discussing something, like next week we will be doing uh
129		a kind of a uh group discussion type activity. **Just kinda throw**
130		**yourself out, say one little thing.**
131	S11:	< @ >
132	Mike:	**and the next time say one little bit more**, and before you know,

133	S11:	[I hope so]
134	Mike:	you'll be in there, you'll you'll forget about nervousness because
135		you've done it and **you'll just get more comfortable. It's just,**
136		**it's kind of an experience thing.**
137	S11:	I'll try it < @ >

In Excerpt 14, Mike initiates the sequence with his empathetic effort revealing that the student is not the only one to get nervous, and then he explicitly utters that it is natural to get nervous with an additional stress on the word *normal* (lines 117-119, and 121). All his initial work to reassure his student is taken positively by the student (*right* in line 120, and a soft laughter in line 122). Then, Mike in his next turn keeps the floor for a while by listing several ways for dealing with nervousness. While doing so, he uses several hedges (*little bit nervous*, and *little bit shy* in lines 125 and 126) and seeks agreement with his stance (*you know* in line 126). Continuing in this supportive role, Mike again softens his suggestions in the form of imperative with a combo of *just kinda* (line 129), and *one little thing* (line 130). The student responds with soft laughter as she did before. In line 132, Mike repeats his previous suggestion in the same manner, which overlaps with his student's wishful agreement (*I hope so* in line 133). In the remaining turn, Mike utilizes more hedges, such as *just* and *kind of* to make things seem easier (*you'll just get more comfortable,* and *It's just, it's kind of an experience thing* in lines 135 and 136). This entire linguistic endeavor by Mike through the use of hedges in his suggestions is then welcomed by a promise (*I'll try it* in line 137) and complementary soft laughter by the student.

Boosting in Suggestions

As presented earlier, boosting is one of the two facets of modifying the force of suggestions in office hour dataset in this study. Put differently, modification is not unidirectional, and this type of modification can also contribute to relational work between the foreign

instructors and their Turkish EFL students in certain cases. This strategy was evident almost only in instructor initiated-suggestions and not as frequent as mitigation. Yet, the foreign instructors do, on occasion, use such lexical and phrasal resources to upgrade their suggestions. Below, Table 12 presents the overview of boosters in suggestions.

In the following two excerpts, I present the two of the most frequent boosters *just* (22%) and intensifier *very* (11%), and I illustrate how they strengthen the proposition of instructor-initiated suggestions. The following sequence in Excerpt 15 occurs in an office hour between Amelia and one of her students. In this specific segment of the office hour interaction, they check if one of the main sources in the student's essay is listed correctly in the reference list or not.

Excerpt 15:

```
330   Amelia:   The author here should be Andrew Leonard. Umm so, she should
331                show up as the reference when you quota her or you know, or
332                when you paraphrase her. So this, I would just check once again
333   S06:               [ uh ]
334   Amelia:   the details of this source.
335   S06:               [ I ]   [ I ]     [yeah] I just used the Microsoft reference thing.
336   Amelia:   I know. Reference thing, I know. But I mean I wonder if there is
337                some way to change that. Okay, let's just check this source.
338   S06:                                             [so]                 [I can]
339                I can write that the producer is Leonard?
340   Amelia:   but I don't know if that's true though. We have to check that.
341                Can you check the source (0.2) to just make sure that the
342                producer is her?
```

In the excerpt above, Amelia wants to make sure if her student has an accurate entry for one of the authors in her reference list. She indicates the MS Word tool for that purpose; *she should show up as the reference when you quota her, or you know, or when you paraphrase her*. Following her assumption, Amelia makes a suggestion and refers back to her previous statement with a stress on *So this*. She then suggests checking the details of the source by enhancing her suggestion with an increased pitch on *just check*, and emphasizes that the action of checking

needs to be repeated (*once again* in line 332). The use of conditional *I would* is also notable in Amelia's suggestion as well since the shift from a *you* perspective to a speaker-oriented one is not very common in instructor-initiated suggestions. By utilizing a hypothetical situation that she would do so if she were him, Amelia conveys her suggestion by indicating with this first person pronoun use. Meanwhile, the overlaps in line 335 signal the student's urge to express himself but he cannot do so until Amelia finishes her utterance. The student then shows agreement with his instructor's suggestion (*yeah* in line 335), and expresses that he used only MS Word reference tool. This is clearly confirmed by Amelia's repetition in line 336, but she still seeks an alternative to change the entry, and repeats her suggestion with a similar emphasizing tone (*Okay, let's just check this source* in line 337) with an increased stress on *just*. Therefore, the use of *just* again functions as a booster for the illocutionary force of her suggestions, and *this* points out the specific source they are talking about. This time, she frames the suggestion (inclusive *we*) implied by *let's* adding a mitigating effect. The sequence then goes on with a self-suggestory act of the student who seeks confirmation at the same time (*I can write that the producer is Leonard?* in line 339) and Amelia's two additional suggestions with exactly the same propositional content as her earlier suggestions (*We have to check that. Can you check the source (0.2) to just make sure that the producer is her?* in lines 340 and 341).

Turning to the next lexical item as a booster in another instructor-initiated suggestion, I examine the use of intensifier *very* in Excerpt 16. The sequence again takes place in Amelia's office hour, and she and her student are talking about how to enter a reference correctly using MS Word reference tool. The student has several problems with entering the references using MS Word tool and he has already lost several points because of such issues. Thus, the office

Table 12

Overview of Boosters in Suggestions

Boosters	Mike N	Maria N	Amelia N	Students N	Total N	%
just	13	2	18	4	37	22
I think	3	3	4	6	16	10
very	10	0	8	0	18	11
really	6	1	7	0	14	8
actually	6	0	4	0	10	6
a lot / more / (that/too) much	4	0	4	0	8	5
only	1	0	5	0	6	4
definitely	1	2	3	0	6	4
please	0	3	4	0	7	4
always	3	2		0	5	3
as I said / as you can see	0	5	0	0	5	3
so/too adj./adv.	2	0	1	0	3	2
for now / right now	2	0	2	0	4	2
still	1	1	2	0	4	2
as much .. as	1	0	3	0	4	2
directly	0	0	2	0	2	1
exactly	1	0	1	0	2	1
once again / again	0	1	1	0	2	1
completely	0	0	2	0	2	1
of course	0	0	1	0	1	1
never	0	0	1	0	1	1
I'm sure	0	0	1	0	1	1
primarily	1	0	1	0	2	1
quite	1	0	0	1	2	1
even	1	1	0	0	2	1
specifically	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	58	21	75	11	165	100

hour initially starts with the student's inquiry about that aspect of his paper. Prior to the

following sequence, Amelia provides examples to respond to her student's concern that has made

him come to this office hour session.

Excerpt 16:

```
63    Amelia:  So, this tells me that you're either not using this function at all, or
64             you're not using it correctly. **So, you, it's very very easy to correct**
65             **it** and why to lose points over something like this?
66  S12:                                    [yeah]
67  Amelia:   but I mean I have to (0.1) take some points off.
68  S12:                          [yeah, I understand yes]
69  Amelia:   yeah?
70  S12:      hmhm
```

In this short excerpt above, Amelia starts with a diagnosis of her student's paper,

specifically related to the references, since the student has come to find out about that. Then, she

makes an encouraging suggestion by emphasizing the ease of correcting his mistake. Amelia

utilizes an extraposed *to* as her syntactic choice and doubles the intensifier *very* before the

adjective *easy* in her utterance (line 64). Although this repeated intensifier allows her to make the

suggested act less difficult, it conveys Amelia's certainty and desire to persuade her student to

correct his mistake. Such an intention is immediately followed by a rhetorical question by her to

point out that it should not be a reason to lose points. The student's acknowledgement *yeah*

overlaps in line 66. Amelia continues, explaining that she is obliged to cut off some points. The

student again immediately agrees with her expression of responsibility as the course instructor,

and signals his understanding clearly (*yeah, I understand yes* in line 68). Amelia then want to

make sure by using the agreement token *yeah* as a confirmation question, and receives her

student assent once more.

Repetitions in Suggestion-Response Episodes

Repetitions of lexical items and utterances are important in discourse because they enable speakers to achieve several communicative and interactional goals in meaning-making process in discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hymes, 1981; Schiffrin, 1982). More recently, Tannen (2007) highlights the role of repetitions in conversation by defining it as a strategy for "the establishment of coherence and interpersonal involvement" in discourse (p.58). In her work *Talking Voices*, she presents the four broader categories of functions for the use of repetitions in interpersonal communication:

1. Production: The use of repetitions facilitates fluency and automaticity in speech. By repeating a certain pattern in an utterance, speakers can expend less effort and energy, and only add new information.

2. Comprehension: This function is actually the reflection of production. By using repetitions, speakers provide less density and less new information in discourse. In other words, it becomes easier to process message for listeners.

3. Connections: Repetitions also link ideas and promote cohesiveness in discourse.

4. Interaction: By using repetitions, speakers achieve several interactional goals, such as taking and maintaining the floor, displaying listenership, stalling, expanding, and/or showing appreciation of what is said, etc. (Tannen, 2007).

Repetitions can be produced in several levels, such as repetition of a phoneme, morpheme, phrase, utterance or idea. However, one broad classification that facilitates identification of this strategy includes self- repetitions and allo-repetitions, and these two types of repetitions contribute to the ongoing interaction at many levels (Tannen, 2007). The use of repetitions by the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study is abundant in

suggestions-response episodes of office hour discourse. In fact, several instances of repetitions are evident in most of the office hour interactions in the dataset (34 out of 38). Indeed, it is possible to see several instantiations of repetitions in almost all excerpts that have been provided in previous sections. As stated above, repetitions of different forms and degree of variations occurred not only in the suggestions themselves but also in their surrounding context. Thus, I examined the various functions of repetitions for both self-repetitions and allo-repetitions below. In what follows, I focus on this feature or strategy and its varying functions in the dataset. Only the repeated parts or patterns are in bold in the given excerpts of suggestion-response episodes.

Self-repetitions

Both parties in office hour interactions utilize self-repetitions for various purposes. The forms of self-repetitions also differ with regard to the specific pattern repeated. In some cases, it is a word, or phrase; and in others, the repetition is a certain syntactic choice in a suggestion with some new propositional content added. Ideas are repeated mainly in three ways: exactly in the same verbatim way, with some variation, and in a paraphrased way. Such self-repetitions enable the speaker to achieve several communicative functions, such as emphasizing meaning, keeping the floor, and ratifying agreement. Thus, these repetitions are all important component of office hour interactions to gain insights into how the instructors and students jointly construct meaning in their interactions with an emphasis on suggestions.

In Excerpt 17 below, Amelia exemplifies just one of many cases where she uses self-repetitions while making suggestions to her students. Prior to the excerpt, she and her student talked about the organizational issues within a paragraph in his essay. Although the student claims that the paragraph is about personal finance, Amelia does not think so.

Excerpt 17:

120   Amelia: N::o! I don't see any mention of money or finance.
121   (0.3)
122   Amelia: So **you need to find a way to connect it.**
123   S13:   **Okay**.
124   Amelia: Right?
125   S13:   **Okay**.
126   Amelia: Either in your own explanation or contextualization of this
127   paraphrase. **You need to find a way** how **to connect** this text
128   from an outside source to your subject.

    In line 120, Amelia initially expresses her disagreement with a prolonged *no* and then a

statement of fact that she does not see anything about money or finance. This turn is followed by

a three-second pause, and Amelia takes the turn again to make a suggestion for the problem that

she has already stated (*so you need to find a way to connect it* in line 122). Although the student

accepts it with the agreement token *okay* in line 123, Amelia wants to confirm his agreement

again in line 124. As the suggestion-giver, Amelia ascertains the student's agreement and

alignment to her suggestion (*right?* in line 124), which elicits a self-repetition performed by the

student to orient herself what she has been suggested by her instructor. This solicited student

self-repetition to show agreement or alignment complies with Amelia's expert or higher status

role in office hour interactions. After a second time of being agreed, Amelia responds with more

suggestions in lines 126-128. She first initiates her turn by using elliptical forms and giving two

options. Then, she makes another suggestion that is actually a self-repetition. The repetition of

you need to find a way and *to connect* despite a slight variation in-between allows her to keep the

same illocutionary force as well as obviously emphasize the propositional content in her

suggestion. It is quite likely that she can also smoothly maintain her turn by saving the fluency,

and meanwhile arranging what to say next in her utterance. Additionally, Amelia's self-repetition

in line 127 can notably be an instance of what Tannen (2007) calls "expanding" (p.73). By

adding new information to her utterance, Amelia elaborates on her suggestion (*this text from an outside source to your subject* in lines 127 and 128).

As seen in previous example, both the instructors and the students in this study often repeat agreement tokens, such as *yeah*, *yes*, *okay*, *right*, (or disagreement token *no* on a few occasions). One such self-repetition by Maria's student is presented in the following short excerpt:

Excerpt 18:

142   Maria: For example, in the reading texts, **find the words that really**
143   **improve your English as well. Plus, remember that talking with**
144   **friends is not the same as academic English.**
145   S14:   **Yes yes**. Of course! **I know I know.**

In this very short excerpt above, Maria first makes a very specific suggestion with regard to vocabulary in the reading texts and introduces it with *for example* in line 142. Both the use of *for example* to introduce her suggestion and *as well* at the end signals that she adds more onto what they have already talked about studying or improving English. Then, Maria makes her second suggestion that sounds more like a reminder of the idea that everyday English is different from academic English implying that the student has to work (*Plus, remember that talking with friends is not the same as academic English* in lines 143 and 144). The student then takes the turn and responds to Maria's suggestions with two instances of self-repetition in line 145. The repetitions of the lexical item *yes* and phrase *I know* are two forms of multiple sayings performed in a single intonation contour (Stivers, 2004), and displays ratified agreement and confirmation of what Maria has just said by the student.

The analysis of self-repetitions by the instructors and students in office hour interactions demonstrate that each party might use the same strategy for different purposes. The variance in

their communicative and interactional goals in the use of self-repetitions closely relates their social status in these interactions. While the instructors can use repetitions to solicit agreement or alignment from their students as well as emphasize the force of their suggestions, the students usually self-repeat to show agreement or alignment with their instructors.

Allo-repetitions

By definition, allo-repetitions are the situations where one speaker repeats what the other speaker has said, either simultaneously or not. When compared to self-repetitions in the dataset, allo-repetitions by the participants in this study are more frequent than self-repetitions. Not surprisingly, they too serve many functions in the office hour discourse. However, whereas self-repetitions are used mostly by the instructors, allo-repetitions are more common with the students in this study.

In Excerpt 19, one student in Mike's office hour session uses allo-repetition by "echoing" her instructor's utterance (Tannen, 2007, p.68). The sequence takes place towards the end of the office hour where the main topics are in-class oral presentations and speaking anxiety. The student comes to Mike's office to ask questions about her previous in-class presentation and to recieve some feedback so that she can prepare for the next one. Just before the following sequence, Mike shares his opinions about Turkish language classrooms since he has had the opportunity to visit and observe several primary and secondary schools in Turkey. He mentions what he perceives as a lack of motivation or unwillingness to talk in the class, which is almost the only opportunity for them in an EFL context.

Excerpt 19:

```
205  Mike:   and so when you get into a class like this, I just want you to talk
206          without me telling you what to say. It was like 'what do I say? I
207  S15:                [ < @ >  and we don't]
208  Mike:   don't know what to say' uh 'fine, thank you!'
```

209	S15:	< @@@ >	it's true
210	Mike:	< @ >	
211	S15:	it's true.	
212	Mike:	and so it'll just, **it takes getting used to**.	
213	S15:	yes, I think **we can get used to it**.	
214:	Mike:	So, I'm not, I'm not worried about you all.	

Mike's voluntary act to share his experiences and observations with Turkish students leads him to finally come up with his suggestion in the form of a *want* statement, which also initiates the sequence in Excerpt 19. By looking at his generalizations or overall observations in the preceding turns, it is highly likely that the pronoun *you* in his suggestion is plural. Thus, considering all his students in general, he suggests they produce talk without any direction. Mike then gives some examples from his own students in the form of direct speech with an imitative tone of voice in lines 206 and 208. This also creates an entertaining atmosphere accompanied with laughter by both parties and the student's repeated confirmations (*it's true* in lines 209 and 211). After that, Mike points out that it is about becoming familiar with talking in English by saying *it takes getting used to* in line 212. His utterance is then repeated by the student with a reformulation in the next turn showing her agreement with Mike. This allo-repetition by the student also displays how Mike's student orients herself to him by echoing Mike's utterance.

Another instance of student allo-repetition comes from one of Maria's office hour interactions. The student comes to her office hour to examine her exam paper and also find out the areas that caused her to lose points. In the following excerpt, participants discuss the academic writing task on the exam.

Excerpt 20:

62	Maria:	You're using a lot of **repetitions.**
63	S16:	**repetitions**
64	Maria:	Yes. Have a look.
65	(0.5)	
66	Maria:	Umm, what was it? Ummm

67 S16:   What is wrong with that?
68 (0.4)
69 Maria: As every other aspect, you didn't need that.
70 S16:   I thought it was so cool entrance.
71 Maria: < @@ > yes, what about this? Right at the beginning of the
72   paragraph.
73 S16:   or, so what what should I write instead of that?
74 Maria: **people's lives**
75 S16:   **people's lives**
76 Maria: it is about to be very formal and impersonal. Right now, this is the
77   stage that you're learning. **Try to stick with conventions, okay?**
78   **Try to make it formal**.

The student's allo-repetitions occur in lines 63 and 75 in the sequence above. In the first

instance, Maria states one of the problems in her student's paper in her utterance *You're using a*

lot of repetitions in line 62. Her explicitness or straightforward tone while pointing out the

student's mistakes is noteworthy because giving account of such issues is valued a lot by the

students. In other words, the instructors are expected to be able to explain clearly why the student

received a certain grade in an assignment or exam. By repeating the content word *repetitions* at

the end of Maria's utterance, the student both continues her comprehension and displays her

acceptance of the stated problem. Such an allo-repetition by the student is again considered

acknowledgement of Maria's utterance because it is performed in a single intonation contour that

comes to a final intonation allowing the student to complete her turn (Stiver, 2004). In other

words, the student's allo-repetition aligns with Maria's utterance in terms of intonation as well.

Looking at the second instance of student allo-repetitions in this sequence, the same argument

can be articulated with regard to how it functions. In line 73, the student inquires into the

possibility of an accurate use in her turn (*so what what should I write?*). Without losing time,

Maria provides her answer for the correct expression or usage *people's lives* in the next turn. The

verbatim repetition by her student appears in line 75, which is then followed by Maria's two

sequential suggestions. In this sequence, allo-repetitions by the student show that the students repeat their instructors' utterances to show comprehension as well as agreement or alignment as they do in self-repetitions as well.

Allo-repetitions by the students play an important role in giving/receiving suggestions in office hour interactions because the Turkish ELF students' showing alignment to their international instructors contributes to the co-construction of a smooth suggestion-response episode. In other words, orienting themselves to their instructors' utterances and specifically suggestions, the students embrace the role of being told what to do and acknowledge the instructors' expert role in office hour interactions.

The international instructors also utilize such allo-repetitions in office hour interactions in this study. In the following excerpt between Mike and his student, I examine how Mike uses this involvement strategy to assure his own understanding of what the student has just said. The sequence takes place at the beginning of the office hour session right after greeting each other and Mike's signaling that he is ready to help. The student then elaborates on his concern that relates to choosing a topic for his argumentative essay.

Excerpt 21:

```
11   S08:   you know I choose the new world order.
12   Mike:  right right.
13   S08:   and there is a little, actually there is a huge topic called, huge thing
14          called illuminati. And new world order and illuminati, they are
15          parallel so
16   Mike:             okay, say it again
17   S08:   new world order
18   Mike:  new world order, yeah.
19   S08:   and the illuminati
20   Mike:  illuminati
21   S08:   yeah which is similar with them. So I'm doing both of them.
22   Mike:  okay
23   S08:   in the one
24   Mike:            (0)okay keep in mind the old one, big project, is
```

| 25 | **argumentative essay. So you need to narrow down your topic to** |
| 26 | **something than can be argued.** |

Mike's two allo-repetitions appear in lines 18 and 20. Prior to these repetitions, his student initiates the sequence by reminding Mike about his topic (*you know I choose the new world order* in line 11). Mike immediately shows his acknowledgement, which is actually another example of a self-repetition that is presented in the previous section (*right right* in line 12). The student then starts to give details of his topic by also introducing another relevant topic in lines 13-14. However, Mike does not hesitate to interrupt him to make his student repeat what he has just said. Complying with Mike's request, the student then repeats the two related topics he is talking about one by one in different turns (*new world order* in line 17 and *illuminati* in line 19). Meanwhile, after each of these turns, Mike uses allo-repetitions in lines 18 and 20. Similar to the use of allo-repetitions by Maria's student in the previous excerpt, Mike demonstrates his comprehension of what the student has said (i.e. *new world order* and *illuminati*). Notably, it is crucial for Mike to understand what the student's preferred topic for his argumentative essay is so that he can help him with his concern. However, such a comprehension check through allo-repetitions on the part of Mike also enables him to interfere with his student's direction about topic choice. That is, Mike also uses this strategy for "buying time" to help his student to narrow down the topic. In line 24, Mike thus takes the floor immediately through latching without any resistance from the student. He then keeps the floor for a while to suggest being aware of the type of the task (*keep in mind the old one, big project, is argumentative essay*) and thus narrowing down his topic (*So you need to narrow down your topic to something than can be argued*). Different from allo-repetitions by the students, the instructors do not necessarily use this strategy to show alignment or agreement but instead to frame their upcoming suggestions in office hour interactions.

Summary

In this section, the essential focus was given to the suggestion-response episodes where both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students employed varieties of linguistic forms. Three main categories of imperatives, declaratives, and interrogatives were the broader classification of both instructor-initiated and student-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions. Among several subcategories of declaratives, the use of modals and semi-modals appeared to play an important role both in instructor-initiated and student-initiated suggestions by allowing them to give suggestions for different purposes and modify the illocutionary force of these suggestions according to their purposes and the surrounding context. The Turkish EFL students in this study also contributed to suggestion-response episodes with their self-suggestory acts, through which they made suggestions for their own concerns or problems at hand in the office hour interactions. Different from the international instructors' suggestions, they usually sought confirmation or permission by often using interrogatives in their suggestions. Moreover, I examined the modifications including both hedging and boosting in both instructor-initiated and these self-suggestory acts in suggestion-response episodes to show how two types of modification are employed in suggestions. Even though both parties used various modifications in their suggestions, hedging to mitigate the force of suggestions was more frequent than boosting specifically in student-initiated suggestions. Finally, several forms of repetitions by both parties appeared to take place office hour interactions and play a key role allowing the instructors and students to accomplish divergent communicative and interactional purposes specifically in co-construction of the suggestion-response episodes.

I also provided several excerpts from the dataset to exemplify all the abovementioned aspects of suggestion-response episodes. By taking the analysis of the speech act of suggestions

to discourse level, I examined how they were initiated and responded to by both parties in the ongoing interaction. This also allowed me to display how linguistic choices of the participants functioned in suggestion-response episodes with regard to their institutional roles as the instructor and student in office hour interactions.

CHAPTER SIX: SUCCESSFUL AND PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS

In this section, the third and final research question in this study is addressed: What are the successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions between Turkish EFL learners and their international instructors? What functions may relate to their success and problems? In order to answer this research question, I examined all the phases or segments of office hour interactions moving beyond the suggestion-response episodes and traced instantiations of various forms of relational work between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study. Therefore, it would be meaningful at this point to repeat what relational work signifies according to Locher and Watts (2008). In their definition, it is articulated as "all aspects of the work invested by individuals in the construction, maintenance, reproduction and transformation of interpersonal relationships among those engaged in social practice" (Locher & Watts, 2008, p.96). Likewise, such interpersonal functions of talk were also manifest in office hour interactions between the instructors and students in this study.

One key aspect of relational work and how participants attend to interpersonal goals is the notion of face. As discussed in Chapter 2, the perspective of relational work embraces a discursive approach to the notion of face, and asserts that face is negotiated by participants in interpersonal relationships (Locher & Watts, 2005). In other words, participants conjointly shape and achieve face through social interaction (Arundale, 2010). While doing so, they attend each other's face needs and wants by using language. Therefore, what is considered "relational" in the analysis of data refers to certain acts or discourse level strategies either international instructors

and Turkish EFL students, or both, use while attending each other's face needs or wants and maintaining their interpersonal relationship. These acts or discourse level strategies in this study include self-disclosure, justifications, encouragement, expression of various feelings, jokes, and small talk, as well as a confrontation, such as student resistance.

As articulated in previous sections, office hour interactions are task-oriented with an academic concern or problem to be discussed or solved during the interaction. However, this task-orientedness in such settings does not mean that the interlocutors do not pertain to relational talk or interpersonal relations (Koester, 2004). In other words, as presented in Chapter 4, the international instructors and their Turkish students often have certain goals to be accomplished or topics to be discussed throughout office hour interactions but at the same time they attend to interpersonal aspect of their relationship. Thus, this interpersonal aspect of office hour interactions between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study is significant for certain reasons. First of all, these interlocutors were not completely strangers to each other but in fact already had prior relationship to an extent since the Turkish EFL students were the students of these international instructors. It is usually more likely to have manifestations of relational work in such encounters (Koester, 2004) because participants have already shared background and formed relationships. Additionally, as stated earlier, both international instructors and their Turkish EFL students might be willing to care each other's face wants or needs by using certain discourse level strategies in office hour interactions.

While analyzing the office hour dataset from a relational work perspective, I also utilized both the instructor and student questionnaires, and examined specifically the section for office hour experience to gain insights into both parties' post hoc evaluations or perceptions of their completed office hour interactions. First of all, it was obvious in the questionnaire data that the

international instructors and their Turkish students had quite similar perceptions or evaluations of their interactions. In other words, the majority of both parties (95%) expressed that the interactions were successful or smooth. There were only few instances or references to expressing problems by both groups of participants with regard to their office hour interactions. Turkish EFL students in this study typically interpreted the success of office hour interactions by drawing upon the extent to which they received feedback, help, information, support, etc. Overall, almost all of them acknowledged that having office hour interactions with their international instructors were quite helpful and effective. Only few students mentioned their own language barriers related to language proficiency and inability to express themselves as slightly problematic aspects of their interactions. Similarly, the international instructors thought that office hour interactions were successful because they were able to clarify or explain what was being asked, or address their students' concerns. However, Maria was the only one of the three instructors to provide comments about her interpretation of the success and problem in her interactions with the students. Examples and excerpts from the questionnaire data that includes such metapragmatic comments are also presented in the relevant sections of this chapter.

Successful Aspects

In alignment with the conceptualization of successful aspects of office hour interactions above, this section delineates how both parties utilized certain discourse level strategies contributing to relational work between them. These discourse level strategies or social acts typically were linked to positive aspects of office hour interactions such as harmony, solidarity, involvement, connectedness or empathy, etc. in the ongoing talk. As confirmed by the questionnaire data, such harmonious manifestations of relational work in office hour interactions were thus much more frequent than instances of problematic aspects. As stated before, such

types of relational work that were identified in the office hour dataset in this study are namely self-disclosure, justifications, encouragement, expression of various feelings, jokes, and small talk. The in-depth analysis of such forms of relational work was presented in the following sections.

Self-disclosure

Self-disclosure is basically defined as making personal information known to others (Cozby, 1973; Jourard, 1964; Polansky, 1965). It becomes salient specifically in interpersonal relationships and can be situated within the perspective of social exchange and social penetration theory. That is, developing interpersonal relationships is a joint activity as a result of interpersonal rewards or costs depending on the social factors, or degree of interpersonal relationship (e.g. intimates non-intimates). Such a process of establishing and maintaining relationships involves self-disclosure that is determined by these interpersonal reward and cost factors in social exchanges. Some foremost parameters for self-closure include the amount and depth or intimacy of information that is revealed in communication. The duration of the act of making such personal information known to other(s) is also another element in self-disclosure. Additionally, disclosing personal information to another interlocutor can also be reciprocal (Cozby, 1973). Even though it might be associated with close relationships and how partners negotiate their relationships (Derlega et al., 1993), such an act of revealing personal information is likely to occur between colleagues and friends as well (Baker & Ellece, 2011). By disclosing personal information or feelings about themselves, participants might seek solidarity or empathy from each other in their interactions.

In a similar vein, self-disclosure is one of the common strategies utilized by both the students and instructors in office hour interactions in this study. The total number of self-

disclosure instances in the dataset is 12 whereas 8 of these instances belong to the students and 4 to the instructors. In some cases, it appears as a one-sided strategy employed by only one party. In others, it is utilized mutually by both parties, and stimulates each other's act of disclosing some personal information relevant to the ongoing interaction. The content of self-disclosure in office hour interactions in this study includes the participants' past and current language learning experiences, personal traits, concerns, language-related inabilities or incompetence.

In the following excerpt, I examine one such instance of mutual self-disclosure by both the instructor and student. The excerpt comes from Mike's office hour sessions where the student makes a request for feedback on her previous in-class presentation. She is the same student (S11) in Excerpt 14, and lines 92-97 are reproduced in Excerpt 22. After getting positive feedback for her previous performance and some suggestions for her prospective oral presentation from Mike, the student indeed voices her feeling shy about speaking in front of people specifically in English. In other words, the student initiates the self-disclosure what precedes Excerpt 22. Right at the beginning of the following excerpt, however, Mike starts to share his similar experience and some personal information.

Excerpt 22:

```
86  Mike:  yeah! Well, that's actually a common problem with everybody or with
87         many people even when they're speaking in their own language. I
88         mean if you know sometimes when I get excited, I start speaking
89  S11:                                  < @ >
90  Mike:  fast too.
91  S11:   yes
92  Mike:  Uhh and when I get nervous, I do the same thing. I actually get
93         nervous, I've been teaching almost twenty years and I still get
94         nervous sometimes.
95  S11:   right
96  Mike:  So, it's normal.
97  S11:   < @ >
```

The sequence begins with Mike's agreement token *yeah* in line 86. Here, Mike acknowledges that his student's statement in earlier stretches of discourse that she speaks fast in her oral presentation because she gets nervous. Then, he immediately frames his turn with the discourse marker *well*, which starts with a generalization. In lines 86-87, Mike explains that getting nervous and thus speaking too fast is a common problem. He strengthens his claim by using the lexical booster *actually* and *even* while making this generalization. In his second utterance in the same turn, Mike shifts the focus to his own very similar experience in the same situation, thus initiating a sequence of self-disclosure (*I mean if you know sometimes when I get excited, I start speaking fast too* in lines 87-90). The student's positive uptake of Mike's first attempt of self-closure is signaled by a quiet laughter that overlaps with Mike's turn in line 89 and agreement token *yes* in line 91. Following his student's affirmative response, Mike goes on with more personal details (*I've been teaching almost twenty years* in line 93) to preface his repeated assertion that he still gets nervous while speaking. Again, this second set of self-disclosure by Mike is received by his student with *right* in line 95 and more quiet laughter in line 97.

The act of revealing information by Mike about his own feelings and experience in this segment of office hour interaction serves several purposes with regard to relational work between an instructor and his student. First of all, Mike does not stay unresponsive to his student's previously expressed concern for her speaking anxiety. Thus, Mike aligns himself with his student by stating that he himself feels the same way and it is common to speak fast or feel nervous while speaking, stressing that she is not alone. Moreover, the display of self-disclosure by Mike in this context operates as a strategy for seeking solidarity or showing involvement. He not only turns the attention to his own feelings to voice that it is a mutual concern but also

225

displays understanding of his student's concern. While doing so, Mike also reduces the status difference.

The enactment of self-disclosure in the same office hour interaction does not end in the previous excerpt. Later in the flow of interaction, the amount and content of self-disclosure continues in the subsequent turns. Mike's student discloses personal details this time. In between these two sequences, Mike makes several suggestions to his student to overcome her speaking anxiety. In lines 107 and 108 below, Mike then relates his student's concern to his own past experience, and thus frames it as a previous personality trait by saying *Uh I had the same problem. I was a very shy person*. Upon his student's surprise (*oh* in line 109), Mike adds more to his unveiling of personal experience (*I never, I don't think I've ever spoken in front of a class until I got to university* in lines 110-111) to emphasize the sameness in both their case. We see a three-second interturn pause in line 112, and until then it is only Mike who reveals about himself. However, all his efforts in the form of self-disclosure turn out to be a step-by-step move that manages to elicit a longer piece of self-disclosure from his student. Thus, the student takes the interturn pause as an opportunity to take a turn and reveal some details about herself. Keeping the floor for a while, she expresses how she feels when she speaks in English, specifically in class, in comparison to Turkish as her first language. It is then this very moment where both Mike and his student engage in natural self-disclosure mutually to address one common concern of Turkish EFL students in Turkey.

Excerpt 23:

107 Mike: You just have to continue doing it, over and over. **Uh I had the same**
108   **problem. I was a very shy person.**
109 S11:   oh ((surprised))
110 Mike: Believe it or not! **I never, I don't think I've ever spoken in front of**
111   **a class until I got to university.**
112   (0.3)

```
113  S11:    Normally, I'm not shy person but mmm in classroom I feel very
114          nervous so yeah. Actually when I was, a::h when I speak English,
115          I feel very nervous. A::h when I when I speak in Turkish, no not
116          problem. I'm so good, a::h I'm really relaxed but a::h in English
117  Mike:   Well, that's natural. I mean it's not your first language and so it's
118          natural.
```

Notably, the use of self-disclosure by both participants in Excerpt 23 is a typical example of how relational work is co-constructed by Mike and his student in office hour interactions. Both parties work collaboratively in maintaining their relationship harmoniously through sharing details about themselves and showing listenership in the ongoing interaction. It is worth noting that the actual display of the student's own personal information occurs only after her instructor does so. Put differently, Mike takes the initiative to empathize with his student by revealing some details about himself, and the student allows him to do so with her minimal verbal contribution but attentive listenership. That is, she acknowledges both Mike's institutional role as the instructor and his being 'wiser' party with his experience, and attempts to keep the floor only when she has the opportunity (e.g. interturn pause). Yet, her turn in lines 113-116 demonstrates how she then reciprocates by initiating an instance of self-disclosure.

Justifications

Giving justifications by both groups of participants in this study is evident as another discourse level strategy contributing the relational work in the office hour dataset. Justifications can be defined as explanations or grounding by either the instructors or students for (not) doing something. They can involve rationale or reasons for past, present, or future events. Such instances of providing justifications in the dataset are typically utilized to vindicate why they do or assign certain tasks whereas the students mostly give account for their performance in a task or exam. There are 9 instances of providing justifications in the dataset.

As presented previously in Chapter 4, office hour interactions in this study involve sequences that differ considerably depending on the level of each party's verbal contribution, which I chose to call "equal" and "unequal" contributions. Giving justifications often requires longer stretches of discourse and commonly results in unequal contributions. In the following Excerpt 24, I examine one such occurrence from an office hour interaction between Amelia and her student. The student wants to ask a couple questions with regard to her reference list in a previous writing assignment that has been just graded. Just as Amelia is checking her reference list and giving feedback on what the student has done, the student switches the topic to the upcoming exam by asking a question. Upon her request for information, Amelia very briefly lists what they will do in the exam where mainly they will write an argumentative essay using the content they have covered in the class.

Excerpt 24:

```
(0.2)
37  S17:      it's gonna be hard (Hx) ((nervous))
38  Amelia:  hard exam? Well, we're trying to do, well I don't know I mean,
39               what we're trying to do now in class is to both get to know the
40               business ethics text very very well. So, this is why I ask what is
41               the point of hurricane example, what is the point of Friedman,
42  S17:                                              [hmhm]
43  Amelia:  what is point of Hocker. The reason I'm doing that is just to
44               make sure that everybody understands uhh the text very very
45  S17:                                [hmhm]
46  Amelia:  well. Poker analogy, for example, everybody needs to know
47               what is the point of that. What does Carr say about that poker
48  S17:              [hmhm]
49               analogy? How is that deceptive? How is that not maliciously
50               deceptive? So, if you know these concepts very very well, then it's
51               going to be much easier for you to use them in your essays, but if
52               you don't know them at all, like if you haven't even thought
53               about them or seen them, yeah you're right, in two hours it's
54               very difficult to write an essay using three sources.
55  S17:      is it going to be enough you know two hours for (0.2) essay that we
56  Amelia:                                              [it's enough]
57  S17:      don't know?
```

58 Amelia: it's enough if you know the text very well
59 S17:   hmhm
60 Amelia: and if you have a very good u:::h knowledge of those stages of essay
61   writing.

After a two-second interturn pause, the student starts this sequence with an evaluative

comment by saying *it's gonna be hard*. Her anxiety while making this evaluation about the

exam is displayed through her nervous exhale following her utterance. Amelia takes up her

student's evaluation and responds with a lengthy set of justifications. The lack of any prosodic

change or difference in Amelia's initiation of her justifications indicates that she does not

interpret her student's comment as confrontation. She thus starts with stating the broader goals of

recent in-class tasks (*...to both get to know the business ethics text very very well* in lines 38-40).

Then, Amelia connects this statement of goal for her course to what she does in her class (*So,*

this is why I ask... in lines 40-42), and then adds more reasons to justify why it is necessary to

acquire certain content (*The reason I'm doing….* in lines 43-44, and *Poker analogy, for example,*

everybody needs to know what is the point of that in lines 46-47). The student shows her

listenership or attentiveness to what her instructor is saying by three instances of backchanneling.

Maintaining the same tone of voice, Amelia elaborates on her content-related justifications by

using three subsequent questions to emphasize what is specifically important to know about the

content (lines 47, 49, and 50). In the rest of her uninterrupted turn, she then concludes by linking

the role of knowing or not knowing the course material very well to the upcoming exam. She

does so by using two conditional clauses to show how the idea of an easy or difficult exam

depends on how much they know the concepts and content in their three materials. The student

responds with a further question about the allotted time for the exam, which reflects her

continuing concern, and seeks Amelia's perspective (*is it going to be enough you know two*

hours for (0.2) essay that we don't know in lines 55 and 57). Similar to her previous turn, Amelia

repeats the same assertion for the direct relationship between the course content and the exam (lines 58, 60, and 61), which is again accepted by her student (*hmhm* in line 59).

Amelia's use of several justifications in this excerpt is important because she addresses her student's exam anxiety and thus shows her understanding as instructor. Additionally, she makes effort to explicate how the content of her course is important for the exam so that the student can understand the connection between knowing the course content or tasks well and overcoming her concern for the exam. While providing justifications for why it is important to understand the content of her course and argumentative essay writing process, Amelia also emphasizes her expert role as the instructor of the course, and thus highlights the status difference between herself and the student.

Encouragement

The dataset reveals 5 instances of giving encouragement in office hour interactions, which occurs in the talk of all 3 instructors. The following excerpt involves such an act of showing support by the instructor towards her student. The interaction takes place in one of Maria's office hours where the main purpose is to review a midterm exam paper, upon the student's request. Although the student has shown observable improvement in her English, Maria and the student collectively delve into possible ways for more improvement, specifically in academic writing. Prior to the following sequence, the student starts to reflect on how hard she works.

Excerpt 25:

```
118  S16:    I'm trying really hard but I don't know. In the classes, you know, I
119             was come to you and like "Look teacher! I want to say bluh bluh"
120             and you would say "it's not suffice! It was so different thing!" I
121             was like, "oh my God!".
122  Maria: I think you're doing a great job. You just have to give it up for
123             the final, make sure that you're doing the < X X X >  that you
```

124		**have to do for the final. If you have any doubts, just ask**
125		**questions, okay? As you do in class and practice**. When I ask you
126		to write, for example, that's because I want you to practice for the
127		final, okay?
128	S16:	[okay]
128	Maria:	and that's it!

The student begins the sequence repeating her former assertion that she is a hard worker. She then retrospectively attempts to remind her efforts in Maria's one of previous classes (lines 118-121). Maria responds by expressing her positive opinion about the student's performance (*I think you're doing a great job* in line 122). Following her encouraging evaluation of her student's status, Maria adds some more strategies to consider for the final exam suggesting the ways to improve her grade. In other words, Maria's initial encouragement movement prefaces her subsequent suggestions in the same turn. She first gives a suggestion that involves a mitigated obligation (*You just have to give it up for the final, make sure that you're doing the < X X X > that you have to do for the final* in lines 122-124) Then, Maria formulates a conditional clause where the illocutionary force of her suggestion is conveyed through a mitigated imperative followed by an attempt to seek confirmation (*if you have any doubts, just ask questions, okay?* in lines 124 and 125). To support her suggestions, Maria refers to the fact that the students does so in class and then adds the goal of such in-class practice with regard to the final exam (lines 125 and 126). Following this, she completes her turn with *okay* to seek confirmation or agreement from her student again. Finally, the student's overlapping *okay* in line 127 demonstrates agreement or acceptance.

What Maria does in the sequence above is a representative example of supporting her student by showing her empathetic role as instructor. As Excerpt 25 above shows, she not only expresses her positive attitude towards her student but also provides suggestions. Thus, giving

encouragement to students plays an important role in office hour interactions from a relational

work perspective, and is connected to suggestions.

Expressing Feelings

Another instantiation of relational work that was traced in this study is a broader category

of expressing feelings. Both groups of participants felt the urge to express various types of

feelings at some point during their interactions. The office hour interactions in this study yield 11

instances of expressing feelings performed by both the instructors and some of their students.

Such acts of expressing feelings involve displays of surprise or shock, disappointment, empathy,

happiness, satisfaction, etc. In what follows, I examine two short excerpts where students express

their feelings. In the first one, it is Amelia's student who reveals his disappointment; and in the

second one, it is Mike's student who refers both to his surprise and happiness.

The sequence in Excerpt 26 comes from an office hour interaction between Amelia and

her student. It takes place at the beginning of the office hour, and the student does not state a

certain problem or concern. However, he begins by talking about his previous English language

learning experience with a specific reference to the preparation program at his university. Even

though he acknowledges that they learn English in that program, he believes it is not sufficient

for advanced academic writing skills as required by Amelia's class. In other words, the office

hour interaction is initiated by the student's indirect complaint about the discrepancy between the

English preparation program and the language-based expectations in content courses.

Excerpt 26:

```
08   S18:    We saw this in our first exam you know u:h I get really bad grade.
09   Amelia:  hmhm
10   S18:    I didn't expect that actually.
11   Amelia:  hmhm
12   S18:    A:h I work so hard but a:h (0.3) I don't (0.2) get what I want
13            from exam but you know our second exam was perfect for me.
```

```
14   Amelia:      [hmhm]                                        [hmhm hmhm]
15   S18:      A:h I really a:h hard a:h worked about eighty-two, eighty, instead
16   Amelia:                                               [hmhm]
17   S18:      of eighty one.
18   Amelia:  hmhm
```

The student starts the sequence by illustrating his preceding indirect complaint with his current situation in Amelia's course. The use of deixis *this* in line 8 indicates how he connects the former discourse and his performance in the first exam. Additionally, his evaluative stance in *really bad grade* in the very same utterance signals his frustration in that exam. However, his first overt statement of disappointment comes into explicit words in his next turn (*I didn't expect that actually* in line 10). Then in lines 12 and 13, he makes his second attempt to express his unfulfilled expectations by saying *but a:h (0.3) I don't (0.2) get what I want from exam,* and precedes his characterization of success on the second exam. In between these two obvious attempts of expressing his feelings, the student explains that he works hard for the exams though (*A:h I work so hard* in line 12), which is then repeated in lines 15 and 16 by comparing two previous exams (*A:h I really a:h hard a:h worked about eighty-two, eighty, instead of eighty one*) as well as the last but to-be-announced exam[16]. In other words, Amelia's student's anxiety for the results of the last exam, which is numbered eighty-two, provokes this sequence of expressing disappointment by the student. During the interaction in Excerpt 26, Amelia minimally responds to her student with frequent use of agreement token *hmhm*, showing her active listenership, while allowing her student to express himself.

Similarly, the sequence in Excerpt 27 also demonstrates how Mike's student cannot hide his surprise and happiness after receiving information about his attendance status. The student

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[16] In the context of Amelia's course at TU, the exams are numbered. Thus, at the time of data collection, the students had already taken all three exams numbered 80, 81, and 82. However, the last one had not been announced when this interaction was recorded. Numbering exams was not practiced at CU and might be typical to TU context.

visits Mike to check his absenteeism in his class and to make sure he does not exceed the limits. Immediately after exchanging greetings, the student asks about the number of his absent hours in Mike's class. Thus, the sequence in the following excerpt is initiated with Mike's straightforward respond to his student's request for information.

Excerpt 27:

```
05   Mike:   uhh, you have missed according to my records six hours.
06   S19:    six hours? ((surprised))
07   Mike:   yeah. You have six.
08   S19:    I thought nine hours < @ >
09   Mike:   I only have you for six unless I forgot to count one. Uhh (0.2) I can
10           go back and check but uhh I only have you for six.
11   (0.2)
12   S19:    If I six, (0.2) I will be happy < @ >
13   Mike:   I can check really quick ((shuffling papers and Mike counting silently))
14   STD:    because I'm nervous about the absenteeisms.
15   Mike:   okay,  we give < X X > ((shuffling papers)) yeah I only have you
16           for six.
```

Following Mike's utterance, the student repeats only the content or the piece of information that is salient to himself (*six hours?* in line 6). The repetition in the form of a question demonstrates the student's desire to seek confirmation from Mike. The surprised tone of voice accompanying his confirmation check reveals that the information given by Mike is unexpected. Once Mike reassures him by echoing himself (*you have six* in line 7), the student verbalizes his surprise in his next turn by stating his own expectation with regard to his absenteeism in his utterance *I thought nine hours* in line 8. The fact that his utterance is followed by a soft laughter adds his happiness upon that new and pleasant information on his part. Then, Mike stresses the same information once more, and even offers to check it again. Starting his next turn after a two-second interturn pause, the student formulates a conditional clause –*If I six, (0.2) I will be happy*, to explicitly articulate his happiness that depends on having six-hour

absenteeism in line 12. In the manner he does in his previous turn, this is followed by another soft laughter. Mike thus repeats his offer to check his student's absent hours and he actually does so at the same time as it appears in line 13. Meanwhile, the student provides the reason for his inquiry (*because I'm nervous about the absenteeisms* in line 14). The sequence ends with Mike's re-checking his records and announcing once more that his student has only six hours for his absenteeism in lines 15-16. Responding to his student's expression of surprise, happiness, and nervousness with regard to his absenteeism concern, Mike not only provides solicited information, but also takes it one step further by offering (and actually performing) the act of checking it out again to assure his student.

Jokes

The office hour interactions in this study also involve displays of humor through the use of jokes by both the instructors and the students. Even though making jokes is not as frequent as the other forms of relational work that were presented above, 4 instances of making jokes were observed in the dataset, and each party performed two instances of introducing jokes. In the following excerpt, I examine one such example of a student-initiated joke, and how it leads to mutual enjoyment in the middle of a very focused sequence.

The sequence in Excerpt 28 occurs between Amelia and her student as they discuss possible ways to improve the student's essay. Prefacing the sequence, they focus on how to put similar ideas or examples into one body paragraph. The topic of the specific body paragraph is environmental organizations. However, the student has only one example of such organizations (e.g. Greenpeace) in her paragraph.

Amelia begins her turn by pointing out the abovementioned problem of having only one example to support the student's paragraph. She makes an indirect suggestion by using the modal

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might want to and a conditional clause *if you add it one or more* in lines 174-175. That is, after a

false start, Amelia introduces the condition *if you're saying organizations in the plural* to frame

her indirect suggestion of *you might be a little bit more convincing if you add it one or more*. The

student in her next turn takes Amelia's suggestion in a humorous way, and makes a joke (*okay*

let me delete the s from here in line 176) on the suggested way of revising her paragraph. What

adds to the humor in her utterance is that her witty remark offers another solution that is actually

not meant by Amelia, but sounds like an easy way to correct the problem. As is apparent from

the laughter in lines 177, 179, and 181, the idea entertains both parties and followed by mutual

laughter for a while. Amelia then makes an attempt to switch back to her previous point by

starting her turn *okay so organizations have* in line 182. However, it remains incomplete because

of her student's overlapping utterance *okay one or more* in line 183, which exhibits her

willingness or readiness to take Amelia's initial suggestion of adding more examples of

organizations.

Excerpt 28:

173   Amelia: So you might want to, if you're saying organizations in the plural,
174   you might be a little bit more convincing if you add it one or
175   more.
176   S04:   **okay, let me delete the s from here.**
177   < @ @ @ >
178   Amelia: with one organization is doing.
179   < @ @ @ >
180   Amelia: There is one organization doing this, nobody else in the world.
181   < @ @ @ >
182   Amelia: okay so organizations have
183   S04:   [okay one or more]
184   Amelia: yeah.

      The use of jokes as one common category of humor can be utilized for various functions

in the ongoing interactions. In the case of the office hour interaction above, it can be notably

argued that the student reduces the overall formality of talk and spices their talk with a relief by using a joke. What makes this communicative act successful is Amelia's welcoming of the student's amusing utterance.

Small Talk

In the dataset of office hour interactions, the instantiations of small talk is observed only few times. All three occurrences are student-initiated and continue for a very short time. In the following excerpt presented below, I examine one such sequence where small talk takes place. It happens at the end of an office hour interaction between Mike and his student just before they close the session and exchange goodbyes. Prior to the instance of small talk in Excerpt 29, Mike and his student negotiate the day for next meeting so that he can help the student narrow down his topic and develop his argumentative essay. While wrapping up the session, Mike provides two final suggestions: One in the form of imperative (*first yeah do that part*) and one with the modal use involving inclusive *we* and subordinated with a time clause (*once we get this down, we can work on the other parts*). Immediately after Mike gives these suggestions, Excerpt 29 takes place as follows:

Excerpt 29:

277 S08: Okay (0.4) okay thanks. **By the way, how is your daughter? I**
278   **heard that she is sick.**
279 Mike: uh she is much better. It was just like a twenty-four hour stomach bug
280 S08: with the fever?
281 Mike: No, she never had a fever. She was just, couldn't keep anything
282   down.
283 S08: Okay
284 Mike: I think she just got some of that (X X X) and it was over after
285   twenty-four hours.
286 S08: Okay, that's good!
287 Mike: Thanks.
288 S08: Have a good day!
289 Mike: You too!

The sequence starts with the student's okaying what Mike has just said and thanking him before the end of the entire office hour interaction. Following this, the student introduces the topic of small talk by using the phrase *by the way* and then asking *how is your daughter?* in line 277. He then reveals the information he has about Mike's daughter's recent situation saying *I heard that she is sick* in the same turn. Mike immediately participates in this student-initiated small talk by giving updates and some details about what her daughter has been going through in his turn. The student then makes another move to keep small talk on and asks if she had fever or not in line 280. In a similar manner in his previous turn, Mike again contributes by answering his student's question and adding the actual problem with her sickness (*No, she never had a fever. She was just, couldn't keep anything down* in lines 281-282). After the student's empathic *okay*, Mike proceeds with some possible reasons for her daughter's status and announces that it is over now in lines 284-285. This unsolicited provision of further details demonstrates Mike's willingness to share such personal information with his student. Then, the student responds with another empathic *okay* followed by an evaluative comment *That's good* in line 286 to show that he is happy to hear the news. The sequence and the office hour interaction end with Mike's thanking for his student's interest and exchange of goodbye wishes.

The instance of this student-initiated small talk in Excerpt 29 presented above exemplifies how each party jointly contributes to relational work in office hour interactions. First of all, initiation of such small talk by the student proposes his care or interest that has obviously bothered Mike and his family recently. What is more, it is positively marked because the student could have left the office by simply thanking and exchanging goodbyes. Put differently, he has done more than what is usually expected to do in a typical office hour session. In return, Mike has shown his readiness to explicate the situation and even give more details than

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what is being asked. Thus, both Mike and his student perform some extra verbal or linguistic contribution even though it is not a vital component of the task at hand in this office hour interaction. Overall, they co-construct moments of empathy or attentiveness and interest to the other's personal problem through the manifestation of this small talk instance.

Problematic Aspects

Similar to the successful aspects of office hour interactions, certain problematic interactions can also be considered as contributing to relational work between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students in this study. These problematic aspects can be broadly described as the moments or instances of miscommunication, orienting to divergent concerns, or disagreement, where some degree of tension comes into play between the interlocutors. However, as stated previously, of such problematic aspects there were only few instances in the entire office hour dataset in this study. In other words, most of the time, harmony or compliance between the international instructors and their Turkish students governed the interactions. Yet, there were two manifestations of problematic aspects in office hour interactions, where the international instructors had to manage confrontational situations. In this section, I examine one such interaction where the student resistance is embedded throughout the entire office hour session.

Student Resistance

The notion of resistance, which has been defined as opposition to a practice or norm imposed onto the social subject (Baker & Ellece, 2011), has received increased attention in research on language learning. Examining student resistance is important because it reveals how power relations are negotiated in ongoing interaction through language. To date, only a handful of studies have examined how resistance influences the language learning process in different

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contexts (Canagarajah, 1999, 2004; Trang & Baldauf, 2007), and how it relates to learner

identities (Talmy, 2008). In what follows, embracing "a case study approach" (Marra, 2012,

p.1583), I examine one such illustrative case where the instance of student resistance is

embedded in the entire office hour interaction between Maria and her student. Although it is an

exceptional case, it offers an interesting focus in that both the international instructor and student

use various linguistic strategies to attend their interactional goals. One such feature that

distinguishes this interaction from others is that the use of prosodic contextualization cues very

often (e.g. sudden increase in stress, intonation, and pitch at lexical and utterance level) is

marked in the participants' achievement of these interactional goals. The total duration of this

specific office hour interaction is around 12 minutes. The student had made a prior arrangement

to meet with Maria. According to the student's answer in item 15 in the student questionnaire

(and Maria's answer in item 9 in the instructor questionnaire), which is about the purpose for

coming to the instructor's office, he came to talk to Maria about a couple of connected concerns:

the content in the current lessons, feedback on midterm writing task, and his overall writing

ability in her class. I have divided the interaction into 5 segments that show distinct stages of

how resistance is enacted (some lines have been deleted to keep the focus on these relevant

portions of interaction).

 Before turning to in-depth analysis of the instance of student resistance and Maria's

management of such a confrontational situation, it is useful to present both parties'

interpretations of this very specific office hour talk. The survey responses indeed display their

mutual awareness of the problematic nature of this office hour interaction. First of all, the student

describes the interaction as "Interesting experience. I notice my ideas make me challenging to

writing essay" (Questionnaire data, Dec.3, 2014) in his reply to the item 16, which asks about the

successful and problematic aspects in the interaction. He actually signals in his comment his awareness of his problem (e.g. translating his ideas into his writing). Similarly, Maria expresses her perceptions of the office hour interaction with her student in items 10 and 12 as follows:

"I reckon fairly well. [name of the student]'s personality, his sense of criticism and the constant need of being against the common flow emerges in his writing, creating, too often, problems both content- and sentence-wise. This is not the first feedback session. The student seems to look for and understand feedback; indeed, some improvements have been noticed in his written production." (item 10, Questionnaire data, Dec.3, 2014)

Such an answer to the questionnaire item that is about the successful and problematic aspects of the interactions depicts a clear-cut understanding and background knowledge by Maria relying on their prior relationship as instructor and student. She is aware that showing resistance is part of his personality but also points out that he has actually improved in his writing skills. Maria then provides even more details in her answer to item 12 that asks how she feels about the interaction:

"[name of the student]'s interest in conversation automatically affects our interactions. Most of the time, I'm concentrated on how to stem and channel his somehow argumentative ideas into a suitable form of expression. On the one hand, I don't want to restrict his flow of ideas. On the other hand, I want to make sure he complies to the course requirements." (item 12, Questionnaire data, Dec.3, 2014)

Combined with the previous answer, Maria's comments in item 12 characterizes her student's resistance to academic writing norms and course requirements but at the same time experienced fluctuations in her attitude or perspective in this office hour interaction. This might pertain to the institutional and interpersonal planes of office hour interactions.

Turning to the primary data source, the office hour interaction as shown in the very first segment below starts with a typical opening sequence. The first 4 lines serves to greet the instructor (*Hi Miss!*), invite the student (*come in*), check availability (*are you busy?*), and signal readiness (*I was waiting for you*). Following this, the student immediately begins to set the agenda in his turn in line 5. The student relies on a prolonged pause filler *a::h* often, and as soon as he starts to present his purpose for initiating this office hour meeting. What is more, the overall prevalence of his use of this pause filler or hesitation marker as well as the presence of mid-turn pauses in his talk are associated with two common functions: Thinking what to say next and desire or effort to keep the floor. It is worth noting that the vocalization of pause fillers is different than common ones in English (e.g. *ah* instead of uh, um, mm, etc.). Turning back to the content of his turn, he first refers to leadership styles discussed in a previous class (*A::h we a::h learnt in last lecture a::h the leadership styles* in line 5), and his attitude towards this content (*a::h and a::h I'm interested in a::h the topic* in lines 5-6). Then, he asks about what Maria thinks about the topic (*and what you think about leadership, your opinion* in lines 6-7), presumably wanting more information about his instructor's opinion about the course content that he himself is also interested in. While this seems like a reasonable inquiry, this is the only case where a student does so at the initial stage of the interaction, turning the attention to the instructor.

Excerpt 30:

```
01  S20:    Hi Miss
02  Maria:  Come in
03  S20:    Are you busy?
04  Maria:  I was waiting for you.
05  S20:    A::h we a::h learnt in last lecture a::h the leadership styles, a::h and
06           a::h I'm interested in a::h the topic, and what you think about
07           leadership, your opinion.
```

```
08  Maria:  Why don't we go the other way around? Why don't you tell me your
09          opinion first and then we'll see if yours matches mine.
10  S20:    A::h I, I said, a::h as you can remember I don't believe any leader.
11          A::h (0.2) and they are saying lie to get into part. A::h I imagine the
12          the leader is behind the society which they choosed a::h like a::h
13          think a (0.1) a man who a::h take the like scavenger. He has a
14          responsibi- responsibilities to society and I don't think a::h (0.2) a::h
15          the authority has much a::h powerful or much thoughtful for us.
16  Maria:  (taking a breath) okay so you're making a very general uh
17          connection to the idea of power in a, in a, in a say (0.2) in a in a big
18          picture where you're talking about society and leaders like in
19          governments, organizations. And I agree with you that umm (0.2)
20          they may not be thinking about people below. However, the
21          leadership, the topic we had a look at in class today, could have
22          been applied to kind of u::h (0.3)
23  S20:    what?
24  Maria:  to tinier examples, like, like, I don't know. Uh you students work
25          together, so in group work where you have the leader of the group,
26          so somebody that's responsible….
```

Turning back to the sequence in Excerpt 30 above, Maria in line 8 responds to her student's inquisitive manner with a suggestion. Her opting for a conventionalized syntactic form *why don't we* is not only an indirect way of making a suggestion but also invites a collaborative act with the use of inclusive *we*. Then, Maria reformulates her suggestion with the same syntactic choice but his time shifting the subject pronoun to *you,* and offers a comparison between his student's and her opinions (*and then we'll see if yours matches mine* in line 9). First of all, this process of suggesting that the student tell his opinion first functions as an implicit refusal for the student's request. By doing so, Maria aligns with her institutional role as the help or support provider to his student, and reminds him of the basic tenet of office hour interactions: to focus on the student's concern. Second, she tactfully achieves her interactional goal of switching the attention to her student by portraying it as a joint act rather than directly or solely imposing on her student. The student confirms in his next turn by responding to Maria's proposition.

Reflecting on the course content, the student begins to reveal what he believes about leaders in society in lines 10-15. As can be seen, his talk is dominated by frequent use of pause filler (10 times), and it involves three short mid-turn pauses, which demonstrates how he strives for expressing his opinions. Likewise, in line 10, the student starts his turn the pause filler *A::h* and a false start *I, I said that* also involves repetition of the first person subject pronoun. Following this, the student says *as you can remember* to index the fact that he has already stated it before, and then elucidates his pessimistic stance about leaders *–I don't believe any leader*. In the rest of his turn, he reveals more about his personal opinions with regard to the supposed role of leaders in society. Meanwhile, Maria keeps silent and allows her student to express himself or reflect on the topic of the course. However, when Maria starts her turn in line 14, her audible in-breath plus her two discourse markers (*okay so* in line 16) signal a potential problem with how the student conceptualizes or understands the course content. Confirming her nonverbal framing device, Maria then diagnoses the problem by explicitly stating in her relatively longer utterance *okay so you're making a very* <u>general</u> *uh connection to the idea of power in a, in a, in a say (0.2) in a in a big picture where you're talking about society and leaders like in governments, organizations* in lines 14-17. Two things appear to be salient in Maria's identification of the problem: stress on the lexical item *general* to emphasize the core of the problem in her student's conceptualization; and frequent repetition of *in a, in a, in a say (0.2) in a in a big picture* that also involves a two-second mid-turn pause to be cautious while doing so. Maria acknowledges her students' proposition about leader's attitude towards people, but her increased stress on *may not* indicates her cautiousness not to generalize it. This actually serves as a prelude to her assertion that the topic content they cover in class with regard to leadership is different, which is again displayed through increased stress on *could have been* in lines 19-20. Her caution once

more time is confirmed by the use of lexical hedge *kind of,* hesitation marker *u::h*, and end-of-turn pause for three seconds, which leaves her utterance incomplete. Prompted by her student in line 21, she completes her assertion in line 24, followed by repetition and uncertainty – *to tinier examples, like, like, I don't know*. Maria then justifies herself with an example to narrow down the topic of leadership into a more familiar context for the student. Her elaboration on her example occurs between lines 24 and 32, which is partially deleted.

Until this moment, it appears to be a relatively smooth interaction when we look at the two primary moves in it. First, the student reflects on the course content and explains what he thinks about real leaders in life or society. Second, Maria claims that his understanding is a bit general given the course content, and she then narrows it down to an academic context. However, in Excerpt 31 below, the student comes up with an even more complicated perspective with regard to connecting leadership styles to other situations. Thus, Excerpt 31 is the stage where the student's resistance begins.

The student starts his turn with a hesitator *mmm*, and then introduces the new topic by saying *I saw a::h a::h in philosophy a::h lecture* in line 32. Right at that moment, Maria's very soft but nervous laughter overlaps with the student's move to shift to that new topic. At this point, Maria's soft but nervous laughter coincides with her response to item 10 in the questionnaire as presented above. In other words, Maria most probably knows what is coming next based on her previous interactions with him. By sharing an example from a philosophy lecture and a person he has encountered in that lecture, the student makes references to one specific type of religion in lines 32, 34, and 35, which is indeed very personal and subjective subject to be discussed in an office hour interaction with an instructor. The student takes his next turn where he attempts to use direct reported speech first in line 34 *("maybe God is")* to give an

account for what the person in a philosophy lecture mentioned in his previous turn but then he

interferes with his own account to give a piece of background information (*you know in Quran,*

he always say 'we'). However, Maria shows her listenership in line 36 with her minimal

response *hmhm*, and allows the student to maintain the floor for a while. Following this, the

student completes his account in the form of direct reported speech (*"maybe" he said, a::h*

"maybe God is democratic and many, there is many person, and they're deciding with like

autocratic leadership" in lines 37-38). The use of direct reported speech here achieves a

transactional goal where the student provides another instance of a connection between the

course content –the leadership styles– and a different context.

Excerpt 31:

```
32  S20:    Mmm, I saw a::h a::h in philosophy a::h lecture, there was a person
33  Maria:                        < @ > ((nervous))
34  S20:    who told me like that "maybe God is" you know in Quran, he
35          always say 'we'.
36  Maria:  hmhm
37  S20:    "maybe" he said, a::h "maybe God is democratic and many, there is
38          many person, and they're deciding with like autocratic leadership"
39  Maria:  Okay, that is an interesting perspective but today the aim of the
40          autocratic or laissez-faire leadership style is just to let you know
41          different, you know, learn about new different styles of leaderships,
42          okay? Umm (0.3) in the final exam, if ever you're gonna talk about
43          leadership styles, don't make it this complex.
44  S20:    but you know my brain (0.2) like a, (0.2) a:h it's, a:h (0.2) keep it
45  Maria:                  < @ > ((nervous))
46  S20:    to focusing all, and sharing all, wants to share all idea, but there is a
47          strict content, (0.2) and I don't want to obey something, (0.2) rules.
48  Maria:  but we we've talked about this before. I know that you wanna
49          mention the things that you feel passionate about, or that you
50          want to put on paper your ideas, and I'm fine with it, but this kind of
51          writing especially in this class is not creative writing. It's not free
52          writing….
```

In the sequence of talk between lines 32-38, there is not any specific syntactic form

indicating an overt resistance. However, by presenting a type of abstract connection between the

leadership styles and a controversial topic, the student constructs a type of "passive resistance" throughout his turn. The move for coming up with such an example does not comply with what Maria has already presented in the previous excerpt. Thus, he prefers not to orient himself to his instructor's proposition in her previous turn and displays an implicit resistance toward what he has just been offered. Interestingly, he manages the initiation of resistance episode by shifting from an *I* perspective in his earlier turn (lines 8-13) to a third party and what he has told him (e.g. *there was a person….* in line 29, and *"maybe" he said* in line 34).

Starting her turn in line 39, Maria first uses acknowledgement token *okay* and then makes an evaluative remark *that is an interesting perspective* as her initial reaction to her student's example. Even though she keeps her empathic tone of voice, her lexical choice of *interesting* creates some ambiguity and vagueness with respect to its positive or negative sentiment. Her sudden increase in stress and pitch on *but today* immediately puts emphasis on upcoming, and contradicting, assertion by Maria. She refers specifically to *the aim of autocratic or laissez-faire leadership style* covered in their class (in lines 37-40), which implies that the student's example again does not align with the course content or goal. Meanwhile, Maria uses the hedge *just* to downgrade her proposition, and seeks agreement or input from the student by using cajoler *you know* in line 41 and alerter *okay* at the end of her statement in line 42. Following this, she maintains her turn, shifting the focus to the final exam prefaced with the hesitation marker *umm* and a three-second pause. Formulating a conditional clause, Maria makes a direct suggestion in her final utterance in the same turn (line 42-43). The use of imperative in the main clause *–don't make it this complex*, and again increased stress and pitch on *don't* strengthen the illocutionary force of her direct suggestion, and even makes it sound like more of a mild warning. It is also important to note that Maria makes her first reference to the final exam possibly to signal that her

expectations for students on such major exams are different from how the student connects

course content to other topics. Right at this moment, the student takes his turn where he vocalizes

his resistance explicitly. In line 44, he starts his turn with *but* to present his counter-argument and

at the same time seek agreement with *you know*. Then, he shifts the focus to his own way of

thinking or processing by saying *my brain* at the beginning of his first attempt for an overt

resistance, which overlaps with Maria's nervous laughter (line 45). Prefacing his propositional

content with frequent pauses, pause fillers, and false starts (*(0.2) like a, (0.2) a:h it's, a:h (0.2)*) in

line 44), he states that he *wants to share* all his ideas *but there is a strict content* in line 46.

Following his proposition and what prevents him from sharing all his ideas, the student

unhesitantly goes on record and produces the utterance that frames the enactment of his

resistance in this office hour interaction: *I don't want to obey something* in line 47. Maria

responds to this clearly stated resistance move with the same empathic tone by reminding his

student that they have talked about it before (line 48). Again, a sudden prosodic change in *I know*

in line 48 *and I'm fine with it* in line 50 emphasizes her understanding towards the student's

desire to write down all his ideas. Maria thus positions herself as welcoming his student's desire

to express his own ideas. However, by using conjunction *but* again with a notable increase in

stress and pitch, she states what the student wants to do is not what they do in her class with

regard to writing (*but this kind of writing especially in this class is not creative writing. It's not

free writing* in lines 50-52). Then, Maria maintains the floor for an uninterrupted and longer

stretch of talk to emphasize that it is the sentence and paragraph structure that the student needs

to focus on in her class (lines 52-57).

In the next short sequence of talk, we can observe continuing student resistance despite

Maria's extensive explanations in lines 50-61. The following excerpt is the continuation of her

prolonged turn, and starts with her concluding remarks for this uninterrupted segment of talk.

Thus, towards the end of her talk, Maria formulates a *wh-* cleft utterance (*what I ask you even before the midterm* is in line 58) to suggest a solution for her student. While initiating her suggestion in this cleft structure, Maria emphasizes her expectation for her student. She also uses the first person pronoun *I* and makes a reference to *the midterm*, which is another important exam for determining the pass-fail status of the students in the course. Then, she completes her suggestion with great stress on the lexical item *please,* hedging (*a bit more kind of*) followed by a two-second midturn pause, and then again increased stress on the modifier *less* (lines 58-59). Making another suggestion in the form of imperative, Maria once more time highlights the importance of sentence and paragraph structure, which was her main suggestion in her prior lengthy turn (*Focus on the structure of the sentence or the structure of the paragraph, and then we have time to discuss your ideas* in lines 60-61). Even in this final segment, we can see that Maria has now started to emphasize her role and expertise as the course instructor by using an *I* perspective and making references to important exams and expected norms in those exams, highlighting her authority as a way to counter the student's ongoing resistance.

Excerpt 32:

```
58   Maria:   What I ask you even before the midterm is please in the exams try to
59            be a bit more kind of (0.2) less brainy and less complex. Focus on
60            the structure of the sentence or the structure of the paragraph, and
61            then we have time to discuss your ideas.
62   S20:     A::h you mean a::h the, before start, a::h make it algorithm like my
63            department.
64   Maria:   ((smile)) no algorithms. Keep it keep it simple. I want you to create
65            an outline before you start writing, and make it the idea, look, ideas
66            can be complex, (0.2) ok? You don't have to go into philosophical
67            dissertations. You can keep it less, less < @ > ((nervous)) complex
68   S20:                              [still complex]
69   Maria:   than that, especially in the final and the midterm.
70   S20:     Hmhm
```

However, Maria's efforts to explain the norms and expectations are not taken up by her student. Even though the student's intention seems to be a confirmation check (*A::h you mean a::h the, before start*, in line 62), he now offers a completely new idea of using *algorithm* (referring to his department of Software Engineering). Maria immediately rejects such a simile between academic writing norms and an algorithm (*no algorithms* in line 64). Following this, Maria continues giving more direct suggestions (*keep it simple* and *I want you to create an outline…* in lines 64-65), repeating the main ideas she has said before (*look, ideas can be complex, (0.2) ok? You don't have to go into philosophical dissertations. You can keep it less, less < @ > ((nervous)) complex than that, especially in the final and the midterm* throughout lines 65-67). The student's barely noticeable overlap *still complex* in line 68 is noteworthy because it is the very first move in this interaction so far in which he seems to be aligning himself with his instructor. This is then followed by an agreement token *hmhm* in line 70, indicating that the student orients himself to what Maria has just said. Thus, Excerpt 32 above involves the moments of the student's first alignment to his instructor, and the stated norms or expectations. This co-constructed consensus continues for a few more turns, in which Maria repeats the same ideas, and her student okays what she says.

However, this temporary stage of reaching an agreement does not put an end to the case of resistance taking place in this office hour interaction but only pauses it momentarily. In the following excerpt, we can see several more instances of the student's resistance that is enacted in different ways throughout this longer sequence of talk. The excerpt starts with a two-second interturn pause and then the student takes his turn. At first, he seems to be accepting Maria's words (*you saying that* in line 81) but he then constructs another counterargument focusing on what he has done in the previous midterm exam. Prefacing his stance with a false start (*but a::h*

(0.2) it's same as the academic), he explicates his negative opinion with regard to the connection between the notion of science and academic performance, which was possibly the topic in the midterm writing exam (*a::h I, I don't suppose the word science and a::h the academic's a::h performance related to* in lines 81-83). His increased stress on *there isn't any* in his next utterance supports his idea that these two concepts are not related according to him. A similar prosodic change on *everybody knows* and *it has the relationship* displays his effort to show his awareness of how others see the topic (lines 84-85). However, this does not prevent him from expressing his own way of taking it while writing (*I didn't see other perspective when I write you something* in lines 85-86). Thus, even though the student vacillate between what everybody thinks about the same topic, his talk is still driven by his desire to express his own ideas in writing.

Maria's response to yet another instance of resistance initially starts with a calm *okay* in line 87. Formulating two conditional clauses, she then elucidates how it works when she reads the student's paragraph (lines 87-91). Maria's use of increased stress again on certain lexical items throughout her turn enables her to emphasize more salient piece of information she aims to provide (*If* in line 87; *clear, then*, and *but* in line 88; *then* in line 90; and *that science* in line 91). She also shifts to a more straightforward tone of voice unlike her overall empathic manner until now. Following this, the student in his next turn acknowledges what Maria has just said. However, after a two-second mid-turn pause, he then utilizes another resistance strategy: placing blame on others. The student makes a statement of fact (*In last a::h last year a::h I failed* in line 92) and suggests that his failure was due to others' (his instructors') lack of trying to understand his meaning (*because I think they didn't try to understand my paragraph*). Even though he shows a glimpse of his ambivalence with repeated first person pronoun *I* and a two-second mid-turn

pause, he completes his turn by expressing his abilities (*I can write, I can think* in lines 93-94),

but it is the others who are responsible for his failure (*but they does, doesn't like my ideas* in line

94).

It is important for instructors to listen to their students' academic concerns or problems

but this is obviously a face-threatening situation for Maria to respond since *they* in her student's

utterances refers to her colleagues. Perhaps for this reason, Maria increases the stress and pitch

once more this time combining with the attention-getter *Look!* at the very beginning of her next

turn starting in line 95, which is an outrageous move on the student's part. Interestingly, this is

followed by a less agitated lexical framing by using the agreement token *okay*. Maria's use of

okay is ambiguous here in the sense that she might be either partially agreeing with such a

possibility stated by her student, or trying to cautiously sketch out her turn. In that sense, her

false start (*they may* in line 95) becomes salient because she switches and upgrades to a more

certain syntactic form, a remarkably increased stress on *don't*. However, Maria's shift to less

certain mood (*because sometimes I'm I'm just assuming* in line 96) contradicts with her previous

syntactic choice and allows her to point out the main problem in a vague manner (*but the thing is

this* in line 96). She then echoes his student by repeating his assertion (*you can think, (0.2) you

can write* in lines 96-97) to preface her diagnosis with regard to the student's language related

problems (*but when it comes to writing, your sentences are a bit confusing because the grammar

and the sentence structure, it's not really in a, let's say (0.3) in an understandable English* in

lines 97-100).

At this point, Maria's turn in lines 95-100 can be summarized as; a) first, she adds

emphasis to her turn by using an attention-getter and prosodic change, b) then, she ambivalently

acknowledges her student's assertions by echoing him, c) finally, she cautiously states the

problem with her student's language use in English (lexical downgrader *a bit* in line 98, and a syntactic framing device *let's say* followed by a three-second mid-turn pause in line 99). Therefore, Maria utilizes the first two moves in her turn to mitigate her last move for the proposition that the problem is about the student's English use in academic writing. At the same time, she also indirectly rejects her student's assertion that it is *they* who don't like his ideas.

Excerpt 33:

```
80              (0.2)
81   S20:    You, you saying that but a::h (0.2) it's same as the academic a::h I, I
82              don't suppose the word science and a::h the academic's a::h
83              performance related to. There isn't any sentence about this, showing
84              this, but everybody knows the a::h (0.2) you said complex but it
85              has the relationship and I, I, I didn't see other perspective when I
86              write you something.
87   Maria:  Okay. If the connection between academic performance and science
88              is clear in your paragraph, then I'll look at the logical flow. But, if
89              there is no connection, so if you did not explain how science is
90              connected to academic performance, then you do understand that
91              that science goes a little bit off-topic.
92   S20:    yeah. (0.2) In last a::h last year a::h I failed because I think they
93              didn't try to understand my paragraph. I, I, (0.2) I can write, I can
94              think, but they does, doesn't like my ideas.
95   Maria:  Look! Okay. They may, they don't like your paragraph because
96              sometimes, I'm I'm just assuming, but the thing is this. You can
97              think. (0.2) You can write but when it comes to writing, your
98              sentences are a bit confusing because the grammar and the sentence
99              structure, it's not really in a, let's say (0.3) in an understandable
100             English.
101  S20:    if I
102  Maria:     so they may not like not the idea o::r the concept you want to
103             express. It's the way you express it. That's the problem. That's
104             why I keep asking you to work on sentences, work on vocabulary
105             because academic writing is not about how many words you put on
106             your paper. It's the quality of the words you choose.
107  S20:    but a::h how can I show a::h my ideas without native spea-, I'm not
108             native speaker, and a::h I try to say something a::h I have in my
109             mind and
110  Maria:          but while saying it, you have to check for grammar. So,
111             subject verb object is the minimum requirement, okay?
112  S20:                                       [yeah]
113  Maria:  Then if you want to work on compound and complex sentences,
```

```
114          you remember we worked simple, compound, complex, you can put
115          two simple sentences and then combine them but make sure the
116          sentences are correct.
117  S20:    but in my brain a::h ^opposite^ is happen-ing
118  Maria:  yes, but that's why
119  S20:                        in first complex sentence, then I try to simplify
120          and a::h (0.2) when when you saw the lecture who tried to < @ >
121          a::h read them by paragraph, they a::h saying still my simple
122          sentence too complex.
```

Just as the student attempts to take his next turn (*if I* in line 101), Maria interrupts him to take over the turn. Contradicting with her cautiousness in her previous turn, she now prefers to go on record by reformulating her former proposition with regard to the source of problem (*so they may not like not the idea o::r the concept you want to express. It's the way you express it. That's the problem* in lines 102-103). As typical of Maria's prosodic style, the increased stress and pitch on certain segments is notable (e.g. *may not like not*, and *it's the way*) for her to add emphasis. Maintaining her turn for a while, Maria then uses her direct statements for the student's problem in academic writing in English as a justification for her directives (*That's why I keep asking you to work on sentences, work on vocabulary* in lines 103-104). She then adds another reason (*because academic writing is not about how many words you put on your paper* in line 105) by stating what academic writing is 'not' about. Following this, Maria completes her turn with *it's the quality of the words you choose* in line 106, serving as a hint that suggests what to consider in his writing.

At this point, the interaction has involved four vivid instantiations of the student's resistance. As stated before, Excerpt 33 above involves repeated instances of Maria's student's resistance towards academic writing norms and expectations in her course, despite Maria's increasingly more straightforward, or even on record, style. In lines 107-109, for instance, the student initiates his turn with another such resistance phase. He first formulates a question (*but*

a::h how can I show a::h my ideas without native spea-) as an attempt to justify his inability to

express his ideas accurately with not having native-speaker competence but he leaves this effort

incomplete. Instead, he bluntly says *I'm not a native speaker* in affirmative sentence structure to

use this as grounding to his forthcoming initiation of resistance (*and a::h I try to say something*

a::h I have in my mind and in line 108). However, this invokes another instance of interruption

by Maria, who cuts off his new counterargument. Thus, Maria takes over the turn in line 110

again to give an example of accurate use of English language. Her entire turn between lines 110

and 116 also involves two declarative and one imperative suggestions in sequence (*but while*

saying it, you have to check for grammar in line 110; *Then if you want to work on compound and*

complex sentences, you remember we worked simple, compound, complex, you can put two

simple sentences and then combine them in lines 113-115; and finally *but make sure the*

sentences are correct in lines 115-116). As can be seen, the student is persistent in his resistance.

After one such turn by the student (*but in my brain a::h opposite (mispronounced) is happen-ing*

in line 117), Maria does not give up and prepares herself to provide possible another set of

explanations (*yes, but that's why* in line 118). However, it is the student this time who interrupts

and manages to take over the turn. The student then elucidates what he has just said in his

previous turn in line 117 by expressing that he starts with complex sentences but then he

simplifies his sentences (*in first complex sentence, then I try to simplify* in line 119). Combined

with his overlapping agreement *yeah* in line 112, this seems to be a possible alignment with his

instructor. Yet, this only happens until he refers to his previous idea of placing blame on third

party while finalizing his turn (*they a::h saying still my simple sentence too complex* in lines 121-

122), where the third person plural subject pronoun *they* refers to other instructors who have read

his paragraph before. Between the lines 123 and 137, which are not included here, Maria takes a

longer and uninterrupted turn where she repeats herself, adding some further details about how to organize ideas and writing. Meanwhile, the student overlaps with agreement token *yeah* in line 131.

Before moving to the last segment, various contextualization cues, such as prosodic change, stress and/or pitch on a specific word, etc., are evident in Maria's talk throughout the entire interaction. She, for instance, adds emphasis to her meaning by stressing certain words or phrases, although she speaks in a very calm tone of voice. Thus, the contrastive and distinctive style in her prosody that specifically emerges in this interaction contributes to her way of handling student's resistance. Additionally, the use of mid-turn pauses, hesitation markers or pause fillers, repetitions, and false starters by both parties more frequently in certain turns or sequences is crucial in understanding how Maria and her student co-construct their talk where the main activity is resistance.

In the last excerpt below, the resistance in this office hour interaction begins to wind down as Maria and her student are reaching to a final consensus. Excerpt 34 starts with the student's *wish* statement about his earlier-stated "third party factor" reason for his failure (*I wish a::h they will read the a::h my paragraph with me* in line 138) offering to read his paragraph together with other instructors who will be grading his writing. Prefaced with a smile, he then attempts to go on explaining his rationale (*I can't, I can't a::h say all the a::h* in line 139). However, Maria interrupts her student again, and asks a rhetorical question (*is this how you read the books?* in line 140) with a sharply increased loudness. This functions as an indirect challenge to what her student has just offered in his *wish* statement. She then reformulates her question in affirmative form with rising intonation by elaborating on it (*You read the book with the author because the author explains the tricky parts you don't understand?* in lines 141-142). Taking his

next turn to respond to Maria's rhetorical inquiry, the student starts with his typical stance-taking

syntactic choice *a::h but* and also solicits agreement from Maria (*you know* in line 143).

Following this, he provides an explanation where he indirectly refers to his assertion that it is not

only the author – *before the author* – but also the publisher who makes several revisions (*there is*

the publisher and they're many times write the paragraph in lines 143-144). Once again, Maria

chooses to go on record not only with her syntactic choices but also prosodic change (e.g.

increased stress) on *that's your job* and *revision and writing is your job* in line 145 to give the

responsibility completely to her student. She then completes her turn with an imperative

suggestion repeating her very same proposition with a stress on the verb *revise* in line 146, which

increases the illocutionary force of her direct suggestion. Surprisingly, the student agrees with

Maria by agreement token *yeah* in his next turn.

Excerpt 34:

```
138  S20:     I wish a::h they will read the a::h my paragraph with me and (smile)
139            I can't, I can't a::h say all the a::h
140  Maria:                                    is this how you read the books?
141            You read the book with the author because the author explains the
142            tricky parts you don't understand?
143  S20:     a::h but you know a::h before the author, there is the publisher and
144            they're many times write the paragraph.
145  Maria:   but that's your job. Revision and rewriting is your job. That's what
146            I keep telling you. Revise before submission.
147  S20:     yeah
148  Maria:   You know what we do for the midterm, (0.2) we read your midterm
149            together.
150  S20:     okay
151  Maria:   okay? We'll, we'll, I'll take your paper, we read your midterm
152            together during the week or next week, maybe on Monday, and you
153            have a look at how I try to understand your ideas, and when I don't
154            understand, you'll fill me in but it doesn't mean that the grade is
155            gonna change, okay?
156  S20:     okay.
157  Maria:   I'll tell you what I don't understand
158  S20:     Hmhm
159  Maria:   Okay? Deal?
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160 S20:   okay
161 Maria: Perfect. Okay. Any other questions?
162 S20:   No
163 Maria: okay so
164 S20:   thanks.
165 Maria: okay.

What goes on in Excerpt 34 between lines 147 and 165, as stated earlier, can be considered as a smooth transition to an upcoming final consensus between Maria and her student. Possibly facing no sign of any more resistance, Maria initiates a sequence signaling the end of this office hour interaction. Starting her turn with solicitation of input from her student (*you know what we do for the midterm*) in line 148, Maria offers to read his midterm together (*we read your midterm together* in lines 148-149). The clear uptake of the student is evident in his *okay* in line 150. Following this, Maria elaborates on the details of how to do the business of reading the student's midterm together between the lines 151 and 154, responding to her student's former *wish* statement in line 138. However, she sets the code of conduct (*but it doesn't mean that the grade is gonna change* in lines 154-155) followed by alerter *okay* for a confirmation check. At this point, Maria's offer is marked since she proposes to do something that she does not technically have to do. Such an offer is immediately confirmed by Maria's student (*okay* in line 156), and then they harmoniously finalize their decision of a collaborative reading of the student's midterm between the lines 157 and 161 right before they terminate the session.

Summary

In this chapter, I examined various discourse level strategies that the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students employed while attending to relational aspects of office hour interactions. The analysis of 38 interactions revealed that the instructors' and students' relational practices serve different interpersonal functions in co-constructing,

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maintaining, and negotiating their relationships. Relying on the functions of these discourse strategies, the forms of relational work were then presented as successful and problematic aspects of office hour interactions. Successful aspects included self-disclosure, justifications, encouragement, expression of feelings, jokes, and small talk. These discourse level strategies mainly contributed to harmony in office hour interactions, where one party initiated the relational act and the other responded to it positively, or both parties were involved in the act collectively. Problematic aspects, however, were only few cases and involved confrontational situations, such as student resistance.

Embracing a discourse analytic approach enabled me to analyze language use in several excerpts in which relational aspects were attended to. A closer examination of these excerpts showed that the types of relational work that were listed above very often connected to suggestion-response episodes appearing either before or after suggestions in these episodes. In other words, even though these relational practices might occur at any stages of office hour interactions (e.g. opening or closing but mostly in the body of interactions), most of the time they co-occur with the giving/receiving of suggestions. They are linked to several discourse level functions, such as seeking or showing solidarity and empathy, increasing or reducing social distance, constructing institutional identity, reducing the formality, as well as challenging the instructor's authority or institutional role.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

This final chapter presents the concluding remarks and discussion of findings in this study with regard to its contribution to the field. Additionally, methodological implications of the study as well as implications for Turkish EFL learners are articulated. Finally, the chapter ends with the limitations of the study and the recommendations for future research.

Several aspects of English language use in office hour interactions in an EFL context were the main focus in this study. The findings pertaining to the analysis of these interactions between the international instructors and Turkish EFL students were presented through Chapter 4 to 6. To briefly review the specific emphasis in research questions, I first examined the primary functions and topics that relate to these functions as well as how the nature of contributions by the participants might differ at office hour interactions. At this point, my goal was to link such discourse features to the topic or goal of the ongoing interaction. Then, I investigated the suggestions in these office hour interactions. In alignment with the theoretical framework, such examination into the speech act of suggestions allowed me to analyze both instructor-initiated and student-initiated suggestions, or self-suggestory acts by the students, in office hour interactions within the flow of actual talk. While examining these two types of suggestions in the dataset, I shifted the emphasis from utterance level realization to discourse level function of these suggestion realizations. The most crucial aspect of analyzing the suggestions in discourse was that the suggestion-response episodes are negotiated and co-constructed by the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students by assigning two parties as the actors in the process of

soliciting, giving, and accepting or rejecting the suggestions in office hour interactions. Finally, examining the data through the lens of relational work, I analyzed the manifestations of relational work between the international instructors and their Turkish students during successful and problematic cases by providing in-depth discourse analysis of these moments. The forms of relational work attended to by both parties under the successful aspects in office hour interactions included acts of self-disclosure, making justifications, giving encouragement, expressing feelings, making jokes, and initiating and participating in small talk. As for the problematic aspects, I analyzed one case of student resistance embedded in an entire office hour interaction –such cases were very rare in the dataset.

Primary Functions, Topics, and Discourse Organization

The first research question yielded three primary functions and a variety of topics that relate to these functions in office hour interactions. As stated by Limberg (2007, 2010), office hour interactions might yield a variety of topics depending on the university context. It was interesting to see that the interactions between Amelia and her students at TU were overwhelmingly about getting feedback on many aspects of their argumentative essay draft and academic writing conventions. These interactions seemed to be quite similar to writing tutorials as described in Thonus (1998a, 1998b, 1999), or one-to-one private lessons on academic writing. However, even though the other two instructors at CU offered similar courses during the study, their students had more varied reasons or purposes for office hour interactions that directly had impact on the topics. One reason for this difference in Amelia's office hours at TU might be related the online appointment system students used as stated before. Even though the student participants at CU were also supposed to make appointments or arrangements with their international instructors, CU was not as systematic or formal in implementing this practice as the

other research site (TU), and most of the time, the instructors at CU were flexible in their office hour scheduling. Therefore, the difference in systematicity or the degree of flexibility in scheduling office hour interactions might have had impact on the variety of the topics in each international instructor's office hours with Turkish EFL students.

I also discussed that most of the office hour interactions in the dataset involved multi-topics. In other words, topic shifts were quite common in office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. Additionally, the analysis of the data for the first research question demonstrated that the students typically shared certain concerns with the same instructor. The students' tendency to talk about speaking anxiety and cultural aspects with Mike, and language learning experiences as well as relevant exams with Maria and Amelia might also relate to each instructor's specific expertise or experiences. For example, the Turkish EFL students might have the perception that Mike was the best person to talk about speaking anxiety because he was not only offering a speaking-oriented course but also was a native speaker of English. Thus, the role of the international instructors' expertise, experiences, and additional institutional identities (e.g. Erasmus coordinator, in the case of Mike) as well as relationships with students, and their students' perceptions of these factors, proved to be influential in the content and function of office hour interactions. In other words, although office hour interactions are mainly motivated by the students' concerns, such factors might have an impact on why the students initiate office hour interactions with certain instructors. As presented in Chapter 3, even though one more international instructor at CU and his Turkish EFL students agreed to participate in the study, none of these students initiated any office hour interactions with the instructor. The extreme case of getting no data from that international instructor at CU

might also support this argument. In contrast, I did not encounter any problems getting data from the other three instructors and their students in this study.

A further observed difference among certain segments of office hour interactions was the nature and amount of contributions made by the international instructors and their Turkish students. The distinctive features in such discourse segments shed light onto how these discourse segments were organized, specifically with regard to turn-taking sequence and holding the floor, and how they were related to functions and topics. The two types of such discourse segments in office hour interactions were equal and unequal contributions, and constitute the *subgenres* identified in this study. Through the analysis of three excerpts, I presented that these two types of discourse segments had distinctive features depending on the interactional goals. In other words, the purpose or function of a certain office hour interaction (e.g. to give/receive feedback and information versus to negotiate academic or course-related concerns) had an impact on the co-construction of these equal and unequal contributions. The negotiation of a make-up class and clarification of course content in the first two excerpts, for instance, allowed these segments to be realized as equal contributions. However, having the transactional goal of delivering information resulted in one monologic turn (an example of an unequal contribution). Such unequal contributions typically took place when the international instructors relied on their expertise and were considered to be the source of information or solution. In other words, administrative matters led to negotiations by the participants whereas, request for information or feedback resulted in more extended turns. Whether equal or unequal, one important implication is that the linguistic choices, strategies, and several discourse features are various in such discourse segments and interrelated with the interactional goal or the function; and certain topics might yield or facilitate such discourse segments as discussed above. One such distinctive feature

was the turn-taking in office hour interactions. That is, as exemplified in the analysis of first and second excerpts, the frequent use of question-and-answer format was prevalent when such negotiations took place in equal contribution. Additionally, the analysis of an unequal contribution where Mike dominated the interactions revealed that the instructors use numerous strategies to deliver information while also displaying their expertise and constructing their institutional role as the party of 'more knowledgeable'. In that sense, the findings in this section corroborate with the expert-novice role and uneven distribution of knowledge among the instructors and students in institutional discourse (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 2001; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Locher, 2004) and office hour interactions as one such type (Nair-Brodeur, 1995; Reindhart, 2010). Finally, these two types of discourse segments are co-constructed by the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. Even in monologic interactions, it is the student who triggers the sequence by requesting information or seeking advice, and continuing to contribute minimally, as primarily a listener.

Suggestion-response Episodes

In Chapter 5, the findings with regard to the analysis of suggestion-response episodes were presented. Adopting the framework of relational work, this study examined both instructors' and students' suggestions, and thus the analysis of suggestions in office hour interactions appeared in two main categories: instructor-initiated suggestions and student-initiated suggestions. However, one striking finding was the difference between the number of suggestions made by the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. Even though it was my initial anticipation that suggestions are quite likely to take place in office hour interactions, the large number of this speech act in the dataset exceeded that expectation, specifically with regard to the instructor-initiated suggestions. The overall findings revealed that

95% of suggestions were produced by the instructors in the office hour dataset. Again, this was partially anticipated at the beginning of the study because students usually initiate office hour talk with their instructors to seek help, advice, or solution for their concerns. Yet, it was surprising to see the large amount of suggestions initiated by the international instructors within the interactions.

Moreover, examining suggestions through the lens of relational work allowed me to take into account how the hearers responded to these suggestions in the ongoing interactions. As Locher (2004) puts it, the decision of whether an utterance is perceived polite or appropriate depends on the hearer's interpretation and it is the hearer "who judges the relational aspect of an utterance" regarding his/her own understanding or perception of norms, frames, and expectations (p. 90). Thus, by analyzing the suggestion-response episodes with a focus on the speaker and hearer, this study showed that the giving and receiving of suggestions is a co-constructed and negotiated speech activity. This co-constructed and negotiated nature of these suggestion-response episodes involved several acts, such as request for help, initiation of the suggestions, accepting or negotiating the suggestions.

Further analysis of instructor-initiated suggestions in office hour interactions demonstrated that the international instructors utilized various linguistic choices while giving suggestions to their Turkish EFL students. Previous research on suggestions also focused on the frequency, type, directness and indirectness, mitigation strategies, and social variables in in different institutional discourse, such as office hours (Jiang, 2006, Reinhardt, 2010), academic writing tutorials (Thonus, 1998a, 1998b, 1999), and advising sessions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990, 1993). However, in order to understand the relational aspect of suggestions and how the hearer responds to them requires examination of larger sequences of discourse, as

emphasized by Locher (2004). In that sense, this study contributes to the existing body of literature by showing how suggestion-response episodes are co-constructed by the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, and how certain linguistic formulation might fulfill various functions in these episodes.

The findings in Chapter 5 demonstrated that modality as the most frequent linguistic category (39%) played an important role in the formulation of instructor-initiated suggestions. In other words, while fulfilling their institutional role of helping their students find solutions to their academic concerns, the international instructors used modals and semi-modals more often than other linguistic choices. The further analysis of this category in suggestion-response episodes revealed that the international instructors fulfilled a variety of functions (e.g. providing alternative ways as a solution, emphasizing expectations or requirements for assignments/tasks/projects, expressing outcomes of a future actions, or suggesting a future action, etc.) while making suggestions with modals and semi-modals. Depending on their interactional goals, they utilized various forms of these modals and semi-modals to express possibility, obligation, certainty and uncertainty, and hypotheticality. As presented previously, suggestions with modals and semi-modals are categorized as conventionally indirect in the relevant literature (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988; Koike, 1994; Martinez-Flor, 2005) since the illocutionary force of suggestion is evident in the utterance modified by the use of modality. However, rather than the linguistic form merely, it is the communicative or interactional goals of office hour interactions that determined the instructors' choice of modals and semi-modals. The analysis of five excerpts in Chapter 5 indicated that these interactional goals the international instructors wished to fulfill through their suggestions had impact on the use of certain modal (e.g. *can* for giving options and telling what to do as an alternative way to follow). Yet, the

instructors did not hesitate to express necessity, requirements, and expectations for their students by using semi-modals *have to* and *need to*, specifically when they constructed and delivered their expert role by giving suggestions.

Another significant finding with regard to instructor-initiated suggestions was the use of imperatives as the second most frequent linguistic category (28% among other types of instructor-initiated suggestions). Imperatives are regarded as the most direct linguistic category in the realization of suggestions (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Hinkel, 1997; Martinez-Flor, 2005). In that sense, the significant amount of instructor-initiated suggestions in the form of imperatives demonstrated that directness is a social norm in office hour interactions in this study. Specifically, when considered the Turkish EFL students' agreement or acceptance of these suggestions most of the time, the direct form of giving suggestions is an appropriate behavior or the expectation from the hearers' perspectives. As the analysis of Excerpt 9 showed, one typical way of using imperative suggestions was to encourage students with regard to their language-related problems. Similarly, the international instructors also utilized imperatives in the dataset to find immediate solutions to their students' concerns, explicate procedures, and summarize the preceding talk for a comprehension check. Therefore, imperative forms of suggestions in this study were being used as 'face-enhancing', rather than face-threatening, types of directives. The analysis of imperatives then provides insights into functional aspect of this direct form of suggestions offering that directness might actually be a strategy to seek solidarity or involvement in some communities. The findings here align with what Fraser (1990) asserts in his sociocultural views of politeness and directness since the understanding and accepted degree of directness might differ relying on the social norms or expectation in speech communities and also the content of the utterance.

As stated earlier, adopting the perspective of relational work in this study, the analysis included the suggestion realizations by both participants groups. Thus, the findings revealed that the students also contributed to the co-construction of suggestion-response episodes by providing suggestions. With regard to these student-initiated suggestions, or their *self-suggestory acts* in this study, the main difference was the beneficiary of the suggestion. In other words, the students actually contributed to the problem-solving process in office hour interactions by making suggestions for their own sake. When we consider the goal-oriented and/or task-oriented nature of office hour interactions, these student-initiated suggestions were actually an enactment of their institutional role as the help/advice/information/feedback-seekers in office hour interactions. Even though the number of such *self-suggestory acts* was quite low, which is not surprising giving the asymmetrical distribution of power and expert-novice relationship between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students. Therefore, the analysis of these *self-suggestory acts* in office hour discourse and how the Turkish EFL students used them in congruent with their status in these interactions is a novel contribution of this study to the field of interlanguage pragmatics. Even though these students are non-native speakers of English, they were able to produce suggestions for their own academic concerns in alignment with their novice role in office hour interactions (e.g. the use of interrogatives to get approval from the instructors). Additionally, although the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students come from different L1 and cultural backgrounds, their shared background knowledge with regard to social and institutional context enabled them to co-construct almost always 'smooth' instances of intercultural communication.

The analysis of *self-suggestory acts* also demonstrated that the Turkish EFL students used modals and interrogatives much more frequently than other linguistic choices. In their study of

advising sessions, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) framed suggestions with the notion of status-congruence delineating that suggestions are status-congruent for advisors whereas they do not match with the students' status in advising sessions. The study concluded that nonnative speaker students did not utilized status-preserving strategies as often as the native speaker students in advising sessions. However, the findings with regard to *self-suggestory acts* in this study do not support what Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) assert since it was a common practice for the Turkish EFL students to seek approval or confirmation, or even permission from their instructors while also making suggestions. Similar to instructor-initiated suggestions, the use of modals and interrogatives was prevalent in their *self-suggestory acts* in office hour dataset in this study but for quite different interactional goals that comply with their status.

Additionally, both the Turkish EFL students and their international instructors in this study modified their suggestions in various ways. Mitigation and boosting appeared in both instructor-initiated and student-initiated suggestions. Even though the two facets of modification were evident in the dataset, it was mitigation through hedging that played an important role in suggestions in office hour interactions. Both groups of participants utilized various hedges to display hesitation or uncertainty, and thus to attenuate the illocutionary force of their suggestions. Specifically the analysis of Excerpt 13 demonstrated how the student could utilize various hedging devices to show his hesitation and uncertainty not only to soften the imposition of his suggestion but also seek confirmation from his instructor. In that sense, the findings once more demonstrate that the students were able to modify their suggestions with the use of status-congruent strategies. Similarly, mitigation through hedging in instructor-initiated suggestions revealed that the international instructors despite their higher status in office hour interactions

attended to their Turkish EFL students' face needs by lowering the imposition on their suggestions.

Finally, repetitions played an important role in suggestion-response episodes by appearing in the dataset quite often. The analysis of these episodes involved self-repetitions and allo-repetitions employed by the international instructors and Turkish EFL students. Both types of these repetitions were utilized for various purposes contributing to the ongoing interaction at different levels. The participants, for example, displayed tendency to repeat themselves in order to add emphasis, expand their meaning by adding new information, and/or endorse their agreement. Likewise, allo-repetitions of the international instructors and Turkish EFL students demonstrated their efforts to orient to the other party, show acceptance or agreement, and assure comprehension in the flow of interactions. Thus, the use of repetitions contributed tremendously to the co-construction of suggestion-response episodes harmoniously functioning mainly as showing and seeking agreement or alignment.

Successful and Problematic Aspects

The third and final research question in this study delved into the instantiations of how the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students pursued relational work in office hour interactions. Participants displayed their competence to initiate, pursue, and manage interpersonal aspects of authentic talk at such academic settings. I examined both successful and problematic aspects of relational work.

With regard to the types of relational work considered successful, the overarching tendency was for both parties of participants in this study to harmoniously co-construct the sequences of relational work in office hour interactions. Using various discourse strategies, they were able to create and contribute to the interpersonal functions of office hour interactions. As

presented in Chapter 6, these successfully performed layers of relational work in this study were

self-disclosure, justifications, expressing various feelings, jokes, and small talk. The analysis of

these manifestations of relational work in this study was important for its role in understanding

sociopragmatics of office hour interactions specifically on the part of the Turkish EFL students

in this study. Even though these students had several issues in their use of English language in

terms of accuracy, as it was reflected in the excerpts and transcriptions, they demonstrated their

pragmatic competence by successfully contributing to the ongoing interaction with their

international instructors. The analysis of excerpts with regard to the successful aspects presented

the harmony, orientation to each other, and mutual contributions between the international

instructors and Turkish EFL students on their way to co-constructing and maintaining their

relationships. Finally, the examples of relational work in the shape of successful aspects revealed

the accepted cultural norms while attending to interpersonal aspects in office hour interactions in

this study. In other words, the Turkish EFL students as well as their international instructors

showed their ability to enact the interpersonal, or relational, aspects of office hour interactions

while co-constructing and maintaining their relationships and institutional roles. Koester (2004)

asserts that "a relational turn or sequence can occur at virtually any point in the discourse, as

long as it is seen as relevant in some way to the task at hand" (p.1422). The analysis of various

instances of relational work in excerpts confirms this assertion in the sense that most of the

examples for successful aspects were closely linked to the giving and receiving of suggestions in

office hour interactions.

Furthermore, the findings presented in Chapter 6 also revealed the problematic aspects of

office hour interactions. However, the types of relational work considered problematic in this

study was quite rare, with only two instances of student resistance in the entire dataset. The in-

depth analysis of one of these student resistance case involved several indications with regard to the use of language in the formation and management of such a challenging situation. Being involved in a co-constructed communicative activity, both parties showed their abilities to negotiate their meaning through iterative phases of resistance. One striking aspect of this example was the purposeful use of contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1992), such as sudden increase in stress, pitch, and intonation, which plays a crucial role in creating and managing resistance in office hour discourse.

Methodological Implications

It is often a challenge to plan, design, and conduct a large-scale study especially if it is a qualitative one. Even if a researcher has the most fine-grained research plan for the study, it is the actual experience of conducting research that creates a genuine training and learning process during which one comes to an understanding why to do things in certain ways and/or why not to do so. Not until I was actually involved in the process did I realize the role or importance of certain methodological components in this study. Therefore, there are three main methodological aspects of this study that I may have implications for future studies of pragmatic competence. These are the use of naturally occurring data, the process of transcription of the data, and the size of data in such discourse analytic studies.

The type of data has always been a controversy or lead to some discussions in favor of one type in the field of pragmatics. Literature on pragmatic competence mainly involved elicited versus natural data. The elicited data utilized in pragmatics was primarily DCTs to investigate the production of various speech acts (Gass & Neu, 1996; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper & Dahl, 1991). However, more recent discussions with regard to research on pragmatic competence highlight the role of using naturally occurring data to investigate how L2 speakers

actually perform in real communication (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005; Golato, 2003; Koester, 2002, 2004). Having had prior experience working with the elicited type of data (e.g. discourse completion tests) in pragmatics, I had the opportunity to compare and reflect on these two types of data sources although the researcher's purpose should determine data sources used (Cohen, 2005; Golato, 2003).

Working with authentic interactions, in my opinion, was a completely genuine and truly *applied* experience. Using naturally occurring data and analyzing 38 office hour interactions revealed the subtleties of English language use by the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students, which I believe would have been very different than elicited data from a discourse analytic perspectives, and proved to be more than sufficient resource to understand how interlocutors make meaning through their language use. By closely examining certain features, I was able to raise my own awareness of and realize many things about actual communication that we usually take for granted. The analysis of the data was meaningful and relevant because the data came from a real communicative activity between the instructors and students in the two university contexts.

That said, the use of naturally occurring data in the study of pragmatic competence is one of the major methodological implications in this study. One relevant aspect to the use of such data is the consideration of how record these interactions. In other words, as it has been presented in Chapter 3, audio-recording the office hour interactions was preferred in this study because the focus was primarily on verbal communication because there is already enough to study in the ongoing talk itself. Using video-recordings will obviously contribute to our understanding of social interaction and how non-verbal contributes to the talk. However, it will also bring numerous complexities not only in the analysis but also with regard to procedures to

follow. As stated above, the talk itself constitutes a sufficiently rich source to understand how interlocutors use language in such authentic interactions.

The second methodological component that I wish to highlight relying on my experience is the process of transcribing the office hour interactions. It is again another major methodological implication of this study that discourse analysis researchers must describe their own data. As stated in the methodology section, transcribing the audio-recording data means turning these recordings into a text, which was the main data source in this study. Therefore, this process of turning the data into texts allows the researcher to familiarize herself/himself to what is happening in the ongoing talk. In this study, for instance, the while- and post-transcribing stages throughout the transcription process allowed me to have a full understanding of the dataset. As Edwards (2003) puts it, transcribing the data is an open-ended process, and plays a key role to recurrently listen to the data throughout the study and make revisions to the transcriptions. Going through the entire process of transcribing, repetitive listening, and going back and forth to check and see if the abovementioned features or details were reflected accurately in the transcription constituted one of the core stages of this study. In my opinion, this kind of an ongoing interaction with the data is essential for the researchers conducting discourse studies, and indeed forms a basis for the analysis and write-up stages. Being involved in these stages also facilitates internal consistency by allowing the researcher to self-check through repeated activities.

Several researchers present or argue the principles and aspects to consider (e.g. format, content, etc.) while transcribing the audio-recorded data in spoken discourse research (Du Bois, 1991; Edwards, 2003; Ochs, 1979). These researchers also underline the main tenets of the transcription process. Ochs (1979), for instance, defines transcription as "a selective process

reflecting theoretical goals and definitions" (p.44). In other words, it is the researcher who

should be deciding what format to follow, what features of spoken data to include, and how

much detail to provide in the transcription. In my experience, since the data came from an

academic setting in an EFL context, it was easier than transcribing an everyday conversation

where people use more colloquial language. I decided to create verbatim transcriptions of

recording because it was necessary to examine the entire office hour interactions to fully answer

the research questions in this study. However, selectivity in this process came into play while

determining what features of data to include. Again, since discourse features, such as overlap,

interruptions, pauses, false starts, laughter, prosody, etc., were vital components of data analysis

in this study, all these discourse elements were included in the transcriptions.

Finally, one important methodological implication in this study is related to the size of

the data in discourse analytic studies, and it would be reasonable to say that bigger is not always

better. As explained in Chapter 3, the office hour interactions in this study, specifically in

Amelia's case at TU, started to repeat themselves by yielding the same topics or content.

Additionally, I was able to identify overarching trends with regard to suggestion realizations as

the main focus in this study, which means data saturation was reached at some point of data

collection process (e.g. when 38 interactions were recorded). Therefore, in discourse analysis, it

is usually not the size or amount of the data but the understanding of language use in social

context within the scope of the research questions.

Implications for Turkish EFL Learners

Previous research on the pragmatic ability or competence of L2 learners has traditionally

focused on either cross-cultural comparisons or miscommunication in intercultural

communication to delineate the differences in nonnative speakers' English language use when

compared to native speakers (Axelson & Madden, 1994; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Beebe et al., 1990; Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Davies & Tyler, 2005; Kreutel, 2007; Nelson et al., 2002). Investigating both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic issues in L2 production or communication by speakers of English with various L1 backgrounds, these studies mainly focused on patterns of speech act realizations and sociopragmatic variation from the perspectives of cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), pragmatic transfer (Beebe et al., 1990; Chang, 2009) and variation or cross-cultural differences in speech act realization (Kreutel, 2007, Nelson et al., 2002), lack of status-congruent strategies and initiation of suggestions by nonnative speakers in advising sessions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990), inability to utilize context-specific discourse and interactional styles and strategies (Axelson & Madden, 1994), problematic exchanges or miscommunication in office hours (Chiang, 2011; Chiang & Mi, 2008; Davies & Tyler, 2005; Tyler & Davies, 1990). Being informed by these previous findings with nonnative speakers of English and L2 learners, my anticipation before conducting this study was that the Turkish EFL students might have similar pragmatic issues in office hour interactions with their international instructors. As institutionally designated learners (because they still take English language-based courses in their first year), the Turkish EFL students were considered to be likely to encounter pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic problems while interacting in English with their international instructors. Additionally, in alignment with the discussion of EFL education in Turkey in Chapter 1, I again anticipated that the Turkish EFL students in this study might experience difficulty in authentic interactions in English. However, the analysis of various excerpts in Chapter 4 to 6 revealed that the Turkish EFL students were able to contribute significantly to the co-construction of office hour interactions in this study.

In alignment with the discussion on the use of naturally occurring data in the previous section, office hour interactions represent a real communicative activity in university settings. With its dynamic and authentic nature, examples from such type of institutional and academic discourse might create opportunities for EFL learners at universities to use English language for real-life purposes and outcomes. The study demonstrated that both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students were able to make contributions to the ongoing office hour interactions. When we consider the analysis of equal and unequal contributions in Chapter 4, the findings provided evidence for how specifically the Turkish EFL students displayed ability to attend to their communicative goals in these contributions. Being involved in a negotiation of a make-up class (Excerpt 1) and a negotiation of meaning in relation to course-content (Excerpt 2), the Turkish EFL students co-constructed equal contributions in office hour interactions. Even though the amount of equally contributing to the ongoing talk was much less than unequal contributions in the dataset, it was the Turkish EFL students who acknowledged to be passive receivers of information or feedback from their instructors depending on their purpose for coming to the office hours (Excerpt 3). Yet, they showed their engagement in listenership during such unequal contributions with minimal response tokens (Farr, 2003).

As the analysis of excerpts in Chapter 5 in this study showed, the act of suggesting in discourse is complex involving certain patterns and linguistic choices and requiring both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence on the part of the instructors and students in this study. In that sense, even though the instructor-initiated suggestions were abundant and directness in these suggestions seemed to be norm very often, the Turkish EFL students were able to give self-suggestions when they needed to do so. Utilizing modality and interrogative forms of these self-suggestory acts, they tended to seek confirmation or approval from their

international instructors in suggestion-response episodes. This also displayed the Turkish EFL students' pragmatic ability to co-construct these suggestion-response episodes in this study. Specifically, the analysis of Excerpt 13 exemplified how a Turkish EFL student could mitigate his suggestion of offering an English for specific purpose class so that they could understand content-based English in their undergraduate courses through the use of various hedging devices.

Finally, the analysis of office hour interactions between the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in this study demonstrated that both parties were successfully involved in various forms of relational work. The analysis of self-disclosure (Excerpts 22 and 23), for instance, demonstrated that the Turkish EFL student participated in an act of mutual self-disclosure only after her instructor initiated the instance. In addition, the example of joking in Excerpt 28 displayed the ability of a Turkish EFL student in inserting humor into the task of giving/receiving feedback during office hour interactions. Finally, following a suggestion-response episode towards the end of an interaction, the initiation of small talk in Excerpt 29 exemplified how student participants could attend to interpersonal or relational aspects of office hour interactions in this study. However, the findings also provided evidence for problematic aspects of office hour interactions through a case analysis where one of the Turkish EFL students performed resistance to course requirements and expectations. However, such instances were only a small segment of the total dataset.

Limitations of the Study

In this section, my goal is to highlight the limitations, or some challenging aspects, of conducting a study such as this. First of all, the proposed number of the participating international instructors was originally 4-6. However, the actual number of participants in this study was three international instructors with their Turkish EFL students. As explained in the

methodology chapter, no data came from one of the international instructor and his students at CU even though they agreed to participate. Similarly, two out of three international instructors at TU did not follow up with the study procedures even though they gave their consent initially. Therefore, the study was carried out with 3 international instructors and their Turkish EFL students at two research sites. Although the data for each set of instructor-student interactions appeared to reach data saturation by repeating itself (Ary et al., 2010), the number of participants and interactions per research site was not equal. Having three instructors resulted in involving one male and two female instructors, which might relate to the role of gender differences in communicative styles. The odd number of international instructors also led to having one native speaker and two nonnative speakers of English, and this might also relate to their specific linguistic choices and conversation styles in office hour interactions.

Additionally, the primary data source in this study was office hour interactions and thus the main focus was this type of discourse-based data in the study. However, the study also involved two secondary data sources that were anticipated to inform my understanding and interpretations of the primary data. While the use of secondary data (classroom observations and post-hoc questionnaires) was helpful and facilitative for the data analysis, they were relevant only at some points for answering the research questions. The use of classroom observation notes were, for instance, only limited to the analysis of the first research question. Even though classroom observation notes yielded certain patterns and use of linguistic strategies (e.g. the use of questions), it was not possible to incorporate the data source with the analysis of office hour excerpts.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this section of the chapter, the purpose is to come to a conclusion by offering future directions to be investigated relying the findings and interpretations in this study. The analysis of 38 office hour interactions showed that both groups of participants use various linguistic strategies to co-construct suggestion-response episodes and also attend to interpersonal or relational aspects throughout the interactions. Adopting the framework of relational work to explore pragmatic competence in office hour interactions, this study might pave the way for prospective research endeavors, specifically in EFL context.

The opportunities to be engaged in authentic interactions in English are often quite limited for EFL learners because of the role of the language. Therefore, further research on such real communicative activities as office hour interactions will be useful to understand additional aspects of English language use in these interactions. The findings for the first research question, for instance, revealed that specific discourse segments of office hour interactions might become equally or unequally contributed depending on the participants' turn distribution, volubility, and linguistic strategies employed. The analysis of Excerpt 3 between Mike and his student exemplified how office hour interaction might become monologic, in which one party keeps the floor and dominates the interaction. However, from the perspective of relational work, this was interpreted not necessarily related to the status difference between the instructors and students but the transactional goal and students' expectation to be provided information from experts. In further research, the notion of power in office hour discourse in EFL context can be studied from a discursive perspective in much detail, which asserts that participants negotiate the notion of power, and their language use in office hour discourse reveals the nature of such negotiations. This aspect of office hour interactions has been partially focused in this study, and the analysis of

excerpts tended to show that the international instructors' power was mostly related to their expert role that became relevant according to what is being discussed in the office hour interactions. Further research on this aspect of office hour interactions will be useful to understand if the notion of power is negotiated in a similar way in different university settings.

The main focus in this study was on suggestion-response episodes and the analysis of the dataset indicated that both the international instructors and Turkish EFL students used various linguistic forms in giving and receiving suggestions. Embracing the framework of relational work to explore pragmatic competence and suggestion realizations in office hour discourse enabled me to consider both parties' language use and how they co-construct suggestion-response episodes in these authentic interactions. The analysis of these suggestion-response episodes from a discourse analytic approach also showed that several other linguistic features co-occur in the giving and receiving of suggestions. In other words, office hour interactions constitute a rich source of data in terms of investigating language use. For future research directions, the main focus can be shifted to these other linguistic features for a further understanding of language use in office hour discourse in EFL context. Additionally, the study of pragmatic competence and linguistic politeness from a similar theoretical framework can be conducted in other types of academic and institutional discourse at EFL universities.

Another focus in this study was on successful and problematic aspects in office hour interactions and how participants contributed to such aspects by attending various forms of relational work. The analysis of the dataset demonstrated that the types of relational work both parties initiated and participated mostly contributed to the success of office hour interactions although there were few cases where the participants involved in confrontational situations. A further study of such manifestations of relational work between the participants in EFL context

will be useful in order to explore the role of English language use and how participants maintain and negotiate their relationships. As discussed earlier in this study, how participants attend the forms of relational work relies on their expectations and perceptions of their social roles and the communicative activity they participate in, which is situated in the social context. Therefore, understanding relational work in office hour interactions might also be studied from a cross-cultural perspective by comparing how Turkish EFL students attend to types of relational work in English as their foreign language and Turkish as their native language, and what some similarities and/or differences between these two sets of interactions. How do they, for example, enact relational work with their Turkish instructors in Turkish? What types of social acts are both Turkish instructors and students engaged in during their office hours? How is this similar to or different from the forms of relational work between international instructors and Turkish EFL students?

Finally, these abovementioned expectations and perceptions of both instructors and students can be explored in more detail by using different data sources for an in-depth qualitative analysis. As stated before, the expectations and perceptions of participants play a key role in how they use language and what kind of relational work takes place in office hour interactions. It might be a fruitful research direction to use retrospective interviews after office hour interactions take place. By using such reflective data source, further research will enable us how both parties perceive their own and each other's roles in office hour interactions as well as the goals, constraints, and expectations.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Overview of Speech Act and Politeness Research

Author & Year	Participants/Setting	Methodology	Main Findings	Notes
Dalton-Puffer (2005)	six CLIL lessons where English is the medium of learning subjects	discourse analysis	The findings pertaining to directives/requesting behavior in Austrian CLIL lessons show that: - students receive great amount of indirect and modified requests; -requestive goals are influential in directness/indirectness and linguistic strategies; -directives in CLIL classrooms show linguistic variety but the fixed distribution of roles does not allow students to utter directives themselves.	The main focus is on the realization of directive speech acts. The scheme by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Trosborg (1995) has been used.
DeCapua & Dunham (1993)	over a 3-year period by recording and transcribing radio advice programs 10 telephone conversations	qualitative: discourse analysis	Implicit or vague requests for advice, or nor requests at all, have been identified in the data. The callers' narratives functioned as clarification or background information for the problem. There were differences in interactional strategies depending on the roles: 1. Advice seekers employed interactional strategies of explanation, elaboration, and narration; 2. Advice givers employed different strategies (e.g. restatement, confirmation, etc.) to develop and maintain the conversation. Major roles of advice-givers were to help advice seekers clarify their problems and sort through their options; and either to confirm or offer advice.	The researchers adopted Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford's two stages of advising sessions: the diagnostic & directive.
Ervin-Tripp (1976)	data from students' term papers reporting on interactions in family; office, hospital, and laboratory interactions; hamburger and tobacco		six types of directives are identified in the data (need statements, imperatives, imbedded imperatives, permission directives, question directives, and hints)	

	shops; students' dining halls and adult education classes, etc.			
Flores-Ferrán (2010)	a case study from a larger data in a university medical facility two 45-min interactions between a 43-year old Puerto Rican male and a therapist	mixed method	Several speech acts were identified in the data (e.g. providing instructions, voicing frustration, presenting threat, surrendering, expressing conflict, receiving criticism, expressing doubt, complaining, and accusing) The findings also suggest a variety of mitigation strategies and indirect speech in the data (e.g. plural inclusive form, alternations with zero subject, repetitions (as indirectness), adverbials, colloquial phrases, a hedge, etc.) Mitigation devices (MD) in the data include parenthetical verbs, hedges, bushes, shields, episdemic disclaimers, time deixis in verb mood, redundant verb clauses The most frequent three MDs are time deixis, parenthetical verbs, and shields whereas hedges, tag questions, an epistemic disclaimers are the least frequent ones.	

Koester (2002)	a corpus of 66 conversations between colleagues at work
	
	recordings of university offices, editorial offices of publishers, and sales and accounts offices of small business
	
	several everyday workplace tasks (e.g. Giving instructions, making arrangements, briefing or joint problem-solving
		qualitative: a discourse approach	The findings related to performatives in direct speech acts and metalanguage indicate that:
			  -explicit performatives are unusual in co-workers' office talk (only in problematic/ conflictual conversations)
			  -metalinguistic verbs and nouns are used to state the communicative function of the utterance
			  -performatives and metalanguage serve as 'frames' at the beginning
			
			In workplace conversations:
			  -advice-giving has a certain pattern (advice+accept+ evaluation) with various indirect linguistic strategies
			  -directive discourse involves a large number of modal construction, imperatives, and	

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			formulations to ensure meaning
			
			Also, some implications are:
			  -different speech acts generate different discourse patterns and linguistic choices
			  -learners need more accurate instances of varying speech acts and opportunity/ exposure to practice different types of conversations
			  -speech act instruction should be based on discourse types/genres.	

the company president (in his office) and 2 managers (subordinates)				
Koester (2004)	same data with Koester (2002)	qualitative: a discourse approach	Relational sequences are most frequently take place at the end of an encounter, and the most common genre is 'making arrangements'. Interlocutors should make relational talk relevant to the topic or task at hand. Relational sequences incorporate positive evaluation, humorous remarks, appreciation (or interpersonal involvement and solidarity), etc. Relational talk could also function as identity negotiation.	

Ladegaard (2012)	1 hour and 50 minutes business meeting
	
	6 key personnel (manager, supervisor, and sales assistant)
	
	all are from Hong Kong and China
			The data has included;
			  -open display of insensitive comment by two female leaders (e.g. invasion of her colleagues, private talk and blatant rudeness with face-threatening intention)
			  -code-switching to claim a professional identity
			  -joking back or humor as 'on record with redressive action' strategy as well as a mitigating device
			  -jocular and mock insult as examples of instrumental rudeness
			  -reprimands and swear word to show toughness	

			and masculinized identity as well as a way of doing solidarity -a warning in the middle of a meeting, and the case of expletives intensifying FTA and female leaders' unmitigated masculine management style	
Marra (2012)	ongoing project with skilled migrants in workplace interaction in New Zealand recordings during internship	a case study approach	The findings reveal; -multiple repetitions by the New Zealandinian colleague as a source of authority (conflict resolution though authority) -extensive arguments to come to the same point (conflict resolution through negotiation) Also, the disagreement serve only to create better understanding of the status quo and reluctance to engage in a disagreement (conflict avoidance) The use of humor is used as a mitigated refusal	The analysis is data-driven, rooted in interactional sociolinguistics, and integrates social constructionist paradigm. COP framework has been used.
Saito (2011)	data from a dental laboratory in Tokyo area 30 hours of recordings for two months of summer 2006	Discourse analysis	The study indicates that directives sometimes involve confrontation and extended negotiation in male superiors and subordinates workplace communication. Subordinates challenge their superiors when they refuse their superiors' directives OR when they fail to perform their directives immediately. Superiors usually have direct and addressee-oriented interactional styles.	e.g. Both superiors and subordinates use linguistic resources strategically to showcase their contestive positions but later when interaction unfold, superiors mitigate their directives to get subordinates, compliance

Stubbe et al. (2003)	data from the Language in the Workplace project at Victoria University
	
	9-minute excerpt from a meeting between two people in a NZ workplace
		multiple discourse analysis	Complaints like some other speech acts are face-threatening and involve several politeness strategies:
			 -the interlocutor who is engaged in complaining uses negative politeness strategies such as minimizing imposition and giving deference
			  -hedging and indirectness is evident in negative politeness
			  -the superior interlocutor uses positive politeness strategies such as reinforcing the hearer's positive face and giving gifts to the
				The researchers also analyze the same data with four more different approaches to discourse analysis (conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistic, critical discourse analysis, and discursive psychology).

			hearer (e.g. sympathy or understanding, etc.) Interlocutors' choice of (super)strategies is congruent with their power and status relationship	

Vine (2009)	data from the Wellington Language in the Workplace Project corpus
	
	3 managers in two government departments in New Zealand (managers-subordinates in one-to-one interactions)
	
	47 interactions (422 minutes)
		qualitative: a discourse approach	The study investigates aspects of social context and effect on speech acts and directives:
			  -status differences/social distance has a salient role in both the manager's & subordinates' contributions to the interaction
			  -the majority of directive language has been observed in problem-solving and task allocation interaction
			  -the manager uses explicit directives with the temporary executive assistant whereas his directives are implicit with the permanent executive assistant.
			
			Overall discourse also include imperatives and less forceful forms such as modal interrogatives:
			   -imperatives takes place (i) at the end of a long discussion (e.g. problem-solving); (ii) when there are multiple tasks (typical of task allocations); (iii) when directly elicited; and (iv) in the case of now (immediate directness)
			   *directives with lower level of force took place when a directive is (i)isolated; (ii) when there is a high level of imposition; and (iii) when a different approach is being suggested.	

Williams (2005)	10 writing center sessions 4 tutors, 2 native English writers, and three L2 writers	discourse analysis	Modality can both mitigate and augment the forces of directives Tutors uses language to both exert authority and reduce status difference as it pertains to their ambiguous roles (e.g. use of aggravators and mitigators). Writers make requests only when they are authorized to do so by the tutor. Writers rarely reject tutors' suggestions, usually	

			with mitigation (e.g. downgrader or an excuses/explanations). Tutors' responses to writers' rejection can vary from acceptance of challenge, gentle refusal, and mild anger.	

Yates (2005)	18 participants of Anglo-Australian background (AB) and Chinese background (CB)
	
	audio- and video-recordings of two teaching sessions as a part of their initial teacher training qualification
		discourse analysis	The study explores commonalities and differences in mitigating style:
			  -language background and gender influence the mitigation of directives (e.g. participants with AB use mitigations more frequently than those with CB, and females mitigate more than males in each group)
			  -Groups also show variance in the frequency of four different mitigation categories
			  -There is also individual variation in the use of mitigation strategies by participants of the same language and gender
			  -Mitigation styles (e.g. solidarity, social distance, imposition, etc.) also vary among groups
			The findings pertaining to variation among the AB participants show that;
			  -AB participants are different in their use of forms and devices and the degree of social distance
			  -variation seem to be motivated by gender, discipline background, context, and individual factors related to how they negotiate their identities as teachers.
			The findings pertaining to variation among the CB participants show that;
			  -likewise, CB participants seem to be motivated by the similar factors in their variation
			  -they are also constraint by the socialization process to the culture, norms, social relations, etc. as well as their linguistic and pragmalinguistic competence in English
				The purpose of the study is to investigate and compare the verbal mitigation of directives among two groups of speakers: those who were grown up and educated in Australia and those in China.

Appendix B: IRB Approval Letter

USF
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA

RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

6/11/2015

Hatime Ciftci, M.A.
Teaching and Learning
13103C National Drive
Tampa, FL   33617

RE: **Expedited Approval for Amendment**
IRB#: Ame3_Pro00016851
Title: Pragmatic Competence in EFL Context: Suggestions in University Office Hour Discourse

Dear Ms. Ciftci:

On 6/9/2015, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** your
Amendment. The submitted request has been approved for the following:

Increased enrollment

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University
of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any
questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board

Appendix C: Short Summary for Recruitment Purposes

Principal Investigator: Hatime Ciftci (hatime@mail.usf.edu)

USF IRB Study #: Pro00016851

Study Title: Pragmatic Competence in EFL Context: Suggestions in University Office Hour Discourse

Overall Purpose and Significance: The purpose of this study is to explore English language use in office hour interactions between international instructors and their Turkish EFL students in Turkey. One communicative activity where EFL learners use English is their office hour interactions with the international instructors. The interactions in university-level office hours are usually dyadic because they take place between a professor/instructor and a student, and it is important to examine English language use for several reasons. First, they are also heterogeneous in nature with varying goals (e.g. signing forms, advising students, etc.), and topics. Second, effective one-to-one communication in this type of speech event is influenced by such variations and contextually situated. Consequently, the dynamics of office hours involves certain communicative skills specifically on both parties (instructors and students). Therefore, it is the main focus of this study to examine how both international instructors and their Turkish EFL learners as first-year undergraduate students use English language in their office hour interactions. By studying English language use of Turkish EFL students in office hours, this study will contribute to research on pragmatic competence in authentic interactions or naturally occurring conversations with a specific focus on their suggestion strategies, and contribute to the understanding of linguistic politeness in a certain discourse community. Also, the study will provide several pedagogical implications that will probably contribute to EFL education in Turkey.

Methodology: If the international instructors and their Turkish EFL students take part in this study, they will be asked to be audio-recorded while they are talking to each other during office hours. The number of office hour recordings will depend on the students' own choice of coming to talk to the professors. After the office hour visit, both the instructors and students will be given a post-interaction questionnaire that consists of three parts. It will take around ten minutes to complete it. Finally, there will be classroom observations in the participating instructors' classrooms during data collection process. Both the students and professors will be given additional information and informed consent form if they volunteer to participate in this study.

Please choose the appropriate one according to your decision:

☐ Agree to participate
☐ Don't agree to participate

Appendix D: Post-interaction Questionnaires

POST-INTERACTION QUESTINNAIRE FOR INSTRUCTORS

The purpose of this survey is to get some background knowledge about you and gain insights into your office hour experience with your student. Please provide answers for the following questions and use the back page if needed. **All the information will be kept confidential.**

Part I. Demographic Information

1. Country of Origin:
2. Native Language: Any other language(s):

3. Area of specialization: (BA & MA degrees)
4. Department/Program:
5. How long have you been teaching?

6. Courses Taught in the last 2 years:

7. How long have you been in Turkey?

8. How long have you been working at this university?

Part II: Office Hour Experience

9. What was the purpose of office hour meeting today?

10. How did it go? What was specifically successful and problematic about the office hour meeting with your student?

11. How often do your students come to your office hour? Why do they usually come?

12. What do you think about today's interaction between you and your student? How do you feel?

POST-INTERACTION QUESTINNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

The purpose of this survey is to get some background knowledge about you and gain insights into your office hour experience with your professor. Please provide answers for the following questions. **All the information will be kept confidential.**

Part I. Demographic Information

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Department and Program:

4. Which high school did you attend?

5. Do you use English in any environment other than school?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
6. If yes, in which context(s)?

Part II: Language Background

7. What is your third language other than Turkish and English?

8. If you have any third language in question 7, how would you describe your level in that language?
   Third language:
   ☐ Native speaker
   ☐ Advanced
   ☐ Upper-intermediate
   ☐ Intermediate
   ☐ Elementary
   ☐ Beginner

9. How many years have you been learning English?

10. Did you attend English language program in this university?
    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

11. Do you have any study abroad experience in a country where you spoke English? If yes, how many years/months?

12. In which English language skill(s), do you feel more confident? Please order them 1 to 4 according to your comfort level (e.g. 1 means the most comfortable, 4 means the least comfortable)

☐ Reading ☐ Writing ☐ Listening ☐ Speaking

Part III: Office Hour Experience

13. Have you known this professor before taking this course?
☐ Yes ☐ No

14. If yes, how do you know him/her? (e.g. did you take any classes with him/her before?)

15. What was your purpose for coming to this professor's office today?

16. How did it go? What was specifically successful and problematic about the office hour meeting with your student?

17. How often do you talk to your foreign professors in their office hours? Why do you usually have office hour meetings?

18. What do you think about today's interaction between you and your student? How do you feel?

Appendix E: Transcription Conventions and Codes[17]

bold   Key utterance that is being examined

:   Lengthening of a sound or syllabus

(#.#)   Pause in seconds (e.g. (0.2) for a two-second pause)

@   Laughter and multiple @ shows a longer laughter

[   ]   Speech overlap

(Hx)   Exhalation

((   ))   Researcher's transcription comments

<X X X>   Uncertain hearing or unintelligible

?   Rising intonation or appeal

underline   Increase in stress or pitch

°word°   Quieter speech

{   }   Information brackets

"   "   Direct speech (or utterance read from a student's paper)

…   Continuing turn

^word^   Mispronunciation

---

[17] Other than these transcription codes, regular punctuation conventions were utilized, such as comma, full stop, or exclamation for surprise.