NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' VIEWS ON VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICE PERSONNEL AT THE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH CYPRUS: HOW COURTEOUS IS THIS COMMUNICATION?

MASTER THESIS

SULTAN ZENCİRKIRAN

NICOSIA

DECEMBER 2018

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' VIEWS ON VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICE PERSONNEL AT THE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH CYPRUS: HOW COURTEOUS IS THIS COMMUNICATION?

MASTER THESIS

SULTAN ZENCİRKIRAN

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

NICOSIA

DECEMBER 2018

Approval of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences

_____

Prof. Dr. Fahriye Altınay Aksal
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

_____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis submitted by Sultan Zencirkıran titled "**International students' views on verbal and non-verbal communication of the international registration office personnel at the universities in North Cyprus: How courteous is this communication?**" and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

_____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt _____

Asst. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen Bostancı _____

Asst. Prof. Dr. Doina Popescu _____

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study.

Full Name:

Field of Study:

Signature:

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt for being there for me and guiding me throughout the thesis.

I would like to thank all my instructors who have been there with all their help. I would like to thank my family and friends for their support and help and of course my participants who have taken part in my research voluntarily. I am very grateful to have such nice people around me and to have the chance to work with them and have their help to complete my thesis. Thank you so much!

ABSTRACT

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' VIEWS ON VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICE PERSONNEL AT THE UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH CYPRUS: HOW COURTEOUS IS THIS COMMUNICATION?

Sultan Zencirkıran

M. A. Program, English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

December 2018, 94 pages

The study is an examination of international students' views on the verbal and non-verbal communication of the university's international registration office personnel and tries to find how courteous this communication is. One of the motivating factors behind this study is the idea that the contextual situation under which verbal and non-verbal communication are practised affects the degree of courteousness. Much of the notable differences are in the education sector, notably universities which are surrounded by a lot of international students. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to international students studying in North Cyprus. Eighty six questionnaires were successfully retrieved and the data was analysed using SPSS version 22. The data analysis involved a combination of descriptive statistics, correlation coefficient test and independent t tests. The results showed that verbal communication was positively correlated with non-verbal communication. Both hypotheses that improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication cause significant changes in courteousness were accepted at 5% significance level. Observations were made that the prevalence of barriers to communication would always undermine the effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal communication. The originality of the study lies in its proof against Brown and Levinson's

theory that individuals do not always act in a rational manner. The study also shows that acts of impoliteness are as a result of individual's decisions not to show courteousness. Recommendations were made that the education officials, international registration personnel and international students work on improving the communication in the organization.

ÖZ

ULUSLARARASI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN KUZEY KIBRIS'TAKİ ÜNİVERSİTELERDEKİ ULUSLARARASI KAYIT OFİSİ PERSONELİNİN SÖZLÜ VE SÖZSÜZ İLETİŞİMİ HAKKINDAKİ GÖRÜŞLERİ: BU İLETİŞİMLER NE KADAR KİBARLAR?

Sultan Zencirkıran

İngilizce Öğretmenliği Yüksek Lisans Programı

Danışman: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

Aralık 2018, 94 sayfa

Bu uluslararası öğrencilerin Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki üniversitelerdeki uluslararası kayıt personelinin sözlü ve sözsüz iletişimi hakkındaki görüşleri: bu iletişimler ne kadar kibardırlar adlı bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışmanın ardındaki motive edici faktörlerden biri sözlü ve sözsüz iletişim uygulanmasının içeriksel durumlarda kullanıldığında saygı unsurunu ne derecede etkileyen bir fikir olduğudur. Fark edilen çoğu farklılıklar, birçok yabancı öğrencileri bulunan üniversitelerin yer aldığı eğitim sektörüdür. Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki üniversitelerde eğitim gören yabancı öğrencilere toplam 100 adet anket dağıtıldı. Seksen altı anket başarılı bir şekilde geri alındı ve veriler SPSS 22 kullanılarak analiz edildi. Veri analizi betimsel istatistikler, korelasyon katsayısı testi ve bağımsız t testi birleşimini içerdi. Sonuçlar sözlü iletişimin olumlu şekilde sözsüz iletişimle ilişkili olduğunu gösterdi. Gerek sözel gerekse sözel olmayan iletişimdeki gelişmelere yol açan her iki hipotez de, nezakette önemli değişikliklere neden olmakta, % 5 anlamlılık düzeyinde kabul edilmiştir. Ayrıca, iletişimin önündeki engellerin varlığının, sözlü ve sözel olmayan iletişimin etkinliğini her zaman zayıflatacağı da gözlemlenmiştir. Çalışmanın özgünlüğü, Brown ve Levinson'un teorisine karşı, bireylerin her zaman rasyonel bir şekilde hareket etmediği şeklindeki kanıtında yatmaktadır. Ayrıca araştırma, kibarsızlığın bireylerin kişisel kararı sonucu

olduğu, nezaketi göstermek olmadığını gösteriyor. Eğitim yetkilileri, uluslararası kayıt ofisi personeli ve uluslararası öğrencilerin iletişim becerilerini geliştirmek için çalışmaları yönünde öneriler yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İletişim, nezaket, uluslararası kayıt ofisi, uluslararası öğrenciler, sözlü iletişim, sözsüz iletişim, kibarlık.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as aForeign Language

FL: Foreign Language

FTAs: Face Threatening Acts

H: Hearer

IRO: International Registration Office

S: Speaker

SL: Second Language

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Communication is one of the most widely debated topics both in the business world and academic fraternity. This follows the potential benefits that it offers in an organisation and its absence or ineffectiveness is considered to have negative repercussions on an organisation. For instance, Hargie (1997) outlined that bad relations between individuals can even tarnish ones' image and reputation. This can also be supported by Maguire and Pitceathy (2002) who established that organisations which are characterised by poor communication strategies, ineffectiveness and barriers to communication are more prone to suffer from reduced performance levels and poor relations between employees.

The concept of communication has been significantly and relatively linked to business institutions and its application to the educational institutions has been much confined to a teacher and student relationship (Makoul, 2003). Yet in actual fact, communication in an educational institution is not just limited to teacher and student relationship but also extends to include student to student, student to administrative staff, teacher to teacher and teacher to administrative staff communication. Observations can, however, be made that efforts to examine the student to administrative staff communication are still at infancy stage especially when considerations are made that the use of verbal and non-verbal communication between international students and International Registration Office (IRO) personnel varies to a greater degree.

It is also important to note that the use of verbal and non-verbal communication does not only affect aspects such as performance but also extend to include other things such as perceptions of the person involved in the communication process. One of the notable aspects that can be influenced by the use of verbal and non-verbal communication is courtesy (Yin, 2009). This is relatively true to a large extent especially after observing that a significant number of educational institutions are currently being considered as being characterised by issues of impoliteness or lack of courtesy especially between international students and administrative staff. This study seeks to examine how international students perceive the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel as courteous or not.

Research Problem

The notion of politeness revolves around a lot of concepts and ideas and such ideas tend to vary in explanation when related to different aspects. For instance, efforts to determine how verbal and non-verbal communication influences the extent to which IRO personnel are considered to be polite or impolite varies with the society. For instance, Yin (2009), established that politeness is a cultural element embroiled in a society and changes in response to differences in culture. Meaning that some cultures are naturally polite while others are impolite and yet in both their natural or native circumstances, they are considered to be polite. Vilkki (2006) also argued that politeness is a response to and a function of what is communicated and how it has been communicated during a conversation. This implies the use of verbal and non-verbal communication has a significant bearing on the extent to which IRO personnel are courteous.

The major challenge is that verbal and non-verbal communication are different aspects which are composed of different elements such as words, sounds, gestures and mannerisms. Hence, it is sometimes incomplete or insufficient to consider that they will have the same influence on the extent to which the IRO personnel are courteous. As a result, there is a strong need to examine how verbal and non-verbal communication influences the extent to which the IRO personnel are courteous. In addition, Makoul (2003) highlighted that every communication process is surrounded by both circumstances and barriers that influence both verbal and non-verbal communication. To make matters worse, these barriers can vary from one organisation to another notably in educational institutions. Furthermore, the academic environment is surrounded by interactions between students of various cultural, religious, social and economic backgrounds which differ from those of an ordinary employee and manager background. Moreover, ideas surrounding the extent to which communication influence the extent to which a person will respond in a polite way or not, are determined by a lot of factors. These factors include things such as 'face', reputation, nationality, semantics and the use of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Brown & Levinson, 1978). It gets worse when the situation involves the use of the English language by international students whose understanding and use of the English language can vary from that of the IRO personnel. This is because most international students use English language as a First Language (FL) while others use it as a Second Language (SL). Communication and perception problems are more likely to occur when they engage in communication with people who use EFL. Hence, there is a need to examine how international students perceive the use of verbal and non-verbal communication and whether it is courteous or not. As it stands, the issue of barriers to communication and how they interact to influence the extent to which the IRO personnel

are courteous still remains underexplored. Also, using existing literature sources applied in different organisational backgrounds to offer explanations of how they interact to influence organisational outcomes and incidences in educational institutions might not yield satisfactory results. Hence, this study, therefore, seeks to explore these issues in details and offer explanations as to how international students perceive the use of verbal and non-verbal communication in terms of courteousness.

Aim of the Study

The main emphasis of this study is to examine international students' views on the verbal and non-verbal communication of international registration office personnel at universities and find out how courteous this communication is. The study also thrives to attain the following objectives;

- To determine if improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication cause significant changes in courteousness.

- To examine if differences in nationality have an effect on communication.

- To determine whether changes in educational levels or qualifications cause a change in the international students' ability to communicate well.

- To determine possible strategies that can be used to enhance communication between international students and the IRO personnel.

Research Questions

Having outlined what this study seeks to attain, the following research questions were formulated in line with the above-mentioned research objectives;

- Do international students consider the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel as courteous?

- Do improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication cause significant changes in courteousness?

- Do differences in nationality have an effect on communication?

- Do changes in educational levels or qualifications cause a change in the international students' ability to communicate well?

- What are the possible strategies that can be used to enhance communication between international students and the IRO personnel?

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the examination of international students' views on the use of verbal and non-verbal communication of IRO personnel at the universities and how courteous this communication is. The study is also based on examinations made from data collected randomly from a sample of 86 international students. The study is also confined to the use of statistical methods such as descriptive statistics and correlation coefficient tests to ascertain the relationship between the use of verbal and non-verbal communication and courteousness.

Organisation of the Study

The study is structured into five different chapters. The initial chapter provides introductory ideas about verbal and non-verbal communication and how they influence international students' views on whether the IRO personnel are courteous or not. The second chapter covers information about theoretical and empirical insights surrounding communication, politeness and English as a foreign language, and how it influences communication between international students and international registration office personnel at the universities. The third chapter deals with the methodological approach that was used so as to provide answers to the proposed research questions while the fourth chapter focuses on the analysis of the obtained findings. The last chapter looks at conclusions, recommendations and suggestions that can be made from the study.

Significance of the Study

Foremost, this study is important because it results in the adoption of measures that can be used to improve communication between international students and international registration office personnel as well as international students' perceptions towards universities' international registration office personnel. It can be noted that effective communication results in improved cooperation and international relations between the IRO personnel and international students as well as other international stakeholders. Hence, this study can be said to be a huge contribution towards improving international relations between universities and their international stakeholders. In addition, the study through its nature is in a strong position to come up with strategies and measures that can be used to safeguard worldwide universities' corporate image and reputation. The study

also contributes towards improving academic information in the area of communication and English language studies and can be used as a base for future studies.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The study mainly focuses on opinions that were drawn from a pool of international students. An effective examination of the concept of the influence of communication practices on courteousness requires interviews be conducted with the IRO personnel. Incorporating both interviews and questionnaires at the same is time consuming especially considering the fact that the period of study is limited. As a result, the researcher had to rely on empirical studies as a source of ideas about the communication conduct of the IRO personnel.

Definition of Key Terms

- Communication refers to the exchange of information and the transfer of behavioural input from the sender to the receiver (Griffin, 2006, p. 6)

- The Merriam Webster dictionary defines courteous as the extent to which a person is respectful or polite. In this study, courteous will be synonymously used to refer to the politeness of the IRO personnel.

- Non-verbal communication is the opposite of verbal communication and includes using mannerisms and gestures by a person to express himself or herself (Argyle et al., 1970, p. 223).

- Verbal communication pertains to the use of words and sounds by a person in order to express himself or herself (Argyle et al., 1970, p. 223).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter covered information about theoretical and empirical insights surrounding courteousness (politeness) communication and English as a foreign language, and how it influenced communication between international students and the IRO personnel. This was important because it helped to identify empirical gaps in the literature and formed a solid base upon which arguments were supported or refuted. It also looked at the possible communication barriers that influenced the IRO personnel's degree of courteousness. This was important as it allowed strategies to be formulated to help enhance the effectiveness of communication.

Language

Language is the standard way through which people communicate with each other by using a set of language rules. Dictionary.com (n.d.) defines language can be defined as a combination of words that are spoken and written in a systematic way in relation to a given culture, community or geographical area. Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006) consider it to be a body of principles and system of elements that are used to construct sentences in order to communicate with another person.

Irrespective of the manner in which a language may be defined, it remains imperative that languages are an integral part of the society. Their importance not only lies in communicating ideas but also in ensuring that the right meaning is shared across all

communication platforms. This therefore implies that whether one chooses to communicate in EFL, SL or another language implies that the right communicative meaning and response must be evident. Such relies on grammatical competence but this is not always the case because languages are composed of a lot of parts and elements. Furthermore, Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006) further outlined that the definition of a language itself is difficult and composed of a lot of different parts. This not only makes it difficult to understand a language but also poses perception and response problems. For instance, Hobjilă (2012) hinted that communications problems can cause a person to be considered as lacking courteousness and yet in actual fact the person is courteous. But the major limitation is that the way a person speaks is determined by the person he or she is speaking to. This implies that the notion of courteousness between international students and IRO personnel is more likely to differ from any other situation. In most cases, the extent to which the IRO personnel is deemed to courteous relies on whether they have understood what has been verbal and non-verbally communicated.

Also, this is determined by the international students' communication competence. That is, their ability to English language appropriately (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006). Moreover, if both international students and the IRO personnel are to interact well with each other, then they must be able to understand each other perfectly well. This means that the international students must verbally and non-verbally communicate in a manner that the IRO personnel will be able to comprehend. This problem stems from the idea that English language is a foreign language to IRO personnel and either a FL or SL to some international students. This often requires that non-verbal communication be used to reinforce what has been verbally communicated. This includes gestures, body posture, facial expressions, body language, and so on.

The Notion of Pragmatics

The need to examine international students' views on verbal and non-verbal communication of the IRO personnel can be best understood by examining the concept of pragmatics. Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 449) defined pragmatics as "the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used". Thus, according to Richards and Schmidt, pragmatics is composed of:

a. how the relationship between the speaker and the hearer influences the structure of sentences.

b. how speakers understand and use speech acts.

c. how knowledge of the real world affects the use and interpretation of utterances (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 449).

These three aspects are of huge importance in understanding international students' views on verbal and non-verbal communication of IRO personnel and how courteous it is. They also outline the importance of real-world effects and this denotes that international students' views of the IRO personnel will also be influenced by other external elements. In doing so, a distinction can therefore be set between pragmatics and semantics, which deals with meaning without reference to the users and communicative functions of sentences (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Unlike semantics, pragmatics dwells on speakers meaning, sentence meaning and context of use. This contrasting feature can be illustrated using Figure 1.
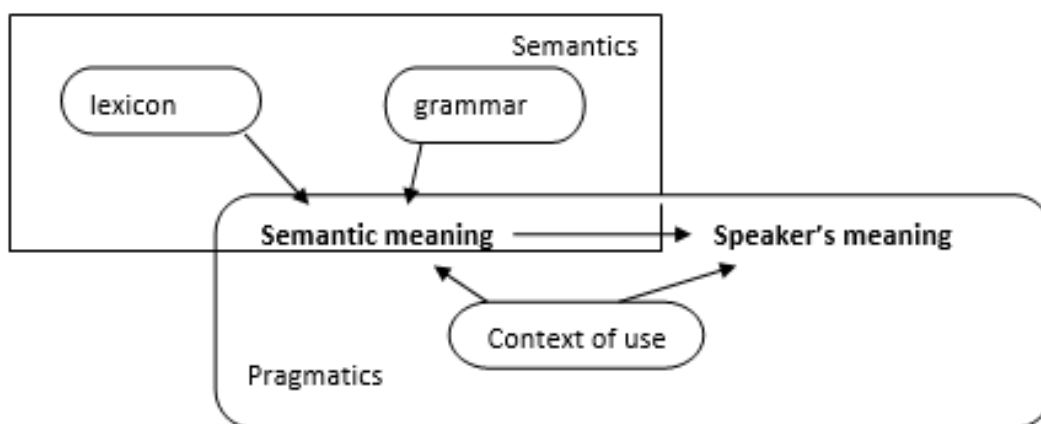
Figure 1. Visualisation of two kinds of meaning

Source: Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006, p. 139)

Using Figure 1, it can be noted that pragmatics broadly covers the contextual use of speaker's meaning and semantic. In addition, pragmatics also focuses on aspects such as speech acts, implicature, presupposition and indexicality. It is in this regard that Yule (1996) considers it to be the study of speaker meaning. Pragmatics thus will help in assisting in analysing what the IRO personnel imply rather than what they literally mean during the act of communication. In order for what the IRO personnel has communicated to be considered as clear, the IRO personnel must therefore be in a position to share cooperative principles. This can be supported by insights established by Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006) which highlighted that cooperative principles are an essential element of communication. This entails that cooperative principles must not be neglected during the act of communication between international students and IRO personnel.

Pragmatics also has an influence on the examination of international students' views on the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel. This is mainly because it highlights the importance of social aspects (socio-pragmatics) in the communication process. This in turn imposes implications on whether the international

students consider IRO personnel as polite or impolite. For instance, social norms require that individual be generous whether in invitations, offers and under any normal circumstance. As a result, cultural values and norms can cause the establishment of extreme social significance to certain aspects than others. But socio-pragmatics does not relatively focus on what has been used to demonstrate politeness but rather on cultural factors behind the assigning of social importance (Leech, 2014). This implies that both the international students and the IRO personnel's cultures and subcultures impose effects on how polite each of them will be. With differences in cultures and subcultures, expectations will therefore be made that the degree of politeness will vary between the international students and IRO personnel.

The Influence of Speech Acts on Courteousness

Elements of non-verbal communication and their implications on courteousness can be examined by incorporating the idea of speech acts. Yule (1996) defined speech acts as actions which things such as requests, promises, invitations, compliments, complaints and apologies that are done using utterances. It is important to note that both international students and the IRO personnel use actions when using English or Turkish language to communicate with each other. Such actions are what are termed speech acts. Speech acts are in various forms and often include things such as challenges, issuing orders, apologising, congratulating each other, making promises, threats and bets. These examples do therefore point to the extent to which both verbal and non-verbal communication can be used to express courteousness. This is important especially when examining the interaction between international students and the IRO personnel. Alsulami (2015, p.23) considers that this can be examined by using;

- Locutionary acts include actions such as using a certain morpheme or making a sound, to refer to a particular person.

- Illocutionary acts such as giving a warning, making a promise, request, stating a fact or asking a question.

- Perlocutionary acts are often extreme and include actions such as deception or telling lies, frightening, annoying someone etc.

Thus, it can be deduced that both international students and the IRO personnel can lessen their level of imposition when performing an act so as to avoid face-threatening acts (FTAs). Speech acts can thus also be said to offer an indication of what constitute good verbal and non-verbal communication.

Theoretical Literature Review on Courteousness

Efforts to offer explanations about how the IRO personnel's use of verbal and non-verbal communication influences international students' perceptions about the courteousness of the IRO personnel will be based on the use of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and the conversation maxim model in this study. This is because Brown and Levinson's politeness theory offers explanations about why it is important to be polite and the possible repercussions that can be suffered when one is not courteous while the conversation maxim model indirectly offers recommendations on possible strategies that can be undertaken to improve the courteousness of the IRO personnel.

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. The politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1978) provides insights about politeness. This theory is based on two basic assumptions which read (p. 48);

1) Every person has a self-image which is otherwise known as a 'Face' and this 'face' is also composed of a positive face and a negative face.

2) An individual is rational and always acts in a rational manner all the time.

Ryabova (2015) asserts that the decision to act or behave in a polite manner is strictly based on an individuals' decision. That is, a person freely decides on whether he or she should be polite or not. But the most important aspect that can be deduced from Brown and Levinson's theory is that the decision to be polite relies on the need to save what is known as a 'face' which is defined as a public image that a person tries to maintain (Redmond, 2015).

Face and Face-Threatening Acts. Foremost, it is important to note that ideas behind the need to offer explanations about politeness assume that members of the society have what is known as a 'face' or public self-image (Wilson, Aleman & Leatham, 1998). This is based on the work undertaken by Goffman (1967), who considers a 'face' as a favourable social value that the society infers upon a person gets when he or she acts or behaves in a certain way that the society considers as reasonable. But there are also different ideas which offer a description of what can be considered a 'face'. For instance, Huang (2007) regards a 'face' as similar to self-esteem. But it is imperative to note that ideas about a 'face' are based on perceptions and hence they tend to change over a period of time and in relation to things such as feelings and circumstances. Hence, efforts to examine how the IRO personnel is regarded as courteous or not will also revolve on feelings and circumstances. Moreover, it also hinges on nature and extent to which people interact with each other.

Meanwhile, Goffman (1967) has asserted that people will try by all means to protect other people's 'faces' (protective orientation) as well as maintain their own 'faces' (defensive orientation). What this implies is that individuals will cooperate together so as to maintain their 'faces' but the extent to which they will cooperate in preserving their 'faces' is determined by how vulnerable each of them is. Thus, when one individual is less vulnerable than the other, that same individual can be reluctant to cooperate in preserving their 'faces'. This also implies that the extent to with the IRO personnel and students cooperate in preserving their 'faces' is determined by how vulnerable each of them is and if the IRO personnel feels that there are less vulnerable, then chances are very high that they will not cooperate with the students in preserving both their 'faces'. What can be learned from this theory is that any person's 'face' can easily be affected by another person and both considerations and recommendations can be made that everyone is concerned about the others' faces. It is in this regard that acts that threaten a person's face are termed face-threatening acts (FTAs). According to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 49) FTAs can be categorised into two broad categories and these are;

- Positive face represents the need by an individual to have actions and wants that are desirable to others.
- Negative face refers to the desire by people to have not their actions hindered.

Both positive and negative faces can be illustrated using an illustration provided by Redmond (2015).

Figure 2. An illustration of positive and negative faces

Source: Redmond (2015, p. 2)

Since FTAs are often against an individual's desire, it is also worthy to note that FTAs have a negative effect on the addressee or speaker's face. Considerations must, however, be made that there are factors which influence the extent to which FTAs will affect a person or influence a particular situation. For instance, Brown and Levinson (1987), hinted out that is determined two important elements. That is;

- The person hearer or speaker whose face is being threatened.
- The face which is being threatened (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 51).

FTAs acts are considered to be unavoidable and this is mainly because efforts to prevent a threat often result in a threat to a speaker's or hearer's face (Redmond, 2015). That is to say that it is practically impossible for both the IRO personnel and international students to avoid FTAs and efforts to try to do so often to lead to other FTAs. FTAs often include things such as requests, disagreements, complaints, interruptions, insults and accusations. For instance, a request made by a person is a form of an imposition and tends to reduce the addressee's level of freedom. According to Petríčková (2013), the face-threatening acts that affect hearer's (H's) negative face are;

- Expression of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints, and reprimands, accusation, insults

- Contradiction or disagreements, challenges

- Expression of violent emotions

- Irreverence, mention of taboo topics, including those that are inappropriate in the context

- Bringing of bad news about the hearer, or good news about the speaker

- Raising of dangerously emotional or divisive topics

- Blatant non – cooperation in an activity (interrupting the hearer's speech)

- Use of address terms and other status-marked identifications in initial encounters (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 63).

These show that S doesn't care about H's positive face and these affect speaker's (S's) positive face:

- Apologies

- Acceptance of a compliment

- Breakdown of physical control over the body, bodily leakage, stumbling or falling down, and so on.

- Self-humiliation, shuffling or cowering, acting stupid, self-contradicting

- Confessions, admissions of guilt or responsibility for doing something wrong or for not doing something.

- Emotion leakage, non-control of laughter or tears (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 63).

```
                                  1. without redressive action, baldly
                                 /
                 on record      /                          2. positive politeness
                        /      /                          /
   Do the FTA /                with redressive action
            /          \                                  \
           /            4. off record                      3. negative politeness
FTA
    \
     5. Don't do the FTA
```
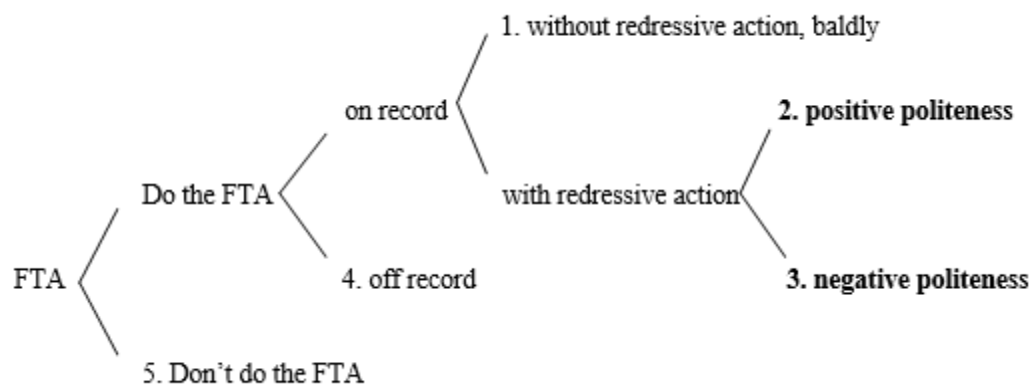
Figure 3. Possible strategies for doing FTAs.

Source: Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 69)

Figure 3 depicts conditions under which an FTA can be done and the possible regressive actions that follows. This also includes whether such an action will resultantly be considered as negative or positive politeness.

Types of Politeness

Positive Politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987) asserted that positive politeness focuses on the hearer's point of view that his or her thoughts are desirable. This implies that communication between the hearer and the addressee is based on common values and interests. This helps to set a big difference between positive politeness and negative politeness in the sense that the former has a wider scope. In actual fact, mainly involves the use of language aspects such as jokes and complements without the need to worry about negative FTAs. Positive politeness has a positive effect of reducing the social distance between the addressee and the speaker.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) positive politeness strategies can be broken down into 15 strategies. The initial eight politeness strategies address the idea that

people who have the same needs and wants tend to share the same politeness strategy. The last group of strategies assumes that there exists cooperative action between the hearer and the speaker and this includes their related goals. This implies that a speaker is free to use any strategy when requesting something from the hearer. Both the hearer and the speaker will thus, be acting at their own interests.

1. Raise common ground.

2. Avoid conflicts or disagreements.

3. Facilitate and or promote agreement.

4. Use in-group identity markers

5. Increase interest to the hearer

6. Manipulate sympathy, approval and interest with the hearer.

7. Pair attention to hearer.

8. Reciprocate.

9. Ask or give reasons.

10. Include both the hearer and speaker in the activity

11. Be optimistic

12. Make promises

13. Presuppose that the speaker´s has a concern and knowledge about the hearer's wants

14. Joke (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 67).

Examples of the first group of strategies include statements like, "*Your hair looks good today (...) By the way, can you lend me fifty dollars.*" It can thus be noted that the use of positive politeness strategies does not require a direct referral to a specific FTA. It can

be noted that the looking good of the hair is not connected to the speaker borrowing fifty dollars but it helps to reduce the inappropriateness of the made request.

The hearer can show more interests to what the speaker is saying and this causes the speaker to feel appreciated and that what is being communicated is of huge interest. Hence, it is always important to put more effort towards the subject and establishing a common ground between the hearer and the speaker. Individuals with the same mutual interests and this will be reflected by both the terminology and in-group dialect. For instance, both the speaker and the hearer can address each other as buddy or mate. International students and the IRO personnel can thus be said to be having the same in-group markers. In Turkish language, international students and the IRO personnel can address each other as '*Abi*' or '*Abla*' as a way of showing that they have the same in-group markers.

Negative Politeness. It is the opposite of positive politeness and Brown and the speaker and the hearer will be having different grounds of corporation and understanding. Huang (2007) depicted that the focus of negative politeness lies in its attempt to the need to defer from the addressee. In other words, it seeks to reduce imposed FTAs on a speaker. This is because its use requires that one remain focused and specific as possible. Hence, one cannot freely use it in when communicating with others. Brown and Levinson established that negative politeness is composed of ten specific strategies and these are;

1. Either part to the conversation will be acting as if he or she is incurring a debt. Be conventionally indirect

2. Nominalize

3. Use the FTA as a general rule

4. Avoid pronouns "*I*" and "*you*" by impersonalising the speaker and the hearer

5. Apologize

6. Use deference

7. Reduce impositions.

8. Be pessimistic.

9. Hedge or question.

10. Be pessimistic (Wagner, 2004, p. 32).

Hedges

Considerations were made that the problem with FTA is mainly associated with assumptions that surround its use (Huang, 2007). For instance, the IRO personnel can ask students their personal details hoping that they are willing to share it. Hedges therefore serve as a strategy of avoiding such assumptions and commitment. But the main difference is the way people label and much of the ideas concerning hedging are changing due to a high level of on-going research (Murphy, 2010). Hedging is however, defined as a speech act that is partly true and applies to a limited extent (Brown &Levinson, 1987). As a result, it includes the use of words like *sort of, could, might etc.* In other words, it is one of the ways both the speaker and hearer can use to opt out of a conversation or argument.

Hedging also includes the use of *if*-clauses as a way of suspending the Gricean maxims (Allott, 2010). The main reason one hedges is thus, one reason for hedging is to directly stating the need to make an FTA. The speaker can also use it to show that he or she is fully aware of the imposition. In the case of IRO personnel, they can hedge when they do not have the right words to say. International students on the other hand, can acknowledge the impact of the FTA and their reluctant to formulate it. This is done by expressing problems with the formulation of the FTA.

Choice of Strategy

One of the notable implications that can be deduced from Brown and Levinson's theory pertains to the choice of strategy. That is, the theory asserts that there are rules that restrict speakers from using a strategy when performing an FTA and as a result, they do not necessarily adopt a specific strategy when performing an FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Consequently, Brown and Levinson (1987) went on to establish that there is a list of strategies which speakers can adopt but such strategies tend to vary in terms of their contribution towards protecting the face. These strategies can be listed as follows;

- Off-record

- Negative politeness

- Positive politeness

- Baldly on-record (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 89).

The difference between these strategies is considered to be in terms of how dangerous they are when used in relation to FTA (Held, 2005). For instance, negative politeness is considered as not having significant bad effects as compared to positive politeness since the former focuses more on closeness and the speaker is exposed to the risk of having to show that there is a friendly relationship that exists between individuals engaged in the communication process (Kasper, 2009). As a result, it can be noted that off-record strategies are deemed to be the best and least harmful strategy. However, this does not entail that speakers will not use the other strategies and Brown and Levinson (1987) contend that there are reasons that will always compel speakers to use undesired strategies and these reasons were identified as follows;

- The use of high-risk strategies may imply to the hearer that the threat being posed is also of greater magnitude and this can actually be at the disadvantage of the speaker.

- Sometimes the recommended or desired strategies may actually turn out to be ambiguous and this is notable with off-record strategies. As a result, the hearer has to spend a lot of time and effort trying to infer what is implied by the speaker and this often violates the Gricean maxims (Held, 2005).

With the above factors in mind, it is therefore apparent that in order to determine the best possible strategy, there is a great need to first determine or assess the potential level of threats associated with FTAs. This implies that if the IRO personnel is to use the best possible and effective strategy, then it must consider circumstances that influence the effectiveness of FTA. This can be supported by ideas established from a study by Watts (2003), which asserts that in order to assess the effectiveness of FTA, then is a great need to put the following elements into considerations;

- The way social cultures regard and value impositions.

- Both the power of the speaker and hearer.

- The social distance that exists between the speaker and hearer (Watts, 2003, p. 34).

Implications can, therefore, be made that whatever choice of strategy IRO personnel decide to use to communicate with international students may actually have undesired consequences on the reputation and perception of the international students towards the IRO personnel. But this depends on the social culture of the university and on how it deals with issues such as value imposition. Also, this is greatly determined by the power of the IRO personnel and the international students. That is, if international students pose little or no power relative to the IRO personnel, then the IRO personnel are more

likely to dominate international students leading to obviously wrong perceptions about the lack of courteousness of the IRO personnel.

The Conversational Maxim Model of Politeness

Leech (1983) developed his definition of politeness from Grice´s cooperation Principle. He asserts that it is not sufficient to use the cooperative principle as the sole criterion for explaining the relation between sense and force. As a result, he established the politeness principles (cooperative principles), which are used to reduce discord and maintain comity in interaction. Cooperative Principles assert that the speaker's meaning can be determined based on the basis of semantic meaning. "The basic assumption is that speakers are behaving rationally and cooperatively" (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006, p. 11). To make clear what rationally and cooperatively mean, Grice divided this principle into six conversational maxims. The politeness principle also consists of a number of maxims:

- **Tact maxim**

  - Minimize cost to other and maximize benefit to other.

- **Generosity maxim**

  - Minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self.

- **Approbation maxim**

  - Minimize dispraise of other and maximize praise of other.

- **Modesty maxim**

  - Minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self.

- **Agreement maxim**

  - Minimize disagreement between self and other and maximize agreement between self and other.

- **Sympathy maxim**

  - Minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other (Wagner, 2004, p. 24).

This model is criticized by Watts (2005) on the basis that it fails to explicitly offer a sound definition of politeness. Also, Brown and Levinson (1987) contended that it has a lot of maxims. This does not help to control how pragmatic theory recognises counter-examples. However, it still remains an important tool that can be used to offer explanations surrounding the exhibition of politeness among individuals. Hence, it can also be used to explain changes in courteousness of the IRO personnel.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Communication plays an important role in any organisation and efforts have in most cases been placed towards improving communication. This is because communication is vital for passing down information such as instructions, orders, making requests etc and if such information is not availed or received correctly and on time, organisation may suffer the consequences such as reduced performance, loss of customers

and orders etc. irrespective of the type of organisation in which communication is being practised, it is important to note that communication allows organisation leaders to execute their managerial functions of controlling, organising and planning organisational activities as well as motivating employees (Maguire & Pitceathly, 2002). A distinction can be made between verbal and non-verbal communication as follows;

Verbal Communication. Is the use of auditory language to exchange information with other people (Hargie, 1997, p. 23). It includes sounds, words, or speaking. The tone, volume, and pitch of one's voice can fail contribute to effective verbal communication.

Non-Verbal Communication. Is communication between people through non-verbal or visual cues (Hargie, 1997, p. 23). This includes gestures, facial expressions, body movement, timing, touch, and anything else that communicates without speaking.

Both verbal and non-verbal communication are important aspects of communication and must consider in all circumstances especially when deciding on how to communicate especially by the IRO personnel and international students. Failure to do so can often lead in the wrong meaning being portrayed or misunderstandings that affect how international students relate with the IRO personnel. Arguments are, however, given that the importance of communication does not vary with the type of communication being used (Maguire & Pitceathly, 2002) while others consider it to vary (Griffin, 2006; Makoul, 2003). Either way, it is important to ensure that all the modes and means of communication are being used in a proper way so that both parties engaged in the communication process.

The Significance of Communication in Educational Institutions

In educational institutions such as universities, it is important to ensure that there is a smooth flow of information through the use of available and necessary communication channels. Though studies have significantly emphasised the importance of communication between students and teachers (Hackman & Waller, 1990; McCroskey et al., 1986), it is also important to note that communication between students and academic personnel is also of huge importance. This can also be supported by observations made by Bellenger (1999), which established that the relationship between students and teachers is not only confined to classroom communication but also includes communication activities undertaken outside the classroom. This can also be supported by findings established from a study by Dobransky and Frymier (2004), which asserts that it is not enough to restrict communication in educational institution to just student and teacher communication but also include how the students communicate with other external individuals between academic officials, parents and strangers etc. discoveries were made that communication between students and academic officials such as the IRO personnel is of paramount importance but little has been done to examine how communication revolves between international students and IRO personnel. This study, therefore, serves to bridge in the gap and explore some of the issues encountered by international students when engaging in communication with IRO personnel and whether the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel is courteous or not.

When the notion of communication is discussed in terms of education, two dimensions can be seen clearly. One is administration, and the other involves teaching and learning. Educational institutions determine social behaviours, cultures, organizational structures, and interpersonal relationships. Learning democratic behaviour, the power of

independent and scientific thinking and critical, creative, and productive thinking skills are all shaped by educational institutions. IRO personnel have great importance in educational settings. In order to attain school objectives, develop school qualities, maintain school culture, and create a positive environment, mutual communication must be improved at all cost (Habaci, 2013).

It is also important to note that behaviour is an output of the learning process. Therefore, educational institutions can be said to be responsible for instilling sound communication principles and behaviour in international students. Failing for both international students and the IRO personnel to engage in effective and meaningful communication can be partly blamed on educational institutions. This can be supported by insights given by Ergin and Birol (2005) which contends that education helps to change individual behaviour, attitudes, and impart knowledge and ideas.

Communication can also be said to be important in helping towards maintaining good educational culture (Hoy & Miskel, 1998). This is why the IRO personnel is advised to communicate effectively well with international students. However, it still remains an issue that communication can sometimes be complicated. In such cases, measures need to be enacted to deal with any potential barriers to communication. This helps to foster interpersonal relationships between the IRO personnel and international students. Moreover, the educational processes revolve around how the IRO personnel deals and portrays themselves to international students. International students are educational institutions clients and any portrayal of bad image may ruin educational institutions reputation both on the local and international scale. Hence, the success of educational institutions can be said to be determined by how IRO personnel interacts with the institutions clients who happen to be international students. Either way, it remains

important to foster communication so as to quickly resolve issues, promote harmony and foster progress.

Barriers to Effective Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

The extent to which the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel can be deemed to be courteous or not is to some extent determined by existence of barriers to communication. Barriers to communication are elements or things that can interfere with or possibly hinder the communication process (Argyle et al., 1970). In the case that barriers have been encountered, a wrong or negative response can be triggered leading to either the students or IRO personnel to behave in a way that is not polite. On the other hand, efforts to protect a public image (face) by the IRO personnel rely on the extent to which the communication process will flow. Hence, it is important to ensure that all the barriers to communication have been eliminated. This part, therefore, seeks to examine some of the barriers that can hinder verbal and non-verbal communication between international students and IRO personnel and the extent to which they can influence the politeness of the IRO personnel.

The Credibility of the Sender

The credibility of the sender is one of the notable barriers to communication and its effects on educational institutions are as severe as in other organisational institutions (Trenholm & Jensen, 2008). Hence, it is important to ensure that there is always some element of credibility involved before engaging in communication. In tertiary institutions, international students can lose interest in communication with IRO personnel when they doubt the credibility of the IRO personnel. This can be characterised by resentfulness as

students may opt to talk to another person whom they consider to be of higher credibility. Even if there are no other barriers that hinder the communication process between the international student and the IRO personnel, the international student may perceive the IRO personnel as lacking courteous all because the IRO personnel is considered to be lacking credibility. The more trustworthy the IRO personnel are, the more and better the international students will receive and believe the message passed. There are circumstances where students may be given a time frame that by that time their issues will be resolved and come that time or day only to discover that their issues have not been attended (Silverman, Kutz & Drapper, 2016). Such tends to compromises the trustworthy of the IRO personnel and can lead to increased frustrations and anger and compromises the extent to which both parties will be polite.

Emotional Disconnects

Mccabe (2004) contends that emotional disconnects can ruin effective communication and that it is not always good to engage in communication when one of the parties involved in the communication is angry. This implies that both the international students and IRO personnel are not encouraged to continue communicating when one of them is angry. This is because it is assumed that an angry, anxious or stressed person is more likely to be impolite and receptive even though constructive criticisms have been aired (Trenholm & Jensen, 2008). Emotional disconnects are usually associated with perceptions of an attack and in such a case a person is more likely to be considered impolite.

Connotation and Denotation

Connotation and denotation relate to the way people of a different dialect, culture and educational levels use a language (Chant et al., 2002). For instance, the words 'braces'

and 'lift' tend to mean two different things in England and in the United States of America. As a result, a person may fail to understand the contextual meaning of words used and this can stimulate negative response especially in the use of English language by most foreign students whose English proficiency is in most cases higher than that of IRO personnel. Hence, the IRO personnel can end up reacting in an impolite way all because of the problem of connotation and denotation.

Semantics

Foremost, semantics refers to the meaning of phrases and words (Ming-hai., 2000). Due to the idea that different phrases and words can have different meanings, the communication process is more likely to be characterised by a lot of confusion. For example, the words "Seven men are coming to the university on Wednesday" makes it difficult and confusing for one to tell if "Seven Man" as an individual is coming to the university on Wednesday or simply seven people are coming to the university on Wednesday. As noted, from observations made by Leech (2016), which points to the idea of anger, frustrations and confusion which can lead to impolite behaviour as the IRO personnel might not be having time to process such information due to backlogs and pilling pressure.

Information Overload

Processing too much information at the same time can actually hinder communication. This is because recipients involved in the communication process have a limit to the amount of information they can process during a particular period of time (Kirwan, 2010). Information overload also occurs as a result of the level at which the communication process is being undertaken. Hence, it is always important to ensure that international students provide information in digestible bits as well as reduce the frequency

or level of the communication process. International students must also check to ensure that the IRO personnel has understood the message.

Selective Perception

Cases which are associated by contradictions of prior beliefs and emotional discomfort as a resulting of a person over-focusing or under noticing a stimulus are known as selective perception (Aspen & Lonberg-Madsen, 2005, p. 13). In relation to this study, students selectively ignore that being nice to the IRO personnel helps them to get good service, but rather choose to be aggressive. Both the IRO personnel and students can selectively choose to engage in improper actions which are contrary to what is acceptable. Selective perception thus, causes one to be considered as impolite when a person chooses to disregard information, values and norms that would them seem impolite. Aspen and Lonberg-Madsen (2005) defended such action citing that it is a form of perceptual defence. For instance, the IRO personnel can respond harshly to a student whom they do not like each time they notice the student entering the IRO. Selective perception causes the communication process to be bias as some students of a different nationality gain more favour from the IRO personnel over other students.

Filtering

Messages communicated are always prone to the problem of filtering and both the IRO personnel and international students can easily filter information. This can be supported by ideas given by Silverman, Kutz and Draper (2016) which showed that people have different filters which they use to view a particular situation. This implies that the international students will approach the IRO personnel using a different set of filters. The international students on the other hand, will also approach the IRO personnel using a different set of filters. Kirwan (2010) also stated that differences in language, culture,

experience and lifestyle will result in a different set of filters. This therefore suggests that differences in perceptions between international students and the IRO personnel are as a result of differences in set of filters. Kirwan (2010, p.16) also contends that this is the main reason why foreigners or people of different cultures have to try so hard to avoid confusion. It is thus important to avoid filters and this can be accomplished by repeating the message.

Physical Barriers

A significant number of physical barriers are associated with noise which can hinder concentration or impair a person's ability to hear perfectly well. The IRO is a busy place and it can actually be characterised by a lot of noise which can affect the IRO personnel's level of concentration. Background noise is also a notable aspect and both students and the IRO personnel can easily lose focus when in a room with full of noise. McCabe (2004) posits that it is important to ensure that it is impossible for one to pay attention or get comfortable in the midst of noise. It is therefore important to ensure that the IRO is free from noise at all costs. Physical barriers can easily be dealt with through advance planning and the use of awareness programmes.

English as a Foreign Language and its Influence on Communication and Courteousness

Foremost, it is important to note we all have to speak so that we have to understand each other and all this revolves around languages. The Oxford dictionary defines language as a combination of a set of words that are used in a systematic way by people of a given community. This definition does however not limit the use of other definition because the word language is considered to be having a lot of elements Finegan and Besnier (as cited in Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006).

Meanwhile, English is one of the most widely used languages in the world and its usage is surrounded by a lot of opportunities and problems. But much of the issues that are widely talked about the English language are mainly focused on the challenges that are encountered by non-English speakers who either consider it to be a SL or a FL. Thus, non-native English speakers are always forced to ensure that they maintain a high level of grammatical competence when speaking, writing, even listening to English language speakers. Any discrepancies in grammatical competencies often cause problems such as misconceptions such as impoliteness or lack of courteousness (Abdul-Majeed, 2009; Liu & Allen, 2014).

The other challenge that may be encountered when using English language as a foreign language is that one has to stick to the required grammatical rules and failure to do so may be considered as lack of courteousness. This is mainly because such sentences will be lacking clarity and often project the wrong meaning (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006). As a result, EFL requires a certain level of communicative competence so as to avoid wrong perceptions as well as FTAs. Hence, it is always important that the IRO personnel is in a strong position to use EFL appropriately when communicating with international students (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006). It must, however, be noted that the use of EFL tends to differ with people and the nature of relationships that we have with other people such as family, friends and teachers etc. thus, in order for the IRO personnel to be capable of communicating effectively with the international students they both need to understand each other when communicating in English language whether using verbal or non-verbal communication (gestures, body posture, facial expressions, body language etc.) but much of it relies on verbal communication. This can be better understood by looking at the following aspects;

a) Pragmatics

Pragmatics is often considered to be the study of how to use a particular language when communicating, how sentences are related to each other and the exact situation such sentences can or must be used as well as interpreting utterances made (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). There is, however, a huge difference between pragmatics and semantics, and Richards and Schmidt (2010) outlined that the latter mainly focuses on meaning without reference.

Though there are so many ways EFL meanings can be influenced, Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006) outlined that pragmatics mainly deals with speech acts, implicature, presupposition and indexicality. In other words, it focuses on looking at "speaker meaning". This can be supported by ideas given by Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006) which highlighted that sharing what is called cooperative principles will help enchance the clarity of the communicated message. However, much of the weight is placed on the extent to which a person is generous and this is what socio-pragmatics is mainly concerned about. Thus, socio-pragmatics focuses on how people use a particular language to the express courteousness. Efforts to examine how international students view the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel in terms of courteousness are mainly centred on what is termed "cross-cultural pragmatics," and how culture and subcultures elements will interact to influence the degree of courteousness (Yule, 1996, p. 3).

b) Speech acts

Alsulami (2015, p. 386) defined speech acts as actions that are done using utterances and include things such as a request, promise, invitation, compliment, complaint

or apology. In EFL, it is important to make sure that one understands what acts embodied in a particular sentence. This means that both international students and the IRO personnel must be in a good position to understand each other's speech acts. This includes all aspects of speech acts, that is;

- Internal actions.
- Actions of communication.
- Actions other than communication (Alsulami, 2015, p. 386).

All these acts are to a large extent related to FTAs and there is always a need for a person to save another person's face while at the same time making sure that his or her request will be granted. This applies to a lot of extent to international students who often make a request to the IRO personnel and their mandate is, therefore, to ensure that they are in a position to save the IRO personnel's face in a manner that will see their request being granted.

Empirical Literature Review

Hobjilă (2012) did a study that uses interviews to investigate how the use of Didactic communication landmarks affects positive politeness and negative politeness in education institutions. The study established that both positive and negative politeness can be demonstrated using paraverbal, verbal and non-communication methods and that these methods serve either as additional or substitute methods. This, therefore, outlines that paraverbal communications methods also have a capacity to influence the courteousness of the IRO personnel and must be given due attention. The findings made from the study further showed that there is a strong need to maintain a balance between negative and

positive politeness so as to enhance communication between students and teachers. Hence, the IRO personnel must demonstrate a strong ability to strike a balance in demonstrating both positive and negative politeness when communicating with international students. Recommendations were further made that efforts to improve negative politeness should be supported by activities such as the use of indirect replies, using indirect impersonal messages, reducing requests or critiques and using forms before critic component of the messages some of the key strategies that can be used to improve courteousness.

Wagner (2004) used theoretical insights on politeness and FTAs to conduct an examination on how positive-and negative-politeness strategies can be used to apologise for drawing focus from Cuernavaca, Mexico. The findings made disagree with Brown and Levison's theory which asserts that negative politeness is the best possible way to use when engaging in facework. This, therefore, implies that it is in most cases for the IRO personnel to adopt social strategies when engaging in both verbal and non-verbal communication with international students. This is important because it will help reduce the social distance and can always be used freely without the need to avoid a negative face.

García and Terkourafi (2014) looked at circumstances that surround cases in which native and non-native Spanish speakers should be polite. The findings revealed that culture plays an important role in determining when, how and where an individual should be polite. This implies that the extent to which the IRO personnel is courteousness is explained by the prevailing conditions surrounding them. In addition, the study showed that non-native speakers are more likely to be courteous as opposed to native speakers and will transfer L1 preferences into their L2. Hence, it can be said that international students are more likely to be courteous as opposed to the IRO personnel.

Abdul-Majeed (2009) did a study that looks at how Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory can be used to attain positive politeness strategies in language. The study established that the politeness is determined by circumstances governing the situation and that it is impossible to have a person who is polite all the time. Hence, this implies that cases whereby the IRO personnel is courteous or not are bound by circumstances and that it is rational not to lack courteousness. That is, it justifies the decision to be impolite or lack interest in improving courteousness.

Ryabova (2015) placed considerations on looking at politeness strategy in everyday communication. It is established in the study that there are various politeness strategies ranging from positive, negative, relative or absolute politeness just as they are various English speech etiquette models. The findings also support arguments that have been made which contends that circumstances under which a person can be courteous are different and will continue to vary. Moreover, it also established that every single politeness strategy has its own required etiquette speech act. This means that the use of speech acts by both international students and the IRO personnel will significantly influence the courteousness of the IRO personnel.

Liu and Allen (2014) conducted a study that examines linguistic politeness in Japanese and they claimed that no matter whom people talk with, they want both the S and H to have positive faces and to speak formally according to their relationship and position in society.

Agis (as cited in Alsulami, 2015, p. 23) claims that positive politeness of Turkish women with children and friends is better than men, but men' positive politeness to older relatives is better than females'. The study highlighted that "cross-linguistics" and "cross-

cultural" go hand in hand and this puts into consideration differences in language and culture. But the challenge is that the use of one language does not mean that it equates to one culture. This can be supported by ideas given by Jonathan (2012, p. 1128) which hinted that language is not always a good label of culture.

Finally, as Leech (2014) claims that being polite is not compulsory, people choose to be polite or impolite according to the situation they are in. Also, Ismail, Aladdin and Ramli (2014) believe that besides having grammar rules, languages have their own strategies to politeness and they show differences between individuals and cultures of language users. Politeness is not just all about using nice words and also meaning it by showing them with their behaviours and manners (Ismail, Aladdin & Ramli, 2014).

Summary of Literature Review

From the given theoretical and empirical frameworks, it can be established that communication plays a vital role in organisations and that its roles are not limited to professional bodies but also extends to include educational institutions. Both Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and the conversation maxim are important in offering explanations as to why it is important to be courteous and what can be done to improve courteousness. However, these theories have their own limitations especially when considerations are made that conditions which affect the extent to which an individual can be courteous are always subject to change over time. More so, the issue of cultural differences also plays an important role in describing an individual's courteousness mainly because in some culture it is natural to be impolite (not regarded as impolite). The study also managed to outline that it is important to ensure that there is effective communication

between the IRO personnel and international students. Examinations made in this study also show barriers to communication have an effect on the international students' perception of how the use of verbal and non-verbal communication affects the courteousness of IRO personnel. Further observations also revealed that the use of paraverbal communication also affects the courteousness of IRO personnel but has not been duly acknowledged and given the necessary academic research attention.

Insights shown by the given empirical frameworks shows that there is a huge need for both international students and the IRO personnel to demonstrate a balanced level of positive and negative politeness when communicating with each other. In line with recommendations that have been established, recommendations to improve the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel and the courteousness of the IRO personnel must include activities such as the use of indirect replies, using indirect impersonal messages, reducing requests or critiques and using forms before critic component of the message are some of the key strategies that can be used to improve courteousness.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focused on the methodological approaches that were taken so as to arrive at a stage where conclusions, recommendations and suggestions about future studies were made. This chapter thus, looked at the research design, population and sampling, participant, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical conduct of the study.

Research Design

The study relied on the use of primary data that was collected using questionnaires. In its nature, the study was to be said to be a quantitative research that involved the use of statistical methods to analyse the obtained findings. The obtained results were used to provide answers to the following questions;

- Do international students consider the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel as courteous?

- Do improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication cause significant changes in courteousness?

- Do differences in nationality have an effect on communication?

- Do changes in educational levels or qualifications cause a change in the international students' ability to communicate well?

- What are the possible strategies that can be used to enhance communication between international students and the IRO personnel?

It was from providing answers to the above questions, that discussions and recommendations were made. This also included making conclusions using the obtained findings as well as being in a position to make suggestions about future studies.

Population and Sampling

The study revolved around the examination of the views of 100 students that were randomly selected from a pool of international students studying in North Cyprus. This was because the available population size was too big and this resultantly gave a larger sample size which at this stage proved to be time-consuming and cost ineffective. Thus, culling a reasonable sample size from a huge population size made it possible to make generalisations about the views of international students.

This use of random sampling in this study was supported by ideas outlined in a study by Marshall (1996), which asserted that random sampling is easy to use and offers a higher probability in terms of the extent to which a sample size accurately represents the actual population size which in this case are the views of international students. Also, chances of making errors were minimised by using simple random sampling (Cochran, 2007). However, the use of simple random sampling required that a researcher be in possession of a lot of knowledge and that the researcher take appropriate action to avoid making errors. In doing so, the researcher had to double check the data entry process and make sure that correct information has been captured and entered correctly.

The data was collected during the fall semester of the 2018-2019 academic year and the participants took part voluntarily.

Participants

Demographic Features of the Respondents

Gender and age profile of the respondents

Based on the established demographic findings depicted in Table 2, it was established that the high number of international students who participated in this survey were composed of male students who constituted 69.8% of the total number of international students as opposed to female international students who constituted 30.2% of the total number of international students. Table 2, also revealed that a relatively high number of international students studying in North Cyprus who participated in the study were in between the age group of 18-22 years and this translated to 46.5% of the total number of international students followed by 31.4% of the international students between the age group of 23-27 years, 14% between the age group of 28-32 years, 5.8% between the age group of 33-37 years and 2.3% above 38 years.

Table 1

Gender and Age Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Description	Responses	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	69.8%
	Female	26	30.2%
	Total	**86**	**100%**
Age group	18-22 years	40	46.5%
	23-27 years	27	31.4%
	28-32 years	12	14.0%
	33-37 years	5	5.8%
	38+ years	2	2.3%
	Total	**86**	**100%**

Educational level

Insights depicted by Figure 4, revealed that there were a high number of international students studying towards attaining BA and BSc qualifications followed by MA and MSc and PhD qualifications with respective frequencies of 63, 18 and 5. This suggested that there was a relatively high level of understanding of the use of verbal and non-verbal communication since these aspects are taught at each academic level and the depth and scope of understanding and the use of verbal and non-verbal communication was positively related with academic qualification.
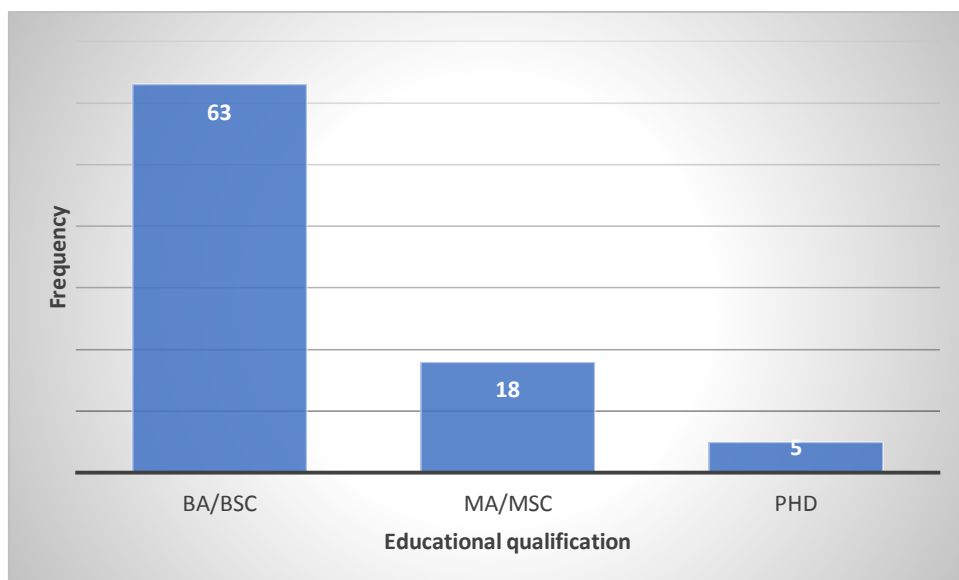
Figure 4. Educational qualification of the respondents

Expectations were therefore made that international students' understanding and use of verbal and non-verbal communication increased with the attainment of higher educational qualifications such as a master degree and a PhD degree. This was more likely to pose positive effects on how international students communicate with the IRO personnel.

Nationality

The cross section of international students that participated in this study were drawn from 17 nationalities. Nigeria had the highest number of native speakers with a total of 28 students, 9 Huasa, 10 Igbo and 9 Yoruba followed by Zimbabwe with 18 speaking Shona and one English. The study drew ideas from a wide number of students such as Libya, Ukraine, Somali and Ethiopia. This increased the validity of the results since the opinions were obtained from a huge pool of different students. This also increased the exposure of the IRO personnel to numerous circumstances that put their courteous to test.

Table 2

Nationality of the International Students

Nationality	Native language	Frequency	Total	Percentage
Nigerian	Hausa	9		
	Igbo	10	28	32.6
	Yoruba	9		
Zimbabwean	English	1	19	22.1
	Shona	18		
Jordanian	Arabic	4	4	4.7
Pakistani	Urdu	6	6	7.0
Congolese	French	4	4	4.7
Libyan	Arabic	7	7	8.1
Egyptian	Arabic	1	1	1.2
Syrian	Arabic	5	5	5.8
Omani	Arabic	1	1	1.2
Ethiopian	Amharic	1	1	1.2
Botswanan	Setswana	1	1	1.2
Cameroonian	French	1	1	1.2
Kazakh	Kazak	1	1	1.2
Ghanaian	Ghanaian	2	2	2.3
Ukrainian	Ukrainian	2	2	2.3
Somali	Somali	2	2	2.3
German	German	1	1	1.2
Total		**86**	**86**	**100**

Perceptions about the level of English understanding

It was established in the obtained literature that the extent to which one was

considered to be courteous or not was determined by his or her ability to understand what

was said. It was in this regard that effort was devoted towards examining if the IRO

personnel understood the accent of the international students and if the international

students always had to repeat themselves in order for the IRO personnel to understand them. The obtained results are depicted in Figure 5.
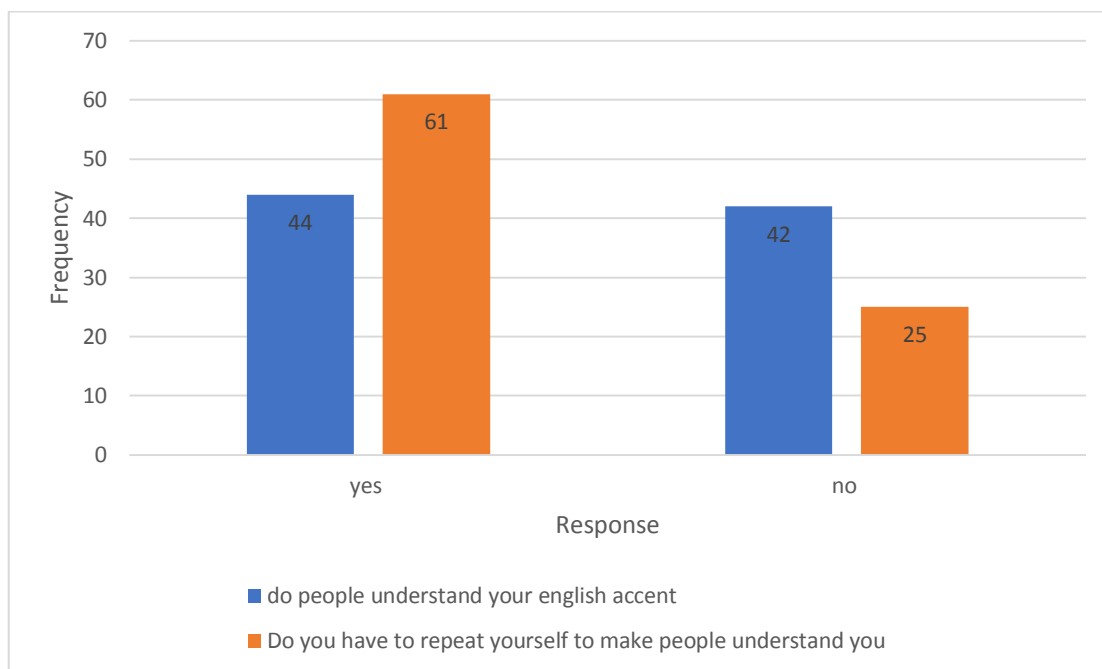
Figure 5. Perceptions about the level of English understanding

Data Collection

The research instrument was obtained from a study conducted by Alsout (2018) and Leontaridou (2016). This was because these studies addressed similar research concerns and provided a strong base upon which comparison and arguments were laid. Moreover, they also covered a lot of aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication and courteousness. The questionnaire was composed of three sections. The first section dealt with demographic features of the respondents, the second part covered information about verbal communication while the third part dealt with non-verbal communication issues and how they influenced the extent to which the IRO personnel were courteous. A 5-point Likert scale was also used and corresponded to never, rarely, not sure, sometimes and

always. The research instrument was slightly modified so that it matched the concerned

academic environment and remains relevant in capturing and addressing prevailing issues.

The research instrument also incorporated ideas obtained from Brown and Levinson's

(1987) politeness theory (the face-saving theory of politeness) for assessing the

courteousness of the IRO personnel towards foreign students.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social

Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The data analysis procedures that were used include the use of

descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation whose aim was to assess the

magnitude of effect and the responsiveness of the variables respectively (Neuma, 2013).

This was accompanied by the use of Spearman Correlation Coefficient tests which helped

in determining the nature of correlation that exists between verbal and non-verbal

communication, and courteousness. Tables, graphs and pie charts were also used to present

the findings and this was made possible through the use of Microsoft Excel.

Reliability

Reliability tests helped to determine how reliable the estimated variables were in

answering or addressing the research problem or topic (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1996). In

this study, reliability tests were conducted using Cronbach's alpha which provided a

measure of the internal consistency of the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The

basic idea was that variables which had an internal consistency of at least 70% were

considered to be reliable and the obtained Cronbach's alpha values were assessed based on

this benchmark (Neuman, 2013). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha was found to be above 0.70 and it was concluded that the questionnaire used in the study was reliable.

Both verbal and non-verbal communication had respective Cronbach's alpha values of 0.85 and 0.87 which were above the 0.70 standard. Hence, it was thus, concluded that both verbal communication and non-verbal communication variables had high internal consistencies. This implied that they were used to offer reliable explanations about the international students' views on the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel.

Table 3

Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Decision
Verbal communication	0.85	Highly reliable
Non-verbal communication	0.87	Highly reliable

Pilot Study

Foremost, it is important to note that a pilot study is a study that is conducted as a research trial using a limited number of participants so as to come up with an extensive research (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Hence, it was in this regard that a pilot study was undertaken using a total of seven participants. Hence, it is in this regard that a pilot study was undertaken using a total of seven academic professors drawn from universities across North Cyprus. All the seven professors were from the English Language Teaching department at their respective institutions. The questionnaire was later amended in line with the academic professors' recommendations.

The importance of a pilot study was highlighted using ideas established from the study by Cho, Cheung and Edwards (2005), which asserted that a pilot study is conducted with the main emphasis of achieving the following targets;

- It contributes towards improving data collection.

- It helps to determine if the adopted research instrument is appropriate to address the underlying research area.

- Makes it possible for the researcher to gain additional information that is needed to improve the study

- Most importantly, a pilot study helps to curb errors that may occur during the research process.

Validity

Studies that involve the use of a questionnaire are highly recommended that they undertake validity tests and this is considered to be of paramount importance. For instance, Rosenthal and Rosnow (1996) considered that validity tests helped to ensure that the research instrument remained valid in addressing the subject area and it was in this regard that validity tests were conducted in relation to face validity. This also helped to ensure that the questionnaire had no errors and that the respondents fully understood what was required from them (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Consequently, validity tests were thus said to have helped in ensuring that the response rate remained relatively high and that the proposed research instrument highly reliable as possible. Validity tests were done so as to determine if;

- The questions were easy to understand.

- The questionnaire effectively addressed or covered the research topic.

- The used layout was easy and not vague.

- The used language was easily understandable.

- The questions were double-barrelled.

Seven professors expressed total confidence in the ability of the research instrument to fulfil its intended purposes in providing the necessary data that was used to provide answers to the proposed research questions.

Ethical Conduct

As part of efforts to ensure that sound ethical standards are upheld, the researcher applied for approval from the university's ethical committee which was charged with the task of evaluating proposed research instruments to determine their feasibility in addressing a given research topic. In addition, the collected data was not made public and was treated with utmost confidentiality. This was because the findings were strictly for academic purposes and were not be used for any purpose other than that.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The study examined international students' views on verbal and non-verbal communication of international registration office personnel and attempted to find out how courteous this communication was. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to international students in North Cyprus and a total of 86 questionnaires were retrieved. This translated to a response rate of 86% which was relatively high enough to offer reliable explanations that were a close reflection of international students' views on the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the international registration office personnel and how courteous this communication was. Data analysis and findings were based on the collected 86 individual responses.

Correlation between Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to examine the nature correlation that existed between verbal and non-verbal communication. It was established that there was a strong positive correlation between verbal communication and non-verbal communication of 0.72. This meant that improvements in verbal communication were also associated with positive improvements in non-verbal communication or vice versa. Since non-verbal communication is often used to reinforce the effectiveness of verbal communication, it was thus considered that improvements in non-verbal communication helped to improve the

effectiveness of verbal communication (Makoul, 2003). This was supported by ideas given by Griffin (2006) which suggested that non-verbal communication is mostly used to reinforce or further illustrate ideas and meaning depicted using verbal communication.

Table 4

Correlation Coefficient Test

	Verbal communication
Non-verbal communication	0.72 *(0.000)*

* Significant at 0.01 and probability value in parenthesis

International Students' Views about the Courteous use of Non-Verbal Communication by IRO Personnel

Information on the use of non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel was noted to be associated with opinions that the IRO personnel was rarely courteous. That is, the IRO employee rarely greeted students when they entered the office, the IRO staff smiled when they greeted students, the IRO employee looked at students when they speak to them, the IRO employee showed sympathy when students told them about a problem, that IRO employee cooperated in solving students' problems, the IRO staff were friendly in general, the IRO employee gave students full time. This was because their mean scores were relatively around the Likert scale value of 2 which represents the opinion rarely. Such therefore suggested that the use of non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel strongly lacks a lot of aspects which are needed to improve their level of courteousness.

Table 5

International Students' Views about the Courteous use of the IRO Personnel

Non-verbal communication	M	SD
The International Registration Office (IRO) employee greets me when I enter the office.	2.48	0.82
The IRO staff smile when they greet me.	2.33	0.94
The IRO employee looks at me when I speak to them.	2.30	0.96
The IRO employee shows sympathy when I tell them about a problem.	2.61	0.89
The IRO employee cooperation solving my problem.	2.54	0.84
The IRO staff are friendly in general.	2.31	1.01
The IRO employee gives me my full time.	2.36	0.89
The IRO employee looks stressed.	3.12	1.37
The IRO employee respects the queuing number.	3.30	1.20
The IRO employee keeps calm if I lose my temper.	3.49	1.18
The IRO employee shows no bias related to my colour.	3.57	1.12
The IRO employee looks overworked.	3.61	1.16
The IRO employee makes faces when I do not understand him.	3.62	1.12
The IRO employee loses his temper easily.	3.93	1.09
The IRO employee shows no bias related to my nationality.	3.97	1.06

Key: M: Mean Score   SD: Standard Deviation

In addition, the results also showed that the IRO employee did not greet students when they entered the office. This follows its associated mean value of 2.48±0.82. Of which greeting is one of the key social norms and values which people use to identify a person as courteous or not. Moreover, there was a limited use of gestures as part of the communication process by the IRO personnel. This was evidenced by low mean scores of 2.33±0.94 and 2.30±0.96 which respectively suggested that the IRO personnel did not respectively smile when they greeted students and did not look at students when they spoke

to them. High mean values of 3.93±1.09 and 3.97±1.06 were noted to be associated with the idea that the IRO employee lost his temper easily and showed no bias related to students' nationality respectively. This was relatively linked with the view that this was sometimes true and hence in most cases the IRO personnel was said to be lacking these aspects which influenced their level of courteous. Hence, it was said to be true that the IRO personnel was not courteous towards international students.

The Effects of an Improvement in Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication on Courteousness

Independent t-test was used to test the validity of the proposed null hypotheses. The null hypotheses were mainly centred on the need to test if improvements in the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel had implications on their courteousness. This was because the proper use of verbal and non-verbal communication had important implications on the extent to which the IRO personnel was courteous to international students.

Table 6

Hypothesis Test

Null Hypothesis (H$_0$)	Test method	Probability	Decision
Improvements in verbal communication do not cause significant changes in courteousness	Independent t-test	0.00	Reject
Improvements in non-verbal communication do not cause significant changes in courteousness	Independent t-test	0.00	Reject

Using the given results, all the null hypotheses were rejected at 5%. Hence, conclusions were made that the proper use of verbal and non-verbal communication by IRO personnel was important in influencing the views of the international students. As a result, improvements in the use of verbal and non-verbal communication greatly improved the IRO personnel's level of courteousness.

The Influence of Nationality on Communication

Ideas depicted in literature showed that the level of communication varies with educational qualification. It is in this regard that One-way ANOVA test was used to test the validity of this idea. Using the depicted results in Table 7, it was concluded that there were no significant changes in communication attributed to changes in educational level.

Table 7

The Influence of Nationality on Communication

Null hypothesis	Value	Sig.	Decision
Differences in nationality have no significant effect on communication	ANOVA	0.29	Retain

The Influence of Educational Qualification on Communication

Studies showed that educational qualification influenced the degree to which students communicated (Redmond, 2015; Ryabova, 2015). Effort was placed in this study to test the validity of such an observation using One-way ANOVA. Using Table 8 results, contradictory ideas were established about the effect of nationality on communication. Conclusions were thus made that there were no significant changes in communication attributed to changes in differences in nationality.

Table 8

The Influence of Educational Qualification on Communication

Null hypothesis	Method	Sig.	Decision
Changes in education level had no significant effect on communication	One-way ANOVA	0.28	Retain

Strategies of Enhancing Communication between International Students and the IRO Personnel

In terms of the magnitude of effect, it was noted that all the variables had mean effects that were above 3.10. On a Likert scale of 5, this signified that the international students agreed that the use of verbal communication by the IRO personnel was sometimes courteous. This further suggested that much was needed to improve the use of verbal communication by the IRO personnel.

Meanwhile, the view that the IRO employee explained sentences by paraphrasing to ensure students understanding had a high mean value of 3.79±1.02. This suggested that the IRO personnel had some challenges in verbally communicating using English language as a FL. Problems in using English as FL had negative implications on perceptions about their courteousness. Also, much of the variability was noted to be surrounded with the idea that the IRO staff use simple English while making explanation which has a high standard deviation of 1.33. This implied that any complication or difficulty in the use of English that makes it difficult to understand what has been communicated will have negative effects on their courteousness. This is basically true as noted from theoretical principles of communication which contended that words used in communication must be simple to understand.

Table 9

Strategies of Enhancing Communication

Verbal communication	Mean	Std. Dev.
The IRO staff talk to me nicely.	3.14	1.19
The International Registration Office (IRO) staff use simple English while making explanation.	3.31	1.33
The IRO employee allows me to finish my sentence.	3.33	1.23
The IRO employee use courteous expressions such as "May I have your name? Can you repeat please? Would you come later? "etc.	3.35	1.30
The IRO employee gives me orders such as "go and sit, come later, wait there, do as I say" etc.	3.44	1.28
The IRO employee concludes their talk with expressions such as "see you, you are welcome, have a nice day, bye".	3.45	1.21
The IRO employee pronounces words clearly to make sure that I understand them.	3.48	1.11
The IRO employee checks that I accurately understand them.	3.48	1.16
The IRO employee answers all of my questions.	3.63	1.13
The IRO employee explains sentences by paraphrasing to ensure my understanding.	3.79	1.02

Ideas also showed that the international students did agree that the IRO personnel sometimes talked to them nicely as noted by a mean score of 3.14±1.19. On the other hand, it also implied that most of the time the IRO personnel was not nice to international students. Hence, this can be the main reason why international students considered the IRO personnel as lacking courteousness.

Also, ideas suggested that the IRO employees sometimes used courteous expressions such as "may I have your name? can you repeat please? would you come later?" etc. as noted by a mean value of 3.35±1.30. On its own, this suggests that the use of

courteous expressions by the IRO personnel is limited. Hence, much was needed to be done to ensure that the IRO personnel uses courteous expressions.

Discussion

The given results showed that the degree to which a person was courteous was determined by the extent to which a person communicated verbally and non-verbally. This was also determined by the situational context under which communication was being done. The level of communication in the education sector, notably in universities varies significantly from other professional institutions. This therefore significantly supported the importance of this study. This also implied that the context under which a person was considered to be courteous varies with the environment and exposure to verbal and non-verbal communication.

Also, circumstances under which the IRO personnel's courteousness was tested were so numerous. This was because interacted with a lot of international students from different continents and countries. Notable examples included, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Libya, Jordan, Egypt etc. under such circumstances, the students were accustomed to different cultural backgrounds, values and norms. As a result, this affected the way they verbally or non-verbally communicated with the IRO personnel. The IRO personnel responded in a courteous or non-courteous manner depending on how the students interacted with them. It was in this regard that it was considered that the views of the international students on the courteousness of the IRO personnel depended on how the students interacted with others. Hence, was relatively bias to just consider the courteousness of the IRO personnel without assessing how the international students interacted as well.

One of the most important aspects of communication was repetition. The findings showed that the international students had to repeat themselves so that the IRO personnel understood them. Thus, failure to understand what was said by the IRO personnel caused harsh behaviour by both the students and the IRO personnel. In most cases, cultural values, norms and beliefs interfered with one's perception. For instance, what was considered as impolite in one culture was considered as absolutely polite. Hence, though the international students actually perceived it as impolite, in Turkish culture such a scenario was considered as polite. This observation represented cultural limitations with Brown and Levinson's theory and the conversational maxim theory.

The study also managed to establish contradicting insights about Brown and Levinson theory. Brown and Levinson theory contended that an individual always acted in a rational manner and thrived to protect his or her public image. However, the findings revealed that this was not always the case and that individuals were bound to act irrationally. This was because the term rationality was subjective and some individuals opted to intentionally behave in an irrational manner. That is, the decision to act or behave in a polite manner was strictly based on an individual's decision. This was highly related to things such as attitude, character, mood, favouritism and so on.

Discussions on Improvements in Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Both alternative hypotheses which contend that improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication cause significant changes in courteousness were accepted at 5%. This entailed that much was needed to be done to improve the use of verbal and non-verbal

communication by the IRO personnel. This required effort to be placed by education officials, IRO personnel and international students.

Discussions on the Effects of Nationality and Education on Communication

As noted, education and nationality were established not to be having significant effects on communication. This contradicted with the arguments given by (Habaci, 2013) which contended that the level of communication basically improved with the level of education. This also contradicted with the idea that exposure to different types of people of different cultural backgrounds, values and norms increased the chances of communication breakdowns and challenges. This therefore implied that external circumstances such as work pressure, sense of urgency, frustrations and etc. were major determinants of courteousness.

Discussions on Challenges Undermining Communication

The existence of barriers to communication always undermined the effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal communication. As a result, incorrect and impolite perceptions were established. A significant number of these barriers were mainly related to the level of engagement between the IRO personnel and the international students. Hence, efforts to deal with these barriers were therefore centred on improving verbal and non-verbal communication between the IRO personnel and the international students.

The positive correlation that existed between verbal and non-verbal communication meant that either improvements in verbal communication or non-verbal communication resulted in improvements in the other. Conclusions were made in this study according to the idea established by Makoul (2003) that non-verbal communication was used to

reinforce the effectiveness of verbal communication. That is, it was reached that the IRO personnel should use non-verbal communication to reinforce the effectiveness of verbal communication. Cases where the IRO personnel was failing to understand what is being said, non-verbal communication becomes the best strategy to use so as to avoid compromising courteousness. This was supported by Brown and Levinson's politeness theory which contended that a negative face must be avoided at all cost. Furthermore, the lack of courteousness by the IRO was explained by the lack of potential benefits from acting in a polite manner. These results also contradicted with the conversational maxim model of politeness. The model assumed that the IRO personnel will maximise benefits to international students and maximise costs to themselves. But this does not help in explaining the lack of courteousness.

The study also implied that the use of English language as a FL increased the chances of observing impolite behaviour. This was mainly because the use of English language as a means of communication was subject to misunderstandings and challenges. These challenges were high in circumstances where a native language like Turkish was predominantly used. To make matters worse, exposing the IRO personnel to students who used English as a SL, changed the IRO personnel's level of communication.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study was an examination of international students' views on the verbal and non-verbal communication of the international registration office personnel at universities in North Cyprus and how courteous this communication was. This study was motivated by observations made which pointed out that the use of both verbal and non-verbal communication had different implications on courteousness. One of the main reasons was established to be the contextual situation under which verbal and non-verbal communication were practised. Much of the studies that examined the implications of communication were based on non-education sectors. In addition, this study was necessitated by the need to examine how barriers to communication influenced an individual's degree of courteousness.

Using the established results, conclusions were made that a high number of international students exposed the IRO personnel to circumstances that put to test their courteousness. Having numerous and various international students implied that the IRO personnel was exposed to different cultural backgrounds, value and norms. Such different cultural backgrounds, value and norms had a high chance of contradicting with what was deemed as courteous. In addition, an effective examination of the courteousness of the IRO personnel required that the way international students communicate be examined as well.

Conclusions can also be made based on the established findings about the strategies that were used to improve the effectiveness of verbal communication. That is, avoiding the use of vague words or terms helped in avoiding communication problems which led to

impolite behaviour. Hence, it was advisable for both the IRO personnel and international students to keep the communication process as simple as possible. Also, cases were the IRO personnel had failed to understand what was communicated by the international students, required that the international students repeated and rephrased their messages.

Both verbal and non-verbal communication were important aspects of communication and their combined use helped to alleviate adverse situations. In most cases, the effectiveness of verbal communication was improved by using non-verbal communication. As a result, it was said that much was needed to improve the use of verbal and non-verbal communication by the IRO personnel.

The use of Brown and Levinson's theory and the conversational maxim theory was important as it helped in understanding why it was important to act in a polite way. However, these theories had their own shortfalls. This was because individuals did not always act in a rational manner and things like attitude, character, mood etc., influenced a person's level of courteousness. Moreover, cultural values, norms and beliefs interfered with one's perception and what international students actually perceived as impolite was actually be considered as polite. This observation represented cultural limitations with Brown and Levinson's theory and the conversational maxim theory.

Recommendations

With regard to the established findings, recommendations were made in respect to education officials, IRO personnel and international students.

Recommendations to Educate Officials and the IRO Personnel

They must come up with public relation training programmes that are aimed at training the IRO personnel on how to deal with students as business clients.

Communication lessons must be introduced as part of the professional training programmes to educate the IRO personnel.

There is a need to establish suggestions boxes and dispute handling departments that deal with issues affecting international students.

University official need to train the IRO personnel on how;

- They should use courteous expressions when communicating with the international students.
- They should also use sympathetic gestures and other non-verbal expressions to handle difficult situations.
- They should ask international students to either repeat themselves or clarify issues and expressions which they do not fully understand.

Recommendations to International Students

They should be encouraged to exercise patience when communicating with the IRO personnel not forgetting the language and cultural differences that separate them.

They should use simple and understandable English when communicating with the IRO personnel so as to enhance the effectiveness of the communication process.

In cases where the IRO personnel do not understand the used means of verbal communication, then non-verbal communication should be used as a supporting mechanism.

Suggestions for Future Studies

The lack of courteousness of the IRO personnel was discovered in the course of the study to be somehow linked to the way international students interact. This also included aspects like attitude, character and the effectiveness of classroom communication teaching and learning programmes. As a result, there is a greater need to examine the effectiveness of classroom communication lessons and how they influence an individual's level of courteousness, attitude and character.

REFERENCES

Abdul-Majeed, R. K. (2009). The realization of positive politeness strategies in language: The politeness theory of Brown and Levinson. *Journal of College Of Education For Women, 20* (2), 509-527.

Ali, E., & Alsout, G. (2018). Politeness and request strategies in Libyan postgraduate students'e-mails (Doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya).

Allott, N. (2010). Key terms in pragmatics. London, GBR: Continuum International Publishing. Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com/lib/masaryk/docDetail.action?docID=10427674&p00.

Alsulami, S. Q. (2015). The effectiveness of social distance on requests. *Arab World English Journal, 6*(3), 382-395.

Argyle, M., Salter, V., Nicholson, H., Williams, M., & Burgess, P. (1970). The communication of inferior and superior attitudes by verbal and non-verbal signals. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 9*(3), 222-231.

Aspegren, K., & Lonberg-Madsen, P. (2005). Which basic communication skills in medicine are learnt spontaneously and which need to be taught and trained?. *Medical Teacher, 27*(6), 539-543.

Ballenger, C. (1999). Teaching other people's children: Literacy and learning in a bilingual classroom. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 (paper: ISBN-0-8077-3789-5; cloth: ISBN-0-8077-3790-9).

Brown, P. (2015). Politeness and language. *International Encyclopaedia of the Social & Behavioral   Sciences (Second Edition), 18*, 326–330.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1978). Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena. In E. Goody (Ed.), *Questions and politeness: Strategies in social interaction* (pp. 56-310). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). Politeness. Some universals in language usage. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chant, S., Jenkinson, T. I. M., Randle, J., & Russell, G. (2002). Communication skills: some problems in nursing education and practice. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 11*(1), 12-21.

Cho, P., Cheung, S. W., & Edwards, M. (2005). The longitudinal orthokeratology research in children (LORIC) in Hong Kong: a pilot study on refractive changes and myopic control. *Current Eye Research, 30*(1), 71-80.

Cochran, W. G. (2007). Sampling techniques. John Wiley & Sons.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage publications.

Dobransky, N. D. & Frymier, A. B. (2004). Developing teacher- student relationships through out of class communication. *Communication Quarterly, 52*(3), 211-223.

Ergin, A., & Birol, C. (2005). Eğitimde iletişim. Anı Yayıncılık.

Fasold, R.W., & Connor-Linton, J. (editors). (2006). An introduction to language and linguistics. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.

García, M. J. B., & Terkourafi, M. (2014). What, when and how? Spanish native and non-native uses of politeness. *Pragmática Sociocultural/Sociocultural Pragmatics, 8*(2), 262-292.

Goffman, E. (1967). Interaction ritual; essays on face-to-face behavior. Garden City, NY: Doubleday. London: Pearson Education Limited.

Goffman, E. (1972). On face-work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. In J. Laver & S. Hutcheson (Eds.), Communication in face-to-face interaction (pp. 179-196). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Grice, P. (1989). Studies in the way of words. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Griffin, E. M. (2006). A first look at communication theory. McGraw-Hill.

Habaci, I. (2013). Communication and speech factors in effective educational administration. A. Kd, nq & A. Sahin (Eds.), Speech training, 265-275.

Hackman, M. Z., & Walker, K. B. (1990). Instructional communication in the televised classroom: The effects of system design and teacher immediacy on student learning and satisfaction. *Communication Education, 39*(3), 196-206.

Hargie, O. (Ed.). (1997). The handbook of communication skills. Psychology Press.

Haugh, M. (2013). Im/politeness, social practice and the participation order. *Journal of Pragmatics, 58,* 52-72.

Held, G. (2005). Politeness in linguistic research. In K. Ehlich& S. Ide (Eds.), Politeness in language : Studies in its history, theory and practice. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. Retrieved from

http://site.ebrary.com/lib/masaryk/docDetail.action?docID=10318141&p00.

Hobjila, A. (2012). Positive politeness and negative politeness in didactic communication – landmarks in teaching methodology. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 63*, 213 – 222.

Hoy, W.K., & Miskel, C.G. (1998). Educational administration theory, research and practice. U.S.A.: Random House.

Huang, Y. (2007). Pragmatics. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Ismail, I. R. S., Aladdin, A., & Ramli, S. (2014). Vousoutu?: Towards understanding the politeness concept in French. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 118*, 184 – 189.

Jonathan, C. (2012). (Im) politeness: Three issues. *Journal of Pragmatics, 44*, 1128 - 1133.

Kasper, G. (2009). Politeness. In F. Brisard, F. Östman& J. Verschueren (Eds.), Pragmatics of Interaction. Amsterdam, NLD: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Kirwan, M. (2010). Basic communication skills. Handbook of veterinary communication skills, P. 1-24.

Leech, G. (2014). The pragmatics of politeness. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leech, G. N. (1983). Principle of pragmatics. London: Longman.

Leech, G. N. (2016). Principles of pragmatics. Routledge.

Leontaridou, A. (2016). Power and politeness in email communication in the workplace: A case study of a multinational company (Master's thesis).

Liu, X., & Allen, T. J. (2014). A study of linguistic politeness in Japanese. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics, 4*, 651-663.

Maguire, P., & Pitceathly, C. (2002). Key communication skills and how to acquire them. *Bmj, 325*(7366), 697-700.

Makoul, G. (2003). Communication skills education in medical school and beyond. *Jama, 289*(1), 93-93.

Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice, 13*(6), 522-526.

McCabe, C. (2004). Nurse–patient communication: an exploration of patients' experiences. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 13*(1), 41-49.

McCroskey, J. C., Plax, T. G., Kearney, P., & Richmond, V. P. (1986). Power in the classroom VI: Verbal control strategies, nonverbal immediacy and affective learning. *Communication Education, 35*(1), 43-55.

Ming-hai, Z. H. U. (2000). On the supreme principle of pragmatics. Guangzhou University. Journal of Social Science Normal Edition, 9, 014.

Murphy, B. (2010). Corpus and sociolinguistics: Investigating age and gender in female talk. Amsterdam, NDL: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Neuman, W. L. (2013). Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Pearson education.

Ortega, C. P. (2012). Attitudes of English speakers towards thanking in Spanish. *International Pragmatics Association, 20*(2), 201-222.

Petríčková, I. (2013). Politeness Strategies in Interview Questions (Doctoral dissertation, Masarykovauniverzita, Filozofickáfakulta). Retrieved from https://is.muni.cz/th/zqdds/?so=nx on 22 September 2018.

Redmond, M. V. (2015). Face and politeness theories. English Technical Reports and White Papers. 2. Retrieved from:http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/engl_reports/2on 22 September 2018.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). Longman Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics. 4th edt. : Pearson Education Limited.

Rosenthal, R., & Rosnow, R. L., (1996). Computing contrasts, effect sizes, and counternulls on other people's published data: General procedures for research consumers. *Psychological Methods, 1*(4), 331.

Ryabova, M. (2015). Politeness Strategy in Everyday Communication. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 206*, 90-95.

Silverman, J., Kurtz, S., & Draper, J. (2016). Teaching and learning communication skills in medicine. CRC press.

Trenholm, S., & Jensen, A. (2008). Interpersonal communication (pp. 10-12). New York: Oxford University Press.

Van Teijlingen, E. R., & Hundley, V. (2001). The importance of pilot studies.

Vilkki, L. (2006.). Politeness, face and facework: current issues. *Journal of Linguistics, 19*, 322-332.

Wagner, L. C. (2004). Positive-and negative-politeness strategies: Apologizing in the speech community of Cuernavaca, Mexico. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 13*, 19-28.

Watts, R. J. (2003). Politeness: Key topics in sociolinguistics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, S. R., Aleman, C. G., & Leatham, G. B. (1998). Identity Implications of Influence Goals A Revised Analysis of Face Threatening Acts and Application to Seeking Compliance With Same-Sex Friends. *Human Communication Research, 25*(1), 64-96.

Yin, L. (2009). Cultural differences of politeness in English and Chinese. *Asian Social Science, 5*(6), 154.

Yule, G. (1996). Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaire

Near East University

Department of English Language Teaching

International Registration Office Survey Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

This study is conducted as a partial fulfilment to the requirements of a Master's degree in English Language Teaching at Near East University. This study examines **'International Students' Views on Verbal and Non-verbal Communication of the International Registration Office Personnel at the Universities in North Cyprus: How Courteous is this communication?'.** In this survey, we seek your views on and experiences with the international registration office staff. Remember the time you visited the international registration office when registering and respond sincerely to the following items based on your experience there. Your responses will be anonymous and will never be linked to you personally. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw any time you want. It is expected that this survey will take about 6 minutes of your time.

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution.

Researcher
Sultan Zencirkıran, MA Student
Department of English Language Teaching
Near East University
E-mail: sultansaltn@yahoo.com

Thesis Supervisor
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt
Department of English Language Teaching
Near East University
E-mail: mustafa.kurt@neu.edu.tr

Part A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Please provide the following information by marking with (X) and filling in the blanks.

1. **Gender:** ( ) Male   ( ) Female

2. **Age (years):** ( ) 18-22   ( ) 23-27   ( ) 28-32   ( ) 33-37   ( ) 38+ years

3. **Educational level:** ( ) BA/BSc   ( ) MA/MSc   ( ) PhD

4. **Nationality:** _____

5. **Native language:** _____

6. Do people understand your accent in English?   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

7. Do you have to repeat yourself to make people understand you? ( ) Yes   ( ) No

PART B: VERBAL COMMUNICATION

	Please read each statement carefully and mark with (X) the option that best represents your opinion. Statements	Never	Rarely	Not sure	Sometimes	Always
8	The International Registration Office (IRO) staff use simple English while making explanation.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
9	The IRO employee pronounces words clearly to make sure that I understand them.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
10	The IRO employee explains sentences by paraphrasing to ensure my understanding.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
11	The IRO employee checks that I accurately understand them.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
12	The IRO employee answers all of my questions.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
13	The IRO employee allows me to finish my sentence.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
14	The IRO employee use courteous expressions such as "May I have your name? Can you repeat please? Would you come later?"etc.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
15	The IRO employee gives me orders such as "go and sit, come later, wait there, do as I said" etc.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
16	The IRO employee concludes their talk with expressions such as "see you, you are welcome, have a nice day, bye".	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
17	The IRO staff talk to me nicely.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

PART C: NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

	Please read each statement carefully and mark with (X) the option that best represents your opinion. Statements	Never	Rarely	Not sure	Sometimes	Always
18	The International Registration Office (IRO) employee greets me when I enter the office.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
19	The IRO staff smile when they greet me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
20	The IRO employee looks at me when I speak to them.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
21	The IRO employee shows sympathy when I tell them about a problem.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
22	The IRO employee cooperation solving my problem.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
23	The IRO staff are friendly in general.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
24	The IRO employee gives me my full time.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
25	The IRO employee shows no bias related to my nationality.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
26	The IRO employee shows no bias related to my colour.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
27	The IRO employee keeps calm if I lose my temper.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
28	The IRO employee loses his temper easily.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
29	The IRO employee makes faces when I do not understand him.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
30	The IRO employee looks stressed.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
31	The IRO employee looks overworked.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
32	The IRO employee respects the queuing number.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION!

APPENDIX B

Ethical Approval Form

YAKIN DOĞU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU

03.10.2018

Dear Sultan Zencirkıran

Your application titled **"International Students' Views on Verbal and Non-verbal Communication of the International Registration Office Personnel at the Universities in North Cyprus: How Courteous Is It?"** with the application number YDÜ/EB/2018/185has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

Note: If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

APPENDIX C

Turnitin Report

International students' views on the verbal and non-verbal communication

7% SIMILARITY INDEX

6% INTERNET SOURCES

3% PUBLICATIONS

3% STUDENT PAPERS