Pragmatic Transfer in Advanced Saudi EFL Learners' Refusals

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Abstract:

The present study investigated pragmatic transfer in the refusals of advanced Saudi learners of English as a foreign language (SEFL) in terms of the frequency and content of the semantic formulas, and whether their refusals correspond more to those of Saudi native speakers of Arabic (NSA) or native speakers of English (NSE). A total of 45 female subjects participated in the study and were divided into three groups: advanced SEFL as the target group ($n = 15$), NSA as a baseline data group ($n = 15$), and NSE as a baseline data group ($n = 15$). The study employed a mixed-method data collection approach consisting of a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and semi-structured interviews. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using the chi-square test and descriptive statistics. The results of the study revealed that pragmatic transfer was evident in the refusals of the SEFL group in both the frequency and content of semantic formulas. Moreover, the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal corresponded more to the NSA group than the NSE group. The analysis revealed that the SEFL group's use of the direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies, and adjuncts to refusals either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the strategies to refuse all of the four stimulus types: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies in a similar pattern; they used the direct strategies significantly less with interlocutors of a lower and higher social status, and significantly more with interlocutors of an equal social status. Furthermore, the content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group corresponded more to the content of the semantic formulas used by the NSA group in terms of the degree of specificity and the choice of the type of specific excuses. The SEFL group significantly approximated the NSA group's use of both specific and unspecific excuses; they used three categories of specific excuses in a similar frequency: family, health, and personal preferences or needs.

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Refusals

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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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PRAGMATIC TRANSFER IN THE SPEECH ACT OF REFUSAL

This paper is entitled:

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Written by

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The final copy of this paper has been examined by the signatories, and we found that both the content and the form meet the acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

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Abstract

The present study investigated pragmatic transfer in the refusals of advanced Saudi learners of English as a foreign language (SEFL) in terms of the frequency and content of the semantic formulas, and whether their refusals correspond more to those of Saudi native speakers of Arabic (NSA) or native speakers of English (NSE). A total of 45 female subjects participated in the study and were divided into three groups: advanced SEFL as the target group ($n = 15$), NSA as a baseline data group ($n = 15$), and NSE as a baseline data group ($n = 15$). The study employed a mixed-method data collection approach consisting of a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and semi-structured interviews. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using the chi-square test and descriptive statistics. The results of the study revealed that pragmatic transfer was evident in the refusals of the SEFL group in both the frequency and content of semantic formulas. Moreover, the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal corresponded more to the NSA group than the NSE group. The analysis revealed that the SEFL group's use of the direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies, and adjuncts to refusals either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the strategies to refuse all of the four stimulus types: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies in a similar pattern; they used the direct strategies significantly less with interlocutors of a lower and higher social status, and significantly more with interlocutors of an equal social status. Furthermore, the content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group corresponded more to the content of the semantic formulas used by the NSA group in terms of the degree of specificity and the choice of the type of specific excuses. The SEFL group significantly approximated the NSA group's use of both specific and unspecific excuses; they used three categories of specific excuses in a similar frequency: family, health, and personal preferences or needs.

ملخص الدراسة

تبحث هذه الدراسة في ظاهرة النقل البراغماتي عند الطالبات السعوديات اللاتي يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ذوات المستوى المتقدم وذلك من خلال دراسة أساليب الرفض التي يستخدمونها باللغة الإنجليزية من حيث تكرار ومحتوى الصيغ الدلالية للرفض، وما إذا كانت أساليب الرفض المستخدمة من قبل الطالبات السعوديات اللاتي يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تتوافق أكثر مع أساليب الرفض لدى المتحدثات باللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات أو المتحدثات باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أم. بلغ عدد المشتركات في الدراسة ٤٥ مشتركة تم تقسيمهن على ثلاث مجموعات مكونة من ١٥ مشتركة وهي: طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ذوات المستوى المتقدم وهي المجموعة المستهدفة من الدراسة، ومتحدثات اللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات وهي مجموعة البيانات الأساسية الأولى، ومتحدثات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أم وهي مجموعة البيانات الأساسية الثانية. تم استخدام منهج مختلط الأساليب لجمع البيانات مكون من أداتين هما: اختبار إكمال الخطاب المستخدم لاستنباط أساليب الرفض من المشتركين ومقابلات شبه منظمة. وقد تم تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها بطريقة كمية ونوعية عن طريق اختبار كاي التربيعي والإحصاءات الوصفية. كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن حدوث النقل البراغماتي في أساليب الرفض لدى الطالبات السعوديات اللاتي يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ذوات المستوى المتقدم من حيث تكرار ومحتوى الصيغ الدلالية للرفض، وأن أساليب الرفض المستخدمة من قبل الطالبات السعوديات اللاتي يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تتوافق مع أساليب الرفض لدى المتحدثات باللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات بشكل أكثر من المتحدثات باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أم. وكشف تحليل البيانات بأن استخدام طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لاستراتيجيات الرفض المباشرة، واستراتيجيات الرفض الغير مباشرة، وملحقات الرفض إما مائل أو قارب استخدام المتحدثات باللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات لهذه الأساليب لرفض محفزات الرفض الأربعة في هذه الدراسة وهي: الطلبات، والدعوات، والعروض، والاقتراحات. استخدمت كل من مجموعتي طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من السعوديات والمتحدثات باللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات استراتيجيات الرفض المباشرة بنمط متقارب، أي أقل بشكل كبير مع المخاطبين ذوي المكانة الاجتماعية الأدنى والأعلى، وبشكل أكبر مع المخاطبين ذوي المكانة الاجتماعية المساوية. كما أن محتوى الصيغ الدلالية المستخدمة من قبل طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية توافقت بشكل أكبر مع محتوى الصيغ الدلالية المستخدمة من قبل المتحدثات باللغة العربية كلغة أم من السعوديات من حيث درجة التحديد واختيار نوع الأعذار المحددة. فلقد استخدمت المجموعتين المشار إليهما أعلاه الأعذار المحددة وغير المحددة بشكل مقارب جداً، واستخدمت ثلاث فئات من الأعذار المحددة في تردد مماثل وهي: الأعذار المتعلقة بالعائلة، والأعذار المتعلقة بالصحة، والأعذار المتعلقة بالتفضيلات أو الاحتياجات الشخصية.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my mother, my father, my sisters, and my brother.

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List of Abbreviations

DCT	Discourse Completion Test
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IL	Interlanguage
ILP	Interlanguage Pragmatics
IMSIU	Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
KSU	King Saud University
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MA	Master of Arts
NSA	Native Speakers of Arabic
NSE	Native Speakers of English
SEFL	Saudi Learners of English as a Foreign Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PSU	Prince Sultan University

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Chomsky's (1965) conception of linguistic competence was prevalent in the field of linguistics during the 20th century. Chomsky (1965) assumed that the prime concern of a theory of linguistics is with an ideal speaker-listener who is proficient in his language and unaffected by non-grammatical conditions when applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance in a completely homogeneous speech community. This ideal conception defines the notion of linguistic competence in terms of grammaticality and well-formedness. However, the emergence of Hymes' (1972) notion of communicative competence shed light on aspects other than the mere grammaticality of the utterance; aspects such as the appropriateness and possibility of utterances interact to determine the acceptability of these utterances and reflect the linguistic competence of the speaker. Hymes (1972) criticized Chomsky's (1965) ideal concept of linguistic competence for omitting "almost everything of sociocultural significance" (p. 62). Hymes (1972) argued that an adequate definition of linguistic competence must integrate the theory of linguistics with the theory of communication and culture; hence, take into consideration contexts in which a speech community is not homogeneous consisting of speakers who have different linguistic backgrounds. Thus, he integrated sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects into Chomsky's (1965) conception of competence and defined communicative competence as the ability to use language in various communicative situations in a manner that is acceptable not only in terms of grammaticality but also in terms of social appropriateness.

Every language consists of a unique set of linguistic forms, structures, and functions that are conditioned in terms of use and interpretation by sociocultural and contextual conventions (Wolfson, 1989). Communicative competence is unconsciously developed by native speakers

through the involvement in communication which is a form of social interaction that includes “a high degree of unpredictability and creativity in form and message” (Canale, 1983, p. 3). According to Canale (1983), this communication takes place in sociocultural contexts that regulate appropriate language use. When people from different cultural backgrounds interact, they bring culturally inherited sets of values, preferred communication styles, expectations, and interpretations to monitor and evaluate their speech (Al-Issa, 2003). Since the use of a particular language is governed by the speaking norms of its culture, second and foreign language learners must be aware of such norms that determine the appropriateness of use of various linguistic forms in the target language.

An essential component of communicative competence is pragmatic competence which is generally understood as “the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context” (Thomas, 1983, p. 93). Pragmatic competence has received increasing interest in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research in the last decades which is reflected in the growing literature on non-native speakers’ production of speech acts and the impact of several contextual variables on the choices of realization strategies and the linguistic forms by which such strategies are implemented (Kasper, 1996). Speech acts can be thought of as utterances that perform actions such as requesting, apologizing, promising, and refusing; therefore, speech acts convey various functions of language. Speech acts are universal as all languages have linguistic means to perform them. Nevertheless, the choice of the linguistic forms and strategies to perform speech acts vary from one culture to another. Thus, pragmatic competence in the light of the framework of speech acts can be defined as “the speaker’s knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts” (Koike, 1989, p. 279). Much of the interdisciplinary research in interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) has been conducted within the framework of speech acts. ILP

is an interdisciplinarity that derives its theoretical and empirical foundation from the two disciplines SLA research and pragmatics in the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of speech acts in a second language (L2) (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

Refusals are one type of many speech acts which occur in all languages. Nevertheless, speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds do not refuse in the same way, and their sensitivity to the contextual variables that surround the speech event of refusing vary significantly. Difficulties in communication may emerge in cross-cultural communication when language learners who are non-native speakers of the target language interact with native speakers due to language learners' lack of knowledge of the sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms that govern the performance of refusals in the target language. Lacking pragmatic competence in the target language, language learners may transfer the pragmatic norms involved in the production of refusals from their native language (L1). Thomas (1983) suggested that pragmatic failure occurs among language learners when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from the native language to the target language. Hence, pragmatic transfer causes pragmatic failure which leads to communication breakdowns or the labeling of language learners by native speakers of the target language as rude or impolite.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Pragmatic competence has a significant role in cross-cultural communication, particularly when performing complex speech acts such as refusals. The mastery of the mere linguistic aspects of the target language does not necessarily guarantee appropriate language use. Pragmatic failure and miscommunication can occur even though language learners have a good mastery of the linguistic aspects of the target language such as grammar, vocabulary, and phonology. Pragmatic transfer is considered one of the major reasons for the occurrence of pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983). Findings of previous studies on pragmatic transfer in

refusals revealed that EFL learners of different cultural backgrounds and proficiency levels indeed transfer some pragmatic norms from their native language to the target language. Furthermore, globalization has increased cross-cultural communication between Saudis and native speakers of English in many areas including education, politics, economy, and culture. Pragmatic failure which might be found among Saudi EFL learners which results from the inappropriate transfer of the pragmatic norms of the native language to the target language may have much more serious consequences than grammatical errors. Making a grammatical mistake, for instance, would be attributed by native speakers of the target language to the learner's lack of language accuracy. On the other hand, the inappropriate performance of speech acts in the target language might be attributed to personality traits, and Saudi EFL learners may be perceived as impolite or rude by native speakers. Therefore, it is crucial to examine pragmatic transfer among Saudi EFL learners when they perform the speech act of refusal in English to provide insights about their interlanguage pragmatic abilities and to what extent pragmatic transfer is found in their refusals.

1.3 Research Questions

The present study aims at finding answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there an evidence of pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 in advanced Saudi EFL learners' realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas?
2. Does advanced Saudi EFL learners' realization of the speech act of refusal correspond more to Saudi native speakers of Arabic or native speakers of English?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses are derived:

1. There is an evidence of pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 in advanced Saudi EFL learners'

realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas.

2. Advanced Saudi EFL learners' realization of the speech act of refusal corresponds more to Saudi native speakers of Arabic.

1.5 Research Significance

Pragmatic transfer has been regarded as a significant reason for pragmatic failure among language learners which results in communication breakdowns in cross-cultural communication. Therefore, it is crucial that studies be undertaken to investigate the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in the realization of a complex speech act such as refusal by language learners. A considerable number of international and Arabic ILP studies have investigated pragmatic transfer in the production of speech acts. However, there is still a shortage of ILP studies in the Saudi context in general, and ILP studies investigating pragmatic transfer among Saudi EFL learners in specific. Studies that have explored the realization of refusals by Saudi speakers were concerned with the cross-cultural perspective comparing the refusals of Saudis in Arabic (e.g., Al-Shalawi, 1997) or in English (e.g., Al-owaji, 2014; Alqahtani, 2015) to the refusals of native speakers of English to find differences and similarities without regard to pragmatic transfer. According to the researcher's current knowledge, there has not been a study that investigated pragmatic transfer in the refusals of Saudi EFL learners in the ILP literature.

Moreover, this study has the potential to benefit EFL teachers and curriculum designers in Saudi Arabia. Wolfson (1989) emphasized that language teachers must become aware of the differences in communicative conventions between one culture and another since teaching a second language involves a degree of cross-cultural communication. It is hoped that the findings of this study can help language teachers and curriculum designers to identify the problematic areas in the pragmatic behavior of Saudi EFL learners. Kasper (1996) asserted

that pragmatic competence could be developed in the classroom through a combination of pertinent input, pragmatic awareness raising, and communicative practice. Hence, EFL teachers can use the findings of this study to identify the pragmatic deviations that may occur in Saudi EFL learners' refusals and engage the learners in communicative activities to raise their pragmatic awareness regarding the performance of refusals in English. Curriculum and textbook designers can also use the findings of this study to develop better materials to deal with the situations wherein Saudi EFL learners fail pragmatically and expose the learners to the pragmatic norms of the target culture.

1.6 Research Limitations

As with most empirical studies, the present study also has some limitations. The first limitation is related to the data collection instrument which is a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). Using a DCT to collect production data provides elicited rather than naturalistic data; elicited speech act production data might not accurately reflect natural speech which occurs in real-life situations (Golato, 2003; Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). Another limitation is that with a relatively small sample size that consists of only female participants, it is difficult to generalize the findings to all advanced Saudi EFL learners of both genders. Finally, some social variables such as social distance, gender of the interlocutor, and age of the interlocutor are not investigated in the current study. Examining the influence of such variables on the choices of realization strategies is vital to provide an in-depth analysis and profound insights about the pragmatic behavior regarding the speech act under study. However, it is difficult to run statistical tests and precisely identify the effect of each variable if many contextual variables influencing the participants' responses are involved (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the related theoretical and empirical literature. In this chapter, three fundamental concepts are discussed: ILP, pragmatic transfer, and the speech act of refusal. The chapter introduces the field of ILP and explains its interdisciplinary background. Next, pragmatic transfer is defined, and the two major distinctions of pragmatic transfer are explicated. The chapter then presents the theoretical framework of the speech act theory and discusses the speech act of refusal. Moreover, a review of the relevant previous international, Arabic, and Saudi studies is provided. Finally, the chapter gives a conclusion that summarizes the general remarks obtained from the literature review.

2.1 Theoretical Background

2.1.1 Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP)

The study of the performance of speech acts in L2 has been an area of interest in ILP in the last three decades. ILP is an interdisciplinary field of study that belongs to two disciplines: SLA research and pragmatics. ILP is a subfield of pragmatics which studies language use and focuses on the choices speakers make when using language in a social interaction, the reasons for those choices, and the effects of those choices on other participants in the act of communication. (Crystal, 1985). As a branch of SLA research, ILP is concerned with the study of the interlanguage (IL) features of language learners when they acquire, comprehend and produce pragmatic knowledge of the target language (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). IL refers to the temporary linguistic system a person develops while learning a second language which is an intermediate system that includes features of both L2, the learner's L1, and some features that belong to neither languages (Sayer, 2008). Therefore, ILP can be defined as "the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge" (Kasper, 1996, p. 145).

2.1.2 Pragmatic Transfer

Pragmatic transfer is an important research domain in ILP due to its potential risk to communication success (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). According to Wolfson (1989), pragmatic transfer refers to “the use of rules of speaking from one’s own native speech community when interacting with members of the host speech community or simply when speaking or writing in a second language” (p. 141). Kasper (1992) defined pragmatic transfer as “the influence exerted by learners’ pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production, and learning of L2 pragmatic information” (p. 207). The influence of language learners’ L1 and culture on their IL pragmatic knowledge and production has been heavily reported in ILP research (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

Two major distinctions relevant to the discussion of pragmatic transfer are found in the literature: the distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer, and the distinction between positive and negative pragmatic transfer (Barron, 2003). Thomas (1983) distinguished two types of pragmatic failure namely pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure from which two types of pragmatic transfer are derived: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer. Pragmalinguistic transfer refers to the process whereby the illocutionary force (i.e., the purpose of the utterance or the speaker’s intention) or politeness value assigned to certain linguistic material in L1 influences language learners’ perception and production of form-function mapping in L2 (Kasper, 1992). Thus, pragmalinguistic transfer occurs when particular forms and strategies are transferred by language learners from their L1 into L2 influencing the degree of politeness or illocutionary force of an utterance. On the other hand, sociopragmatic transfer refers to the influence of the social perceptions underlying language users’ interpretation and performance of linguistic action in L1 on their assessment of L2 contexts since assessments of interlocutors’ social distance and social power, rights and obligations, and degree of imposition involved in different linguistic acts

vary cross-culturally (Kasper, 1992). Therefore, the concept of sociopragmatic transfer refers to language learners' reference to their L1 perceptions of social relationships and social norms in their culture when performing speech acts in L2 as they rely on their L1 assessment of how much politeness to invest in the performance of a particular speech act (Barron, 2003). However, Kasper (1992) noted that the concepts of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic transfer are interrelated and it is often difficult to distinguish them in practice.

The distinction between positive and negative pragmatic transfer is found in the ILP literature. Generally, the transfer of pragmatic knowledge and pragmatic norms which are shared by both L1 and L2 is referred to as positive transfer while the transfer of pragmatic knowledge and pragmatic norms which are inconsistent across L1 and L2 refers to negative transfer (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). According to Maeshiba et al. (1996), positive pragmatic transfer refers to "the projection of first language-based sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge where such projections result in perceptions and behaviours consistent with those of second language users" (p. 155). Negative pragmatic transfer, on the other hand, has been defined by Maeshiba et al. (1996) as "the projection of first language-based sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge onto second language contexts where such projections result in perceptions and behaviours different from those of second language users" (p. 155).

2.1.3 The Speech Act of Refusal

The speech act theory is one of the fundamental theories in the field of pragmatics. The speech act theory was originated by Austin (1962) who argued that "to say something is to do something" in the appropriate circumstances (p. 12). Austin's (1962) initial insight into the speech act theory relates to the distinction between performatives and constatives. Unlike constatives, performatives are sentences or utterances that do not describe or report some state of affairs or state some facts which might be true or false (Austin, 1962). According to

Austin (1962), the uttering of a performative is a part of the actual performance of an action. When a speaker utters “I do take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife” in a marriage ceremony, the speaker is not reporting on the marriage but indulging in it (Austin, 1962). Accordingly, utterances which are used to perform actions as in promising, requesting, warning, complaining, and refusing are called speech acts (Austin, 1962). Three acts are identified as parts of a single speech act: the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act. The locutionary act refers merely to the act of saying something, the illocutionary act refers to the purpose of the utterance or the intention of the speaker, and the perlocutionary act refers to the consequential effects of the utterance (Austin, 1962).

Searle (1976) further developed Austin’s (1962) work and constructed a clear taxonomy of illocutionary acts making a significant contribution to the speech act theory. Built upon Austin’s (1962) original taxonomy, Searle (1976) provided five categories of the illocutionary act: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. The speech act under investigation in this study is the speech act of refusal which falls under the category of commissives. Commissives are those illocutionary acts whose point or function is to commit the speaker to some future course of action (Searle, 1976). Refusals occur when the speaker responds negatively to other speech acts such as requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions either directly or indirectly (Al-Kahtani, 2005; Al-Eryani, 2007). The performance of refusals is influenced by some sociolinguistic variables such as the social status of the interlocutor (Beebe et al., 1990).

Performing refusals can be a risky task that requires a high level of pragmatic competence to avoid any potential offense to the hearer. Refusals involve telling the hearer something he does not want to hear, thus requires the speaker to build support and avoid embarrassment (Beebe et al., 1990). Language learners are at great risk of offending their interlocutors when performing the speech act of refusal due to the existing linguistic and cultural barriers which

are further complicated by the face-threatening nature of refusals (Kwon, 2003). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), refusals are considered face-threatening acts that their bold nature risks the preservation of the face of the addressee. The face of a person is the public self-image that every person wants to claim for himself and be respected by others as this face can be lost, maintained, or enhanced during social interaction (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Therefore, a speaker must pay attention to aspects of politeness when performing refusals in order to avoid any potential harm to the face of the hearer. Speakers utilize various strategies when performing face-threatening acts such as refusals which vary in the degree of directness. Searle (1975) pointed out that speech acts can be carried out indirectly when the speaker performs an illocutionary act by means of another illocutionary act. Indirectness is considered one of the major politeness strategies to mitigate the threat to face when performing speech acts (Searle, 1975). For instance, an apology could be used to perform the speech act of refusal. The choice of the mitigation strategy, degree of directness, and reasons for refusing vary across cultures. Language learners might transfer L1 pragmatic strategies when performing refusals in a L2 which might be considered inappropriate use that leads to communication breakdown. Thus, language learners must have an adequate level of pragmatic competence in the target language to perform refusals in a manner that corresponds to that of native speakers.

2.2 Previous Studies on Pragmatic Transfer in Refusals

Several studies have investigated pragmatic transfer in the refusals of EFL or ESL learners who are native speakers of different languages (e.g., Japanese, Korean, Thai, and Chinese) and different Arabic dialects (e.g., Jordanian Arabic, Yemeni Arabic, and Iraqi Arabic). Such studies are the most relevant to the present study for three major reasons. First, some of these studies are pioneer studies considered as the cornerstone for the majority of the following studies, including this study, which adapted similar research design and methodology.

Second, all of these studies have found evidence of pragmatic transfer in several areas related to the areas of investigation in the current study (i.e., frequency and content of refusal semantic formulas). Third, the majority of these studies have a similar research design, data collection instruments, and data analysis methods.

A number of studies have investigated the realization of the speech act of refusal in English by Saudi EFL or ESL learners. Such studies focused only on exploring the realization of refusals from a cross-cultural perspective by comparing Saudi EFL or ESL learners' refusals to those of native speakers of English without regard to pragmatic transfer. Nevertheless, the findings of such studies are useful for this study since the target group in this study also consists of Saudi EFL learners.

2.2.1 International Interlanguage Studies on Pragmatic Transfer in Refusals

One of the pioneer ILP studies on pragmatic transfer was conducted by Beebe et al. (1990). Beebe et al.'s (1990) study contributed significantly to the literature on pragmatic transfer in refusals by developing a DCT for data collection, a comprehensive taxonomy of direct and indirect refusal strategies, and a detailed coding scheme for the data analysis. The study investigated pragmatic transfer in Japanese ESL learners' refusals quantitatively and qualitatively. Sixty subjects were divided into three groups: 20 native speakers of Japanese, 20 Japanese ESL learners, and 20 American native speakers of English. The study employed a DCT to collect data. Evidence of pragmatic transfer in Japanese ESL learners' refusals was found in the frequency and content of the semantic formulas. The results of the descriptive statistics revealed that pragmatic transfer was found in the frequency of the semantic formulas of refusals to all four types of stimulus: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Moreover, Japanese ESL learners and native speakers of Japanese used particular refusal strategies with interlocutors of each social status similarly indicating that their awareness of social status was transferred from the Japanese culture. Furthermore,

pragmatic transfer was found in the content of the semantic formulas. Native speakers of Japanese and Japanese ESL learners' excuses were vague and less specific in contrast to the specific excuses of native speakers of English.

Language proficiency is an important factor that influences the occurrence of pragmatic transfer. Kwon (2003) examined the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in the refusals of Korean EFL learners of three proficiency levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced using a DCT to elicit refusals. The results showed that pragmatic transfer occurred in the refusals of EFL learners at all proficiency levels, but significantly more among advanced learners. Native speakers of Korean used indirect refusal formulas more frequently than did native speakers of English. Although all Korean EFL groups used direct refusal formulas less frequently than did native speakers of English, only advanced learners used direct formulas with similar frequency to the native speakers of Korean group showing the highest degree of pragmatic transfer among all three Korean EFL groups. According to Kwon (2003), advanced EFL learners have sufficient linguistic means that enable them to transfer the figurative and philosophical tone from their native language.

Wannaruk (2008) reported several incidences of pragmatic transfer by Thai EFL learners when performing refusals in English. Refusals were elicited by a DCT from three groups of Thai EFL learners: lower-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. When compared to the refusals of the native speakers of Thai and the native speakers of English, Thai EFL learners' refusals indicated pragmatic transfer in the frequency and content of the semantic formulas. The EFL groups used the indirect strategy *future acceptance* and the direct strategy *negative willingness/ability* in a similar frequency to the use of native speakers of Thai in most of the DCT situations. In addition, the content of the *excuse/reason/explanation* strategy used by the EFL groups and the native speakers of Thai group was significantly similar. All Thai groups used modest excuses downgrading their

abilities to fulfill or accept the requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions whereas native speakers of English used clear and honest excuses. Unlike the implications from Kwon (2003), the results showed that pragmatic transfer was more apparent in lower English proficiency groups as subjects translated the responses they would usually give in their L1.

More recently, Jiang (2015) studied pragmatic transfer in refusals made by Chinese high school EFL learners. The analysis of the DCT data showed evidence of pragmatic transfer in terms of frequency and content of semantic formulas. Similar to Kwon (2003), the use of the indirect refusal strategies was apparently more frequent within native speakers of Chinese and Chinese EFL learners while native speakers of English used direct refusal strategies more frequently. Moreover, both native speakers of Chinese and Chinese EFL learners tended to give excuses when refusing while native speakers of English used much fewer excuses. In contrary to Beebe et al.'s (1990) results, pragmatic transfer was very distinctive in the content of the *excuse/reason/explanation* refusal strategy; both native speakers of Chinese and Chinese EFL learners used more specific excuses than native speakers of English. Another study on Chinese EFL learners' refusals was carried out by Piao (2016) by adapting Beebe et al.'s (1990) DCT into oral role plays to elicit data. Although refusals were elicited by different methods, the results were consistent with Jiang (2015). The main findings indicated that both native speakers of Chinese and Chinese EFL learners preferred using indirect strategies more frequently than native speakers of English. Pragmatic transfer was clear when addressing interlocutors of a higher social status as the native speakers of Chinese and the Chinese EFL learners used the indirect refusal strategies *regret* and *apology* more frequently than did the native speakers of English. Moreover, the content of the Chinese EFL learners' refusals was influenced by their L1 showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. The content of the *excuse/reason/explanation* strategy used by the native speakers of Chinese and the

Chinese EFL learners was significantly similar by being more specific, family-oriented, and objective than the responses of native speakers of English.

2.2.2 Arabic Interlanguage Studies on Pragmatic Transfer in Refusals

Although the realization of the speech act of refusal by Arab speakers has been studied considerably, the relevant literature is not as rich as other cultures. One of the major relevant Arabic studies was conducted by Al-Issa (1998) who examined pragmatic transfer in advanced Jordanian EFL learners' refusals and the main factors that motivated pragmatic transfer. The analysis of the DCT and interviews data showed that pragmatic transfer was evident in the frequency and content of the semantic formulas. In terms of the frequency of the semantic formulas, Jordanian EFL learners and Jordanian native speakers of Arabic used certain refusal strategies in similar frequency more than did the native speakers of English (e.g., *regret* strategy to refuse requests, *gratitude* strategy to refuse invitations, *off the hook* strategy to refuse offers, and *positive opinion/feeling* strategy to refuse suggestions). Al-Issa (1998) noted that when using the *regret* strategy, advanced Jordanian EFL learners were able to literally translate common phrases from their L1 such as "forgive me" and "excuse me" to express regret. Such findings were in line with Kwon's (2003) assumption that advanced EFL learners have adequate linguistic means to transfer pragmatic norms from their L1 to L2. The findings on the content of the semantic formulas were consistent with Beebe et al.'s (1990); the content of the two Jordanian groups' refusals was vague and less specific deviating from the clear and specific refusals of native speakers of English. Furthermore, Jordanian EFL learners transferred the religious expression "God willing" which is a translation of the Arabic "Inshaallah".

Al-Kahtani (2005) studied the realization of refusals in English by three groups: American native speakers of English, Arab ESL learners, and Japanese ESL learners. Data were collected by using a DCT. Al-Kahtani (2005) reported that the three groups varied

significantly in the realization of refusals except when refusing requests; the three groups used similar refusal strategies (e.g., *excuse/reason/explanation*, *regret*, and *negative willingness/ability*) to refuse requests from interlocutors of lower, equal, and higher social status. Similar to the findings of Beebe et al. (1990), the content of the excuses of the Japanese and Arabs were unclear and less specific when compared with the excuses of native speakers of English. Al-Kahtani (2005) assumed that the differences in the realization of the speech act of refusal among native speakers of English and non-native speakers could be attributed to the influence of non-native speakers' L1.

Al-Eryani (2007) investigated whether the realization of refusals by Yemeni EFL learners corresponds more with those of Yemeni native speakers of Arabic or native speakers of English. Refusals of the Yemeni EFL learners were elicited by a DCT consisting of six situations and then compared with the refusals of the baseline data groups. The results revealed that the three groups performed refusals similarly in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas and Yemeni EFL learners gave more inclinations to L2 pragmatic competence than pragmatic transfer. Al-Eryani (2007) suggested that pragmatic transfer was limited due to the Yemeni EFL learners' high proficiency in English which contrasted implications from other studies (e.g., Al-Issa, 1998; Kwon, 2003).

Abed (2011) studied pragmatic transfer in Iraqi EFL university students' refusals. Data were collected by means of a DCT. Although the findings indicated that refusals of Iraqi EFL learners were generally different from those of Iraqi native speakers of Arabic and native speakers of English, many instances of pragmatic transfer were found. Pragmatic transfer was significantly apparent in the use of refusal adjuncts (i.e., *gratitude/appreciation*) to start a refusal as this tendency was found in the refusals of Iraqi EFL learners and Iraqi native speakers of Arabic in a very similar frequency. Pragmatic transfer was also evident in the subjects' sensitivity to the social status of the interlocutor. Both Iraqi EFL learners and Iraqi

native speakers of Arabic used the direct strategies considerably less with interlocutors of a lower social status.

2.2.3 Saudi Cross-cultural and Interlanguage Studies on Refusals

Most studies that have explored the realization of refusals of Saudi speakers were concerned with the cross-cultural perspective (e.g., Al-Shalawi, 1997; Al-owaji, 2014; Alqahtani, 2015). These studies focused on comparing the refusals of Saudis in Arabic or in English to the refusals of native speakers of English to find differences and similarities without regard to pragmatic transfer. Al-Shalawi (1997) compared the refusals of Saudis in Arabic and Americans in English. The researcher developed a DCT consisting of 14 situations to elicit refusals from 50 Saudis and 50 Americans. The study provided two major findings. First, Saudis and Americans used similar refusal formulas to refuse requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. There were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of the frequency of semantic formulas except in the use of the direct “No” as it was notably avoided by Saudis more than Americans. The most frequently used refusal strategies by both Saudis and Americans were *explanation/excuse/reason*, *regret*, and *gratitude/appreciation*. Second, the content of the semantic formulas varied significantly between Saudis and Americans indicating cultural influence. Americans gave specific and detailed explanations and excuses while Saudis were considerably less specific which supported the results of Beebe et al. (1990) and Al-Issa (1998). Saudis used uncontrollable excuses related to family and health while Americans used personal excuses that express the participants’ own inclinations. Similar to Al-Issa (1998), religious expressions were heavily found in Saudis’ refusals while Americans’ refusals did not contain any religious expressions.

Al-owaji (2014) compared the refusals of advanced Saudi EFL learners and British native speakers of English. Data were collected by using a DCT and then analyzed quantitatively. The findings of the study showed that there were more similarities than

differences between Saudi EFL learners and British native speakers of English when performing refusals in English which was consistent with the findings of Al-Shalawi (1997). Nonetheless, the two groups varied in the degree of directness. Although both groups used indirect strategies more than the direct ones, British subjects were significantly more direct than Saudi EFL learners. The design of the study did not allow to attribute such differences to pragmatic transfer due to the absence of a baseline data group of Saudi speakers of Arabic.

Alqahtani (2015) conducted a cross-cultural comparison of the realization of refusals between American native speakers of English and Saudi ESL learners. Data were collected by role plays consisting of four scenarios: two request scenarios and two invitation scenarios. Significant differences between Saudi ESL learners and native speakers of English were only found in the first scenario which is a request for money and the fourth scenario which is an invitation to watch a scary movie. Compared with native speakers of English who preferred to use the direct “*No*” to refuse the request for money in the first scenario, the majority of Saudi ESL learners did not refuse the request and subjects who refused preferred indirect strategies such as *regret* and *explanation/excuse/reason*. Moreover, native speakers of English were significantly more direct than Saudi ESL learners when refusing the invitation to a scary movie in the fourth scenario. The researcher suggested that such differences could be attributed to the influence of Saudi ESL learners’ L1. Similar to Al-owaji (2014), pragmatic transfer could not be proven due to the design of the study that did not include a baseline data group of Saudi speakers of Arabic. Furthermore, Saudis’ refusals did not contain any religious expressions contrasting the findings of Al-Shalawi (1997) and Al-Issa (1998).

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the main related theoretical aspects namely ILP, pragmatic

transfer, and the speech act of refusal. Thereafter, the chapter reviewed previous studies on pragmatic transfer in refusals. The majority of the reviewed studies used similar methods to collect and analyze data. However, findings regarding the degree and locus of pragmatic transfer in the realization of refusals were inconsistent across cultures and L2 proficiencies. Findings of some studies showed that pragmatic transfer occurred significantly in advanced EFL learners' refusals (e.g., Al-Issa, 1998; Kwon, 2003) while findings of other studies showed that pragmatic transfer was limited in advanced EFL learners' refusals (e.g., Al-Eryani, 2007; Wannaruk, 2008). After the review of the relevant studies that had similar research objectives and used a DCT as the data collection instrument, the researcher decided that the use of the DCT to collect data is the most appropriate and effective method to achieve the objectives of this study. Furthermore, the review of the related Saudi studies indicated that there is a lack of ILP studies investigating pragmatic transfer in the realization of speech acts by Saudi EFL learners. Previous Saudi cross-cultural and interlanguage studies on refusals did not have a research design that allows to detect pragmatic transfer (e.g., Al-owaji, 2014; Alqahtani, 2015). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no previous study that has investigated pragmatic transfer in advanced Saudi EFL learners' refusals. The current study aims at filling this gap in the literature by using a research design that consists of three groups (i.e., advanced Saudi EFL learners, Saudi native speakers of Arabic, and native speakers of English) which allows to identify instances of pragmatic transfer.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. The first section discusses the overall research design employed in this study. The second section introduces the participants of the study. After that, a detailed description of the data collection instruments involving the rationale, development, piloting, and administration of each instrument is given. Finally, the data analysis process is discussed.

3.1 Research Design

The present study aimed at investigating the occurrence of pragmatic transfer among advanced Saudi EFL learners when performing the speech act of refusal in English and whether their realization of this speech act corresponds more to Saudi native speakers of Arabic or native speakers of English. A mixed-method data collection approach, consisting of a DCT and semi-structured interviews, was employed to answer the research questions quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The use of a mixed-method research design has been significantly promoted by ILP researchers (e.g., Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Cohen, 1996b; Félix-Brasdefer, 2010) in the study of speech acts. Kasper and Dahl (1991) suggested that one method can be used to collect the primary data and another method of a subsidiary function can be used to collect data that help with the interpretation of the primary data. Following these recommendations, this study employed a DCT to elicit the primary data from participants divided into three groups and semi-structured interviews were used to help with the interpretation of the primary data. Pragmatic transfer was examined in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas used by each group with respect to the effect of the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal and lower social status).

3.2 Participants

According to Kasper and Dahl (1991), the scientific investigation of pragmatic transfer

requires the collection of three sets of data from three groups of participants: (a) production data of the target language performed by L2 learners, (b) baseline production data of L1 performed by L1 native speakers, and (c) baseline production data of the target language performed by L2 native speakers. Kasper and Dahl (1991) argued that this canonical design which includes comparable sets of IL, L1, and L2 data is more informative and thus preferable for ILP research. Therefore, the data for this study were collected from 45 participants divided into three groups: (a) 15 advanced Saudi EFL learners (SEFL), (b) 15 Saudi native speakers of Arabic (NSA), and (c) 15 native speakers of English (NSE).

The SEFL group included Saudi female students enrolled in the M.A programs (i.e., linguistics and translation) at the College of Languages and Translation at King Saud University (KSU) in Riyadh; their ages ranged between 22 and 28. In order to determine the participants' English proficiency, the researcher relied on their scores in IELTS obtained from the demographic information and language background section in the DCT. Participants whose IELTS scores were 6.5 and over were selected. None of the participants in this group had ever lived or studied in English-speaking countries; thus, any influence other than their native language (i.e., Arabic) was excluded. Only eight students from the SEFL group voluntarily participated in the interviews.

The NSA group consisted of Saudi female students enrolled in the Department of Sharia (i.e., Islamic Law) at Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU) in Riyadh. Participants of this group are native speakers of Arabic who have very limited knowledge of English; their ages ranged between 19 and 25.

The NSE group consisted of American ($n = 11$) and British ($n = 4$) female native speakers of English who do not speak Arabic. The participants in this group were faculty members at Prince Sultan University (PSU) in Riyadh; their ages ranged between 29 and 51.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1 Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

A DCT was used in this study to elicit refusal production data from the three groups of participants. DCTs represent the most frequently used data collection instrument in ILP research (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). A DCT is a form of a written questionnaire that involves a number of situational descriptions followed by a short dialogue with an empty slot in which the participants are expected to fill a response that they think fits into the context (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). The context described in the DCT situations is designed in a way that allows for the particular pragmatic aspect in focus to be elicited (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011). Thereby, participants read the situations and respond in writing by performing the required speech act.

3.3.1.1 Rationale for Using the DCT to Elicit Speech Act Production Data

Methods of data collection have been an area of much debate in ILP research as each method has its strengths and weaknesses in the study of speech act production (Cohen, 1996a; Kasper 2000). Kasper and Dahl (1991) classified the methods used to collect speech act production data in ILP research into observational procedures that provide naturalistic data and elicitation procedures that provide elicited data. In observational procedures, the researcher observes or audiotapes authentic interactions from which naturalistic data is obtained (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). According to Wolfson (1989), speech acts are best studied within the naturalistic settings in which they occur. However, the researcher ruled out the option of using naturalistic data due to their considerable limitations. One of the major limitations of naturalistic data is the difficulty of controlling the sociolinguistic variables involved in the speech event such as gender, age, language proficiency, social status, and social distance in comparable situations (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). In addition, the speech act under study may not occur naturally very often and cannot be captured with relatively high

frequencies (Cohen, 1996a; Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). It would be difficult to generalize and obtain validity when analyzing naturalistic data observed in inconsistent situations taking place in real-life settings in which the social and situational variables are not controlled. Therefore, a more controlled elicitation method would be more efficient in the replicability of situations and comparability of analysis. Based on previous studies, DCTs and role plays represent two instruments that are commonly employed in ILP research to elicit speech act production data (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). Role plays are simulations of communicative encounters in which two participants assume specified roles under predefined social and situational conditions that require the performance of a speech act (Kasper, 2000; Félix-Brasdefer, 2010). What motivates the use of role plays to collect speech act production data is that they provide rich spoken data which may reflect the natural performance of the speech act under study by representing oral production, full operation of the turn-taking mechanism, and negotiation process (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Nevertheless, the researcher excluded the use of the role play method in favor of the DCT for a number of reasons. First, the use of role plays as a data collection method is significantly time-consuming and difficult in the administration and data analysis processes. It might not be possible for the researcher to arrange the appropriate conditions for a large number of pairs to perform the role plays and the transcription of the data may be very time-consuming. (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011). On the contrary, DCTs are easier to administer allowing researchers to collect a large corpus of data in a relatively short period of time without the need for transcription (Beebe & Cummings, 1996). Second, the choice of the DCT over the role play method was based on its suitability to answer the research questions. The use of the DCT would be appropriate since the focus of this study is to investigate the occurrence of pragmatic transfer among advanced Saudi EFL learners when they perform refusals. Kasper (2000) asserted that a carefully

designed DCT is an effective research instrument when the focus of the study is to “inform about speakers’ pragmalinguistic knowledge of the strategies and linguistic forms by which communicative acts can be implemented” (p. 84). Moreover, this study does not rely on the analysis of paralinguistic and nonverbal features that DCTs cannot provide to answer the research questions. Kasper (2000) pointed out that when the research focus is on the conversational interaction, the sequencing of communicative action, and the turn-taking mechanism, an interactive procedure like a role play should be employed. Third, Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) noted that the use of DCTs to elicit production data helps to reduce nervousness and anxiety that might constrain non-native speakers when they are tested orally. After evaluating the major existing data collection methods in ILP research, it was concluded that the use of a DCT would be the most effective method to achieve the objectives of this study.

3.3.1.2 Development of the DCT

The study employed a modified version of the DCT developed by Beebe et al. (1990) which has been widely used for collecting refusal production data in ILP studies. The DCT elicited refusals to 12 written situations categorized into four stimulus types: three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions initiated by interlocutors of higher, equal, and lower social status.

Unlike the DCT design used in Beebe et al.’s (1990) study, the hearer’s rejoinder (i.e., the interlocutor’s reply to the refusal) was not included in the DCT used in this study. The hearer’s rejoinder included in Beebe et al.’s (1990) DCT is designed to signal that only a refusal would fit in the empty slot by providing some clues. Notwithstanding, Rintell and Mitchell (1989) noted that the hearer’s rejoinder might influence and limit the participants’ responses. According to Al-Issa (1998), participants might provide responses which correspond with the hearer’s rejoinder instead of what they would actually say in such

situations. Therefore, the hearer's rejoinder was omitted from the DCT used in this study; instead, some instructions were provided in the DCT to ensure that participants understand the task.

Moreover, Beebe et al. (1990) recommended that the number of variables included in the original DCT design must be decreased as too many variables (i.e., social status and social distance) influencing the participants' responses were involved in each situation. Thus, the design of the DCT situations in the present study included the social status of the interlocutor as the only variable influencing the refusal responses. However, social distance was controlled in the present DCT design; the context of each situation specified the relationship between the interlocutors as being familiar with each other (e.g., classmates and co-workers) (see Appendix A). Hence, the DCT design eliminated close relationships between the interlocutors (i.e., friends or family members) and distant relationships between the interlocutors (i.e., strangers). Furthermore, the gender of the interlocutor was controlled; the participants respond to female interlocutors since the study involved female participants only.

Some modifications were made to the original DCT to ensure that all situations sound natural, appropriate, and familiar to the participants of all three groups and that the situations are comparable across different cultures. For one thing, some of the situations in the original DCT required the participants to assume roles (e.g., owner of a bookstore, president of a printing company, and executive at an accounting firm) which may sound unfamiliar or highly imaginative. In addition, the context of some situations might be inappropriate to the Saudi culture such as inviting someone to a mixed-gender party. The context of such situations was replaced by more familiar and appropriate ones preserving the same social status of the interlocutors. Moreover, the names of the cities were replaced with names of cities in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the researcher tried to make sure that the participants had come across situations similar to those in the DCT; thus, the original situation (i.e., a

suggestion to try a new diet) was replaced by another situation (i.e., a suggestion to try colorful clothes) which was adapted from Piao (2016).

Since the study involved collecting data from Saudi native speakers of Arabic as a baseline data group, the modified English version of the DCT was translated into Arabic by the researcher who is a native speaker of Arabic. The consent form, demographic information and language background section, the DCT instructions, and the descriptions of the situations were translated into Standard Arabic. The initiating utterances, on the other hand, were translated into Saudi colloquial Arabic to make the utterances sound as natural as possible to the participants and to motivate them to provide natural responses that they would give in reality.

The first version of the DCT was developed after a thorough discussion about the design and content of the situations with the supervisor. Five faculty members who are PhD holders with expertise in pragmatics, SLA, sociolinguistics, and translation were requested to validate the DCT to ensure the overall appropriateness of the situations and the translation. The appropriateness of the context and number of the situations were confirmed by the validators. Three validators supported the translation of the initiating utterances into Saudi colloquial Arabic. Following the recommendations of the validators, slight modifications were made to the first version of the DCT including the wording of the instructions section, the wording of some situations in the Arabic version of the DCT, and the overall organization of the DCT.

3.3.1.3 Piloting the DCT

The English and Arabic versions of the DCT were piloted in order to ensure the clarity and familiarity of the situations to the participants and that both the wording and translation of the situations were comprehensible. Twenty-five participants took part in the pilot study: 10 Saudi students who are speakers of Arabic from IMSIU, five faculty members who are native speakers of English from PSU, and 10 advanced Saudi EFL learners from KSU. The

participants were encouraged to give their comments about the DCT. The participants pointed out that the situations were natural and familiar to them and that the wording of the situations was clear. However, it was observed that some participants did not refuse in some situations in both versions. Therefore, phrases such as “but you don’t want to go” and “but you decline her offer” were added to avoid any response other than a refusal (see Appendix B).

3.3.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were employed as a subsidiary data collection method to provide more details on the participants’ pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge involved in their production of the speech act of refusal in the DCT. A semi-structured interview is a flexible type of research interviews which involves asking the interviewees a number of predetermined questions related to the research topic and the interviewer is permitted to probe and expand beyond the predetermined questions allowing for an in-depth investigation to be achieved (Berg, 2001). In ILP research, interviews are useful to provide feedback from the participants regarding aspects of their pragmatic behavior which helps in the interpretation of the primary production data (Cohen, 1996b; Kasper, 2000).

The interview consisted of 15 questions classified into two parts: the first part aimed at elaborating on each situation in the DCT in detail, and the second part looked into the influence of the participants’ L1 and the norms of their culture on their refusals in English and the participants’ suggestions on how to improve their pragmatic competence.

The interview questions were validated by three PhD holders. Following the recommendations of the validators, the interview questions were modified in terms of the overall structure, wording, and order of the questions (see Appendix D).

The interview was piloted to ensure the clarity of the wording and familiarity of the concepts used in the questions. The researcher interviewed five Saudi female students enrolled in the M.A program in linguistics at IMSIU. Then, the participants were given a hard

copy of the interview questions which included a questionnaire about the clarity and familiarity of the questions (see Appendix E). The participants confirmed that the wording of the questions was clear, and the used concepts were familiar.

3.4 Administration of the DCT and Interviews

The final version of the DCT was administered to the participants after obtaining a formal written permission from the Administration of Graduate Studies and Research to collect the data at the Department of Sharia at IMSIU, the College of Languages and Translation at KSU, and the College of Humanities at PSU. A coordinator from each university was informed about the data collection process and the required amount of time.

Before administering the DCT, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and guaranteed participant confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The students who agreed to participate were asked to sign the consent form and provide their demographic information and language background. Then, the participants were asked to read the DCT instructions and were encouraged to ask any questions regarding the DCT. After that, the researcher asked the participants to place themselves in the given situations and respond in the same way they would in real-life conversation. Completing the DCT took about 20 minutes. For the NSA group, the researcher randomly administered hard copies to students at the Department of Sharia at IMSIU. For the NSE group, the researcher visited the College of Humanities at PSU and administered hard copies of the DCT to faculty members who are native speakers of English. For the SEFL group, the administration of the DCT took place at KSU at the College of Languages and Translation. The researcher visited two M.A classes and administered hard copies of the DCT to the students. After completing the DCT, eight participants from the SEFL group were randomly selected and interviewed after receiving their permission to be interviewed and have their interviews recorded. Each interview lasted approximately for 10 to 15 minutes. The data of both instruments were

collected during the first semester of the academic year 1440-1441 H (2019-2020).

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data obtained from the DCT were carried out for the purpose of locating evidence of pragmatic transfer in the performance of refusals in English by advanced Saudi EFL learners. The analysis was based on the independent examination of each refusal response as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas. According to Cohen (1996c), a semantic formula refers to “a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion, any one or more of which can be used to perform the act in question” (p. 254). Thereby, the semantic formulas of refusals used by the target group (i.e., SEFL) and the two baseline data groups (i.e., NSA and NSE) were determined and coded on the basis of Beebe et al.’s (1990) taxonomy of the semantic formulas of refusal which has been widely used in ILP studies on refusals (see Appendix F). For instance, a response to a refusal such as “I’m sorry. I can’t come. I have other plans” was analyzed as consisting of three semantic formulas: *regret*, *negative willingness/ability*, and *explanation/excuse/reason*. In Beebe et al.’s (1990) taxonomy, the semantic formulas of refusal are classified into direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies, and adjuncts to refusals.

The quantitative statistics were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The chi-square test was performed on the DCT data to examine the degree of similarity and difference between the three groups in terms of the frequency of the semantic formulas. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to analyze and compare the content of the semantic formulas. Following the analysis of previous studies (e.g., Beebe et al., 1990; Al-Issa, 1998; Kwon, 2003; Abed, 2011), pragmatic transfer was considered evident if the refusals of the SEFL group in English deviated from the refusals of the NSE group, in any aspect under study, and resembled the refusals of the NSA group.

Regarding the interview data, the recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher in order to be analyzed. The interview data were analyzed qualitatively in order to have a deeper understanding on the SEFL group's refusals. Themes and patterns were generated from the transcripts of the interviews.

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter explicated the methodology used in this study. The chapter presented in detail the overall research design of the study. Then, the selection and description of the participants were provided. The chapter thoroughly discussed the development and piloting of the instruments used in this study: the DCT which was used to collect the refusal production data and the semi-structured interviews which were used to help in the interpretation of the production data. The researcher pointed out issues related to the major methods used in ILP research to collect data on speech act production in order to justify the choice of the DCT as the main instrument in the study. In the final sections of this chapter, the administration of the DCT and interviews, and the data analysis were explained.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents and discusses the results of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to find answers to the research questions concerning the occurrence of pragmatic transfer among advanced Saudi EFL learners when performing the speech act of refusal in English in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas, and whether Saudi EFL learners' realization of this speech act corresponds more to Saudi native speakers of Arabic or native speakers of English. The chapter is divided into two main sections: the results of the data analysis and the discussion of the data analysis. The results of the data analysis are provided in accordance with each research question. The statistical output of the data analysis is shown in a series of tables. Results pertaining to each stimulus type eliciting a refusal (i.e., requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions) are represented and discussed separately. Finally, a discussion of the major results is provided along with the data that were collected from the interviews.

4.1 Results of the Data Analysis

4.1.1 First Research Question: Is there an Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer from L1 to L2 in Advanced Saudi EFL Learners' Realization of the Speech Act of Refusal in Terms of Frequency and Content of the Semantic Formulas?

4.1.1.1 Pragmatic Transfer in the Frequency of Semantic Formulas

The chi-square test was performed on the data obtained from the DCT in order to examine the degree of similarities and differences within the three groups' refusal strategies.

Pragmatic transfer was considered evident if there was a significant statistical difference in the frequency of a particular refusal strategy between the NSE and SEFL groups and no significant statistical difference between the NSA and SEFL groups.

Table 1.1

Descriptive Statistics and Results of the Chi-square Test Showing Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer in the Refusals to Requests

Group	Strategy	Lower	χ^2	P-value	Equal	χ^2	P-value	Higher	χ^2	P-value
NSE	Negative ability	86.67%	8.067	0.005**	73.33%	0.048	0.827	53.33%	8	0.005**
	Wish	13.33%	0.333	0.563	0.00%	-	-	73.33%	8.333	0.004**
	Alternative	0.00%	3	0.083	80.00%	5.4	0.020*	73.33%	4.571	0.033*
NSA	Negative ability	6.67%	0.333	0.563	60.00%	0.053	0.819	6.67%	1	0.317
	Wish	0.00%	0.333	0.317	0.00%	-	-	6.67%	-	-
	Alternative	20.00%	-	-	20.00%	-	-	13.33%	0.2	0.655
SEFL	Negative ability	13.33%	-	-	66.67%	-	-	0.00%	-	-
	Wish	6.67%	-	-	0.00%	-	-	6.67%	-	-
	Alternative	20.00%	-	-	20.00%	-	-	20.00%	-	-

*Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$*

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

The results presented in table 1.1 show that pragmatic transfer was evident in the refusals of the SEFL group when using *negative willingness/ability*, *wish*, and *statement of alternative* strategies to refuse requests from interlocutors of higher, equal, and lower social status. The NSE group used the direct strategy *negative willingness/ability* significantly more (86.67% and 53.33%) than did the SEFL (13.33% and 0.00%, respectively) and NSA (6.67% and 6.67%, respectively) when refusing a request from an interlocutor of a lower social status (Situation 7) and a higher social status (Situation 3). The results of the chi-square test confirm that the difference was highly significant ($p = 0.005$ and 0.005 , respectively) between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the *negative willingness/ability* strategy, and that there was no significant difference ($p = 0.563$ and $p = 0.317$, respectively) between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the strategy.

The SEFL group resembled the NSA groups' use of the indirect strategy *statement of alternative* when refusing a request from an interlocutor of an equal social status (Situation 1) (20.00% and 20.00%, respectively) and deviated from the NSE group's considerable use of the strategy (80.00%) with a significant difference ($p = 0.020$) showing evidence of pragmatic transfer. Furthermore, the SEFL group approximated the NSA groups' use of the *statement of alternative* strategy when refusing a request from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 3) (20.00% and 13.33%, respectively) with no significant difference ($p = 0.655$), and deviated from the NSE group's considerable use of the strategy (73.33%) with a significant difference ($p = 0.033$) indicating the occurrence of pragmatic transfer.

The SEFL group resembled the NSA group's limited use of the indirect strategy *wish* (6.67% and 6.67%, respectively) to refuse a request from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 3) diverging from the NSE group's extensive use of the strategy (73.33%) with a significant difference ($p = 0.004$).

Table 1.2

Descriptive Statistics and Results of the Chi-square Test Showing Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer in the Refusals to Invitations

Group	Strategy	Lower	χ^2	P-Value	Equal	χ^2	P-Value	Higher	χ^2	P-Value
NSE	Regret	66.67%	5.333	0.021*	46.67%	2.778	0.096	40.00%	0.286	0.593
	Wish	26.67%	4	0.0455*	0.00%	1	0.317	66.67%	7.363	0.007**
	Future acceptance	53.33%	1.333	0.248	20.00%	3	0.083	6.67%	6.4	0.011*
	Gratitude/appreciation	46.67%	4.5	0.0339*	73.33%	8.333	0.004**	66.67%	5.333	0.021*
NSA	Regret	20.00%	0.2	0.655	46.67%	2.778	0.096	53.33%	-	-
	Wish	0.00%	-	-	0.00%	1	0.317	33.33%	2.667	0.102
	Future acceptance	33.33%	0.111	0.739	0.00%	-	-	73.33%	0.2	0.655
	Gratitude/appreciation	13.33%	0.333	0.564	6.67%	-	-	6.67%	0.333	0.564
SEFL	Regret	13.33%	-	-	13.33%	-	-	53.33%	-	-
	Wish	0.00%	-	-	6.67%	-	-	6.67%	-	-
	Future acceptance	26.67%	-	-	0.00%	-	-	60.00%	-	-
	Gratitude/appreciation	6.67%	-	-	6.67%	-	-	13.33%	-	-

*Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$*

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

The results presented in table 1.2 reveal that when refusing invitations, pragmatic transfer was evident in the SEFL group's use of the strategies: *regret*, *wish*, *statement of future acceptance*, and *gratitude/appreciation*. Both the SEFL and NSA groups used the indirect strategy *wish* (0.00% and 0.00%, respectively), the indirect strategy *regret* (13.33% and 20.00%, respectively), and the adjunct to refusals *gratitude/appreciation* (6.67% and 13.33%) significantly less than did the NSE group (26.67%, 66.67%, 46.67%, respectively) when refusing an invitation from an interlocutor of a lower social status (Situation 4). The results confirm that the difference was significant between the SEFL and NSE groups when using the *wish* ($p = 0.0455$), *regret* ($p = 0.021$), and *gratitude/appreciation* ($p = 0.0339$) strategies with no significant difference between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the same strategies (i.e., $p > 0.05$).

The findings also demonstrate that pragmatic transfer occurred in the SEFL group's use of the *gratitude/appreciation* strategy (6.67%) to refuse invitations from an interlocutor of an equal social status (Situation 8) which resembled the NSA group's limited use (6.67%) of the strategy and deviated from the NSE group's considerable use (73.33%) of the same strategy with a significant difference ($p = 0.004$).

The results prove that pragmatic transfer was evident when the SEFL group refused invitations from interlocutors of a higher social status (Situation 10). The SEFL group approximated the NSA group's use of the *wish* (6.67% and 33.33%, respectively), *future acceptance* (60.00% and 73.33%, respectively), and *gratitude/appreciation* (13.33% and 6.67%, respectively) strategies with no significant difference ($p = 0.102$), ($p = 0.655$), and ($p = 0.564$), respectively. However, the SEFL group's use of the same strategies deviated from the NSE group's use (66.67%, 6.67%, and 66.67%, respectively) with a significant difference ($p = 0.007$), ($p = 0.011$), and ($p = 0.021$), respectively.

Table 1.3

Descriptive Statistics and Results of the Chi-square Test Showing Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer in the Refusals to Offers

Group	Strategy	Lower	χ^2	P-Value	Equal	χ^2	P-Value	Higher	χ^2	P-Value
NSE	“No”	40.00%	6	0.014*	13.33%	4.455	0.035*	13.33%	2	0.157
	Negative ability	53.33%	8	0.005**	26.67%	1.923	0.166	66.67%	10	0.0015**
	Regret	0.00%	-	-	26.67%	4	0.046*	13.33%	5.333	0.021*
	Positive opinion/feeling	0.00%	4	0.046*	33.33%	0.5	0.48	40.00%	1.471	0.225
	Gratitude/appreciation	73.33%	11	0.0009***	86.67%	-	-	80.00%	0.429	0.513
NSA	“No”	6.67%	1	0.317	40.00%	6	0.014*	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	20.00%	3	0.083	66.67%	0.053	0.819	13.33%	2	0.157
	Regret	6.67%	1	0.317	26.67%	4	0.046*	73.33%	0.048	0.827
	Positive opinion/feeling	6.67%	1.8	0.18	40.00%	1	0.317	93.33%	0.36	0.549
	Gratitude/appreciation	0.00%	-	-	60.00%	0.727	0.394	40.00%	0.6	0.439

Table 1.3 (Cont.)

Descriptive Statistics and Results of the Chi-square Test Showing Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer in the Refusals to Offers

Group	Strategy	Lower	χ^2	P-Value	Equal	χ^2	P-Value	Higher	χ^2	P-Value
SEFL	“No”	0.00%	-	-	60.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	0.00%	-	-	60.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-
	Regret	0.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-	66.67%	-	-
	Positive opinion/feeling	26.67%	-	-	20.00%	-	-	73.33%	-	-
	Gratitude/appreciation	0.00%	-	-	86.67%	-	-	60.00%	-	-

*Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$*

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

The results presented in table 1.3 prove the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in the SEFL group's refusals when using five strategies to refuse offers: direct "*No*", *negative willingness/ability*, *regret*, *statement of positive opinion/feeling*, and *gratitude/appreciation*. The NSE group used direct "*No*" to refuse an offer from an interlocutor of a lower social status (Situation 2) more (40.00%) than did the NSA (6.67%) and SEFL (0.00%) groups. The difference was significant between the NSE and SEFL ($p = 0.014$) groups' use of direct "*No*" while no significant difference was found between the NSA and SEFL ($p = 0.317$) groups.

The SEFL and NSA groups used the direct strategy *negative willingness/ability* less (0.00% and 20.00%, respectively) than did the NSE group (53.33%) to refuse an offer from an interlocutor of a lower social status (Situation 2) with a significant difference ($p = 0.005$) between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the strategy. Moreover, when refusing offers from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 6), the difference was highly significant ($p = 0.0015$) between the NSE (66.67%) and SEFL (0.00%) groups' use of the strategy *negative willingness/ability* while there was no significant difference ($p = 0.157$) between the NSA (13.33%) and SEFL groups' use of the strategy.

The SEFL and NSA preferred using the *regret* strategy to refuse offers from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 6) (66.67% and 73.33%). However, the NSE group used the *regret* strategy less (13.33%) than did the SEFL with a significant difference ($p = 0.021$) proving the occurrence of pragmatic transfer.

There was also a significant difference between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the adjuncts to refusals, i.e., *statement of positive opinion/feeling* ($p = 0.046$) and *gratitude/appreciation* ($p = 0.0009$) to refuse offers from an interlocutor of a lower social status (Situation 2). In contrast, there was no significant difference (i.e., $p > 0.005$) between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the strategies.

Table 1.4

Descriptive Statistics and Results of the Chi-square Test Showing Evidence of Pragmatic Transfer in the Refusals to Suggestions

Group	Strategy	Lower	χ^2	P-Value	Equal	χ^2	P-Value	Higher	χ^2	P-Value
NSE	Negative ability	60.00%	1.143	0.285	53.33%	0.8	0.371	26.67%	4	0.046*
	Future acceptance	20.00%	3	0.083	0.00%	-	-	53.33%	5.444	0.02*
	Positive opinion/feeling	13.33%	2	0.157	26.67%	4	0.046*	60.00%	6.4	0.011*
NSA	Negative ability	46.67%	0.333	0.564	86.67%	0.04	0.84	6.67%	1	0.317
	Future acceptance	6.67%	1	0.317	6.67%	1	0.317	6.67%	-	-
	Positive opinion/feeling	13.33%	2	0.157	6.67%	1	0.317	0.00%	1	0.317
SEFL	Negative ability	33.33%	-	-	80.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-
	Future acceptance	0.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-	6.67%	-	-
	Positive opinion/feeling	0.00%	-	-	0.00%	-	-	6.67%	-	-

*Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$*

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

Table 1.4 demonstrates that pragmatic transfer was evident in the refusals of the SEFL group when using the strategies: *negative willingness/ability*, *statement of future acceptance*, and *statement of positive opinion/feeling*. The NSE group used the direct strategy *negative willingness/ability* more (26.67%) than did the SEFL (0.00%) and NSA (6.67%) groups when refusing suggestions from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 12). The difference was significant between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the strategy ($p = 0.046$) whereas no significant difference between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the strategy ($p = 0.317$) was found.

The SEFL group resembled the NSA group's limited use of the indirect strategy *future acceptance* to refuse suggestions from an interlocutor of a higher social status (Situation 12) (6.67% and 6.67%, respectively) and deviated from the NSE group's use (53.33%) of the strategy with a significant difference ($p = 0.02$).

When refusing suggestions from interlocutors of equal social status (Situation 5) and higher social status (Situation 12), the NSE group used the adjunct to refusals *statement of positive opinion/feeling* more (26.67% and 60.00%, respectively) than did the SEFL (0.00% and 6.67%, respectively) and NSA (6.67% and 0.00%, respectively) groups. The difference was significant between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the strategy with interlocutors of equal ($p = 0.046$) and higher social status ($p = 0.011$) while no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) was found between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the strategy.

4.1.1.2 Pragmatic Transfer in the Content of Semantic Formulas

This part details the data of the actual content of the semantic formulas used by the three groups. The analysis of the data suggests that pragmatic transfer was not only found in the frequency of the semantic formulas, but also in the content of these semantic formulas.

Excuse/reason/explanation was the most frequently used strategy by all participants in the three groups. The *excuse/reason/explanation* was the only used refusal strategy that

contained actual content amenable to further comparative analysis. First, the degree of specificity (i.e., details of place, time, and involved parties) of the excuses used in all 12 situations was compared across the three groups as being either unspecific or specific. Second, the specific excuses were further analyzed and classified into five major categories related to family, health, financial issues, time, and personal preferences or needs.

Table 1.5

Descriptive Statistics of the Degree of Specificity and Content of the Excuses

Group		NSA	NSE	SEFL
Excuse/reason/explanation	Count	128	75	108
	%	71.11%	41.67%	60.00%
Unspecific	Count	61	14	52
	%	47.66%	18.67%	48.15%
Family	Count	26	10	24
	%	20.31%	13.33%	22.22%
Health	Count	12	2	9
	%	9.38%	2.67%	8.33%
Financial Problem	Count	3	1	7
	%	2.34%	1.33%	6.48%
Specific Time	Count	9	7	4
	%	7.03%	9.33%	3.70%
Personal Preferences or Needs	Count	17	41	13
	%	13.28%	54.67%	12.04%
Total	Count	67	61	57
	%	52.34%	81.33%	52.78%

Table 1.5 presents the descriptive statistics of the degree of specificity and content of the *excuse/reason/explanation* strategy. The results show that the Saudi groups (i.e., SEFL and NSA) approximated each other in most of the cases regarding the content of their excuses indicating L1 influence on the content of the SEFL group's refusals.

The SEFL and NSA groups used unspecific excuses considerably more (48.15% and 47.66%, respectively) than did the NSE group (18.67%). For example, both of the Saudi groups gave many unspecific and vague excuses such as "I have other plans", "I'm busy", "I have work to do", and "I'm meeting someone". On the other hand, the NSE group gave specific excuses such as "I'm going out with my husband and kids today", "I have to pick up my daughter from daycare", "I have an appointment with my dentist today", and "I'm dieting for the next month".

Evidence of pragmatic transfer and L1 influence can be seen in the SEFL group's choice of the type of specific excuses they provided in the DCT. The SEFL and NSA groups used specific excuses in a similar frequency (52.78% and 52.34%, respectively); they relied heavily on family-related excuses (22.22% and 20.31%, respectively), or as Al-Shalawi (1997) referred to them as uncontrollable excuses. On the other hand, the NSE group used specific excuses significantly more (81.33%) than did the Saudi groups; they relied considerably on excuses that express personal preferences or needs (54.67%), or as Al-Shalawi (1997) referred to them as excuses that express the participants' own inclinations.

4.1.2 Second Research Question: Does Advanced Saudi EFL Learners' Realization of the Speech Act of Refusal Correspond more to Saudi Native Speakers of Arabic or Native Speakers of English?

This section tries to provide answers for the second research question by comparing the refusals of the three groups to examine the degree of similarity within the three groups' performance of refusals relying on the results of the chi-square test and descriptive statistics.

4.1.2.1 Refusals to Requests

The results presented in table 2.1 (see appendix G) indicate that the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency of the semantic formulas corresponded more to the NSA group. Table 2.1 shows that the SEFL group's use of the semantic formulas to refuse the request situations either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the same semantic formulas. The results of the chi-square test confirm that there was no significant difference between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse requests (i.e., $p > 0.05$). On the other hand, the chi-square test results reveal that a significant difference (i.e., $p < 0.05$) between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse requests was found in five instances: the use of *negative willingness/ability* (i.e., with interlocutors of lower and higher social status), the use of *wish* (i.e., with interlocutors of higher social status), and the use of *statement of alternative* (i.e., with interlocutors of equal and higher social status).

Moreover, it can be seen from table 2.1 (see appendix G) that both the SEFL and NSA groups tended to use the direct refusal strategies in a similar pattern; they used such strategies significantly less with interlocutors of a lower and higher social status, but significantly more with interlocutors of an equal social status.

4.1.2.2 Refusals to Invitations

Table 2.2 (see appendix H) also reveals that the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency of the semantic formulas corresponded more to the NSA group. The SEFL group's use of the semantic formulas to refuse the invitation situations either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the same semantic formulas; no significant difference was found between the two groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse invitations (i.e., $p > 0.05$). Nevertheless, the results of the chi-square test confirm that a significant difference (i.e., $p < 0.05$) was found in the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the

semantic formulas to refuse invitations in seven instances: the use of *regret* (i.e., with interlocutors of lower social status), the use of *wish* (i.e., with interlocutors of lower and higher social status), the use of *promise of future acceptance* (i.e., with interlocutors of higher social status), and the use of *gratitude/appreciation* (i.e., with all three social statuses).

Similarly, table 2.2 (see appendix H) demonstrates that both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies in a similar pattern; they used such strategies significantly less with interlocutors of a lower and higher social status, but significantly more with interlocutors of an equal social status.

4.1.2.3 Refusals to Offers

Table 2.3 (see Appendix I) shows that the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency of the semantic formulas corresponded more to the NSA group. The results presented in table 2.3 confirm that the SEFL group's use of the majority of the semantic formulas used to refuse the offer situations either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the same semantic formulas with some exceptions; a significant difference was found between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of direct "No" and *regret* with interlocutors of equal social status ($p = 0.014$ and $p = 0.046$, respectively). Nevertheless, a significant difference was found between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse offers in eight instances: the use of direct "No" (i.e., with interlocutors of lower and equal social status), the use of *negative willingness/ability* (i.e., with interlocutors of lower and higher social status), the use of *regret* (i.e., with interlocutors of equal and higher social status), the use of *statement of positive opinion/feeling* (with interlocutors of lower social status), and the use of *gratitude/appreciation* (i.e., with interlocutors of lower social status).

It was also noted from table 2.3 (see Appendix I) that both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies less frequently with interlocutors of a lower and higher

social status, but more frequently with interlocutors of an equal social status to refuse offers.

4.1.2.4 Refusals to Suggestions

Table 2.4 (see Appendix J) reveals that the SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency of the semantic formulas corresponded more to the NSA group. No significant difference was found between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse suggestions (i.e., $p > 0.05$). The SEFL group's use of the semantic formulas to refuse suggestions either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the same semantic formulas. On the other hand, there was a significant difference (i.e., $p < 0.05$) between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of the semantic formulas to refuse suggestions in four instances: the use of *negative willingness/ability* (i.e., with interlocutors of a higher social status), the use of *promise of future acceptance* (i.e., with interlocutors of a higher social status), and the use of *statement of positive opinion/feeling* (i.e., with interlocutors of an equal and higher social status).

Table 2.4 (see Appendix J) also demonstrates that both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies considerably more with interlocutors of an equal social status, but considerably less with interlocutors of lower and higher social statuses.

4.1.2.5 Content of the Semantic Formulas

Table 1.5 shows that the content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group corresponded more to the content of the semantic formulas used by the NSA group in terms of the degree of specificity and the choice of the type of specific excuses. The SEFL group approximated the NSA group's use of both specific (52.78% and 52.34%, respectively) and unspecific (48.15% and 47.66%, respectively) excuses. Furthermore, the SEFL and NSA groups used three categories of specific excuses in a similar frequency: family (22.22% and 20.31%, respectively), health (8.33% 9.38%, respectively), and personal preferences or needs (12.04% and 13.28%, respectively).

4.1.3 Results of the Semi-structured Interviews

This part provides a summary of the eight interviewed participants' responses to the questions of the semi-structured interviews. First, the interviewees' responses to the questions of the first part of the interview is presented in table 3.1. Second, the interviewees' responses to the questions of the second part of the interview is presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.1

Summary of the Interviewees' Responses to the Questions of the First Part of the Interview

Part	Question	Responses		
A. Requests	1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse a request (i.e., #1, #3, and #7), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?	Situation 1 0%	Situation 3 100%	Situation 7 50%
	2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each request situation influence your refusals?	Influence 62.5%	No influence 37.5%	
B. Invitations	1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse an invitation (i.e., #4, #8, and #10), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?	Situation 4 37.5%	Situation 8 0%	Situation 10 87.5%

Table 3.1 (Cont.)

Summary of the Interviewees' Responses to the Questions of the First Part of the Interview

Part	Question	Responses		
	2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each invitation situation influence your refusals?	Influence	No influence	
		62.5%	37.5%	
C. Offers	1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse an offer (i.e., #2, #6, and #11) which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?	Situation 2	Situation 6	Situation 11
		12.5%	75%	12.5%
	2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each offer situation influence your refusals?	Influence	No influence	
		62.5%	37.5%	
D. Suggestions	1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse a suggestion (i.e., #5, #9, and #12), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?	Situation 5	Situation 9	Situation 12
		0%	0%	100%

Table 3.1 (Cont.)

Summary of the Interviewees' Responses to the Questions of the First Part of the Interview

Part	Question	Responses	
	2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each invitation situation influence your refusals?	Influence 62.5%	No influence 37.5%

Table 3.1 demonstrates that the situations which involved interlocutors of a higher social status (Situation 3, 10, 6, and 12) were the most difficult to refuse for the participants. All of the eight interviewees (100%) reported that it was difficult for them to refuse the request (Situation 3) and the suggestion (Situation 12) from the boss (i.e., interlocutor of a higher social status); seven of the interviewees (87.5%) reported that refusing the invitation (Situation 10) from the boss (i.e., interlocutor of a higher social status) was difficult; six of the interviewees (75%) stated that it was also difficult to refuse the offer (Situation 6) from the boss (i.e., interlocutor of a higher social status).

It appears from table 3.1 that the situations which involved interlocutors of a lower social status were also difficult to refuse for the participants. Half of the interviewees (50%) reported that they found it difficult to refuse the request (Situation 7) from the housekeeper (i.e., interlocutor of a lower social status); three interviewees (37.5%) reported that it was difficult for them to refuse the invitation (Situation 7) from the employee (i.e., interlocutor of a lower social status); one of the interviewees (12.5%) stated that it was also difficult to refuse the offer (Situation 2) from the cleaning lady (i.e., interlocutor of a lower social status).

Interestingly, none of the interviewees (0%) reported finding difficulty in refusing the request (Situation 1) from the classmate, invitation (Situation 8) from classmate, and suggestion (Situation 5) from the co-worker (i.e., interlocutors of an equal social status). Only one interviewee (12.5%) reported finding difficulty in refusing the offer (Situation 11) from the co-worker (i.e., interlocutor of an equal social status).

As for the influence of the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) on the participants' refusals, some interviewees (62.5%) stated that their refusals were influenced by the social status of the interlocutor in the DCT situations while others (37.5%) reported that the social status of the interlocutor did not influence their refusals to all four stimulus types (i.e., requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions). Some interviewees mentioned a number of ways in which the social status of the interlocutor influenced their refusals: being more polite with the boss (50%); providing convincing excuses to refuse when the interlocutor is a boss or a co-worker (12.5%); refusing the housekeeper's request for an increase in salary more kindly (12.5%).

Table 3.2

Summary of the Interviewees' Responses to the Questions of the Second Part of the Interview

Question	Responses	
1. If you encountered the same situations in Arabic, would you refuse in the same way?	Yes 87.5%	No 12.5%
Why?	Unconsciously 62.5%	Translate 25%
2. Do you think that your native language (i.e., Arabic) or culture influences your refusals in English in any way? How?	Yes 87.5%	No 12.5%

Table 3.2 (Cont.)

Summary of the Interviewees' Responses to the Questions of the Second Part of the Interview

Question	Responses	
3. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each situation influence the level of directness of your refusals?	See details in section 4.1.3	
4. What kind of excuses or reasons do you use when you refuse in English?	Family 75%	Personal 25%
Do you use such excuses or reasons when you refuse in Arabic?	Yes 100%	No 0%
5. Do you think that you have enough pragmatic competence on how to refuse in English?	Yes 12.5%	No 87.5%
6. In your opinion, why do you think developing the pragmatic competence of the target language (i.e., English) in class is important?	Important 87.5%	Not important 12.5%
7. How would you prefer to develop the pragmatic competence of the target language (i.e., English) in class?	Videos 62.5%	Role-plays 37.5%
	Discussions 12.5%	Textbooks 12.5%

Table 3.2 presents a summary of the interviewees' responses to the questions of the second part of the interview which looked into the influence of the participants' L1 on their refusals and their suggestions for improving their pragmatic competence. Of all interviewees, seven (87.5%) reported that their L1 and culture influence their refusals in English, and that

they would probably refuse in the same way in Arabic if they encountered the same situations. The interviewees (87.5%) provided two main justifications for refusing in the same way in Arabic: performing such a behavior unconsciously (62.5%) and translating phrases from Arabic to English (25%).

Regarding the influence of the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each situation on the level of directness of their refusals, two interviewees (25%) clarified that they would be perceived as rude or impolite when using direct refusals with an interlocutor of a higher social status such as a boss, or perceived as uncompassionate when using direct refusals with an interlocutor of a lower social status such as a housekeeper. One of the interviewees (12.5%) further elaborated that it is a social norm in her culture to be more respectful with people who are in a higher social status and more compassionate to people who are in a lower social status.

As for the type of excuses used in their refusals, six interviewees (75%) confirmed that they use family-related excuses while two interviewees (25%) reported that they use personal excuses when making refusals in English as well as Arabic. Four interviewees (50%) justified their frequent use of the family-related excuses by having overlapping schedules with their families. In addition, two interviewees (25%) clarified that family-related excuses are strongly valid excuses in the Saudi culture.

The last three questions focused on the participants' views regarding the status of their own pragmatic competence and the development of such competence in class. The majority of the interviewees (87.5%) stated that they do not have an adequate level of pragmatic competence in English, specifically when performing refusals. The interviewees (87.5%) asserted that it is highly important to develop pragmatic competence in the target language in the classroom and provided their suggestions on how to do so. Five interviewees (62.5%) reported that they would prefer to improve their pragmatic competence by watching relevant

videos, especially of native speakers of English performing refusals; three interviewees (37.5%) stated that performing refusals in role plays would be an effective strategy to develop their pragmatic competence; others mentioned using discussions (12.5%) and specialized textbooks (12.5%) as means to develop pragmatic competence in the classroom.

4.2 Discussion of the Results

The findings proved the first research hypothesis which states that “There is an evidence of pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 in advanced Saudi EFL learners’ realization of the speech act of refusal in terms of frequency and content of the semantic formulas”. The results confirmed that pragmatic transfer was evident in terms of the frequency of the semantic formulas in the SEFL group’s refusals to all of the four stimulus types: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Moreover, the results confirmed the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in the actual content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group. Such findings are in line with previous research regarding the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in the refusals of advanced EFL learners (e.g., Beebe et al., 1990; Al-Issa, 1998; Kwon, 2003).

The results mentioned above were consistent with the findings of the semi-structured interviews. The majority of the interviewed participants (87.5 %) reported that they would refuse in the same way in Arabic if they encountered the same situations. Interestingly, more than half of the participants (62.5%) affirmed that they unconsciously perform such a behavior. This is consistent with Al-Issa’s (1998) findings regarding pragmatic transfer; language learners consciously as well as unconsciously refer to their culturally inherited pragmatic norms to monitor their speech in the target language. Others (25%) reported that they translate their responses from Arabic to English which corresponds also to Al-Issa’s (1998) findings regarding translating phrases from Arabic to English.

The results also proved that pragmatic transfer was evident in the content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group. Both Saudi groups, i.e., SEFL and NSA, used specific

excuses (52.78% and 52.34%, respectively) more than the unspecific (48.15% and 47.66%, respectively) excuses which contrasts with the findings of previous studies; the content of the refusals of Arabs (e.g., Al-Issa, 1998) and Saudis (e.g., Al-Shalawi, 1997) has been described as vague and unspecific. However, the influence of L1 was apparent in the SEFL group's choice of the type of the specific excuses. Both the SEFL and NSA groups preferred using family-related excuses (22.22% and 20.31%, respectively) whereas the NSE group preferred using personal excuses (54.67%) which is consistent with the findings of previous research (Beebe et al., 1990; Al-Shalawi, 1997; Al-Issa, 1998; Piao, 2016). Such results were in line with the findings reported in the interviews. Seven interviewees (87.5%) reported that their native language (i.e., Arabic) and culture indeed influence the content of their refusals. Six interviewees (75%) confirmed that they mostly use family-related excuses when they refuse and then justified their use of such excuses. Four (50%) participants revealed that issues related to their families come up as the main reasons to refuse things due to their strong connection with their families and overlapping schedules. Other participants (25%) clarified that a person must give valid reasons or excuses to refuse particular things, and family-excuses are considered valid in the Saudi culture. This corroborates Al-Issa's (1998) implications regarding the sociocultural norms of speech in Arabic communities; Arabs feel obliged to come up with very convincing excuses for their refusals to avoid any threat to their face and the face of the interlocutor.

The findings also proved the second research hypothesis which states that "Advanced Saudi EFL learners' realization of the speech act of refusal corresponds more to Saudi native speakers of Arabic". The results of the descriptive statistics and the chi-square test revealed that the SEFL group's refusals corresponded more to the NSA group's refusals regarding both the frequency and content of the semantic formulas.

Both the SEFL and NSA groups used the direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies, and adjuncts to refusals in a similar frequency. As presented in the results of the data analysis section, the SEFL and NSA groups either resembled or approximated each other in their use of the indirect refusal strategies and adjuncts to refusals. Regarding the use of the direct refusal strategies, the SEFL and NSA groups used such refusals significantly less with interlocutors of a lower and higher social status, but more with interlocutors of an equal social status indicating that the SEFL group also transferred their awareness of social status from their culture. This is consistent with Beebe et al.'s (1990) findings regarding pragmatic transfer; not only the linguistic forms and choices are transferred by language learners from L1 to L2, but also their awareness of the social variables that influence the use of such forms. All of the eight interviewed participants (100%) reported that it was difficult for them to perform a refusal in situations that involved interlocutors of a higher social status, and five (62.5%) of them mentioned the situations that involved interlocutors of a lower social status. When asked about the influence of the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each situation on the level of directness of their refusals, two interviewees (25%) clarified that they find it difficult to use direct refusals with people of a higher or lower social status because they would be perceived as rude or uncompassionate. One of the interviewees (12.5%) further elaborated that her L1 and culture influence her refusals in English as a person must be more respectful with people who are in a higher social status and more compassionate to people who are in a lower social status. Such findings indicate that it is a sociocultural norm in the Saudi culture to be concerned not only with a person's own self-image, but with the image of others which could be harmed by a direct refusal.

Another observed variation between the Saudi groups (i.e., SEFL and NSA) and the NSE group is that the latter group was generally more direct in their refusals with interlocutors of

all three social statuses than were the two Saudi groups. Such findings are in line with previous studies (e.g., Al-Shalawi, 1997; Al-Issa, 1998; Al-owaji, 2014; Alqahtani, 2015). Moreover, such findings indicate that the Saudi groups (i.e., SEFL and NSA) were more sensitive to the social background of the interlocutor than were native speakers of English.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the analysis of the data collected from a DCT and semi-structured interviews. The analysis of the data aimed at finding answers to the research questions. The results pertaining to each area under investigation (i.e., frequency and content of the semantic formulas) for each research question were presented and discussed separately. First, the results of the chi-square test which was performed on the frequency of the data collected from the three groups (i.e., SEFL, NSA, and NSE) by the DCT were presented in relation to each stimulus type eliciting a refusal (i.e., requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions). Second, the results of the descriptive statistics regarding the content of the semantic formulas of each group were presented in relation to the degree of specificity as well as the type of specific excuses. Third, a summary of the participants' responses to the questions of the semi-structured interviews was provided. Finally, the results were discussed in detail and linked to the results of previous research.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

This chapter presents the concluding implications of the present study. First, an overall summary of the study is given. Second, the major findings obtained from the data analysis are presented. Third, a number of recommendations based on the main findings are offered. Finally, suggestions for further research are given.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate pragmatic transfer from Arabic to English by advanced Saudi EFL learners (SEFL) when performing the speech act of refusal. More specifically, the study intended to provide evidence of pragmatic transfer in the refusals of advanced SEFL in terms of the frequency and content of the semantic formulas, and reveal whether the refusals of advanced SEFL correspond more to the refusals of Saudi native speakers of Arabic (NSA) or native speakers of English (NSE).

The 45 participants in the study were divided into three groups: 15 SEFL as the target group, 15 NSA as a baseline data group, and 15 NSE as a baseline data group.

A mixed-method data collection approach integrating both quantitative and qualitative instruments was employed to answer the research questions. The participants' refusals were elicited by a DCT. However, only eight participants from the target group (i.e., SEFL) voluntarily participated in a semi-structured interview. The administration of the DCTs and semi-structured interviews to the SEFL group took place at the College of Languages and Translation at KSU in Riyadh. The DCTs were also administered to participants of the NSA group at the Department of Sharia at IMSIU, and participants of the NSE group at the College of Humanities at PSU. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using the chi-square test and descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages.

5.2 Major Findings

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data revealed interesting findings regarding the realization of the speech act of refusal by the three groups. The major findings of the current study can be summarized as follows:

- Pragmatic transfer from Arabic to English was an existing phenomenon in the refusals of the SEFL group. The results of the chi-square test and descriptive statistics provided evidence of pragmatic transfer in both the frequency and content of the semantic formulas.
- Pragmatic transfer was evident in terms of the frequency of the semantic formulas in the SEFL group's refusals to all of the four stimulus types: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Many instances of pragmatic transfer were detected in the frequency of the direct refusal strategies "*No*" and *negative willingness/ability*; the indirect strategies *wish*, *statement of alternative*, *regret*, and *promise future acceptance*; the adjuncts to refusals *statement of positive opinion/feeling* and *gratitude/appreciation*. The results of the chi-square test confirmed that there was a significant difference (i.e., $p < 0.05$) between the SEFL and NSE groups' use of the previous semantic formulas, and that there was no significant difference (i.e., $p > 0.05$) between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of these semantic formulas (see Section 4.1.1 in Chapter 4). The findings were in line with the findings reported in the interviews; seven of the interviewees (87.5 %) affirmed that they would refuse in the same way in Arabic if they encountered the same situations of the DCT in reality.
- Pragmatic transfer was evident in the content of the semantic formulas used by the SEFL group in terms of the degree of specificity and the choice of the type of specific excuses. The SEFL group approximated the NSA group's use of both specific (52.78% and 52.34%, respectively) and unspecific (48.15% and 47.66%, respectively)

excuses. Furthermore, the SEFL and NSA groups used three categories of specific excuses in a similar frequency: family (22.22% and 20.31%, respectively), health (8.33% 9.38%, respectively), and personal preferences or needs (12.04% and 13.28%, respectively). The SEFL and NSA groups preferred using family-related excuses (22.22% and 20.31%, respectively) whereas the NSE group preferred using personal excuses (54.67%). The previous findings were consistent with the interviewees' responses as seven interviewees (87.5 %) asserted that their L1 and culture indeed influence the actual content of their refusals, and six of them (75%) confirmed that they mostly use family-related excuses when they refuse in general for particular reasons (see Section 4.1.3 in Chapter 4).

- The SEFL group's realization of the speech act of refusal corresponded more to the NSA group's realization of the speech act. The results of the chi-square test and descriptive statistics revealed that the SEFL group's use of the direct refusal strategies, indirect refusal strategies, and adjuncts to refusals either resembled or approximated the NSA group's use of the strategies to refuse stimulus types: requests, invitations, and suggestions. A significant difference was only found between the SEFL and NSA groups' use of two refusal strategies to refuse offers from interlocutors of an equal social status: the direct "*No*" and the indirect strategy *regret*. On the contrary, the results of the chi-square test revealed 15 instances in which the difference was significant (i.e., $p < 0.05$) between the SEFL and NSE groups' frequency of use of the semantic formulas (see Section 4.1.2 in Chapter 4).
- The effect of the sociocultural norms on the linguistic choices made by the SEFL group when performing refusals was strongly apparent in two major cases. First, both the SEFL and NSA groups avoided using the direct refusal strategies with interlocutors of lower and higher social status. The participants justified such a

behavior in the interviews; all the interviewed participants (100%) reported that it was difficult for them to perform a refusal in situations that involved interlocutors of a higher social status; five of the interviewees (62.5%) reported that it was difficult for them to perform refusals in situations that involved interlocutors of a lower social status; two of the interviewees (25%) affirmed that using direct refusals with interlocutors of higher and lower social status is considered significantly rude. One of the interviewees (12.5%) clarified that it is common in her culture to be more respectful with people who are in a higher social status and more compassionate to people who are in a lower social status.

- Second, both the SEFL and NSA groups preferred using specific excuses related to family while the NSE group preferred using specific personal excuses. The findings of the interviews revealed the influence of the sociocultural norms on the choice of the type of excuses. Four of the interviewees (50%) revealed that they rely on family-related excuses due to their strong connection with their families and overlapping schedules; two of the interviewees (25%) explained that family-related excuses are one of the most valid excuses in the Saudi culture.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings of the study revealed that the performance of refusals of advanced Saudi EFL learners deviated from the performance of native speakers of English; thus, advanced Saudi EFL learners deviated from what is considered socially and culturally appropriate in the target language. In fact, (87.5%) of the interviewed participants reported that they do not have an adequate level of pragmatic competence in the target language generally, and precisely in performing refusals in English. The results of the study provided clear evidence that advanced Saudi EFL learners relied on the speech norms of their native language when using the target language. Such deviations and lack of pragmatic competence are a potential

source for communication breakdowns and misunderstanding in cross-cultural communication.

The majority (87.5%) of the interviewed participants affirmed that developing the pragmatic competence in the target language in the classroom is of significant importance due to its effect on the language learners' public image and how they are perceived by native speakers of the target language. Nevertheless, instruction in EFL classes in Saudi Arabia still focuses on the mere linguistic and grammatical aspects rather than the sociocultural norms of speech in the target language. Moreover, EFL learners have limited exposure to the cultural norms of the target language due to the fact that Saudi Arabia is not an English-speaking country and English is taught as a foreign language.

Therefore, sociopragmatic instruction and exposure to the social and cultural conventions of native speakers of the target language must be incorporated into foreign language curriculum. A number of pedagogical recommendations for EFL teachers and textbook designers can be drawn from the present study. First, EFL teachers may consider integrating a series of applicable tasks, communicative activities, and relevant materials in order to raise L2 pragmatic awareness of EFL learners and expose them to the culture of the target language. The findings reported in the interviews revealed that the participants (75%) would prefer to develop their pragmatic competence through a combination of activities and authentic materials such as performing role plays and watching videos of native speakers of English performing refusals. Second, textbook designers can incorporate the findings of this study. The representation of the pragmatic knowledge of the target language in current English textbooks can be increased and the emphasis can be directed towards specific pragmatic aspects as those investigated in this study.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The following are the researcher's recommendations for future research that expands and

improves the conclusions of the present study. First, this study could be replicated using different data collection methods such as role plays which provide rich spoken data and allow the investigation to cover other interactive and nonverbal features of speech like hesitation, intonation, and turn-taking mechanisms. Second, the study can be replicated on a larger sample size which integrates both female and male subjects in order to generalize the findings to all advanced Saudi EFL learners. In addition, future studies could investigate pragmatic transfer in the refusals of Saudi EFL learners of different proficiency levels (e.g., beginner, intermediate, and advanced) to examine the influence of language proficiency on the occurrence of pragmatic transfer in their refusals. Finally, examining the effect of other variables such as gender of the interlocutor, age, and social distance on the performance of refusals in English by EFL learners could be considered for future studies.

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Appendix A

Design of the DCT Situations

Item	Stimulus Type	Situation	Social Status of the Interlocutor	Social Distance
#1	Request	Borrowing lecture notes	Equal	Familiar
#3	Request	Working extra hours	Higher	Familiar
#7	Request	Request for a raise in salary	Lower	Familiar
#8	Invitation	Invitation to a graduation party	Equal	Familiar
#10	Invitation	Invitation to a housewarming party	Higher	Familiar
#4	Invitation	Invitation to dinner at a restaurant	Lower	Familiar
#11	Offer	Sandwich for lunch	Equal	Familiar
#6	Offer	Promotion which requires moving	Higher	Familiar
#2	Offer	Paying for the broken vase	Lower	Familiar
#5	Suggestion	Trying colorful clothes	Equal	Familiar
#12	Suggestion	Writing notes to remember things	Higher	Familiar
#9	Suggestion	Changing the course syllabus	Lower	Familiar

Appendix B

English Version of the DCT

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in this study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. The purpose of this study is to investigate pragmatic transfer in advanced Saudi EFL learners' refusals. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a Saudi EFL learner, a Saudi native speaker of Arabic, or a native speaker of English. If you agree to participate, you will fill out the attached Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and take part in a following interview. The DCT will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Instructions for the DCT are provided. The interview will take approximately 15 minutes. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed. The recordings will be destroyed once the research is finished. Your identity and responses will be completely confidential and accessible only to the researcher. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the researcher or your university. Your participation is valuable to this research. Thank you for your cooperation.

Agreement

The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained to me and I agree to participate in this study.

Name: Date:

E-mail or phone number:

Signature:

Researcher's name: Jawaher Al-Juraywi

E-mail: jawaheraljerewi@gmail.com

Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Demographic Information and Language Background (EFL Learners):

Nationality: Gender:

Age: University:

College: Major:

Academic Level:

1. Is Arabic your native language?

2. Have you ever studied or lived in English-speaking countries? If yes, for how long have you stayed?

3. What is your highest score in an English standardized test like IELTS or TOFEL?
.....

Demographic Information and Language Background (Native Speakers of English):

Nationality: Gender:

Age: Occupation:

1. Is English your native language?

2. Do you speak Arabic?

Instructions

Please carefully read the following 12 situations. These situations represent requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions which the respondent refuses. Please be as natural as possible and write what you would really say in actual conversation if you encountered such situations. Kindly note that the following requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions should not be accepted in all situations. You can write as much as you want in the blank after "You" provided at the end of the situations.

Situations

1. You are a hard-working college student. You attend classes regularly and take good notes. Your classmate often misses classes and wants to borrow your lecture notes before the examination. You don't want to lend her your lecture notes.

Classmate: Oh! We have an exam tomorrow, but I don't have notes from last week. I am sorry to ask you this, but could you please lend me your notes once again?

You:.....
.....

2. You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She tells you that while she was cleaning, she bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. She feels terrible about it and she wants to pay for the vase, but you decline her offer.

Cleaning lady: Oh God, I'm so sorry! I had an awful accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel just terrible about it. I'll pay for it.

You:.....
.....

3. You are at the office in a meeting with your boss. It is getting close to the end of the day and you want to leave work. However, your boss asks you whether or not you can spend extra hours to help her finish up with the project. You don't want to stay at work for extra hours.

Boss: If you don't mind, I'd like you to spend an extra hour or two today so that we can finish up with this work.

You:.....
.....

4. You are a head of a department in a company. One of the employees in your office invites you to dinner tonight at a restaurant with other employees but you don't want to go.

Employee: We are having dinner at a restaurant together tonight. Would you join us?

You:.....
.....

5. You are at work. You rarely wear colorful clothes. One of your co-workers who is interested in fashion suggests that you should try more colorful clothes, but you decline her suggestion.

Co-worker: Hey, you always wear black and white. I think you should try more colorful clothes.

You:

.....

6. You have been working in a company for two years. The boss offers you a raise and a promotion, but it involves moving from Riyadh to Jeddah. You don't want to leave Riyadh.

Boss: I'd like to offer you a better position in our new office in Jeddah. Jeddah is a great city and it's only two hours from here by plane. A nice raise comes with the position.

You:

.....

7. A housekeeper has been working for you for a year and she asks you to increase her salary, but you don't want to.

Housekeeper: I've been working here just a little over a year now, and I know you've been pleased with my work. I really enjoy working here, but I really need an increase in my salary.

You:

.....

8. You are a senior university student. One of your classmates who you are familiar with invites you to her graduation party, but you don't want to go.

Classmate: How about coming over to my house next Friday? I'm having my graduation party and I'm inviting all of my classmates.

You:

.....

9. You are a faculty member at the university. It is about the middle of the semester now. One of your students tells you that some of the students were talking after class recently and they feel that the class would be better if you make some changes to the course syllabus. The

student suggests that you change some of the remaining topics and the required assignments, but you don't want to make these changes.

Student: Excuse me, some of the students were talking after class recently and we kind of feel that the class would be better if you could change the remaining topics and the required assignments in this course.

You:

.....

10. Your boss has just moved into a new house and invites you to a housewarming party, but you don't want to go.

Boss: I am having a housewarming party next Friday. I know it's short notice but I'm hoping you will be there.

You:

.....

11. It is lunch break at your workplace. One of your co-workers offers you a sandwich she made at home. You decline her offer.

Co-worker: How about a sandwich for lunch? I made it myself at home.

You:

.....

12. You're at your desk trying to find a report that your boss just asked for. While you're searching through the mess on your desk, your boss tells you that maybe you should try and organize yourself better. She suggests that maybe you should write yourself little notes to remind you of things. You decline her suggestion.

Boss: You know, maybe you should try and organize yourself better. I always write myself little notes to remind me of things. Perhaps you should give it a try!

You:

.....

Appendix C

Arabic Version of the DCT

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إقرار الموافقة على الاشتراك في البحث

عزيزتي المشاركة في الدراسة،

أنت مدعوة للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة. تم تزويدك بالمعلومات التالية لمساعدتك على اتخاذ قرار سواء بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة أم لا. إن الهدف الرئيسي من هذا البحث هو دراسة النقل البراغمتي في استراتيجيات الرفض لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من السعوديين ذوي المستوى المتقدم. أنت مدعوة للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأنك طالبة لغة إنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، أو لأنك سعودية ولغتك الأم هي العربية، أو لأن لغتك الأم هي الإنجليزية. إذا وافقت على المشاركة، سوف تقومين بتعبئة اختبار إكمال الخطاب المرفق الذي يستغرق قرابة ٢٠ دقيقة. التعليمات الخاصة باختبار إكمال الخطاب مرفقة. إن هويتك وجميع إجاباتك ستكون موضع سرية تامة وفي متناول يد الباحثة فقط. إن مساهمتك في هذه الدراسة اختيارية ويمكنك الانسحاب في أي وقت دون التأثير سلباً على علاقتك مع الباحثة أو جامعتك. مشاركتك مهمة جداً لهذا البحث. شكراً لك على تعاونك.

إقرار الموافقة:

لقد تم توضيح طبيعة وهدف هذا البحث لي بشكل كافٍ وأوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة.

الاسم: التاريخ:

رقم الهاتف أو البريد الإلكتروني:

التوقيع:

اسم الباحثة: جواهر الجريوي

البريد الإلكتروني: jawaheraljerewi@gmail.com

اختبار إكمال الخطاب

البيانات الديموغرافية والخلفية اللغوية:

الجنسية: الجنس:
 العمر: الجامعة:
 الكلية: التخصص:
 المرحلة الأكاديمية:

١. هل اللغة العربية لغتك الأم؟
٢. هل تتحدثين اللغة الإنجليزية بطلاقة؟
٣. هل سبق لك الدراسة أو العيش في دول ناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أم؟ إذا كان الجواب نعم، كم المدة التي قضيتها هناك؟

التعليمات:

يرجى قراءة المواقع الاتني عشر التالية بعناية. تمثل هذه المواقع مجموعة من الطلبات، والدعوات، والعروض، والاقتراحات التي يجب عليك رفضها. يرجى أن تكوني طبيعية قدر الإمكان واكتبي ما ستقولينه فعلاً في المحادثة إذا واجهت مثل هذه المواقع. يرجى ملاحظة أنه يجب عدم قبول أي من الطلبات، أو الدعوات، أو العروض أو الاقتراحات التالية في جميع المواقع. يمكنك الكتابة بالقدر الذي تريدينه في الفراغ المتروك بعد كلمة "أنت" نهاية كل موقف.

المواقف:

١. أنت طالبة جامعية مجتهدة. تحضرين المحاضرات بانتظام وتدوين ملاحظات جيدة. زميلتك في الصف التي تتغيب غالباً عن المحاضرات تود استعارة دفتر الملاحظات الخاص بك قبل الامتحان لكنك لا تريدين اعارتها دفتر ملاحظاتك.

زميلتك: يا الله! بكره عندنا امتحان وما عندي ملاحظات محاضرات الأسبوع الي فات. معليش، ممكن استعير دفتر ملاحظاتك مرة ثانية؟

أنت:

٢. تصلين إلى المنزل وتلاحظين أن العاملة المنزلية مستاءة جداً. تخبرك العاملة المنزلية بأنه بينما كانت تقوم بالتنظيف، اصطدمت بالطاولة ووقعت مزهرية ثمينة لديك وانكسرت. العاملة المنزلية تشعر بالسوء حيال ما حصل وتريد أن تدفع ثمن المزهرية لكنك لا تقبلين عرضها.

العاملة المنزلية: يا الله أنا مره آسفة. صار حادث مو كويس لما كنت أنظف. صدمت بالطاولة وطاحت مزهريتك الغالية وانكسرت. أنا مره متضايقة وراح أدفع قيمة المزهرية.

أنت:

٣. أنت في المكتب في اجتماع مع مديرتك في العمل. يشارف يوم العمل على الانتهاء وتريدين الانصراف. تسألك المديرة إذا كان بإمكانك البقاء لساعة أو ساعتين إضافيتين لمساعدتها في إنهاء ما تبقى من عمل. لكن، أنت لا تريدين البقاء في العمل لساعات إضافية.

المديرة: إذا ما عندك مانع، ممكن تجلسين ساعة أو ساعتين زيادة اليوم عشان نخلص الشغل؟

أنت:

٤. أنت رئيسة قسم في شركة. تدعوك إحدى الموظفات في قسمك لتناول العشاء اليوم في أحد المطاعم مع مجموعة من الموظفات الأخريات لكنك لا ترغبين في الذهاب.

الموظفة: راح نجتمع أنا ومجموعة من الموظفات اليوم نتعشى في مطعم. وش رايك تجين معنا؟

أنت:

٥. أنت في العمل. أنت نادراً ما ترتدين ملابس ملونة. تقترح عليك إحدى زميلاتك في العمل التي تهتم بالموضة تجربة ارتداء ملابس ملونة بشكل أكثر لكنك لا تقبلين اقتراحها.
زميلتك في العمل: أنت دائماً تلبسين أبيض وأسود. أعتقد لازم تجربين تلبسين ملابس ملونة أكثر.

أنت:

٦. أنت تعملين في شركة منذ عامين حالياً. تعرض عليك مديرتك في العمل ترقية وزيادة في الراتب، لكن ذلك يتطلب انتقالك من مدينة الرياض إلى جدة وأنت لا ترغبين في الانتقال من الرياض.
المديرة: حابه أعرض عليك منصب أفضل في مكتبنا الجديد في جدة. جده مدينة حلوه وتبعد عن الرياض ساعتين بس بالطيارة. راح يجيك زيادة في الراتب إذا قبلتي الوظيفة.

أنت:

٧. تعمل لديك عاملة منزلية منذ عام وتطلب منك زيادة في راتبها لكنك لا ترغبين في ذلك.
العاملة المنزلية: أنا أشغل هنا من أكثر من سنة تقريباً وأعرف أنك راضية عن شغلي. أنا أحب الشغل هنا لكن أحتاج زيادة في راتبي.

أنت:

٨. أنت طالبة جامعية خريجة. تدعوك إحدى زميلاتك التي تعرفينها في الصف إلى حفل تخرجها لكنك لا ترغبين في الذهاب.
زميلتك: وش رايك تجين عندي بالبيت يوم الجمعة الجاي؟ راح أسوي حفل تخرجي وعازمه كل زميلاتي بالصف.

أنت:

٩. أنت عضو هيئة تدريس في الجامعة. لقد انتصف الترم الدراسي حالياً. تخبرك إحدى طالباتك بأن الطالبات كن يتحدثن بعد المحاضرة ويشعرن بأن المادة ستكون أفضل إذا قمت ببعض التغييرات على منهج المادة. تقترح الطالبة تغيير بعض المواضيع والواجبات المتبقية في المنهج لكنك لا ترغبين بالقيام بهذه التغييرات.

الطالبة: معليش يا أستاذة، أنا وبعض الطالبات كنا نناقش بعد نهاية المحاضرة عن المادة. نشوف ان المادة راح تكون أفضل إذا غيرتي بعض المواضيع والواجبات المتبقية في المنهج.
أنت:

١٠. انتقلت مديرتك في العمل إلى منزل جديد حديثاً وتقوم بدعوتك إلى حفلة في منزلها بهذه المناسبة لكنك لا ترغبين في الذهاب.
المديرة: راح أسوي حفلة بمناسبة انتقالي لبيتي الجديد يوم الجمعة الجاي. أدري ان الدعوة متأخرة شوي لكن أتمنى أنك تحضرين.
أنت:

١١. أثناء استراحة الغداء في العمل، تعرض عليك إحدى زميلاتك في العمل شطيرة صنعتها في المنزل لكنك لا تقبلين عرضها.
زميلتك في العمل: وش رايك بساندويتش للغداء؟ أنا سويته بنفسي في البيت.
أنت:

١٢. أنت في مكتبك تبحثين عن تقرير سألتك عنه مديرتك في العمل قبل قليل. أثناء بحثك داخل الفوضى في مكتبك، تخبرك رئيسك بأنه ينبغي عليك محاولة تنظيم نفسك بشكل أفضل. تقترح عليك المديرة أنه ربما يجب عليك كتابة ملاحظات صغيرة لتذكيرك بالأشياء لكنك لا تقبلين اقتراحها.
المديرة: أشوف إنك تحتاجين تنظيم نفسك بشكل أفضل. أنا دائماً أكتب ملاحظات صغيرة بشأن أتذكر الأشياء. أعتقد لازم تجربين هذه الطريقة.
أنت:

Appendix D

Guide Questions for the Semi-structured Interviews

The present study investigates the refusal strategies of advanced Saudi EFL learners. Some refusals made by language learners might be received by native speakers of the target language as inappropriate simply because language learners lack the pragmatic competence in the target language. Pragmatic competence is a significant concept in the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP). Pragmatic competence refers to the ability to use language in various communicative situations effectively and appropriately in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context (Thomas, 1983).

Part 1:

A. Refusing Requests

1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse a request (i.e., #1, #3, and #7), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?
2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each request situation influence your refusals?

B. Refusing Invitations

1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse an invitation (i.e., #4, #8, and #10), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?
2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each invitation situation influence your refusals?

C. Refusing Offers

1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse an offer (i.e., #2, #6, and #11) which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?
2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in

each offer situation influence your refusals?

D. Refusing Suggestions

1. Of the three situations where you had to refuse a suggestion (i.e., #5, #9, and #12), which situation was the most difficult to refuse? Why?
2. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each suggestion situation influence your refusals?

Part 2:

1. If you encountered the same situations in Arabic, would you refuse in the same way?
Why?
2. Do you think that your native language (i.e., Arabic) or culture influences your refusals in English in any way? How?
3. How did the social status of the interlocutor (i.e., higher, equal, and lower social status) in each situation influence the level of directness of your refusals?
4. What kind of excuses or reasons do you use when you refuse in English? Do you use such excuses or reasons when you refuse in Arabic?
5. Do you think that you have enough pragmatic competence on how to refuse in English?
6. In your opinion, why do you think developing the pragmatic competence of the target language (i.e., English) in class is important?
7. How would you prefer to develop the pragmatic competence of the target language (i.e., English) in class?

Appendix E

Questionnaire for the Pilot Study of the Interview Questions

1. Name:

2. University:

3. Major and Academic Level:

Directions: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of these statements regarding the interview questions. Please highlight the box of your answer.

1. The wording of the questions is clear and unambiguous.

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

2. The wording of the questions is straightforward and uncomplicated.

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

3. The structure and order of the interview questions are comprehensible.

☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree

4. Were you confused by any question in the interview? If yes, please mention the question.

Appendix F

Beebe et al.'s (1990) Taxonomy of the Refusal Strategies

I. Direct

- A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse...")
- B. "No"
- C. Negative willingness/ability (e.g., "I can't.", "I won't.", or "I don't think so.")

II. Indirect

- A. Apology, regret (e.g., "I'm sorry..." or "I feel terrible...")
- B. Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help...")
- C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night." or "I have a headache.")
- D. Statement of alternative
 - 1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., "I'd rather..." or "I'd prefer...")
 - 2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (e.g., "Why don't you ask someone else?")
- E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have...")
- F. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., "I'll do it next time." or "I promise I'll...")
- G. Statement of principle (e.g., "I never do business with friends.")
- H. Statement of philosophy (e.g., "One can't be too careful.")
- I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
 - 1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (e.g., "I won't be any fun tonight." to refuse an invitation)
 - 2. Guilt trip (e.g., waitress to customers who want to sit a while: "I can't make living off people who just order coffee.")

3. Criticism of the request/requester, or insult/attack (i.e., Statement of negative feeling) (e.g., “Who do you think you are?” or “that’s a terrible idea!”)
4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
5. Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., “Don’t worry about it.”, “That’s okay.”, or “You don’t have to.”)
6. Self-defense (e.g., “I’m trying my best.” or “I didn’t do anything wrong.”)

J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal

1. Unspecified or indefinite reply
2. Lack of enthusiasm

K. Avoidance (Verbal)

1. Topic switch
2. Joke
3. Repetition of part of the request. (e.g., "Monday?")
4. Postponement (e.g., “I’ll think about it.”)
5. Hedging (e.g., “I don’t know.” or “I’m not sure.”)

III. Adjuncts to Refusals

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (“That’s a good idea...” or “I’d love to...”)
2. Statement of empathy (e.g., “I realize you are in a difficult situation.”)
3. Pause fillers (e.g., “uhh”, “Well”, “oh”, or “uhm”)
4. Gratitude/appreciation (e.g., “Thank you.”)

Appendix G

Table 2.1

Percentage, Frequency, and Chi-Square Values of the Semantic Formulas Used to Refuse Requests

Group	Strategy	Lower		χ^2	P-value	Equal		χ^2	P-value	Higher		χ^2	P-value
		Count	%			Count	%			Count	%		
NSE	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	1	0.317	1	6.67%	1	0.317
	No	2	13.33%	2	0.157	14	93.33%	3.2	0.074	1	6.67%	1	0.317
	Negative ability	13	86.67%	8.067	0.005**	11	73.33%	0.048	0.827	8	53.33%	8	0.005**
	Regret	3	20.00%	3.769	0.052	15	100.00%	2.13	0.144	5	33.33%	2.882	0.09
	Wish	2	13.33%	0.333	0.563	0	0.00%	-	-	11	73.33%	8.333	0.004**
	Excuse/reason	4	26.67%	1.92	0.166	5	33.33%	2.25	0.134	8	53.33%	0.8	0.371
	Alternative	0	0.00%	3	0.083	12	80.00%	5.4	0.020*	11	73.33%	4.571	0.033*
	Set condition	7	46.67%	0.818	0.366	1	6.67%	-	-	3	20.00%	1	0.317
	Future acceptance	0	0.00%	2	0.157	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Positive opinion	2	13.33%	0.2	0.655	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	0.667	0.414
NSA	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	No	0	0.00%	-	-	8	53.33%	0.286	0.593	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	1	6.67%	0.333	0.563	9	60.00%	0.053	0.819	1	6.67%	1	0.317
	Regret	13	86.67%	0.391	0.531	8	53.33%	-	-	13	86.67%	0.04	0.841
	Wish	0	0.00%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Excuse/reason	12	80.00%	0.428	0.513	11	73.33%	-	-	15	100.00%	0.333	0.563
	Alternative	3	20.00%	-	-	3	20.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	0.2	0.655
	Set condition	3	20.00%	0.143	0.705	3	20.00%	3	0.083	1	6.67%	-	-
	Future acceptance	2	13.33%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	3	20.00%	3	0.083
	Positive opinion	2	13.33%	0.2	0.655	0	0.00%	2	0.157	2	13.33%	-	-
SEFL	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	No	0	0.00%	-	-	6	40.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	2	13.33%	-	-	10	66.67%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Regret	10	66.67%	-	-	8	53.33%	-	-	12	80.00%	-	-
	Wish	1	6.67%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Excuse/reason	9	60.00%	-	-	11	73.33%	-	-	12	80.00%	-	-
	Alternative	3	20.00%	-	-	3	20.00%	-	-	3	20.00%	-	-
	Set condition	4	26.67%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Future acceptance	2	13.33%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Positive opinion	3	20.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-	4	26.67%	-	-

Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

Appendix H

Table 2.2

Percentage, Frequency, and Chi-Square Values of the Semantic Formulas Used to Refuse Invitations

Group	Strategy	Lower		χ^2	P-value	Equal		χ^2	P-value	Higher		χ^2	P-value
		Count	%			Count	%			Count	%		
NSE	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	-	-
	No	1	6.67%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	6	40.00%	3.571	0.059	7	46.67%	1.316	0.251	4	26.67%	1.8	0.18
	Regret	10	66.67%	5.333	0.021*	7	46.67%	2.778	0.096	6	40.00%	0.286	0.593
	Wish	4	26.67%	4	0.0455*	0	0.00%	1	0.317	10	66.67%	7.363	0.007**
	Excuse/reason	8	53.33%	1.19	0.275	6	40.00%	2	0.157	9	60.00%	1.087	0.297
	Future acceptance	8	53.33%	1.333	0.248	3	20.00%	3	0.083	1	6.67%	6.4	0.011*
	Principle	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Positive opinion	7	46.67%	-	-	7	46.67%	0.889	0.346	4	26.67%	0.818	0.366
	Gratitude/appreciation	7	46.67%	4.5	0.0339*	11	73.33%	8.333	0.004**	10	66.67%	5.333	0.021*
NSA	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	No	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	2	0.157	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	2	13.33%	0.333	0.564	10	66.67%	0.182	0.67	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Regret	3	20.00%	0.2	0.655	7	46.67%	2.778	0.096	0	53.33%	-	-
	Wish	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317	8	33.33%	2.667	0.102
	Excuse/reason	13	86.67%	-	-	11	73.33%	0.043	0.835	5	86.67%	0.037	0.847
	Future acceptance	5	33.33%	0.111	0.739	0	0.00%	-	-	13	73.33%	0.2	0.655
	Principle	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	2	0.157	11	13.33%	0.333	0.564
	Positive opinion	9	60.00%	0.25	0.617	8	53.33%	0.474	0.491	2	33.33%	0.333	0.564
	Gratitude/appreciation	2	13.33%	0.333	0.564	1	6.67%	-	-	5	6.67%	0.333	0.564
SEFL	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	No	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	1	6.67%	-	-	12	80.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Regret	2	13.33%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-	8	53.33%	-	-
	Wish	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Excuse/reason	13	86.67%	-	-	12	80.00%	-	-	14	93.33%	-	-
	Future acceptance	4	26.67%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	9	60.00%	-	-
	Principle	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Positive opinion	7	46.67%	-	-	11	73.33%	-	-	7	46.67%	-	-
	Gratitude/appreciation	1	6.67%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-

Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

Appendix I

Table 2.3

Percentage, Frequency, and Chi-Square Values of the Semantic Formulas Used to Refuse Offers

Group	Strategy	Lower		χ^2	P-value	Equal		χ^2	P-value	Higher		χ^2	P-value
		Count	%			Count	%			Count	%		
NSE	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	0.333	0.564
	No	6	40.00%	6	0.014*	2	13.33%	4.455	0.035*	2	13.33%	2	0.157
	Negative ability	8	53.33%	8	0.005**	4	26.67%	1.923	0.166	10	66.67%	10	0.0015**
	Regret	0	0.00%	-	-	4	26.67%	4	0.046*	2	13.33%	5.333	0.021*
	Excuse/reason	2	13.33%	2	0.157	10	66.67%	-	-	8	53.33%	1.19	0.275
	Philosophy	10	66.67%	3.769	0.052	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Negative consequences	6	40.00%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Off the hook	7	46.67%	2.333	0.127	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Positive opinion	0	0.00%	4	0.046*	5	33.33%	0.5	0.48	6	40.00%	1.471	0.225
	Gratitude/appreciation	11	73.33%	11	0.0009***	13	86.67%	-	-	12	80.00%	0.429	0.513
NSA	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	No	1	6.67%	1	0.317	6	40.00%	6	0.014*	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	3	20.00%	3	0.083	10	66.67%	0.053	0.819	2	13.33%	2	0.157
	Regret	1	6.67%	1	0.317	4	26.67%	4	0.046*	11	73.33%	0.048	0.827
	Excuse/reason	1	6.67%	1	0.317	14	93.33%	0.667	0.414	13	86.67%	-	-
	Philosophy	1	6.67%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Negative consequences	7	46.67%	1.6	0.206	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Off the hook	13	86.67%	0.037	0.847	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Positive opinion	1	6.67%	1.8	0.18	6	40.00%	1	0.317	14	93.33%	0.36	0.549
	Gratitude/appreciation	0	0.00%	-	-	9	60.00%	0.727	0.394	6	40.00%	0.6	0.439
SEFL	Performative	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	No	0	0.00%	-	-	9	60.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	0	0.00%	-	-	9	60.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Regret	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	10	66.67%	-	-
	Excuse/reason	0	0.00%	-	-	10	66.67%	-	-	13	86.67%	-	-
	Philosophy	3	20.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Negative consequences	3	20.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Off the hook	14	93.33%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Positive opinion	4	26.67%	-	-	3	20.00%	-	-	11	73.33%	-	-
	Gratitude/appreciation	0	0.00%	-	-	13	86.67%	-	-	9	60.00%	-	-

Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status

Appendix J

Table 2.4

Percentage, Frequency, and Chi-Square Values of the Semantic Formulas Used to Refuse Suggestions

Group	Strategy	Lower		χ^2	P-value	Equal		χ^2	P-value	Higher		χ^2	P-value
		Count	%			Count	%			Count	%		
NSE	No	1	6.67%	-	-	2	13.33%	2	0.157	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	9	60.00%	1.143	0.285	8	53.33%	0.8	0.371	4	26.67%	4	0.046*
	Regret	4	26.67%	0.4	0.527	1	6.67%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Excuse/reason	6	40.00%	0.077	0.782	7	46.67%	0.333	0.564	2	13.33%	-	-
	Alternative	4	26.67%	0.143	0.705	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-
	Future acceptance	3	20.00%	3	0.083	0	0.00%	-	-	8	53.33%	5.444	0.02*
	Principle	2	13.33%	0.667	0.414	3	20.00%	3	0.083	2	13.33%	2.778	0.096
	Criticize	0	0.00%	-	-	4	26.67%	0.667	0.414	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Positive opinion	2	13.33%	2	0.157	4	26.67%	4	0.046*	9	60.00%	6.4	0.011*
	Gratitude/appreciation	7	46.67%	2.778	0.096	12	80.00%	2.882	0.09	6	40.00%	3.571	0.058
NSA	No	2	13.33%	0.333	0.564	9	60.00%	0.6	0.439	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	7	46.67%	0.333	0.564	13	86.67%	0.04	0.84	1	6.67%	1	0.317
	Regret	4	26.67%	0.4	0.527	0	0.00%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Excuse/reason	10	66.67%	0.529	0.467	8	53.33%	0.692	0.405	7	46.67%	2.778	0.096
	Alternative	4	26.67%	0.143	0.705	0	0.00%	-	-	4	26.67%	0.667	0.414
	Future acceptance	1	6.67%	1	0.317	1	6.67%	1	0.317	1	6.67%	-	-
	Principle	4	26.67%	-	-	8	53.33%	0.059	0.808	6	40.00%	0.077	0.782
	Criticize	1	6.67%	1	0.317	2	13.33%	-	-	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Positive opinion	2	13.33%	2	0.157	1	6.67%	1	0.317	0	0.00%	1	0.317
	Gratitude/appreciation	1	6.67%	0.333	0.564	3	20.00%	0.5	0.48	3	20.00%	1	0.317
SEFL	No	1	6.67%	-	-	6	40.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Negative ability	5	33.33%	-	-	12	80.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-
	Regret	6	40.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Excuse/reason	7	46.67%	-	-	5	33.33%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-
	Alternative	3	20.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-
	Future acceptance	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Principle	4	26.67%	-	-	9	60.00%	-	-	7	46.67%	-	-
	Criticize	0	0.00%	-	-	2	13.33%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Positive opinion	0	0.00%	-	-	0	0.00%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-
	Gratitude/appreciation	2	13.33%	-	-	5	33.33%	-	-	1	6.67%	-	-

Note: % = percentage, * = $p < 0.05$, ** = $p < 0.01$, *** = $p < 0.001$

Lower = interlocutor of a lower social status, Equal = interlocutor of an equal social status, Higher = interlocutor of a higher social status