

Title: Directness Level of Complaints of Russian Native Speakers and American L2 Learners of Russian

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The present study explored the speech act of direct complaint by offering a systematic analysis of empirical data from American speakers, Russian speakers, and American L2 learners of Russian with a study abroad experience. The presentation discusses the results obtained in the interlanguage analysis; therefore, the data from American speakers will not be a part of the discussion. The analysis is based on oral responses to a discourse completion questionnaire from 30 Russian speakers and 37 L2 learners.

The presentation reports on the level of directness of complaints based on the head act (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984) that is the core of a complaint. The discussion focuses on the differences between L2 learners and Russian speakers in their expressions of complaints and the way they mitigate and intensify the offense.

The results show significant differences between the two language groups in terms of directness and strategy selection. Overall, L2 learners were less direct than Russian speakers in their complaints: They avoided direct confrontations with the hearer, while Russian speakers preferred directly addressing the hearer about the wrongdoing. Some of the differences indicate learners' L1 transfer (e.g., their use of speaker-oriented strategies), and some of them may be attributed to their acculturation process (e.g., learners' directness in interactions with friends about money). Similarly to other studies (Shardakova, 2009), the findings show the learners' difficulties to adjust their linguistic choices to various sociocultural contexts, and they indicate possible areas for classroom intervention.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied Linguistics*, 5(3), 196–213.

Shardakova, M. (2009). *Intercultural pragmatics of the apology: How Americans acquire sociolinguistic competence in Russian*. Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller.