PRAGMATICS IN CLIL: A COMPARISON OF CLIL AND NON-CLIL STUDENTS' REQUESTS

ABSTRACT: *This study is a mixed-method, cross-sectional study that compares the acquisition of request modification in the productions of two secondary school groups (15-16 years old) in two school programs: content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and traditional mainstream (non-CLIL). A total of 192 requests were gathered from both groups by means of an elicitation instrument (a Written Discourse Completion Test –WDCT). The requestive pragmatic moves (external and internal modifiers and request strategies) were analysed according to their pragmatic functions (softeners and aggravators) and a data-driven taxonomy of request modification was elaborated in line with previously developed taxonomies (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Alcón Soler et al., 2005) for the data analysis. The results showed that both groups share similarities typical of foreign language learners. Nonetheless, significant statistical differences between them indicated that the CLIL group had a fuller repertoire of request modification strategies, yet their sociopragmatic knowledge is questioned.*

KEY WORDS: *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL); pragmatic competence; request modification; taxonomy of requests*

RESUMEN: *Este estudio tiene como objetivo determinar si tanto los alumnos de 4º de E.S.O. que participan en el programa bilingüe inglés («AICLE o CLIL») como*

los alumnos que no participan en este programa («no-AICLE o non-CLIL») utilizan de forma distinta los modificadores y las estrategias de petición. Dichos modificadores (externos e internos) y estrategias (directas e indirectas) fueron las dimensiones utilizadas para comparar las peticiones de los alumnos. Con el fin de suscitar dichas producciones (192 peticiones), se utilizó un Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT) con situaciones que no estaban estrechamente relacionadas con los hábitos de clase de los alumnos. Para analizar las peticiones, se elaboró una taxonomía basada en el mismo conjunto de datos para realizar el análisis de datos siguiendo otros estudios en los que se hizo lo mismo (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Alcón Soler et al., 2005). Los resultados demostraron que el grupo «CLIL» y el «non-CLIL» compartían similitudes típicas de los estudiantes de lenguas extranjeras. No obstante, también hubo diferencias significativas entre ellos que indican que el grupo CLIL utilizaba un repertorio más amplio de modificadores y estrategias en sus respuestas, a pesar de lo cual se pone en cuestión su conocimiento sociopragmático.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE); competencia pragmática; modificación de peticiones; taxonomía de peticiones*

1. INTRODUCTION

The term Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) emerged in the European Union (EU) in reference to an educational approach that promotes learning non-language subjects through an additional language (L2) with the two-fold objective of learning the content subjects and the target language, the latter being both a learning tool and a learning outcome (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). CLIL shares similarities with other bilingual education approaches (cf. Cenoz, 2015; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012), where apart from providing more hours of instruction through the target language, these programs also provide an authentic need for students to access information, negotiate content, and express themselves (Lorenzo, Casal, & Moore, 2010). In doing so, CLIL students gain different language competences which have been the subject of a number of studies that compared the performance of CLIL and non-CLIL students (cf. Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015, p. 51). Differences between students in grammar, cloze, dictation and listening, writing accuracy, length of composition, syntactic complexity, and lexical complexity showed that most CLIL groups were at least a grade ahead of the non-CLIL group (Navés & Victori, 2010, pp. 30–49). The same tendency was found in further studies on grammar (Navés, 2011), lexico-grammar (Ackrel, 2007), reading comprehension (Lasagabaster, 2008; Navés, 2011) and spontaneous oral production (Admiraal, Westhoff, & de Bot, 2006). These gains clearly fall under Cummins' (1978) construct of communicative academic language proficiency (CALP) rather than basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). Despite the importance of BICS in general and interpersonal language in particular for successful day to day interactions, these have not received sufficient attention

in the CLIL classroom nor in CLIL research when compared to academic-driven language skills.

Though the CLIL class has a participatory nature that fosters the use of all language functions—the ideational, textual, and interpersonal—by students and teachers (Llinares, Morton, & Whittaker, 2012, p. 212), not all functions and features are equally present, or equally practiced *if* present. Dalton–Puffer (2011, p, 295) tackles this point head on by clarifying that CLIL lessons provide good training grounds for some skills but students cannot be expected to get sufficient practice in the communicative acts to which their exposure is merely incidental. In other words, multiple language functions coexist in the classroom, but the extent to which CLIL as a learning space helps students practice and acquire the features of these functions is a different matter. This leads to doubts about whether CLIL students have an advantage where untaught language competences like language pragmatics are concerned (cf. Dalton-Puffer, 2011. p. 308). Communicative speech acts including requesting, apologizing, inviting, refusing, complimenting and thanking (Searle, 1979) are greatly influenced by "interactions and cultural environments" (CEFR, 2001, p. 13) and not commonly found nor often explicitly taught in L2 curricula (cf. Alcón Soler & Mártinez Flor, 2008). Since empirical research is the only way to determine if CLIL as a context fosters the acquisition of speech acts, the study at hand poses the question: "Are there differences between CLIL and non-CLIL students with regards to their use of request modifiers and strategies?" It explores the pragmatic competence of CLIL students in the north of Spain (Aragon), where students rarely have the opportunity to use the L2 beyond the classroom, as is reported to be the case in other regions in Spain (cf. Lasagabster & Sierra 2010, p. 352). CLIL students' pragmatic

competence in this study is assessed through their ability to formulate and modify requests in comparison to those formulated by non-CLIL EFL students (henceforth, non-CLIL).

Before delving into the study, the importance of interpersonal language in content-based contexts is explained, and the main findings of relevant research on classroom discourse interlanguage pragmatic are reviewed.

2. **Background Research**

2.1. Interpersonal language and the importance of language pragmatics to CLIL students

Interlocutors in any given situation communicate their intentions through linguistic forms that influence the behaviour of others in order to get them to do something; for example, by requesting, suggesting, or complaining, among many other speech acts (Searle, 1979). Speech acts are part of the interpersonal metafunction of language—language *as action*—in the systemic functional view of language (Halliday & Mattheissen, 2014, p. 30), and part of the interpersonal rhetoric (Leech, 1983) by which interlocutors not only get others to do things, but to also manage their relationships with them (Kasper, 1997). The effective use of interpersonal language functions requires pragmatic competence, which is the ability to use language in accordance with the social context (Taguchi, 2009). Language pragmatics has two subcomponents, pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic, and forms part of language-users' communicative competence. Whereas pragmalinguistic competence is the ability to choose the appropriate linguistic form (directness, indirectness, with softeners, with justifiers, etc.) from a range of linguistic variations to carry out a communicative

action, sociopragmatic competence reflects users' understanding of social organization. The latter includes social power, status and distance; impositions in relation to certain events (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and conventional practices within a certain community such as rights, obligations, and taboos (Thomas, 1983). The capacity to vary linguistic forms in relation to these social and cultural considerations is an integral part of speakers' interactional capacity in their first language. Second language learners obviously need the same skills in the L2 for the same reasons. They need to negotiate their roles in content-based contexts (Cummins, 2008) and they are expected to establish rapport and relationships with others who use the same L2 (CEFR, 2000). In the specific case of CLIL learners, Llinares et al. (2012, p. 221) indicate that interpersonal language is a key to operating successfully in academic contexts as students need to regulate their roles and relationships with teachers and peers. CLIL students, however, do not always have sufficient exposure to interpersonal language in the L2, which could be the cause of different social mishaps and communicative breakdowns. A good example that shows how non-native students' interpersonal language skills can influence the outcome of interactions in an academic context can be found in Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993), where students' seeming abruptness and awkward pragmatic use of English negatively influenced how they were perceived by tutors during advising sessions. Generally, students who are grammatically competent but pragmatically incompetent are often perceived as rude or ill-mannered (Enomoto & Marriott, 1994, p. 155; Wannaruk, 2008, p. 319); a mismatch that may eventually be the case of CLIL students in view of their advanced grammatical competence (cf. Navés, 2011) and the doubts surrounding their insufficient exposure and/or practice of interpersonal language, as previously discussed. The next section elaborates on

the type of pragmatic input available to students in the classroom.

2.2. Pragmatics in CLIL classroom discourse

It has been stated that classroom discourse rarely pushes students to produce a wide variety of speech acts (Selinker, Swain, & Dumas, 1975) and rarely helps students notice the need to vary linguistic forms depending on who they address (Ellis, 1992). Studies that have discussed the pragmatic features of CLIL classroom discourse are few (Dalton-Puffer, 2005; Nikula, 2005, 2008; Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006; Gassner & Maillat, 2006, Llinares & Pastrana, 2013; Lorenzo & Moore, 2010), yet they have been enough to establish a view of the discourse characteristics which tend to prevail in this context. These have positively shown that tackling content through a foreign language can create a pragmatic 'mask effect' that motivates students to interact more while performing tasks (Gassner & Maillat, 2006; Nikula, 2008). Negotiating tasks and the primacy of meaning in this content were found to push CLIL students to use pragmatic moves such as hedging and tentative language, which are not part of the students' syllabi in primary or early secondary stages (Lorenzo & Moore, 2010)—possibly to express uncertainty or avoid sounding certain. However, directive illocutionary acts have been found to be a dominant practice in CLIL classes (cf. Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006), which can vary according to factors such as task type. Llinares and Pastrana (2013) analysed primary school and secondary school students' speech during whole-class and group-work discussions, and found that the students used different request modification depending on the task type (group or whole-class). For example, some students used mood derivable imperatives to regulate the task at hand during group work, as if playing the role of a teacher. Non-regulatory exchanges,

however, required other structures, such as modal verbs and evaluative lexis, to discuss the content itself, which secondary CLIL students produced more of. Two points are concluded: first, unmodified speech in the CLIL classroom is warranted by the transactional regulative functions that teachers and students carry out; second, not all types of interpersonal language and pragmatic cues emerge in the classroom and that they vary across tasks and age groups. From a Vygotskian perspective, students' acquisition of language develops within the interactional matrix they form part of (Cummins, 2008), which is clearly rich in direct talk. What makes the matter of acquiring pragmatic competence more challenging is that sociocultural norms are so deeply seated in learners' identity that substituting an engrained set of social assumptions for another is a difficult task (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrell, 1995, p. 23). We can then conclude that the classroom as an educational context cannot be generally claimed to strongly enrich students' pragmalinguistic repertoire or hone their sociopragmatic competence.

Whereas discursive analysis has been valuable in identifying the pragmatic features that tend to emerge in naturalistic classroom exchanges, it has not provided us with a comparison of learners' pragmatic competence across both contexts. More importantly, because the classroom represents a context where its members seem to focus on the message when discussing non-language subjects and disregard how the message is said, data from classroom discourse alone would not be sufficient when researching learners' ILP. In the next section, the importance of requests and the emergence of different requestive taxonomies are briefly discussed before reviewing ILP studies most relevant to the study at hand.

2.3. Requestive modifiers and strategies: taxonomies and studies

Requests as a speech act is an inevitable frequent routine that could have an impositive nature (Sifianou, 1999), depending on the linguistic forms (softeners or aggravators) used to execute the request. The composition of requests and their realizers have been described in studies by Achiba (2003), Alcón Soler et al. (1995), Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), Sifianou (1999), and Trosborg (1995), among others. Nonetheless, Blum-Kulka et al.'s Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project – CCSARP (1989) is particularly influential for having provided one of the earliest request coding manuals and continues to this day to be most relevant to studies specifically dealing with elicited data, as is the case of this study.

The abovementioned studies have produced different taxonomies that classify a request into *a head act*, which is the core of the request function, and *request modifiers* (external and internal), which are the devices responsible for softening or intensifying the requestive function. The *external modifiers* are placed before and/or after the head act (disarmers, cost minimisers, sweeteners, grounders, pre-commitments, and checking on availability) and the *internal modifiers* are found within the head act itself (lexical/phrasal devices and syntactic downgraders). Important to this study as well are the three levels of directness in Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) taxonomy that have been adopted or adapted in other research studies, and that are composed of different request strategy types, namely: marked directness (e.g., imperatives); conventional indirectness or preparatory conditions of ability (can/could); and suggestions and hints (suggestion and hints formulae).

The review first starts with cross-sectional pragmatic studies in the domain of EFL that have compared the requests of learners of different proficiency levels (Economidou–

Kogetsidis, 2012; Hill, 1997; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2003; Otcu & Zeyrek, 2008; Trosborg, 1995; Wang, 2011). These are specifically relevant to the study at hand as CLIL students are EFL learners as well—a fact that remains unaltered by the students' additional exposure to English through content subjects—, and because the present study also compares two groups in which the CLIL group is presumed to be two school-levels ahead of their non-CLIL peers with regards to language proficiency (Navés & Victori, 2010, p. 164). In the EFL context then, Wang (2011) elicited requests from Chinese intermediate and advanced EFL by means of a DCT (Discourse Completion Test) with ten situations. The learners generally used external modifiers more than internal modifiers, but neither of the learner groups used some of the more syntactically complex formulae (e.g. *I was wondering if*) nor did they vary the request strategies according to the levels of impositions in the DCT situations. Also using a DCT with eight situations, Hill (1997) elicited requests from Japanese EFL learners with low, intermediate, and high proficiency levels by means of eight high imposition situations that the learners had not seen before. Learners in the lower levels used external modifiers (vs. internal modifiers), mostly grounders and 'please', and more direct strategies (vs. hints). Their use of imperatives decreased with the increase in their proficiency levels. As for using *preparatory conditions*, progress was found between the beginner and the intermediate levels, but not between the intermediate levels and the advanced levels. Internal modifiers were underused and did not evolve in higher proficiency levels. Using two role plays, Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003) compared requests by Japanese EFL learners at low and high levels of proficiency. Similar to previous results, especially Hill's (1997), Kobayashi and Rinnert found that learners preferred the use of direct request strategies, including *want statements*. Learners used more and varied external

modifiers in higher levels, but their use of grounders were similar in both proficiency groups. Economidou–Kogetsidis (2012) also studied the request modifications of low-proficiency Greek learners by means of role plays. As in the previous studies, results showed learners' underuse of internal modifiers and overuse of external modifiers, mainly grounders. The underuse of internal modifiers persists in other studies as well. For example, Trosborg (1995),who used role plays to elicit requests from Danish EFL learners divided into three lower, intermediate, and advanced levels (secondary school, high school, and university students), also reported that learners employed few internal modifiers. Comparisons across learner proficiency levels showed that the use of external modifiers increased gradually from the beginner group to the advanced group, indicating a linear development. However, the intermediate proficiency group used more internal downgraders than both the beginner and the advanced groups, indicating that internal modifiers may develop in a non-linear fashion. Another uncommon finding was that the learners in this study favored the use of indirect strategies, which is contradictory to the findings in the previously mentioned studies in this section. Otcu and Zeyrek's findings (2008) partially coincide with Trosborg's (1995). They used interactive role plays with two groups of Turkish students of low intermediate and upper intermediate proficiency levels. Though learners showed a tendency towards using external modifiers, they too showed preference for indirect strategies in all three groups though with slightly noted differences. To the author's best knowledge, only one study targeted the speech act of requests as a learning outcome in the content of CLIL at the secondary school level. Nashaat Sobhy (2017) elicited requests by means of a DCT with two situations from three groups of students (ages

14 to 17) in two different programs (CLIL and non-CLIL). The three groups had more hours of instruction in or through English when compared to other EFL classes. The students in Grade 10 CLIL were the youngest (15–16 years old) with 288 hours of instruction a year through both CLIL and EFL, the students in the Grade 11 had graduated from the CLIL program and reverted to having 144 hours of instruction a year through EFL only. Grade 12 students were a special interest group who received 180 hours of EFL a year, which is slightly more than what Grade 11 students had and more than they would typically do. As an overall tendency, students modified requests by using external modifiers, especially grounders and the marker 'please', and they hardly used any internal modifiers. Interestingly, non-formulaic grounders were used significantly less by Grade 12 students, also the oldest group, and the same one reported to be better at softening requests and varying the level of directness depending on their interlocutor (p. 84). This led to the conclusion that pragmatic differences were not necessarily related to studying in the CLIL program per se and that there are other factors working in favor of the older group such as their cumulative exposure to English over time, maturation, and age. The findings also pointed out that students went through a phase in which they mixed and matched request modifiers and strategies they acquired without fully distinguishing between their pragmatic effect(s), which was evident in all three groups, but mostly evident in the case of Grade 10 (4th ESO CLIL).

To sum up the findings from this review, there is consensus that EFL learners tend to use more external modifiers than internal modifiers, especially grounders, and that these increase with proficiency level. Economidou–Kogetsidis (2012) suggests that external modification is less sensitive to the level of proficiency and can be acquired more easily

than internal modification as it demands less syntactic and pragmalinguistic complexity on the part of the learners. Internal modifiers are trickier and their acquisition is possibly not linear. As for directness, it seems that while some learner groups show preference for direct requests like mood derivable imperatives, others show preference for indirect strategies, especially conventional query preparatory conditions. With these findings in mind, the present study targets CLIL and non-CLIL learners at the same educational level to compare their use of external and internal modifiers and request strategies. It is interesting to examine the frequency of request modification devices in both groups, but it is important to see if the CLIL group is truly better at using these devices in softening requests. A single question is posed in this study: Are there differences between CLIL and non-CLIL students of the same age and school level with regards to their use of request modifiers and strategies?

3. THE STUDY

3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were Spanish students from two schools in the region of Aragon (Zaragoza and Huesca), Spain, in their final year of compulsory secondary education (Grade 10) and whose ages range between 15 and 16 years old. In the Spanish education system, this level is referred to as 4th ESO (Etapa Secundaria Obligatoria, which is Spanish for compulsory secondary education). Grade 10, or 4th ESO, is the final level in which CLIL is adopted in schools. A difference in the hours of instruction through English is an aspect that differentiates CLIL and non-CLIL: students in the CLIL program study science and social sciences in English (3 hours per week) in addition to their EFL classes (5

hours per week), adding up to 288 hours of English a year, whereas students in the EFL program have half of those hours through EFL instruction (4 hours per week) a year. The increased exposure to English is an edge CLIL students have. Following Navés and Victori (2010), they are considered to be the higher proficiency group in this study. All Grade 10 CLIL students from both schools participated in the study (a total of 53 students), as opposed to one non-CLIL class from one of the schools only (a total of 26 students), making a total of 79 participants.

The teachers responsible for these classes (all native Spanish teachers except for one British teacher in one of the schools) were asked to provide information regarding whether their teaching outline included language pragmatics related outcomes. Four broad statements were found similar to: "students should interact appropriately in routine situations". The teachers noted that they each decided to what extent and how to tackle these statements.

3.2. The elicitation instrument

The elicitation instrument used in this study was a Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT), with two situations to prompt respondents to produce requests. While using DCTs does not guarantee eliciting requests that students would necessarily use in real situations (Nurani, 2009), they are ideal for: (i) eliciting explicit pragmatic knowledge that requires analysis and consciousness on part of the participants (Bardovi–Harlig, 2013), not guaranteed in spontaneous time-constrained talk that is procedural and unconscious;(ii) controlling research variables for comparability and generalizability (Bardovi–Harlig, 2013); and (iii) prompting the participants to produce utterances that sufficiently resemble naturally occurring patterns (cf. Economidou–Kogetsidis, 2013). Because this study compares the

pragmatic competence of two groups, as opposed to determining their pragmatic performance in real life, a WDCT was considered well-fitted for the purpose of this study.

The WDCT was composed of two interpersonal situations that students may encounter in real day-to-day dealings with a teacher or with peers, yet it was important to avoid situations the respondents may be familiar with, or for which they would produce rehearsed requests. They were written to resemble the level of imposition enacted in the CCSARP situation in which a flatmate leaves the kitchen in a mess and the respondent wants to cook dinner. In parallel, the situations projected reasons for the respondents to be concerned about their performance on a high-stake exam: in other words, they were pushed to react to two impositions acted upon them by two interlocutors. In the first situation, which is between the student and a teacher (Ss-T), the teacher (+power) is typing loudly, which makes it difficult for the respondents to concentrate on the exam. In the second prompt, which is between the student and other students at a residence (Ss-Ss), the resident students (-power) are noisy, which makes it difficult for the respondents to sleep on the night of the exam (Appendix A). In taking initiative for their sociality rights, they were expected to use a variety of request modification devices and strategies that soften or intensify their speech act. The situations were piloted to ensure that the prompts yielded the desired speech act and also to amend any contextual or procedural ambiguities. Expert feedback from two members of the CLIL-UAM research group at the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid was used to improve the wording of the two situations, and their consensus was sought a second time prior to using the situations with the respondents of the study.

3.3. Data collection procedure

An official letter explaining the aim of the study was delivered to the schools where the study took place. Data gathering began after the approvals of the parents and the coordinators. The stage coordinators assisted with scheduling data-collection sessions, which took place in the presence of the class teachers. The researcher explained in Spanish what students should do to avoid any added difficulty or misunderstanding on part of the participants. The participants were informed that their answers would not affect their grades as they were for research purposes. Table 1 shows the number of requests gathered from each group for every situation in the elicitation instrument. A total of 129 requests were gathered from the participants.

Table 1. *The number of students and the corresponding number of elicited requests per group and per situation.*

Program	Total N of Students	N of Ss-T Requests	N of Ss-Ss requests	Total N of requests
CLIL	53	47	45	92
non-CLIL	26	20	17	37
	79	67	65	129

3.4. Data Analysis

3.4.1. Initial data coding

To answer the research question, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were required. Following the taxonomies of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Alcón Soler et al. (2005), the requestive units in the learners' 129 requests were coded and classified. As new pragmatic features surfaced, the researcher made some taxonomical modifications by suppressing or reshuffling existing taxonomical categories, following the trend of previous researchers (cf.

Sifianou, 1999; Trosborg, 1995; Alcón Soler et al., 2005; Schauer, 2009; Woodfield & Economidou–Kogetsidis, 2010). The outcome was a coding scheme that reflects the requestive features used by the learners in the study. Though the new scheme—or taxonomy—is an outcome of this study, it is best introduced before presenting the results as the latter depended on it.

Two taxonomies were kept in perspective during the preliminary coding: Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Alcón Soler et al. (2005). Both reflect learners' use of a variety of strategies (e.g., imperatives, performatives, want/need/obligation, hints and suggestions, and query preparatory conditions); external modifiers (e.g., preparators, grounders, disarmers, promises, threats, and cost minimisers), and internal modifiers (lexical/phrasal modifiers as in understatements, hedges or not naming the action, downtoners, consultative devices or openers, and upgraders). Syntactic internal modifiers were not under investigation in this study and were, therefore, suppressed in the new taxonomy; next to the inaccuracies in the labeling of these modifiers in Blum-Kula et al. (1989) (cf. Leech, 2014, p. 267), they were not found in this corpus as Spanish EFL students rarely use them (Alcón Soler et al., 2005). Other categories that were suppressed for the same reason were strategies like hints, suggestions, and want/need/obligation statements that were not found in their usual function as direct strategies (I want you to 'naming an action')but rather as part of the grounders (*I need/want/have to sleep because I have an exam tomorrow*). Though cost minimisers (*if you don't mind*, could you stop?) and threats (*If you don't* stop now, *I'll complain* to the supervisor) were anecdotal in the corpus, they were included as some tokens were found. In addition to suppressing the previously mentioned categories that did not appear in the corpus and highlighting the pragmatic function of the ones that

did appear, novel pragmatic features unaccounted for in already-existing taxonomies were detected and added to the taxonomy. These could have appeared here as a result of the high imposition non-routinized situations in the elicitation instrument. These emergent features and the division of the taxonomy used are explained next.

3.4.2. Newly emerging pragmatic features

Some of the participants' requests showed that the teacher (typing during the test) and the resident students (talking and watching TV loudly) in the DCT situations were perceived as a source of annoyance (SOA), which was reflected in different strategies and modifying devices. Though 'grounders' are justifications given by the requester to minimize the imposition (Sifianou, 1999, p.185), and usually categorized as softeners in request modification taxonomies, it was observed that some grounders in students' productions implicated the hearer, and did not soften the request. Therefore, a distinction between softening (non-implicating) and aggravating (implicating) grounders was necessary. The new taxonomy (Table 2), in general, reflected which request modification are potential softeners or potential aggravators as in Alcón Soler et al. (2005). The newly emerging features are highlighted in boxes in Table 2 and classified according to their corresponding dimensions as external modifiers, internal modifiers, or strategies.

Non-implicating grounders are those that soften request impositions and are further divided into specific or non-specific. **Non-specific grounders** do not implicate the hearer as a SOA; they may refer to a situation as the reason for the request (*It seems it is quite hot here* - an example from Alcón Soleret al., 2005) or involve the speaker himself/herself (example 1). Concerning **specific grounders**, these specify an object (OBJ) in the immediate setting of the speaker, which the speaker uses to justify the request

(example 2). These are less formulaic than non-specific grounders and request justifications and show effort on part of the speakers to avoid the agent (House & Kasper, 1981) and minimize the potential of face-threatening acts. The latter was abbreviated and referred to as **OBJ-SOA grounders**. The grammatical errors in the provided examples are the students' own.

(1) Ss-T, non-CLIL (non-specific grounders): Sorry, ***I can't concentrate in the exam***, can you stop please?

(2) Ss-T, CLIL (OBJ-SOA specific grounders): Excuse me, could you *please* write more slowly? ***The noise of the computer keys is getting on my nerves and I can't concentrate***.

Another look at these examples (1 and 2) shows the 'formulaic' nature of non-specific grounders—not necessarily grammatically accurate in this corpus—. The specific OBJ-SOA grounders are less formulaic though and require some creativity on part of the students to bypass the agent. In contrast to non-implicating grounders, **implicating grounders**, as the term suggests, are grounders that associate a person (P)—the hearer or the requestee—to the source of annoyance (example 3). These grounders are seen as aggravating request modifiers, referred to in abbreviated form as **SOA-P grounders**.

(3) Ss-T, CLIL (SOA-P implicating grounders): Please teacher can you stop using the computer ***because you produce a very noise sound***."

Table 2. *A taxonomy reflecting Spanish CLIL and non-CLIL students' use of modifiers and strategies in requests. The emergent features are highlighted in boxes.*

Range: Unmarked to Positively Marked Request Modifiers (Potential Softeners)		
DIMENSIONS	**CATEGORIES & SUB-CATEGORIES**	**EXAMPLES**
External Modifiers	Non-implicating Grounders: • Non-Specific	Can you *please* turn the TV down? *I have an exam early in the morning.*
	• Specific in referring to an object as a source of annoyance (OBJ-SOA)	*The sound of the TV is loud;* can you turn it down?
	Cost minimizers	*If you're not watching something important,* can you turn the TV off?
Internal Modifiers	Understatements	Can you turn off the TV *for a little while*? Can you turn it *a bit* down?
	Consultative devices (openers)	*Do you think* you could turn the TV down?
	Downtoners (uncertainty)	Can you *try* to keep the voice down?
	Hedges (not naming the action)	Could you *do something* with the volume?
Strategies	Preparatory condition – Ability or Willingness	*Can/ Could* / *Would* you turn down the TV?
Range. Marked to Negatively Marked Request Modifiers (Potential Aggravators)		
External Modifiers	Implicating Grounders (SOA-P)	Can you be quiet? I can't study *because of your noise.*
	Threats	If you don't stop now, *I'll complain to the supervisor.*
Internal Modifiers	Upgraders (expletives)	Can you turn down this *bloody* TV?
Strategies	Implicating Head-acts (HA-SOA/P)	Could *you* try not to make *too much noise*?
	Imperatives	*Turn down* the TV please.
	Obligation	You *must* turn it off.
	Action-ceasers	Can you *stop* this noise?

As for **action-ceasers,** these are action verbs like *stop, turn/switch off, be quiet/silent, and shut up* (underlined in example 3 above) which inherently do not give the requestees any option but to end the action they are performing, thus the differentiation between 'turn *down*' and 'turn *off*'. An imperative with the former directive (turn down) implies regulating something (the volume, for example), whereas the latter (turn off) implies abandoning the action at hand, which places the use of such verbs under direct strategies with the potential to aggravate. Action-ceasers are differentiated from imperatives and they can be found within indirect forms (*Could you turn off the TV?*).

Finally, **implicating headacts (HA-SOA/P)** are head acts in which the hearer is referred to as a source of annoyance (example 4).

(4) Ss-T, CLIL (HA-SOA/P implicating head acts): Teacher, please can ***you*** stop ***making noise?***

Knowing that hearer-oriented requests have a higher level of imposition and that avoiding mentioning the hearer minimizes imposition and softens requests (House & Kasper, 1981), learners' *reference to the hearer as a source of annoyance* (SOA) was classified as a strategy with the potential to aggravate. This should not be confused with mild and strong hints defined by Blum-Kulka and Olshatin (1984) as "indirect strategies that realize the request by either partial reference to an object or element needed for the implementation of the act ('Why is the window open'), or by reliance on contextual clues ('It's cold in here')" since hints (mild or strong) are stand-alone statements, or questions that do not request a specific action of the interlocutor. Also, one of the drawbacks in the CCSARP coding was the operational difficulty in differentiating mild and strong hints (Leech, 2014, p. 267)

which is overcome here by applying the *SOA* concept. The other features outside the boxes in Table 2 are the same external and internal modifiers and request strategies seen in Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Alcón Soler et al. (2005) where they can be referred to for a full account.

Because the appropriateness of linguistic cues depends on the situation, it is hardly the case that a linguistic feature would always function pragmatically as a softener or an aggravator and the reason why the taxonomy is divided into two ranges: potential softeners and potential aggravators. According to Watts (2003), unnoticed non-salient utterances are part of every day's politic behavior and are, therefore, unmarked and vice versa. Therefore, the categories that could contribute to making requests politic or polite were classified under the range of Softeners–*unmarked to positively marked modifiers*(e.g., "*Could you please repeat what you said?*") as the indirect query preparatory request is considered conventional non-salient everyday politeness. Whether it is marked or unmarked depends on the situation and the interlocutors. Similarly, categories that could contribute to making the request marked or impolite were classified under *Aggravators-Marked to Negatively Marked Modifiers*. For example: "Stop doing too much noise", implies that the interlocutor is the source of noise and the learner uses of the action-ceasing verb "stop" which tends to be salient or marked in a negative manner irrespective of who the interlocutors are.

The opinions of two experts (from the UAM-CLIL research group, previously mentioned) were sought to validate the emergent features before using them in coding the data. The coding was then carried out by the researcher and revised by one of the experts; doubts were discussed until a consensus was reached. As for the statistical treatment of the data, a non-parametric Chi square test of independence was applied at a confidence level of

95% (p=<0.05) using Preacher's (2001) interactive Chi square test of independence with Yate's correction for frequency values less 5 to determine whether the CLIL and non-CLIL groups used request modification significantly differently.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the research question, the request modifiers (external and internal) and request strategies (direct and indirect) produced by both the CLIL and the non-CLIL students were compared. The comparison of results is presented in this section starting with the students' use of external modifiers (4.1 and 4.2) then their use of internal modifiers (4.3 and 4.4), and finally their use of request strategies (4.5 and 4.6).

4.1. Softening and aggravating external modifiers

Softening external modifiers are non-specific grounders, specific grounders (OBJ-SOA), and cost minimizers. Table 3 shows that the use of *grounders* prevails over that of *cost-minimisers* in both groups across both situations and are used more in the Ss-Ss situation with peers than in the Ss-T situation with the teacher. The CLIL students used significantly less *non-specific* grounders in comparison to the non-CLIL group when addressing the teacher—Ss-T (19.5% and 45%) {$X^2 = 4.772$ ($p<0.028$)}, but they were similar in this regard when addressing peers—Ss-Ss, (73.33% and 82.35%). With regards to *specific* grounders, though no statistical significant differences were found, the CLIL group was the only group to use them: 19.15% in the Ss-T situation and 4.44% in the Ss-Ss situation. As for *cost minimizers*, they were trivial in the productions of both groups. Turning to aggravating external modifiers, these are SOA-P grounders that could justify requests but implicate the hearer as a *source of annoyance*.

Table 3. *Raw frequencies, percentages and Chi Square values for the differences between the CLIL and non-CLIL groups on softening external modifiers.*

WDCT Situations	Softening External Modifiers						
(Ss-T) Teacher situation		4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)			
		F	%	F	%	Chi	P <
	Non-specific grounders	9	19.15	9	45.00	4.722	0.028*
	Specific OBJ-SOA grounders	9	19.15	0	0.00	2.931	0.086
	Cost minimizers	1	5	1	2.3	0.023	0.879
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL(N=17)			
		F	%	F	%	Chi	P <
	Non-specific grounders	33	73.33	14	82.35	0.166	0.683
	Specific OBJ-SOA grounders	2	4.44	0	0.00	0.006	0.938
	Cost minimizers	2	4.44	0	0.00	0.006	0.938

Table 4 shows that CLIL students used these *SOA-P grounders* (21.28%) noticeably more than the non-CLIL students (5.00%) in the situation with the teacher, which both hardly used in the situation with peers; only one student per group used it (2.22% and 5.88%). Had the grounders been grouped as one as is the case of previously reviewed ILP studies, no differences at all in both groups' use of grounders would have been observed. The discussion will center on the first type of grounders (specific and non-specific softening grounders). A closer look at the percentages shows that because the non-CLIL group resorted to *non-specific grounders* only—as opposed to the CLIL group using two forms of

softening grounders—, they are found to have used these grounders statistically more than the CLIL group.

Table 4.*Raw frequencies, percentages and Chi Square values for the differences between the CLIL and non-CLIL groups on softening external modifiers.*

WDCT Situations	Aggravating external modifiers						
(Ss-T) Teacher situation		4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	SOA-P grounders	10	21.28	1	5	0.009	0.198
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=17)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	SOA-P grounders	1	2.22	1	5.88	0.0006	0.938

It is important to keep in mind that *non-specific grounders* are more formulaic in nature than *specific OBJ-SOA* grounders (discussed in 3.4.2) and that specific grounders, though limited, are qualitatively interesting for demonstrating some students' attempts to avoid agency (cf. House & Kasper, 1981); in light of that, the only CLIL group's edge above the other group lies in some attempts to bypass implicating themselves or others by thinking of more pragmatically tactful request justifications that involve an object when addressing the teacher (e.g., "the noise of the computer"; "…the keyboard…"), whereas the non-CLIL group resorted to using the more formulaic *non-specific grounders* (e.g., "…I can't concentrate"; "… because I have an important exam"). Kasper and Rose (2002, p. 135) explain development in learners' requests as a move from depending on formulas to which they have been introduced to using parts of these formulas after defragmenting, analysing and

reusing them in new productions of their own, which Otcu and Zeyrtek (2008, p. 289) also refer to it as creativity in production.

4.2. Softening and aggravating internal modifiers

Softening internal modifiers are hedges, understatements, consultative devices (openers) and downtowners, whereas aggravating internal modifiers are upgraders, which aggravate the hearer by overtly stating the speaker's negative attitude through expletives; over-representing the reality; or passing a negative evaluation that affects the hearer. Tables 5 and 6 demonstrate that internal request modification was almost non-existent in this corpus. The CLIL group used them in very low ranges (2.22 to 6.67%), whereas the non-CLIL group did not use them at all.

The only two occurrences of expletives with peers by the CLIL group give the impression of single attempts to imitate native-like outbursts (an intensifier: "the noise…is impossible" and an expletive: "Shut the fuck up"), but not much can be concluded from them. Generally, the underuse of internal modifiers is a persisting feature in EFL learners' requests as can be seen in the reviewed studies (Economidou–Kogetsidis, 2012; Hill, 1997; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2003; Otcu & Zeyrek, 2008; Trosborg, 1995; Wang, 2011). Offered explanations can be summed up in the higher syntactic complexity of embedding a modifier within a clause that learners acquire later on in advanced stages and the transparency in communicating politeness through grounders which are an easier modification to use.

To sum up the results related to students' use of request modifiers, it was found that both CLIL and non-CLIL groups hardly used internal modifiers and resorted mainly to using external modifiers, which were grounders and which are in line with previously reviewed studies (e.g., Economidou–Kogetsidis, 2012; Trosborg, 1995; Wang, 2011).

Table 5. *Softening internal request modifiers in the CLIL and non-CLIL groups in the Ss-T and Ss-Ss situation.*

Situations	Softening Internal modifiers	4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)		Chi	P <
		F	%	*F*	%		
(Ss-T) Teacher situation							
	Hedging	1	2,13	0	0,00	0.197	0.657
	Understatement	1	2,13	0	0,00	0.197	0.657
	Consult. Devices	1	2,13	0	0,00	0.197	0.657
	Downtoners	3	6,38	0	0,00	0.261	0.609
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=17)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Hedging	0	0,00	0	0,00	_	_
	Understatement	3	6.67	0	0,00	0.183	0.668
	Consult. Devices	0	0,00	0	0,00	_	_
	Downtoners	1	2.22	0	0,00	0.26	0.610

Table 6. *Aggravating internal modifiers–CLIL vs. non-CLIL in the Ss-T and Ss-Ss situations.*

WDCT Situations	Softening Internal modifiers	4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)		Chi	P <
		F	%	*F*	%		
(Ss-T) Teacher situation							
	Upgraders	0	0,00	0	0,00	_	_
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=17)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Upgraders	2	4,44	0	0,00	0.006	0.938

Both groups used the same *overall* amount of grounders, as in Kobayashi and Rinnert (2003) whose use of grounders were similar in both proficiency groups. Only when the grounders were compared according to their types did the results show that the non-CLIL

group produced significantly more non-specific grounders in comparison to the CLIL group. Quantitatively, this is the most distinct feature of the comparison, but there is more to be said from a qualitative perspective. Non-specific grounders are more formulaic in nature, as previously explained (section 3.4.2), whereas the specific OBJ SOA grounders are atypical and may require more creativity. For this reason, the use of these latter grounders by the CLIL group, though limited, deserves to be mentioned, especially because the non-CLIL group did not use them at all. The CLIL group also used another limited non-statistically significant number of implicating grounders that the non-CLIL group did not use. Though both of these grounder types are not quantitatively important, they are pragmalinguistically distinct from those of the non-CLIL group. This onset of distinctiveness between both groups may be due to CLIL learners' higher proficiency; their confidence in their ability to experiment with new words and forms (Sylvén, 2017, p. 59). After having looked at modifiers, we now turn to request strategies which are presented in two separate sections: softening strategies and aggravating strategies.

4.3. Softening strategies

Indirect or softening strategies are hints, suggestions, and query preparatory conditions. Hints and suggestions were not used in either group. Table 7 shows that in the situation with the teacher, the CLIL students used 'could' significantly more than the non-CLIL group (40.43% and 5%, respectively) {$X^2 = 7.485$ ($p<0.006$)} and 'can' significantly less than the latter (55.32% and 90.00%, respectively) {$X^2 = 8.408$ ($p<0.003$)}. In the situation with peers, there were no statistically significant differences between both groups' use of 'can' and 'could', yet the CLIL group showed a slight tendency to use 'can' more

than ‘could’ (37.78% and 24.44%), whereas the non-CLIL group used both modals alike (35.29%).

Table 7. *Raw frequencies, percentages and the Chi Square values for the differences between the CLIL and non-CLIL groups on query preparatory conditions in the Ss-T and Ss-Ss situations.*

WDCT Situations	Softening Strategies						
(Ss-T) Teacher situation		4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Can	26	55.32	18	90.00	7.485	0.006***
	Could	19	40.43	1	5.00	8.408	0.003***
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=17)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Can	17	37.78	6	35.29	0.033	0.855
	Could	11	24.44	6	35.29	0.286	0.592

Unlike the non-CLIL group, the CLIL students varied their use of *can* and *could* significantly, which indicates they are varying their use in relation to power relations (the teacher vs. the resident students).This result is in line with other ILP studies in which the more proficient and more pragmatically developed learners employed better situational variation than the less proficient ones (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2007). As mentioned before, the students in this study did not receive specific instruction in language pragmatics, but ‘can’/’could’ are present in ELT course books as two forms of politeness in requests (Salazar Campillo, 2007). This is one source of input the CLIL group—having more hours of instruction through English— picked up on and varied their use depending on their interlocutor.

4.4. Aggravating strategies in CLIL and non-CLIL learners’ requests

Aggravating strategies includes statements in which the learners refer to the

interlocutor as a source of annoyance in the head-act (HA-SOA/P) (example 5), mood derivable imperatives (example 6), and action ceasing verbs (*stop, switch/turn off, shut up, be quiet*) that imply abandoning an on-going action in compliance to the speaker's wish (examples 7-8).

(5) Ss-T, CLIL(HA-SOA/P):Teacher, please can ***you*** stop ***making noise***?

(6) Ss-T, non-CLIL (imperative): Please, ***turn*** the volume ***down***. Tomorrow I have an important exam.

(7) Ss-Ss, CLIL (action-ceasing): Hey! Can you ***shut up***? Please, I need to sleep.

(8) Ss-T, non-CLIL (action-ceasing): Can you ***stop*** the computer. I want to pass the exam.

Table 8 shows that CLIL students in the Ss-T situation used implicating head acts—HA-SOA/P—significantly more than the non-CLIL students (57.45% to 20%) {$X^2 = 7.913$ ($p<0.004$)}. HA-SOA/P was the most dominating strategy in this category in the productions of the CLIL group. As for action-ceasing verbs, 'stop' was the most dominant one in students' requests in the CLIL and the non-CLIL groups, respectively (38.30% and 60%). The use of other action-ceasing verbs and imperatives by the non-CLIL were anecdotal (2.3% to 5.00%). In the Ss-Ss situation, the CLIL students produced more imperatives (37.78% to 17.65%), more HA-SOA/P (26.67% to 5.88%), and generally more action ceasing verbs than the non-CLIL students, but no statistical significant differences were found, and while the CLIL students resorted to using 'turn/switch off' the most (15.56%), the non-CLIL group resorted to using 'shut up'.

Table 8. *Raw frequencies, percentages and the Chi Square values for the differences between the CLIL and non-CLIL groups on implicating head acts and mood derivable imperatives.*

WDCT Situations	Aggravating Strategies						
(Ss-T) Teacher situation		4th ESO CLIL (N=47)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=20)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Implicating head act HA-SOA/P	27	57.45	4	20.00	7.913	0.004***
	Mood derivable Imperatives	1	2.13	1	5.00	0.00	1
	AC-Stop	18	38.30	12	60.00	2.672	0.102
	AC-Switch/ Turn off	0	0.00	1	5.00	0.197	0.657
	AC-Shut Up	0	0.00	0	0,00	_	_
	AC-Be quiet	0	0.00	0	0,00	_	_
(Ss-Ss) Situation with students		4th ESO CLIL (N=45)		4th ESO non-CLIL (N=17)			
		F	%	*F*	%	Chi	P <
	Implicating head act HA-SOA/P	12	26.67	1	5.88	2.085	0.148
	Mood derivable Imperatives	17	37.78	3	17.67	2.288	0.130
	AC-Stop	3	6.67	0	0.00	0.183	0.668
	AC-Switch/ Turn off	7	15.56	0	0,00	1.63	0.201
	AC-Shut Up	4	8.89	3	17.65	0.273	0.601
	AC-Be quiet	4	8.89	2	11.76	0.020	0.887

The only statistically significant difference between groups with regards to request strategies with the potential to aggravate is the use of implicating head acts HA-SOA/P by

the CLIL students, which interestingly appears in their requests to the teacher. Producing implicating head acts require the use of indirect requests (example 5), which was likely to have been only seen by the students as an indirect polite structure, and which would be counted as a query preparatory form following a different requestive taxonomy. From the learner's perspective then, implicating head acts were probably seen as apt for polite-use, which the more proficient students opted for instead of the flat direct imperative (example 6). Therefore, the CLIL learners' significant use of implicating headacts indicates awareness of polite request structures and their tendency use them without being sufficiently sensitive to discerning lexico-grammatical elements that do not support sociopragmatically appropriate functions. Seeing the outcome from this perspective puts the CLIL group a step ahead of the non-CLIL group on the interlanguage continuum. As far as action-ceasers are concerned, it is believed that the prompts affected the performance of the students. Learners' use of 'stop' was frequent in the teacher situation probably due to difficulty in finding other verbs or formulae to request that the teacher would type any differently (quietly or softly). In contrast, they could choose from a wider range of verbs and expressions often heard in the classroom, like 'be quiet', 'turn/switch off' in the situation with peers, or even 'shut up' (*cállate* in Spanish), which Spanish students tend to use among each other in a friendly way as suggested by Hickey (2005).

To sum up the results related to students' use of request strategies, it was established that both groups produced direct and indirect requests; they used unmodified directives (imperatives) for direct requests and query preparatory conditions for indirect requests. Other indirect strategies as hints and suggestions were not found in either group. Statistically significant differences between the CLIL and the non-CLIL groups appeared in

their frequency of use of query preparatory conditions across situations, where the CLIL students had an advantage over the non-CLIL group; the CLIL group used 'could' significantly more and 'can' significantly less than the non-CLIL group in the teacher situation. Their success in demonstrating their ability to vary forms depending on the situation is in line with previous studies where more proficient students were also found to do so (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2007). Another statistically significant difference is their use of more head acts that implicate the hearer (HA-SOA/P), which seemingly contradicts their success with regards to situational variation, but it should not be forgotten that HA-SOA/P have indirect request structures. This result brings us back to the findings in Nashaat Sobhy (2017), where it became clear that learners with considerable exposure to English and having crossed a minimum threshold in language proficiency seem to acquire request modification forms before becoming aware of their sociopragmatic effect. In other studies, CLIL learners from grade 10 were shown to have higher syntactic complexity and more fluency in written production when compared to their non-CLIL counterpart (Navés & Victori, 2010), as well as higher spontaneity in oral production (Admiraal et al., 2006). These linguistic traits seem to be present in this CLIL group's interlanguage system as well, which combined with confidence in their proficiency may be stimulating their production of atypical requests (grounders and head acts) that are verbose at times.

5. CONCLUSION

This study is among the first to target the pragmatic competence of CLIL students as a language learning outcome. It examined the speech act of requests, with focus on how CLIL and non-CLIL students employ modification devices—external modifiers, internal

modifiers, and strategies. Both groups of students share similarities; they showed general preference for mitigation devices used by most EFL learners as reported in previous studies (e.g., Economidou–Kogetsidis, 2012; Trosborg, 1995; Wang, 2011); both groups in this study relied on external modifiers— *grounders* specifically—; avoided internal modifiers and used query preparatory conditions for indirect requests and imperatives for direct requests. There were also significant differences between the CLIL and the non-CLIL groups in the frequency of three of the used devices and strategies, perhaps as an indirect effect of different input exposure and their different language levels (cf. Schauer, 2006, p. 281). The CLIL students were at an advantage in using softening strategies as they varied the query preparatory conditions ('can' and 'could') according to the interlocutor they addressed in the DCT situations. By using a single form more in a specific situation (e.g., employing 'could' when addressing the teacher), they showed awareness that a certain form of mitigation is situationally desirable and that they have attentional control over this form (cf. Bialystok, 1993). However, the CLIL group also used aggravating strategies significantly more, by which they referred to the hearer as a source of annoyance in the headact (HA-SOA/P); similarly, they also used some grounders that implicated the hearer in the same way. These results suggest that the attentional control the CLIL group demonstrated on one form in a particular situation does not apply to the full spectrum of the structures they use and the situations they act in. To clarify further, the CLIL students seem to possess distinct linguistic forms that they choose from when conveying social meaning, whereas the non-CLIL students have fewer non-pragmatically distinct forms that "only reveal the learners' level of interlanguage development" (Bardovi–Harlig, 2003, p. 27). When learners have a larger repertoire of forms, the alternatives of mitigating or

aggravating exist, as the case of the CLIL group. This, in turn, explains why the non-CLIL group used significantly more non-specific grounders and why the requests of the CLIL learners show pragmatic duality. Other factors that may possibly contribute to the differences between the two groups are the spontaneity of the CLIL students in language production (Admiraal et al., 2006) and the linguistic confidence they have as a result of the CLIL learning environment (Sylvén, 2017). The study reached its aims, but there were limitations resulting from time constraints: school schedules made it difficult for all non-CLIL students to participate, which led to having unbalanced groups. For this, Yate's correction was statistically used when the frequencies of request devices or strategies were below five. Also, the WDCT only had two situations due to the limitedness of EFL classroom time during which the data was collected, although these adequately compared how students addressed interlocutors of different power status just as previous studies reached their objectives with a similar number of situations as well (e.g., Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2003; Brubæk,2012).For future research, more situations would consolidate the findings and it would be of value to see how CLIL students use mitigation devices longitudinally or across successive age ranges throughout the CLIL program. It would also be of interest to establish the degree to which students' acquisition of speech act realizers (for mitigation or other) correlates with theL2 exposure input in the classroom by comparing their input to both their naturalistic and elicited output.

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Appendix A

Written Discourse Completion Test

Teacher Situation (Ss-T)

After giving you the exam paper, the teacher starts typing noisily on the computer while you are answering the exam questions. You are not able to concentrate. What do you say to the teacher?

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Residence Situation (Ss-Ss)

You are staying at a residence for students where there are many international students. You have an important exam the next morning, but the other students on the same floor are watching TV and talking loudly. You cannot sleep. What do you say to these students?

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