

## **A Textbook Evaluation of Speech Acts and Language Functions in High School English Textbooks (I, II And III) and Interchange Series, Books I, II, And III**

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### **Abstract**

Although English textbooks are considered as a key component in English language teaching programs, they have been criticized for not offering classroom learner's adequate opportunity for learning authentic language (Vellenga, 2004). This is because, instead of making use of language samples that native speakers actually produce, many textbooks have drawn on native speakers' intuition about language use, which might not always be reliable. This study investigated the use of speech acts presented in Iranian high School English Textbooks I, II, and III and New Interchange series (I, II, III) which are quite popular in Iranian language schools and institutions. For this purpose, speech acts in the conversations were analyzed to see how they were presented through Searle's (1976) speech act model. There were 1100 different speech acts used in New Interchange series while there were only 275 speech acts used in high school textbooks. The language functions in the two mentioned series were also compared, there were a variety of language functions used in the New Interchange series while in the high school English textbooks they were presented unequally and some of them recurred throughout the books which followed no specific pattern. Since high school English textbooks in Iran are not communicatively oriented, the researcher concluded that these books cannot develop the pragmatic competence in the language learners or students. Finally, some recommendations were offered for the textbook designers and language teachers in dealing with the speech acts in high school English textbooks.

**Keywords:** speech acts, language functions, High School English Textbooks

### ***1.1 Background to the study***

Recent decades have witnessed major shifts in our understanding of knowledge about language learning and teaching, which have resulted in a new focus in the way the languages are learned and taught. One of the most consequential incentives behind this shift of focus has been considered to be the fundamental departure from earlier theoretical frameworks toward a more communicative point of view, which regards language more than an isolated set of grammatical rules.

In parallel with this paradigm shift, education policy passed through a drastic change, as well. As Galvin (2003) states, individuals came to realize the need to be educated and learn different languages to take advantage of the opportunities available in today's fast-paced world.

For the L2 learner, a significant amount of time is spent pondering how exams will be structured and contemplating which grammatical features will be the focus of assessments as chosen by

the instructor. A common approach to learning a language may include tasks such as memorizing endless vocabulary lists and grammatical paradigms. And, while this may suffice for students enrolled in a beginner-level course, frustrations arise when they then find they are unable to use the language creatively as they progress to more advanced levels. Why, a student might inquire, have I just successfully constructed a sentence that is grammatically correct yet unable to successfully convey the message I wish to express?

In the contemporary world, given the prevalent cross-cultural communication within and beyond countries, language instruction is expected to focus on communicative use of the target language. In this regard, Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, and Reynolds (1991) contend that when we approach the language class as an opportunity for learners to expand their communication across cultural boundaries, we, as teachers, have the responsibility to equip them with not only the structural aspects of the language, but with the pragmatics as well: more simply, the right words to say at the proper time. (pp. 13-14)

Language pedagogy, therefore, should promote language learners' pragmatic awareness and competence in the target language, especially in terms of emphasis on one of the significant pragmatic features, speech acts, through adequate pedagogical practices. It should be noted that languages have various lexico-syntactic means to realize speech acts, hence established, conventional forms for performing them in a polite, acceptable manner which poses serious problems for EFL learners, for example, in making and mitigating requests (Takahashi, 1996).

Pragmatic competence, one of the core components of communicative competence, is defined as knowing social, cultural, and discourse conventions that have to be followed in various situations (Edwards and Csizér 2001). There is an ongoing debate on whether pragmatic competence can be taught or not. Kasper (1997) argues that while competence cannot be taught, students should be provided with opportunities to develop their pragmatic competence.

On the other hand, a number of studies have also been done in Iran on the book evaluation in public and private sectors. Each of these studies have considered different aspects of the books being taught in public guidance schools and high schools as well as language institutions and language schools in the context under question. Koosha and Dastjerdi (2012) investigated the use of request forms in Richard's Interchange Series, Books I, II, and III. Soozandehfar and Sahragard (2011) analyzed the conversation sections of Top Notch Fundamental textbooks from the pragmatic dimension of language functions and speech acts. Tavakoli (1995) studied the language functions in the dialogues in the English textbooks of Iranian senior high schools. Iraj (2007, as cited in Koosha and Dastjerdi, 2012) studied the extent to which the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have been taken into consideration in New Interchange series. Razmjoo (2007) investigated the CLT principles in the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks.

In this study, efforts were made to compare the high school text books 1, 2 and 3 and the frequently taught textbooks, Interchange 1, 2, and 3, in English language institutions in Iran on the presentation of speech acts. It is a qualitative study which tries to make a comparison between the two textbook series which are being taught in two different educational contexts in Iran, High schools and language institutions or institutes.

### ***1.2. Statement of the problem***

Teaching pragmatics has occupied an important role in ESL/EFL curricula (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Olshtain & Cohen, 1991; Tanaka, 1997). Nowadays, development of pragmatic competence is regarded as "the process of establishing sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence and the increasing ability to understand and produce sociopragmatic meanings with pragmalinguistic conventions" (Kasper & Roever, 2005, as cited in Alcon Soler & Martinez-Flor, 2008, p. 5). However,

pragmatic instruction has not paid adequate attention to language learners' overall development of pragmatic competence which has proved to be very challenging in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts.

Second language learners, therefore, need instructional help to develop their awareness and sensitivity to the target language use. In this regard, language teachers should remind their learners that effective and successful communication not only in their native but also in the target language requires acquisition of grammatical knowledge as well as, importantly, acquisition and practice of various sociolinguistic rules in order to learn what is appropriate in the target language (Eslami&Noora, 2008, p. 326). It is believed that language learners' proficiency level can influence development of their pragmatic competence in the target language. However, "Even fairly advanced language learners' communicative acts regularly contain pragmatic errors, or deficits, in that they fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 10). Speech acts are regarded as "one of the most compelling notions" in pragmatics, (Eslami-Rasekh, 1993, p. 86).

Further, research on pragmatic competence has shown that performing speech acts in a second language (L2) is a challenging and demanding task for L2 learners because of the inherent differences existing between their first language (L1) and culture and the target language (TL) and culture (see Kasper and Rose, 2002). These differences often cause interference and miscommunications and even are considered rude by the native speakers (see Boxer and Pickering, 1995). These findings allude to the importance of pragmatics in the L2 classroom (Eslami-Rasekh, 1993). Hence, this study aimed at shedding some light on the presentation of speech acts in the two most frequently taught textbook series namely Richard's New Interchange Series, Books I, II, and III and high school English textbooks I, II, and III in Iran. It studied how speech acts are introduced and presented in the two series and how Iranian EFL learners develop their pragmatic competence by studying and carrying out the tasks in these series.

### ***1.3. Research Questions***

This study aimed at answering the following questions:

1. What is the range of speech acts and how are they distributed in the textbooks in question?
2. How are these speech acts presented linguistically?

### ***1.4. Significance of the study***

The present study can also be considered significant in several aspects. First of all, existing literature on pragmatic competence development or teaching in textbooks is not abundant, besides, research on pragmatic aspect of communicative competence has been mostly ignored in Iranian textbooks and it has remained an under-researched area. It is, therefore, necessary that more research be conducted to shed light on pragmatics competence, thus supplementing and broadening the existing body of research on the textbook evaluation.

Moreover, when compared to the substantial body of research carried out to explore the pragmatic competence of students learning English as a second language, it is possible to notice that the studies performed in EFL settings which bring about serious challenges to the teaching of pragmatics are limited (Rose, 1994). Hence, it is hoped that this study may add to the cross-sectional inter-language pragmatics research by investigating the pragmatics competence in English textbooks.

Finally, the study seems to have practical significance since findings may provide valuable insights into the field of second language acquisition, second/foreign language education, and more specifically, into the field of English language teaching. It might also have had some implications for high school language teachers and students in Iran.

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1. *Speech Act Theory*

Speech act theory was formulated by the British philosopher John Langshaw Austin in his posthumously published book entitled *How To Do Things With Words* in 1962. John R. Searle, who was one of Austin's students in the 1950s, further developed the theory (Jaszczolt, 2002). The emergence of speech act theory is attributed to a growing dissatisfaction with the assumed deficiencies of logical positivism and truth conditional semantics (Huang et al., 2007). Logical positivism claims that if a sentence can be verified, or objectively assessed as true or false, then that sentence is said to be meaningful. Similarly, truth conditional semantics considers sentences to be true if they correctly describe states of affairs and false if their description is incorrect (Thomas, 1995). Austin (1962) was among the first to disagree with this approach in a series of lectures in which he argued that sentences like (1) to (3) are used to do certain things and not to describe correctly or incorrectly the states of affairs:

- (1) *I apologize for being late,*
- (2) *I sentence you to five years in prison,*
- (3) *I name this ship the Princess Elizabeth.*

He labeled these acts of apologizing, passing sentence, and naming as *speech acts* because they are performed through speech. Austin (1962) refers to sentences given above as performative sentences. He further observes that even though these utterances cannot be assessed as true or false, they depend on appropriate circumstances or conditions in order to take effect. He calls such conditions felicity conditions.

### 2.2. *Politeness Theory*

The notion of politeness as a universal, social and linguistic phenomenon has constituted the centre of increasing attention and interest in the last decades. Politeness is generally regarded as a significant controlling mechanism in human interaction (Huang, 2007). As Longcope (1995, cited in Haugh, 2005) points out, due to the constraining function of politeness in the language we use, interlocutors consciously or subconsciously started to take into account certain variables which determine the form that the language will take while interacting. Goffman (1955) examined these variables under the rubric 'face', and defined this term as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (Goffman, 1955, p. 213).

Brown and Levinson (1987), using Goffman's (1955) sociological notion of face as a starting point, proposed politeness theory in their seminal work entitled 'Politeness: Some universals in language usage'. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) theory of politeness consists of three fundamental notions which include face, face threatening acts, and politeness strategies.

Brown and Levinson (1987) define the concept of face as "the public self-image that every member [of a society] wants to claim for himself" (p.61). The researchers also indicate that face comes in two variations which they claim to be universal: positive and negative. While positive face refers to the hearer's desire to be appreciated or approved of (e.g., by seeking agreement, solidarity, reciprocity), negative face "represents the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to nondistraction, i.e., freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (p.61).

Interlocutors attend to each other's negative face by being indirect, apologetic or by giving deference. They further argue that face is invested; it is something that can be lost, and it must be constantly attended to in interaction. From this perspective, politeness can be regarded as an activity, which serves to enhance, maintain or protect both the speaker's and hearer's face. This concept of face is closely related to commissive type of speech act (e.g., refusals), since, as claimed by Brown

and Levinson (1987), some speech acts such as refusals, complaints, disagreements, criticisms etc., can intrinsically threaten face. Hence, they are called face-threatening acts (FTAs). This assumption is directly relevant to the present study as politeness approach adopted by these researchers is speech-act based. Therefore, conversational participants are expected to engage in some form of face-work, in relation to which they may behave in two ways: either they may avoid the FTA or they may decide to perform the FTA.

### **2.3. Research related to textbook evaluation**

Research into intercultural communication has shown that performing speech acts in a second language (L2) can be a challenging task for many L2 learners due to the inherent differences that exist between their first language (L1) and culture and the target language (TL) and culture (Kasper and Rose, 2002). Boxer and Pickering (1995) pointed out that unlike grammatical errors, learners' difficulties in L2 pragmatics appear to be much less tolerated by native speakers (NS) and are often attributed to rudeness. These findings point to the importance of the pragmatic competence and its instruction and suggest a need for more emphasis on pragmatics in the L2 classroom (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). Teaching pragmatic competence is widely regarded as an integral part of learning and teaching a language, and has been widely investigated (Bardovi-Harlig 1996; Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin 2005). Teaching communication according to the sociocultural rules that govern speech acts in a given speech community is a valuable way to make students aware of what is valued within a culture and how this is communicated.

Previous appraisals of commercially produced textbooks have pointed out that many textbooks tend to offer classroom learners little opportunity for learning L2 pragmatics (see; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). This is due to the fact that many textbooks either do not present or they present speech acts unrealistically. Boxer and Pickering (1995) in a study found out that textbooks generally do not contain indirect complaints (i.e. complaining about oneself or someone/something that is not present in the conversation) as a solidarity-establishing strategy. Bouton (1996) also remarked that the textbook he taught rarely presented the invitations the way they are in published native speaker's (NS) corpora. Han (1992), for example, found that the Korean English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in her study, responded to the compliments with "thank you" because they learned from Korean ELT material that this was the only correct way to respond to a compliment.

Regarding textbook evaluation in Iran, Tavakoli (1995) studied the language functions in the dialogues inserted in the English textbooks of Iranian senior high schools. The findings of the study indicated that out of five different kinds of language functions, only three of them i.e. representative with high frequency, directive, and expressive were used in the texts. While commissive and declaration have been ignored.

Iraji (2007) conducted a research on New Interchange series based on the principles of communicative and task-based approach to investigate to what extent the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have taken into consideration; the study indicated that the series do not follow the principles of communicative and task-based approaches as the author claimed and it had no frequency of meta-pragmatic information.

Razmjoo (2007) investigated the extent to which the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks represented the CLT principles. The study revealed that while high school textbooks were not conducive to CLT implementation, private institute textbooks represent the CLT principles to a great extent.

Soozandehfar and Sahragard (2011) analyzed the conversation sections of Top Notch Fundamental textbooks from the pragmatic dimension of language functions and speech acts. The results

showed that the conversations in these newly-arrived textbooks were not pragmatically efficacious and functional.

Koosha and Dastjerdi (2012) investigated the use of request forms presented in Richard's Interchange Series, Books I, II, and III, widely used in Iranian foreign language teaching Institutes. The results of the study indicated that the series failed to include materials which are needed for meaningful and face saving communication when resort to different kinds of requests was required.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Context**

The present study was conducted in an Iranian EFL context where English language instruction constitutes a total of 2 to three hours per week. In addition to the Persian and Arabic languages, English is offered by the Iranian Ministry of General Education as a compulsory course due to its current status of an international language of communication, medium of instruction and language of science. English is introduced in the 7th year of public school system and is taught throughout the remaining years. Moreover, there is a strong emphasis on English in the Iranian higher education programs by all private and state universities (Shoarinejad, 2008; Shokouhi, 1989). English is the medium of instruction at English departments offering English language teaching, English language and literature, and English translation programs; whereas other departments offer courses of Basic English, General English, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

It is noteworthy that English is especially popular in the private sector (Shoarinejad, 2008) which is manifested by the following statistics; for instance, around 100,000 students are enrolled in a private language school, Iran Language Institute (ILI) (<http://ili.com>). Such popularity of English can be accounted for by various motives of Iranian citizens, who, in search for better educational and/or employment opportunities, have become increasingly mobile and have started immigrating to different English speaking countries (Hakimzadeh, 2006). It is also reported that every year more than 150,000 Iranians immigrate to other countries, especially English speaking countries such as the UK, the USA, Canada and Australia. These statistics suggest that Iranians, particularly the younger generations, usually have positive attitude towards the English language. In this regard, Moiiinvaziri (2008) reported that students participating in her study were highly motivated to learn English, in terms of both instrumental and integrative orientations. These findings are supported by Vaezi (2008), who maintains that Iranian students are highly motivated to learn English.

The institute implements the following instructional resources across various proficiency levels and age groups: "Let's go" series for young learners, "Interchange" series for teenagers and adults; "Passages" series upon completion of the previous series. The institute also offers classes for FCE, IELTS, TOEFL, Master Preparation for English Literature and English language teaching majors.

#### **3.2. Materials**

For the purpose of this study, the three New Interchange books (I, II and III) written by Jack C. Richards (2005), which are quite popular and used in many countries for teaching English as a second/foreign language, and high school English textbooks (I, II and III) written by Birjandi, Soheili, Nowroozi, and Mahmoodi (2000), Birjandi, Nowroozi, and Mahmoodi (2002a), and Birjandi, Nowroozi, and Mahmoodi (2002b) respectively were selected. All speech acts and language functions in these six books were analyzed. Interchange books (I, II and III) each consists of 16 units. High school English textbooks (I, II and III) consist of nine, seven and six respectively. Speech acts and functions at the end of each unit of High school English textbooks (I, II and III) and at the beginning and usually through each unit in Interchange Series were analyzed in this study.

### 3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

As the study is mainly qualitative, no special statistical analyses were needed. Therefore, the entire analysis of the present study were done by careful analysis of the speech acts included in Interchange books (I, II and III) and high school English textbooks (I, II and III) on the basis of Searle's (1976) speech acts and Halliday's (1978) language functions models. These models are as follows:

Searle (1976) suggests the following classification of speech acts:

*Assertives*: They commit the speaker to something being the case. The different kinds are: suggesting, putting forward, swearing, boasting, concluding. Example: *"No one makes a better cake than me"*.

*Directives*: They try to make the addressee perform an action. The different kinds are: asking, ordering, requesting, inviting, advising, begging. Example: *"Could you close the window?"*.

*Commissives*: They commit the speaker to doing something in the future. The different kinds are: promising, planning, vowing, betting, opposing. Example: *"I'm going to Paris tomorrow"*.

*Expressives*: They express how the speaker feels about the situation. The different kinds are: thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring. Example: *"I am sorry that I lied to you"*.

*Declarations*: They change the state of the world in an immediate way. Examples: *"You are fired, I swear, I beg you"*.

According to Halliday (1978), a young child in the early stages of language development is able to master a number of elementary functions of language. Each of these functions has a chance of meanings attached to it. He distinguishes seven initial functions:

*Instrumental* ("I want"): used for satisfying material needs

*Regulatory* ("do as I tell you"): used for controlling the behaviour of others

*Interactional* ("me and you"): used for getting along with other people

*Personal* ("here I come"): used for identifying and expressing the self

*Heuristic* ("tell me why"): used for exploring the world around and inside one

*Imaginative* ("let's pretend"): used for creating a world of one's own

*Informative* ("I've got something to tell you"): used for communicating new information.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

In order to answer the two research questions mentioned before, data were analyzed as follows:

### 4.1. The comparison of speech acts in high school English textbooks (I, II and III) and New interchange series

By comparing the speech acts in the two books in questions, one can see that the number of speech acts used in New Interchange series is more than that of high school English textbooks (see table 1 and 2), that is, the total number of speech acts in the three New Interchange series is 1100 while this number is 275 which is about four times less than the number of speech acts in New Interchange series.

As stated before, the Iranian high school English textbooks are not communicatively oriented and as a result they are not conversation-based. The speech acts analyzed in this research are the ones used in conversations which are included in the language functions at the end of each unit. For example, in New Interchange I, II, and III the number of speech acts is 407, 342, and 351 respectively while this number in Iranian high school English textbooks I, II, and III is 129, 101, 45 respectively. This indicates that the New Interchange series are more suited for teaching pragmatics and communicative functions of English. The percentage of speech acts shows that the representatives

and directives form the major part of speech acts in New Interchange series by 45.63 and 34.45 percent respectively. Likewise, the same trend can be seen in high school English textbooks. It means that these two groups of speech acts are the most prevalent ones in the two textbook series in questions while the other speech acts form a little percentage of speech acts in the two textbook series which seems to be interesting needing consideration.

**Table 1. The frequency and percentage of speech acts in New Interchange series**

	Book I		Book II		Book III		Total	
		%		%		%		%
Representatives	177	43.48	137	40.05	188	53.56	502	45.63
Directives	151	37.10	115	33.62	113	32.19	379	34.45
Commissives	12	2.94	25	7.30	6	1.70	43	3.90
Expressives	67	16.46	65	19.00	44	12.53	176	16
Declarations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	407	100	342	100	351	100	1100	100
Percentage	37		31.09		31.90		100	

**Table 2. The frequency and percentage of speech acts in high school English textbooks**

	Book I		Book II		Book III		Total	
		%		%		%		%
Representatives	51	39.53	41	40.59	21	46.66	113	41.09
Directives	60	46.51	41	40.59	21	46.66	122	44.36
Commissives	2	1.55	4	3.96	0	0	6	2.18
Expressives	16	12.40	15	14.85	3	6.66	34	12.36
Declarations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	129	100	101	100	45	100	275	100
Percentage	46.90		36.72		16.36		100	

#### **4. 2. The comparison of language functions in high school English textbooks (I, II and III) and New interchange series**

By looking at the language functions included in the two textbook series the following results were obtained: The findings show that high school English textbooks cover a variety of language functions. A total number of 22 language functions are included in the three books ranging from basic conversational skills such as Asking Someone's Name to more challenging ones such as granting a request, rejecting a request, requesting politely and so on. Among the high school English textbooks, *English I* presented more language functions (13/22) than both *English II* (5/22) and *English III* (4/22). Some of the language functions recurred across the three books and did not follow any specific pattern. Request comprises about 20 percent of language functions in the book, how to grant, reject request, how to make polite request (book I), followed by requesting politely in book II. Then knowing people also comprises about 20 percent of the language functions, asking someone's names, finding out about people, asking about someone's family, asking about other People. Then, Shopping comprise more than 13 percent of language functions in book I and II (shopping, asking about the price of things, and bargaining. Appearance and dress, and talking about a place (talking about a place, asking for directions) each also comprises about 10 percent of language functions. finally, there are other language functions such as "on the phone, introducing a friend, talking about



**Table 3. Language functions used in New Interchange series**

Unit	Book I	Book II	Book III
1	Introducing yourself, introducing someone, checking information, asking about someone, exchanging personal information	Introducing yourself; talking about yourself; exchanging personal information; remembering your childhood; asking about someone's childhood	Describing personalities; expressing likes and dislikes; expressing agreement and disagreement; complaining
2	Describing work and school, asking for and giving opinions, talking about daily schedules	Talking about transportation and transportation problems; evaluating city services; asking for and giving information	Giving opinions about jobs; describing and comparing jobs
3	Talking about prices, giving opinions, talking about preferences, making comparisons, buying and selling things	Describing positive and negative features; making comparisons; talking about lifestyle changes; expressing wishes	Making requests; accepting and declining requests; leaving messages
4	Talking about likes and dislikes, giving opinions, making invitations and excuses	Talking about food; expressing likes and dislikes; describing a favorite snack; giving instruction	Describing past events; narrating a story
5	Talking about families and family members, exchanging information about the present, describing family life	Describing vacation plans; giving travel advice; planning a vacation	Expressing emotions; describing expectations; talking about customs; giving advice
6	Asking about and describing routines and exercises, talking about frequency, talking about abilities	Making requests; accepting and refusing requests; complaining; apologizing; giving excuses	Describing problems; making complaints; explaining something that needs to be done
7	Talking about past events, giving opinions about past experiences, talking about vacations,	Describing technology; giving instructions; giving advice	Identifying and describing problems; offering solutions
8	Asking about and describing locations of places, Asking about and describing neighborhoods, asking about quantities	Describing holidays, festivals, customs, and special events	Asking about preferences; talking about learning methods; talking about personal qualities
9	Asking about and describing people's appearances, identifying people	Talking about change; comparing time periods; describing possibilities	Talking about things you need to have done; asking for and giving advice or suggestions
10	Describing past experiences; making plans; exchanging information about past experiences and events	Describing abilities and skills; talking about job preferences; describing personality traits	Talking about historical events; giving opinions about the future
11	Asking about and describing cities; asking for and giving suggestions; talking about travel and tourism	Talking about landmarks and monuments; describing countries; discussing facts	Describing yourself in the past; describing regrets about the past; describing hypothetical situations
12	Talking about health problems; asking for and giving advice; making requests; asking for and giving suggestions	Asking about someone's past; describing recent experiences	Describing the purpose of something; describing qualities for success; describing features; giving reasons; talking about ads
13	Expressing likes and dislikes; agreeing and disagreeing; ordering a meal	Describing movies and books; talking about actors and actresses; asking for and giving reactions and opinions	Offering explanations; drawing conclusions; describing hypothetical events
14	Describing countries; making comparisons; expressing opinions; talking about distance and measurements	Interpreting body language; explaining gestures and meanings; describing emotions; explaining proverbs; asking about signs and meanings	Describing how something is done, used, or made; describing careers in the media and entertainment industries
15	Talking about plans; making invitations; accepting and refusing invitations; giving reasons; taking and leaving messages	Speculating about past and future events; describing a predicament; giving advice and suggestions	Making a recommendation; giving and acknowledging opinions; asking for and giving reasons; agreeing and disagreeing
16	Exchanging personal information; describing changes; talking about plans for the future	Reporting what people say; making requests; making invitations and excuses	Describing challenges, frustration, and rewards; talking about the past and the future

age, weight, hair color, asking about the weather, talking about free time, talking about transportation, and talking about one's job.

While in New Interchange series, you can see a variety of function is included, ranging from introducing yourself to topics such as describing personalities; expressing likes and dislikes, giving opinions about jobs, describing past events, asking about preferences, talking about change; comparing time periods, interpreting body language; explaining gestures and meanings and many more. The topics do not overlap while in the language functions included in the high school English textbooks one can see many overlaps, that is, topics are not treated equally and only very routine and culturally safe ones are included and treated in the book. From the inclusion of the functions in the book, it seems that no certain pattern has been targeted and only their inclusion is considered necessary, in another word, their inclusion in the language function part at the end of each unit confirms this fact that language functions do not play a role in the lessons and lesson planning as mentioned before. Furthermore, only two to four line conversation are included in each unit which indicates in the globalized world of today, these series do not intend to prepare the learners for communication and will not be able to achieve the communicative purpose and as a result the pragmatic competence that one needs to act effectively in English and in the global village of today. As stated in literature review part, in order to develop learners' pragmatic competence, its two components that is pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competences need to be developed and since for sociopragmatic competence to be developed, its necessary prerequisite that is pragmalinguistic competence needs to be developed first. However, to develop the pragmatic competence, though the term is not as easy as it is stated here, speech acts can help a lot in this process and since the speech acts included in the high school English textbooks are very limited, one can conclude that these books are not suitable for serving this purpose and consequently language functions which are carried out using the speech acts are affected and limited. Therefore, the researcher thinks that in terms of language functions also these books enjoy some shortcomings

### **5. Pedagogical Implications**

This research can have certain implication for textbook designers in Iran. Since we live in a globalized world where communication in English is a must we have to prepare the best materials and textbooks for our learners to be able to act effectively and efficiently when faced with people from other cultures and countries. Therefore, textbook designers, material developers should take every step necessary to provide the best book possible for the learners and students.

The present study contributes to the growing research on Interlanguage Pragmatics, specifically on pragmatic development of speech acts on the part of learners in EFL contexts. The study suggests the necessity for the high schools to address this particular gap in their language learners' pragmatic competence, and, if need be, revise their materials on offer, as well as reconsider related pedagogical practices.

Furthermore, somewhat limited pragmatic repertoire of Iranian EFL learners seems to require explicit metapragmatic teaching of speech acts in general. The findings also necessitate introduction of authentic spoken data into EFL classrooms.

It is hoped that other English language institutes in Iran will benefit from the findings as well as pedagogical implications of this study into Iranian EFL learners' realization of speech acts. Importantly, language educators should bear in mind that the adoption of socio-cultural rules as one's own in L2 pragmatic production is an individual decision. However, it is our responsibility to equip the learners with enough knowledge to make an informed choice and to not inadvertently convey messages they did not intend" (Eslami-Rasekh, 1993, p. 10).

## 6. Suggestions for Further Research

The current study makes the following suggestions: the high school English textbooks need to be studied especially in terms of speech acts and pragmatic competence as these books are not communicative. Teachers in such context have students who attend private language centers with exposure to a variety of English materials and as result have to deal with more proficient learners and students. Therefore, teachers should tailor the high school English textbooks to their learners' needs and since in speech act instruction both explicit and implicit instruction works, they should adopt a variety of approaches to help the learners. These are the issues that can be considered in later research and studies.

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