

# THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE IN UNDERSTANDING CROSS- CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A STUDY AT XI GRADE STUDENT OF SMK NEGERI 1 BATULAYAR

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## Abstract

This paper investigates the students' English pragmatic competence in understanding cross-cultural communication. There were eighteen communicative situations designed in three different speech acts namely; handling complaint, request and refusal. The situations presented were very similar to the authentic situation that students found during the job orientation for six months in tourism industry. Three instruments were used in collecting the data; questionnaires, discourse completion tests (DCTs) and interview. The multiple choice questionnaire was used to investigate the students' pragmatic understanding in three different speech acts. Meanwhile DCTs was used to investigate the students' pragmatic knowledge in giving response to the given situations related to three different speech acts. Interview question was used to clarify the missing information and to strengthen the reason why such responses were given in questionnaire and in DCTs. The sample of this study was 92 XI Grade students from Hotel Accommodation Program (AP) at SMK Negeri 1 Batulayar. The result show that the students ability in understanding pragmatic is considered very low, they only can understand the utterance from the literal meaning of words and phrases, but the implied meaning of some particular utterances were uneasy to deal with. It is seen from the reported data that the average of the students' responses in understanding pragmatics of the three different speech acts is only 12.7%. The second three different speech acts in discourse completion test (DCTs) was also about giving response to the complaint, request and refusal. DCTs were used to investigate the students' ability in using their pragmatic knowledge to response the nine situational communicative designed. The finding show that the students' ability in giving the written response were vary and less impressive. The written responses in three different speech acts prompt were potentially led to a pragmatic inability in maintaining the smooth conversation in various situations.

*Keywords: pragmatic competence, communicative situational designed, lexical items, basic formulaic sequence, discourse completion test*

## I INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics which studies invisible meaning, implied meaning of an utterance in which it shows how we recognize what is meant even when it isn't actually said or written (Yule. 2006). Pragmatic competence refers to both knowledge of the linguistic forms which realize particular illocution, and knowledge of the appropriate use of the linguistic forms in certain social contexts. Understanding not only the literal meaning of

the utterances but also the implied meaning far beyond them is an important part.

In hospitality industry, in this regards, tourism industry is a setting in which two or more different languages, cultural backgrounds melt in certain period and context and intercultural communication is unavoidable. In this case, understanding linguistic form is an important aspect, moreover, understanding pragmatics is not less important in sustaining the conversation. It has been clearly stated by Nureddeen (2008), Savignon (1991), Taguchi (2009) that the development of communicative competence and sub theme of pragmatic competence are very essential in maintaining a successful intercultural communication in various context.

Saville-Troike (2003:18) defines communicative competence as:

Knowing not only the language code but also what to say, to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. Further, it involves the social and cultural knowledge speakers are presumed to have which enables them to use and interpret linguistic forms.

According to Bardovi-Harlig,( 2001); Kasper and Rose, (1999) that the study of pragmatics has been given very little attention in the language learning process, even though pragmatics is the core element in sustaining the successfulness in communication, specifically in intercultural communication.

Some of the utterances that are frequently used in a daily interpersonal and transactional communication in the hospitality industry are handling complaint, request and refusal in the hospitality services. Indonesian tourism industry has long been carried out to support national income. In the last few decades, people from all over the world found that Indonesia is one of the holiday destinations. Visit Indonesia Year 1992 has placed Indonesian country as the most favorite holiday destination in the world through the interesting site of Bali. This is the golden history of Indonesian tourism, (Nanang 2007). However it was not long after many problems happened in the country such as monetary crises, Bali Bombing, political riots affected such a great development of this industry. This condition however, inflicts the financial loss from the tourism sector, because the visitors gradually left Indonesia as a favorite holiday destination.

Indonesia soon realized and recovered from such situation, and gradually gained back its popularity after ministry of tourism and culture Jero Wacik authorized and promoted Visit Indonesia Year 2008. Nanang (2007) further stated that the visitors from various nations including from many English speaking countries started to increase. It can be seen from an increasing number of visitors from various countries in five years time 2009 -2013. In 2009, the total visitor to Indonesia was 6,323,730 and 8,802,129 in 2013. It means that there were 6.5% increase every year. As the consequence of this condition, English is becoming widely used not only in this industry as a directly related field of hospitality industry but also other sectors of everyday life.

Having seen this promising industry, Indonesian government has conducted many tourism educations throughout the country. One of which, is in the form of vocational high school of tourism. This school of vocation graduates are believed to be qualified in tourism industry and it can be one of the solution to overcome the rate of the unemployment. Vocational high schools of tourism is one of the highly motivated school by junior high school graduates to continue their study.

At this school, English is merely taught for international communication. Besides, English for tourism, English for specific purposes are as the additional subject to be learned. Moreover, in the school curriculum, the students of vocational high school of tourism are given the opportunities to do the job orientation (on the job training) for six months. They can practice their English in an authentic language environment during that period. The students seem to have enough opportunity to expose themselves in speaking English with customers from various English speaking countries. This prerequisite experience is expected to support their professionalism in the future when they are totally involved in this industry.

However, this study investigate the students understanding in pragmatic aspects of certain utterances. Understanding pragmatic of situational designed similar to the prior experience during their job orientation is the key term in this study. Furthermore, accessing the students' English pragmatic competence in understanding certain utterances through questionnaires and discourse completion test are used to collect data.

Based on my observation, students of SMK Negeri 1 Batulayar seem to have inadequate pragmatic competences. However, as the future practitioners in hospitality industry, they should have high competence and performance in interpersonal and transactional communication in providing international standard services. Such particular condition has brought a challenging issue to be investigated as to whether or not the students have adequate pragmatic knowledge in interpersonal and transactional communication in tourism sectors.

Interpersonal communications are carried out to maintain social relationships among the participants/interlocutors. In this activity, the dialogs do not merely ask for information. There are factors that should be taken into account such as what register will be used, whether colloquial language is used rather than formal one. Meanwhile transactional communication is an extension of responsive. In this activity, people communicate their feelings or opinions or specific information to response in the form of not only information but further extended into transactional. (Krisnawati, 2011:103-104).

In relation to this, some research on pragmatics have been widely conducted in the last few decades. There are a number of researches on pragmatics in general and pragmatics on ESL/EFL in particular. Pragmatic research in Indonesia have been conducted to examine the pragmatic competence, Wiryatinoyo (2006), found that pragmatic analysis can cover the weaknesses of syntactic and semantic analysis by which the interlocutors can better understand an utterance from context. Focusing at this aspect of

competence in understanding interpersonal and transactional communication cross culturally is the core aspect to be investigated.

Moreover the purposes of this study are first: To know the students' ability in understanding pragmatics in handling complaint, request and refusal in tourism industry and second purpose is to investigate the students ability in using their pragmatic knowledge in intercultural communication in handling complaint, request and refusal in tourism industry.

## **II MATERIALS AND METHOD**

### **2.1 MATERIALS**

#### **2.1.1 CULTURE**

Culture is an abstract concept and has a number of definitions. One of them is defined as the full ranges of learned human behavior in their community. The terms culture was first used by the pioneer English Anthropologist Taylor (1871) in his book primitive culture.

Culture or Civilisation, taken in its wide ethnographic sense is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The condition of culture among the various societies of mankind, in so far as it is capable of being investigated on general principles, is a subject apt for the study of laws of human thought and action" (cited in Aldosari, 2013 .13)

Besides, culture as seen from three different perspectives: Social science perspective, Interpretive perspective and critical perspectives as stated by Martin and Nakayama, (2010: 86).

Social science researchers focus not on culture per se but on the influence of culture on communication. In other words, such researchers concern themselves with communication differences that result from culture. They pay little attention to how we conceptualize culture or how we see its functions. In contrast, interpretive researchers focus more on how cultural contexts influence communication. Critical researchers, for their part, often view communication and the power to communicate—as instrumental in reshaping culture. They see culture as the way that people participate in or resist society's structure.

From the three perspectives above, we can analyse that Social science' perspectives focuses on cultural diversity which is driven from culture itself. It seems that there is little attention given on the topic on how humans make a concept of culture. Meanwhile, Interpretive approach focuses on the role of cultural context in communication in which culture as a learned and shared

contextual symbolic meaning includes emotions that bear the contextual pattern of behavior. It also looks at the meaning of symbols by means of verbal and non-verbal activities as the blueprint of patterns and rules of communication. Critical perspectives note that culture is a reestablishing from communication and power. In other words, culture is the way of people's participation in the community.

### **2.1.2 COMMUNICATION**

Communication is also a complex term to define, it can be a sustainable action among interlocutors, for example when we greet someone by saying "how are you?" We expect someone we greet to response "I'm fine, very well, fine thanks and the like". If there is no response, communication soon breakdown and the relationship can deteriorate. Most people soon become uncomfortable if they don't get the expected response from their interlocutors.

Martin and Nakayama (2010) explained communication based on three perspectives as well: Social science perspectives maintain that various components of communication are the participants (sender/receiver), messages, channel, and context. It also focuses on the social factors influencing communication such as, gender and social networks. It is in contrast with interpretive perspective, highlighting the symbolic functions of communication in which the symbolic meaning is rather contextual or conventional than inherent. Moreover, the process is an integral part of negotiating meaning of communication. This makes common sense since the nature of human communication is face to face interaction. The last perspective about communication in this notion is the critical perspectives. These perspectives hold, the voices and symbols that are organized within a social hierarchy instead of equality. In other words, there is a stratification of individuals with higher values than that of others.

In the broader sense, communication interculturally involves the terms of high and low context communication in relation to verbal and nonverbal communication (voices and symbols).

Novinger.(2001: 6) stated that:

Communication styles that focus relatively more on words to communicate and less on behavior—the context in which the words are used—are said to be "low-context." "High-context" cultures, in contrast, rely relatively more on nonverbal context or behaviors than they rely on abstract, verbal symbols of meaning.

Low-context and high-context culture are different. In low context communication, the actual words of the message are more important than who is speaking and other non verbal aspect. Information is generally delivered in logical, linear sequence and it is explicit, straight forward and unambiguous. In this culture the focus is in the speakers, furthermore low-context is impatient with high context because they often miss the nonverbal cues, they are also very

individualistic. To mention the characteristics of this kind are found in the Swiss, German and Scandinavian.

In opposite, the high context communication are likely to be in the context, not in the words. These people may use beg or incomplete wording with the underlying meaning actually being found in who is speaking and how. Small non verbal communication is highly significant, for examples screaming at small voice will indicate the speakers' attitude and feeling. High-context also emphasis in nonverbal communication, because of this, misunderstanding can easily occur. Examples of this can be found in Asian countries like Japan, Indonesian, Middle Eastern (Arab), and Native American.

### **2.1.3 SPEECH ACTS AND THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES**

Speech acts are a complex thing to explain Bell (1993:173) states that Speech acts are the units of the external aspect of language and to the specification of the knowledge required by the skilled communicator.

Speech acts that were defined by Searle in Mey (2001) are the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication. The language we use, particularly the speech acts we utter, are entirely dependent upon the context in which the acts are performed. Speech acts are verbal actions. In uttering a speech act, a speaker does something with words; there is a performance of an activity that brings about a change in the existing state of affairs.

The different aspects of speech acts are due to Austin's categorizations (1962): locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary aspects. According to Levinson (1983: 236):

- (i) locutionary act: the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference
- (ii) illocutionary act: the making of a statement, offer, promise, etc. in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it (or with its explicit performative paraphrase)
- (iii) perlocutionary act: the bringing about the effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of utterance.

Austin further states that locutionary act and illocutionary act are detachable, and therefore that the study of meaning may proceed independently, but supplemented by a theory of illocutionary acts.

Searle elaborates the speech acts as direct and indirect speech act. Indirect speech acts suggest that one motivation is to perform the indirectness. In talking to one another and deriving meaning from the talk, one relies upon a great deal of information besides the utterance itself. Speakers communicate meanings beyond the literal meanings of their words. It performs different form and function of the certain utterance, for example, can you send this invoice? The form is interrogative but the function is questions.

In regards to speech acts, Searle in Levinson, (1983:240) mentions five basic kinds of action that one can perform in speaking. by means of the following five types of utterance:

- (i)Representatives, which commit the speaker to the truth of expressed proposition (paradigm cases: asserting, concluding, etc.)
- (ii)Directives, which are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (paradigm cases: requesting, questioning, etc.)
- (iii)Commissives, which commit the speaker to some future course of action (paradigm cases: promising, threatening, offering)
- (iv)Expressives, which express a psychological state (paradigm cases: thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating)
- (v)Declarations, which effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions (paradigm cases: excommunicating, declaring war, christening, firing from employment).

The co-operative principle works in order to have fully understanding of the language use, it has been proposed by Grice and has been well known as the Grice Maxim; This states that we interpret the language on the assumption that a speaker is obeying the four maxims: Maxim of Quality (Being True), Maxim of Quantity (Being Brief), Maxim of Relation (Being Relevant), and Maxim of Manner (Being Clear). Grice (1975)

To sum up, speech acts are in a sense, what make language work; without speech acts language describes truth and falsity and such but with speech acts language allow us to regulate and modify our reality based on the power of words. Speech act theory allows one to look at language not only as a device for communication but also as an instrument of action.

## **2.2 METHODS**

### **2.2.1 PARTICIPANTS**

The participants of this study were 92 students of Hotel Accommodation Program specialist (AP). They were taken purposely since most of the talks in dealing with complaint, request and refusal are found to be their routine when they are totally involved in tourism sector. It means that I used purposive sampling technique, because the conversation is mostly take place in receptionist desk, housekeeping and room services, restaurant, pool bar and laundry services. Moreover, the three different speech acts such as handling complaint, request and refusal are the characteristics subjects of hotel accommodation program specialist. And all of participants have completed a-six month job orientation. They have similar experiences in terms of the opportunity in handling foreign customer, especially English speaking people.

## 2.2.2 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

### 2.2.2.1 Questionnaire data collection

The questionnaire contains nine designed conversations related to three different speech acts in handling complaint, request and refusal (see Appendix A). Indonesian language is used to describe the situations to avoid students' misunderstanding while the discourse/ conversations were in English. In the questionnaire section, students were required to answer multiple choice questions designed in handling complaint, request and refusal to answer research question number 1 (RQ1).

### 2.2.2.2 Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs)

DCTs contains another three different speech acts of the same types but different situational designed (see Appendix B). Every effort was made to meet the students' understanding of the similar situation to what they most likely to face during their job orientation for six months. There were nine designed situations adapted from previous study (Blum-Kulka& Olshtain, 1985; zahedi & Mehran 2011; Yuan, 2012; Hu, 2014) and it is modified into the situation that students most likely to face during their job training and they are free to complete the incomplete dialogue designed and they have pretended to be "you". For example:

Tom : people in my next door seem to be having a party. The noise is driving me crazy. I cannot sleep.

You : \_\_\_\_\_

(see Appendix B for detail).

Students were given sixty minutes to answer the questionnaire and to complete the DCTs.

### 2.2.2.3 Interview

Interview was aimed at investigating the extended clarification of the students' responses in questionnaire and in DCTs, so it was not constructed in advance. Based on the result of the study, finding showed that students' pragmatic understanding was considered low, there were twenty students interviewed.

## 2.3 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

In relation to the first research question (RQ.1), "To what extent are the students able to understand pragmatics in handling complaint, request and refusal in tourism industry?". Data were collected from 92 students as the subject of this study. They were required to answer three different speech acts in nine different situational designed in the form of multiple choice. The students' responses of the questionnaire are then analysed using descriptive statistic and presented in the form of tables and figures. I used both table and figure to display the result of the analysis from the questionnaire data, because both of them have weaknesses and strength. The table can show all of the

participants in the study even though the participants did not have an answer. The students with no answer are called the missing system, but figure can only show the valid percent, the missing system or the participants with no answer were not detected. Meanwhile, the table cannot show the highest possible percentage, but the figure can easily display the highest possible percentage in the left side.

In relation to the second research question "To what extent do the students response intercultural communication in handling complaint, request and refusal in tourism industry?" The students are expected to read and fully understand the written description. The description of the situation is in Indonesian language and the discourses are in English. It is aimed at avoiding misunderstanding. The students are expected to provide the written response to each situation. Responses are analyzed based on the lexical item and basic formulaic sequences expression of every speech acts.

Situation 1-3 on the DCTs investigated the students response in speech acts prompt of complaint. Situation 4-6 investigated the response on the speech acts prompt of request, meanwhile situation 7-9 are concentrated on the response of speech acts prompt of refusal. The data were analysed based on the lexical item and basic formulaic sequence. All of the written responses were listed in the form of table (table of lexical items and basic formulaic sequence) and it only displayed the number of the students with the written response, meanwhile the students who did not have the written response were not appear. But the second table of the same speech acts prompt named; table of components/ category types displayed the whole number of participants whether or not the students gave the written response. The students who did not have the response were noticed as a missing system on the statistical data analysis.

### **III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There were three groups of data in the questionnaire based on the type of speech acts, mainly: data speech acts of handling complaint, data speech acts of request and data speech acts of refusal. The same type of data are also presented in the discourse completion tests (DCTs) and were analysed in turn.

#### **3.1 QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

As explained in the previous section that the first three speech acts are about indirect complaint of three different communicative situations. Most of the students found them difficult to determine the appropriate option concerning the given response. Take example data questionnaire number one (situation 1).

Table 1.1 The frequency of use and percentage of the student response in statistical analysis.

Option	Frequency of Use	Percent	Valid Percent
A	9	9.8%	9.8
B	35	38.0%	38.0
C	35	38.0%	38.0
D	13	14.1%	14.1
Total	92	100.0%	100.0

Students' response to this situation seems to be influenced by the ability to understand words and phrase from which 38.0% of the students answer it with choice "b" (appropriate) because in the discourse ("I'll see the wine waiter for you") is understood as the waiter for serving a drink, whatever drink is ordered. In this regard, it matches in both interlocutors. It is in contrast to another 38.0% of the students response was "c" (inappropriate). In the interview the students with choice "c" thought the same utterance ("I'll see the wine waiter for you") is understood as another sort of drink (wine), in which in the customer' utterance is not mentioned. According to the interviewee the utterance should be ("waiter...I ordered my wine 20 minutes ago"). Anyhow, it is not the issue being encountered in this situation but rather a matter of time that the drink took to be ready was a bit long. So students should see this as a mild complaint from the customer. Unfortunately, there were very little percentage (9.8%) of the students have the ability to understand the implied meaning of such situation.

In conclusion of the speech acts in handling complaint, the students ability in understanding pragmatic is considered very low, they only can understand from the explicit words or phrases, but not in the implied meaning of some particular utterances. It is seen from the reported data that 9.8% students from the first questionnaire, 25% students from the second questionnaire and 3.3% from the third questionnaire got correct answer in determining the implied meaning of the given responses. In relation to this finding students still find it difficult to deal with the indirectness. The three situational designed are in indirect complaint. Leech, (1983:108) stated that people tend to use indirect speech acts mainly in connection with politeness and diminish the unpleasant message that contained in the speech. In this case, complaints can also be treated as a face threatening acts to the hearers and it is often realized through indirectness.

Thomas, (1995: 143). Further argued that people use indirect strategies when they want to make their speech more impressive and reach different goals from their partners' or when they want to increase the force of the message in communication.

Bach and Harnish, (1979: 105) are in accordance with what we found. They stated that:

Conversational situations are never just conversational. They are governed by social rules as well as conversational rules. Insofar as these are mutually recognized – whether institutionally imposed, determined by the persons involved, or personally imposed and reflective of the individuals involved – they provide guidelines within which acts (linguistic and otherwise) are performed and perceived.”

The second three speech acts of request are investigated. The situational designed in the questionnaires presents direct and indirect request which are still in line with what Leech and Thomas explained. Every situation in the second speech acts are summarized as follows: First, Indirect request from a customer to be escorted to the pool bar to wait for one and half hours instead of waiting at the hotel lobby.

Table 1.2: The frequency of use and percentage of the students' response for situation 4 in statistical analysis.

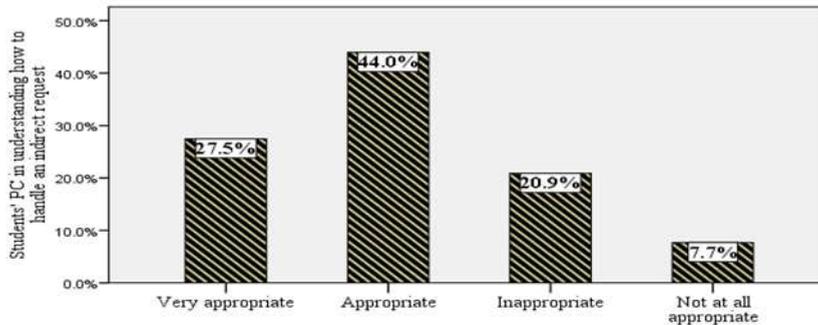
Option	Frequency of Use	Percent	Valid Percent
A	25	27.2%	27.5
B	40	43.5%	44.0
C	19	20.7%	20.9
D	7	7.6%	7.7
Total	91	98.9%	100.0
Missing System	1	1.1%	
Total	92	100.0%	

Nearly all of the students answered the question, except 1.1 % or one student did not have choice as shown in the missing system in the table. The majority of the students with nearly 44% gave choice “b” in which they considered the given response is the appropriate one to such situation. Indeed, response given by the receptionist is not at all appropriate, since the response seems to explain what the pool bar looks like. The receptionist in this regards did not catch the indirect request from the clients, because the clients think that the lobby is not a good place to wait for over one and half hours. The client preferred to wait at the pool bar instead.

The finding in this prompt show that very small percentage (7.6%) of the students got the implied meaning of the customer's indirect request. As shown in the following figure:

Figure 4.1: Customer indirect request.

Situation 4. It describes the customer's indirect request for not waiting such a long time at the lobby, but they prefer to wait at the pool bar instead. (see the discourse)



Bach and Harnish. (1979:267) further state that:

Mutual beliefs has figured prominently in our illocutionary acts. There are mutual contextual beliefs, which facilitates various steps of the hearer's inference to the speaker's communicative intention, and several presumptions which assure the hearer that there is an inference to be drawn.

### 3.2 DISCOURSE COMPLETION TEST (DCTS) DATA

DCTS is another instrument used in regards to research question number two (RQ2). The following section explains in detail the three different speech acts data gathered from the same participants with the questionnaire. The first three DCTS describe about handling direct or indirect complaint, how is the students' pragmatic understanding and competence in giving the response based on the situational designed. The students are expected to read and fully understand the written description. The description of the situation is in Indonesian language and the discourses are in English. It is aimed at avoiding misunderstanding. The students are expected to provide the written response to each situation. Responses are analyzed based on the lexical item and basic formulaic sequences expression of every speech acts, and it is modified from some of the previous study (Yuan, 2012, Zhang, 2014, Blumm-Kulka & Olshtain, 1985)

Situation 1-3 on the DCTS are about the speech acts of handling complaint. Situation 4-6 on the DCTS focused on the speech acts of request, meanwhile situation 7-9 are concentrated on the speech acts of refusal. The first three questions are the data collected from the students' written response about

handling complaints which is analysed based on the lexical item and basic formulaic sequence expression.

Table: 1.3 Frequency of lexical items and basic formulaic sequences in responding to the guest's indirect complaint.

<b>Situation 1.</b> Response to the complaint (The guest is not being able to sleep because the next door that seems to have a party). How the students response to such complaint?	Number of the students	Percentage
I'm very sorry sir, I will soon check	24	30%
I'm sorry on the pleasure	8	10%
Don't worry, I can help you to stop it	6	7,50%
Oh, yes. I'm sorry sir	6	7,50%
Oh yes, I'm sorry, sir because in next door they're having a party.	5	6,25%
I'm very sorry, Mr	4	5%
Yes, Sorry, sir	4	5%
Oh, sorry, sir	4	5%
Sorry, Mr. Tom. I will handling. Please you wait	4	5%
I must tell the people on the side room	3	3,75%
Sorry for the inconvenience you,	3	3,75%
You want move your room	3	3,75%
I'm sorry, sir	2	2,50%
I'm sorry Mr. Might want to move your rooms	2	2,50%
I'm sorry Mr. Tom. I don't know make you cannot sleep	2	2,50%
Total	80	100%

The above table show only 80 students have written responses. It is simplified analysed in three components / or category type as shown in the following category type and the frequency of use table.

Table 1.4: Written DCTs response from Appendix B/1.

Component/category type	Frequency of Use	Percent	Valid Percent
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Apologizing/ Offering alternative	46	50.0%	57.5%
Expressing regret	31	33.7%	38.8%
Direct alternative	3	3.3%	3.8%
Total	80	87.0%	100.0%
Missing System	12	13.0%	
Total	92	100.0%	

Table 1.4 above shows that offering alternative in handling such complaint is the most frequently used response (50%). Meanwhile nearly 34% expressing regret and 13% of the students or 12 out of 92 did not give response. They are categorized as a missing system in the analysis. The students with giving direct alternative to solve the customer's indirect complaint is quite low (3.3%). Students in this regards show variety of responses to please the customers from being inconvenience. Students' pragmatic understanding of such situation has brought into practice that it need to be well practiced interculturally. It is in complicated situation, because on one side the hotel customer need holiday for relax, while on the other hand people go on holiday for being pleasure and happy.

In relation to this study, the conversation designed through questionnaire and discourse completion tests, the students are exposed to use the linguistics and pragmatic knowledge to imagine themselves in such situation. The students then facilitates themselves with situation, context, and the shared values with the customers to reach the intentional meaning or speakers' meaning, so the communication will not deteriorate.

## IV CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 CONCLUSION

This thesis dealt with the students' English pragmatic competence in relation to understanding cross cultural communication in three different speech acts. Specifically in terms of handling complaint, request and refusal in the field of hospitality industry. It investigated the students' ability in understanding pragmatics and find out to what extend the students are able to use it in the given context based on the experience during their job orientation. The first research question concerns with the ability of understanding pragmatics in hospitality industry. It investigates to what extent the students are able to understand pragmatics in three different speech acts, they are answered by questionnaire data. The data from nine speech acts prompts indicate that the students' pragmatic understanding is considered as a relatively low. It is shown by the data that the average students' ability in understanding pragmatics in several aspects such as, culture, context, situation less than thirty percent. Meanwhile

the second research question investigates the students' ability in using the pragmatic knowledge is answered by discourse completion tests data (DCTs). As shown in the data report and discussion, the students' ability in giving the written response based on the single lexical items and basic formulaic sequence are vary. The written response in three different speech acts prompt were presented. Linguistic errors were frequently occurred.

There are a number of elements that students have to develop to be better pragmatically competent in intercultural communication. A- six month period in their job orientation has given a little touch to have an idea of the importance of linguistic knowledge in general and pragmatic knowledge in particular.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, there are many things that students need to equip to get better understanding in pragmatics cross culturally. Since this study has a very limited scope in investigating the ability in understanding pragmatics, for future study the wider range of participants need to be involved in sustaining the study on pragmatics. Furthermore, by looking at this students profile of pragmatic competence, the curriculum designer may use it as the basic idea to propose the explicit pragmatic leaning material. The explicit learning materials designed in curriculum to improve pragmatic competence of the students learning English for specific purposes are very crucial and fundamental. The government as the policy maker are recommended to look for the very effective breakthrough to accommodate all elements; teacher, students, learning materials to collectively facilitate students learning English in general and pragmatics in particular.

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