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REFUSAL STRATEGIES USED BY TURKISH UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTORS OF ENGLISH

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to present what kind of refusal strategies Turkish university instructors of English use and thus aiming to contribute to the limited but growing body of research on Turkish people's refusals in English. With this goal in mind, 20 instructors in the English Language Teaching Department at a state university were given a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) consisting of 12 situations of four eliciting speech acts: three requests, three invitations, three suggestions, and three offers. At the end of the study, it was found that the participants preferred to use indirect refusal strategies the most, adjuncts the next, and direct refusal strategies the least. In addition, it was also demonstrated that the status of the interlocutor plays a role in the number of refusal strategies utilized: the higher the interlocutor's status is, the more refusal strategies the participants employ. The results of the study are hoped to pave the way for further studies involving the refusal strategies of Turkish instructors of English.

Keywords: Discourse Completion Test, status of the interlocutor, refusal strategy, speech act

Özet: Bu çalışmanın amacı, bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümünde çalışan Türk öğretim görevlilerinin ne çeşit reddetme stratejileri kullandığını sunmak ve böylece Türklerin İngiliz dilinde kullandıkları reddetme stratejileri ile ilgili sınırlı fakat genişlemekte olan bir çalışma sahasına da katkıda bulunmaktır. Bu amaçla, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümünde çalışan 20 öğretim görevlisine içerisinde sözeylemlerden üç rica, üç davet, üç öneri ve üç tekliften oluşan bir Söylem Tamamlama Testi verilmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda, katılımcıların daha çok dolaylı reddetme stratejilerini kullandıkları görülmüştür. İkinci sırada, tamamlayıcılar ve en az da dolaysız reddetme stratejilerini kullanmışlardır. Ayrıca, reddedilen kişinin toplumsal konumunun reddetme stratejilerinin sayısı üzerine etkisi olduğu saptanmıştır. Reddedilen kişinin toplumsal konumu yükseldikçe reddetme stratejilerinin sayısı da artışa geçmiştir. Çalışmada ortaya çıkan verilerle, İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümündeki Türk öğretmenlerin reddetme stratejilerini odak noktası alan çalışmaların yolunun açılacağı umut edilmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Söylem Tamamlama Testi, reddedilen kişinin toplumsal konumu, reddetme stratejisi, sözeylem

1. Introduction

Endowed with language, human beings can form infinite sets of sentences based upon a finite set of rules, and this truth has attracted researchers into dealing with language in a deeper fashion. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) are among those who made the classification of utterances into a very small set of functions possible, and their proposed theory is called the Speech Act Theory which "has been one of the basic ingredients of pragmatics for a long time" (Verschueren, 1999). On the issue of saying something, Austin's (1962) threefold distinction on saying something is as follows: 1) locutions: acts of saying something, 2) illocutions: what is done in saying something, and 3) perlocutions: what is done by saying something. The difference between "Austin and Searle lies in the derivation of the illocutionary force of an utterance- Austin argues it is the successful realisation of the speaker's intention, Searle that it is the product of the listener's interpretation of the utterance" (Coulthard, 1977: 24). In addition to this, Searle (1975) proposes 5 classes of speech acts: representatives (assertives), directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. The main focus of the study is the speech act of refusal included in the

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expressives category, which takes place when a speaker says 'no' to an offer, suggestion etc. directly or indirectly. Refusal is a dispreferred response (Al-Shboul, Maros, & Yasin, 2012; Yule, 1996), face threatening act (Brown & Levinson 1978 and 1987; Ellis, 1994; Tanck, 2002), impolite (Levinson, 1983), culture-dependent issue (Al-Eryani, 2007; Rubin, 1983; Yamagashira, 2001), and it requires a high level of pragmatic competence (Chang, 2009; Chen, 1996; Cohen, 1996; Moody, 2011; Ramos, 1991). Failure in refusing properly leads to a miscommunication between the speaker and the listener.

Refusal studies are classified under three headings: intralingual studies which focus on the refusals of a single culture or language, cross-cultural studies concentrating on the refusals across several cultures or languages, and learner-centered studies aimed at discovering how language learners learn and/or use refusals in different cultures or languages (Morkus, 2014). Among the refusal studies concentrating on the comparison of different cultures, Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) may be accredited with putting forth milestones within the field. By using a DCT, they compared the refusals of Japanese and American people and found out that excuses of Japanese people are less specific and vaguer than excuses of Americans. In addition to that, the Japanese were found to be less direct while interacting with someone higher in status. Some other examples of cross-cultural and learner-centered refusal studies are given in the following paragraphs.

Beckers (1999) compared German and American refusals and concluded that German refusals are less direct than American refusals. In another study, Nelson, Al Batal and El Bakary (2002) used DCT with 25 Egyptians and 30 Americans but in a spoken form in their home countries and in the participant's native language. They concluded that the frequencies of the direct and indirect refusal strategies are almost equal. Kwon (2004) compared English and Korean refusals in their native languages and found that Americans do not take into account status as much as the Koreans did. In addition, while Koreans have a tendency to give reasons, Americans do not favor that.

With regard to learner-centered studies, Tanck (2002) compared refusals and complaints of native speakers to that of non-native English speakers, whose first languages included Spanish, Korean, Thai, and so forth. She found that non-native speakers sometimes produced fewer components of the speech act sets of refusal and complaint than native speakers, and the quality of their components was sometimes less appropriate than native ones. Henstock (2003) used DCT and retrospective reports to compare Japanese and American refusals with native Japanese, non-native speakers of Japanese, and native speakers of American English. In conclusion, it was observed that negative politeness strategies are used by Japanese people while interacting with a higher interlocutor, yet Americans use those strategies regardless of the status. Moreover, Japanese people make use of blunt and friendly language in dialogues with someone who is equal or lower in status. Chang (2009) also used DCT and concluded that Mandarin Chinese speakers of English favor indirect refusals and specific excuses; on the other hand, Americans are very direct in their refusals while giving vague excuses. Leaving all those refusal studies aside, the next section presents brief summaries of the refusal studies conducted with Turkish participants.

2. Review of Refusal Studies Conducted with Turkish Participants

To the researcher's best knowledge, there are eleven refusal studies conducted with Turkish participants, and they will be delved into chronologically. The first of them belongs to Bulut (2000) who studied the refusals of native speakers of English, native speakers of Turkish, and advanced level Turkish learners of English. By using a written DCT and oral closed role-play,

he found both in the written and oral data that for the most preferred three semantic formulas, the choice of all three groups was the same (though the order of preference may change): excuse, reason, explanation/nonperformative/and attempt to persuade. Despite the fact that the status level of the interlocutor and the stimulating speech act were found to be influential in most cases, gender of the participants did not present any important effect. In all three groups, indirect categories were favored most, and "excuse, reason, explanation" was the most commonly used formula by them.

Sadler and Eröz (2002) studied Turkish, Lao and American participants through DCT and concluded that the most common refusal strategies of the participants are "excuse, reason, explanation" and "statement of regret". Using those strategies as the most preferred ones was connected to the high proficiency level of the participants in English. They also concluded that pragmatic transfer from non-native speakers' native language influences their English with regard to the frequency, order, and content of semantic formulas utilized in their refusals.

By using a DCT of 12 situations (three suggestions, three invitations, three requests, and three offers), Demir (2003) compared the responses of four groups of participants: Turkish users of English filling the test in English, Turkish users of English filling the same test in Turkish, native speakers of English filling the test in English, and native speakers of Turkish filling the same test in Turkish. At the end, it was seen that despite some similarities among the participants, Turkish users of English utilized similar strategies both in Turkish and in English in a way which is dissimilar from the native speakers of either language. In addition, the status of the interlocutor was found to be an important factor for the strategy choice of the participants.

To detect the similarities and differences between four groups (upper intermediate level of Turkish learners of English both in urban areas and in rural areas and native speakers of English both in urban areas and rural areas), Tekyıldız (2006) utilized a DCT consisting of three requests, three offers and three invitations in which the participants should refuse one lower, one equal, and one higher interlocutor for each type of eliciting speech act. At the end, she found out that Turkish learners of English used direct strategies more than native speakers of English, which may be the result of the easiness of saying 'No' or 'I cannot' rather than producing complex sentences in which the excuses or explanations were given. One highlighted finding is that although the strategy of "unspecific or indefinite reply" is one of the frequently used strategies by native speakers of English, the same strategy was the least used one by Turkish participants. This case was accepted as the signal of pragmatic transfer since Turkish participants hardly ever use that strategy in their native language. Besides, the status of the interlocutor was found to be important in their strategy choice because there was a tendency in all groups for eliciting direct strategies to equal and lower status interlocutors rather than to lower and higher status ones.

For tracing pragmatic transfer, Aksoyalp (2009) used a DCT with native speakers of English, native speakers of Turkish and Turkish teacher trainees of English as an interlanguage group. As a result, she found out that the interlanguage group uses indirect refusal strategies the most, then adjuncts and finally direct strategies. Based on the comparisons with native speakers of English, she concluded that there are fifty-one instances of pragmatic transfer. In another study, Çimen (2009) collected the refusals of native speakers of Turkish, native speakers of English, and Turkish EFL learners by using a DCT and concluded that refusal strategies of each group are very similar in general by having slight differences in the frequency and percentage of usages of the formulas among the groups.

In order to investigate Turkish EFL teacher trainees' competency in refusing requests, Hergüner (2009) used a DCT of 18 situations, and she found that the participants favored indirect strategies, of which "excuse, reason, explanation" and "statement of regret" are the two mostly used ones. The participants were also sensitive to the gender, social status, and social distance of the requesters, for instance, the participants used more refusal strategies for intimates and strangers than acquaintances. In Türkmen's (2010) study, the refusal strategies of Turkish, Korean and Thai college students (at an upper-intermediate level of English) were examined through two situations in a DCT in which the participants had to refuse one request and one invitation. At the end, Turkish participants were found to be using indirect refusal strategies mostly, and they favored "excuse, reason, explanation" much more than the others.

In order to present the refusal strategies of young people in conversations between people having equal status, Şahin (2011) adapted refusal scenes from an American TV Drama serial and formed a DCT consisting of 12 refusal scenes with equal-status interlocutors but with varying degree of closeness. The participants (native speakers of English, native speakers of Turkish, and Turkish teacher trainees of English) refused the requests, invitations and suggestions of their classmates, lovers, close friends, and acquaintances in the study, and one of the findings is that all the participants used the "excuse, reason, explanation" strategy for all levels of role relationship. From a cultural perspective, both Americans and Turks were found to be often indirect in their refusals. Moreover, some instances of pragmatic transfer were also found. Asmalı (2013) investigated the refusals of Turkish, Polish and Latvian pre-service English teachers through four situations in a DCT in English and he concluded that the participants mostly used indirect strategies and the most commonly used strategy is "excuse, reason, explanation". Despite different cultural background of the participants, their choice and frequency of strategies were very close to each other.

Aimed at investigating the refusal strategies of Turkish female EFL learners who are at an intermediate level, Çapar (2014) utilized English version of DCT with one group and the Turkish version with another group. Both groups favored indirect strategies, and "excuse, reason, explanation" had the highest percentage. Additionally, power was found to have an effect on the type of the strategies for both groups: while indirect strategies were preferred for higher and lower interlocutors, direct strategies were mostly used for equal status interlocutors. It was also found that there are traces of pragmatic transfer, which was thought to have arisen because of the students' lack of grammatical and pragmatic competence. As it is clearly underlined in this section, all of the studies conducted with Turkish participants involve the use of a DCT, and the majority of those studies demonstrate that "excuse, reason, explanation" is the most favored strategy. Turkish participants in aforementioned refusal studies consist of learners of English, students in ELT Departments or high-school students; however, there seems no such study conducted with Turkish university instructors of English who are thought to have the most advance level of English and who are considered to be in charge of the teaching process. For this reason, the present study intends to contribute to the field by filling that gap in the related literature.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Convenience sampling was used in the present study in which the participants are 20 Turkish university instructors of English who work at the same university as the researcher herself and who voluntarily agreed to participate. This situation earned some practicalities in terms of time and energy saving during the process of data collection. Among those twenty participants, twelve of them are female and eight of them are male whose ages range from 25

to 53. Only seven out of 20 participants have been to the United States or United Kingdom for a short time, yet the rest have not been to these countries before. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this study, the differences in their gender, age, and having been abroad were not taken into consideration.

3.2. Instrumentation

The participants were given the DCT of Beebe et al. (1990) and asked to give responses to 12 situations: three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions. Each eliciting speech act includes one lower, one equal and one higher interlocutor (see Appendix 1). For instance, while the refuser should take the role of a worker and refuse her/his boss (higher interlocutor) in Item 12, s/he should be a teacher and refuse her/his student (lower interlocutor) in Item 8. The justification for the use of DCT in this study stems from two reasons. First, there is a high degree of control over contextual variables, eliciting situation and the elicited response (Houck & Gass, 1999; Turnbull, 2001). Secondly, considering the abundance of DCT studies, the results derived from the present study would lead to an easy comparison, not only with the studies involving Turkish participants, but also with other cultures and languages.

3.3. Data Collection

DCT was distributed to 20 Turkish instructors of English. They were politely requested to write their responses to the situations and then submit it to the researcher. The participants were not directly instructed to refuse the interlocutor but asked to fill in the blanks in the dialogues in accordance with the example given at the beginning of the test. Within two weeks, every participant submitted their completed test.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data collected from twenty participants was analyzed via content analysis and in line with the classification of refusal strategies by Beebe et al. (1990) which is presented in Appendix 2. Refusal strategies consist of semantic formulas, which are described as "a word, phrase or sentence, which meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy" (Ewert & Bromberek-Dyzman, 2008: 39), and according to the classification of Beebe et al. (1990), the refusal strategies fall under three main headings:

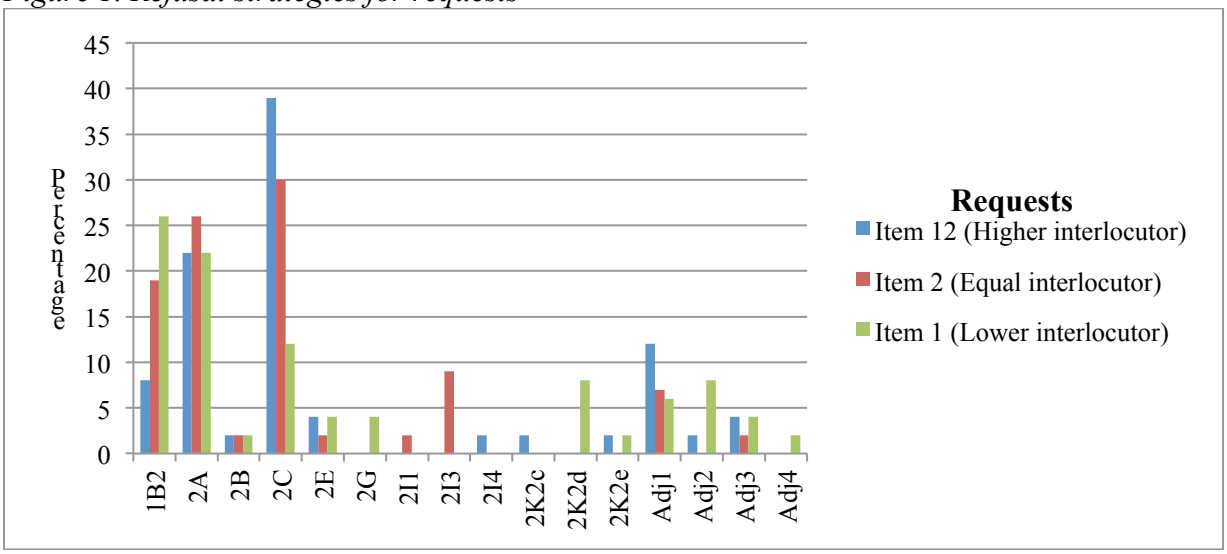
1- Direct strategies in which the speaker states the refusal directly by using performative (e.g. "I refuse") or nonperformative statement (e.g. "I can't"),
2- Indirect strategies which consists of eleven semantic formulas such as statement of wish by saying "I wish I could help you", postponing by stating "I'll think about it" and so forth, and
3- Adjuncts to refusals that can only be used together with direct or indirect strategies such as the statement of empathy by saying "I realize you are in a difficult situation".

With the aim of clarifying the analysis process, an example response of one of the participants is divided into its smaller segments below (see Appendix 3 for more responses of the participants):

> Example response for Item 5: *Well, I have been undergoing some sort of heavy strain, so I'm eating a lot. I cannot go on a diet these days*
>
> Analysis: *Well* is an example of a pause filler, so it is Adj3 (Pause fillers) / *I have been undergoing some sort of heavy strain, so I'm eating a lot* is the reason put forward by the participant. For this reason, this part is accepted as 2C (Excuse, reason, explanation)/ *I cannot go on a diet these days* shows the unwillingness of the participant, so it is 1B2 (Negative willingness/ability)

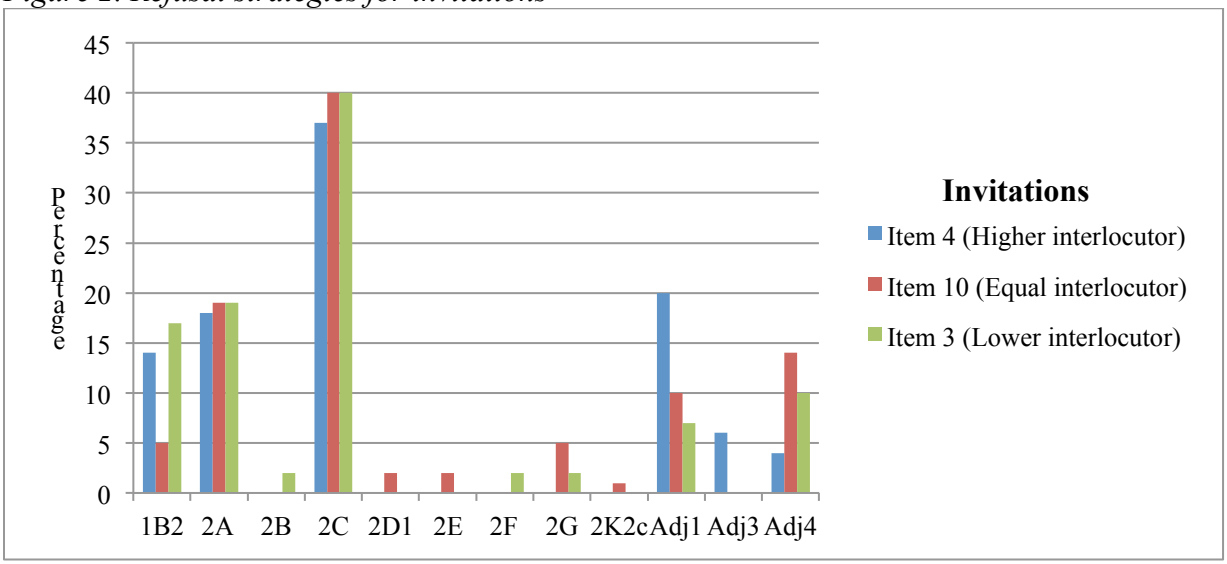
For the reliability concern, the researcher listed the whole 496 strategies of the participants with their actual wordings and randomly chose 200 of them. The researcher then presented this to a colleague, who is an instructor at the same department and who did not participate in the study. That second rater analyzed those semantic formulas, and at the end of this process, inter-rater reliability was calculated via the formula of Miles and Huberman (1994), and co-efficiency level was found .98, which was accepted as an "excellent agreement". After the formation of agreement between raters, descriptive statistics was utilized: frequency counts and percentages of the refusal strategies of the participants for each speech act were given through figures and tables. The first eliciting speech act is requests, and the items under requests are 1, 2, and 12. As it is seen in Figure 1below, participants used 1B2 (negative willingness/ability, 26%) the most for Item 1; nevertheless, for Item 2 and 12 they preferred 2C (excuse, reason, explanation, 30% and 39% respectively) the most.

Figure 1. Refusal strategies for requests



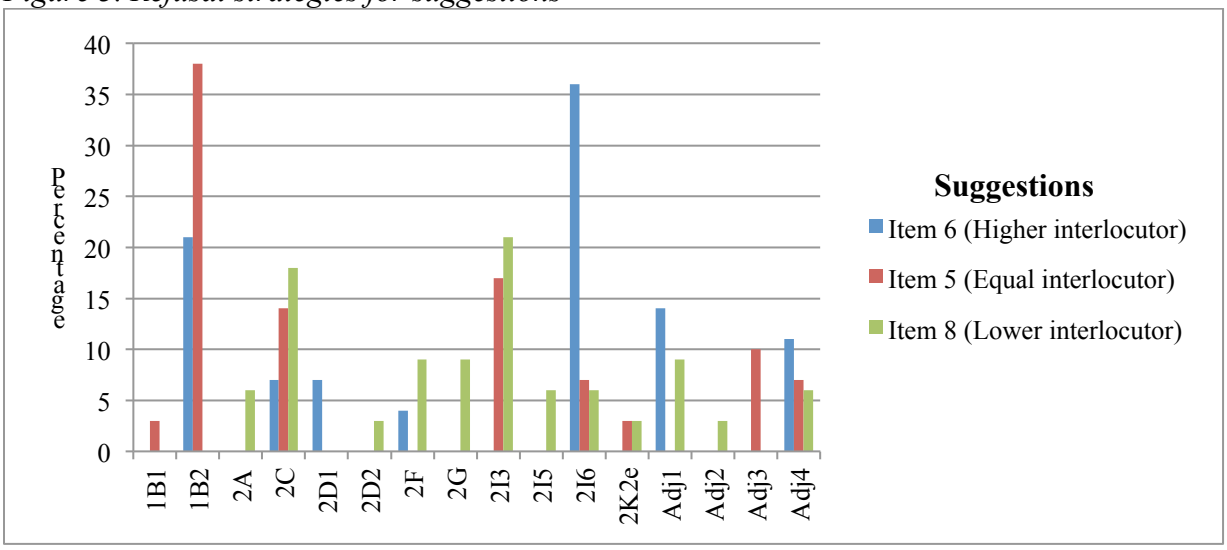
Items 3, 4, and 10 are included within invitations, and for every item in this category, the participants favored 2C (excuse, reason, explanation) the most (40%, 37% and 40% respectively) regardless of the interlocutor's status (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Refusal strategies for invitations



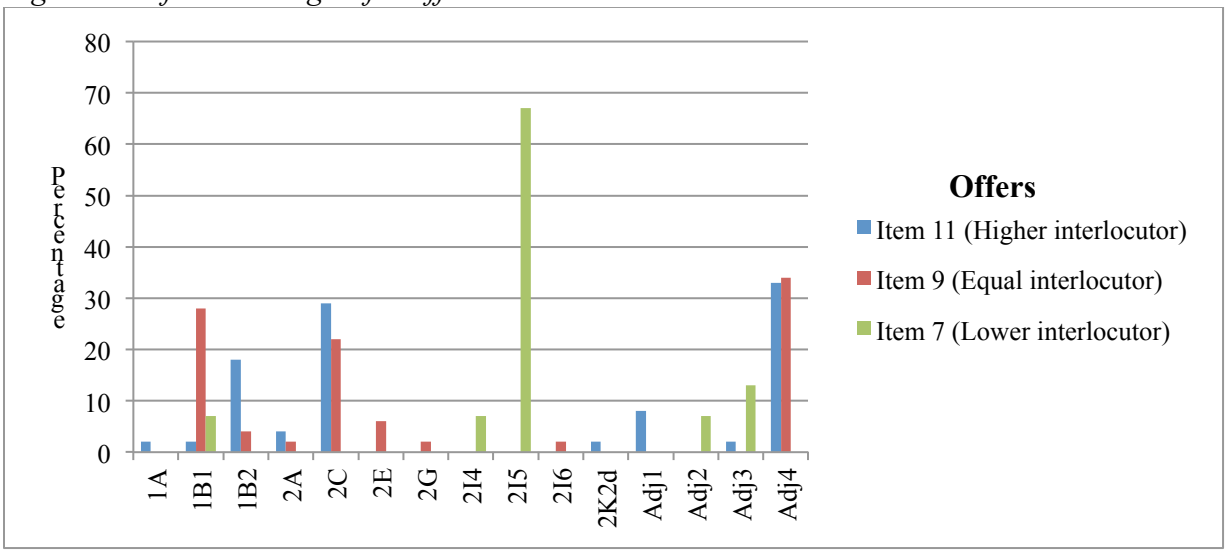
As it is demonstrated in Figure 3 below, there are again three refusal items (5, 6, and 8) within suggestions. While the participants chose to use 2I3 (criticize the request/requester, 21%) the most for a lower interlocutor in Item 8, they employed 2I6 (self-defense, 36%) the most with a higher interlocutor in Item 6. For the fifth item in which there is an equal interlocutor, the participants favored 1B2 (negative willingness/ability, 38%).

Figure 3. Refusal strategies for suggestions



Items 7, 9 and 11 are included in the offers category, and as it is shown in Figure 4, the participants preferred to use 2I5 (let interlocutor off the hook, 67%) the most with a lower interlocutor in Item 7. Nonetheless, they employed Adj4 (statement of gratitude or appreciation) the most for Item 9 and Item 11 (34% and 33% respectively).

Figure 4. Refusal strategies for offers



Item 9 differs from the other items because the participants have to refuse their friend's offer for a piece of cake twice. For the first offer (cf. Figure 4), there are eight different strategies used and the top three among those are: Adj4 (34%), 1B1 (28%), and 2C (22%). Nevertheless, for the second part of this offer in Item 9, there are striking differences, which can be thought to take place because of cultural reasons. In Turkish culture, most of the time, we -as guests-

do not have that piece of cake in the first offer, and we expect to be offered twice or three times. It is an element of our tradition and we are used to being insisted on offers about cakes or any other kind of food. In addition to that, there is no response from the offerer confirming that it should be refused. For this reason, eight participants (six females and two males) accepted the offer by writing 'OK then, just a little piece, please (P1)' or 'OK, just a little then (P18)'. Those 12 participants who refused the offer for the second time used seven strategies, and the ones mostly used are: Adj1 (33%), Adj4 (21%), and 1B1 (17%) (see Table 1). The second part of Item 9 was not included in calculations within the findings and discussion section, yet it was presented here to give a clear picture of DCT presented to the participants.

Table 1

Refusal Strategies for the Second Part of Item 9

Refusal Strategy		Frequency (n=12)	Percentage
Direct	1B1 (No)	4	17%
	1B2 (Negative willingness/ability)	1	4%
Indirect	2C (Excuse, reason, explanation)	3	13%
	2I3 (Criticize the request/requester)	2	8%
	2G (Statement of principle)	1	4%
Adjuncts	Adj1 (Statement of positive opinion)	8	33%
	Adj4 (Statement of gratitude or appreciation)	5	21%
Total		24	

4. Findings and Discussion

Turkish university instructors of English used 496 refusal strategies in total, and they used most of the strategies for the requests (29%) as it is given in Table 2. Second place is occupied by invitations (27%), and the last two are offers (26%) and suggestions (18%). On the issue of the status of the interlocutor, there are not so many striking differences: for the requests, the participants used the refusal strategies for higher and lower interlocutors with the same percentage (35%), yet the least (30%) for equal status. Among the refusal strategies for invitations, the participants used more strategies when they have a higher interlocutor (37%), yet the percentage of strategies used for the other interlocutors is the same (32%). Nevertheless, when it is a matter of suggestions, the same participants utilized more strategies for lower interlocutor (37%), which is followed by equal status (32%) and then higher interlocutor (31%). The last eliciting speech act that was offered has almost the same percentage for higher (39%) and equal interlocutor (38%), but it decreases for lower interlocutor (23%). All in all, vertical total column of Table 2 clearly demonstrates that participants have a tendency to put forward more strategies when they have a higher interlocutor.

Table 2

Total Frequency and Percentage of Refusal Strategies According to the Status of the Interlocutor and the Eliciting Type of Speech Act

The status of the Interlocutor	Strategies used for Requests (f/ %)	Strategies used for Invitations (f/ %)	Strategies used for Suggestions (f/ %)	Strategies used for Offers (f/ %)	Total (f/ %)
Lower	50 (35%)	42 (32%)	33 (37%)	30 (23%)	155 (31%)
Equal	43 (30%)	42 (32%)	29 (32%)	50 (38%)	164 (33%)
Higher	49 (35%)	49 (37%)	28 (31%)	51 (39%)	177 (36%)
Total	142 (29%)	133 (27%)	90 (18%)	131 (26%)	496

In conclusion, as it can be clearly observed in Table 3 below, the participants mostly preferred to use indirect refusal strategies (58%). Adjuncts were their second choice (24%) and the last place is occupied by direct strategies (18%). When refusal strategies were scrutinized one by one, it was perceived that 2C (excuse, reason, explanation) is the most chosen one (f=128), especially for the invitations. This strategy was followed by 1B2 (negative willingness/ability, f=69), and 2A (statement of regret, f=63), both of which were mostly utilized in response to requests.

Table 3

Total Frequency and Percentage of Each Strategy used for Eliciting Type of Speech Act

Refusal Strategies	Requests	Invitations	Suggestions	Offers	Total Frequency/percentage	
1A (Performative- e.g., 'I refuse')	-	-	-	1	1	
1B1 (No)	-	-	1	17	18	18%
1B2 (Negative willingness/ability)	25	16	17	11	69	
2A (Statement of regret)	33	25	2	3	63	
2B (Wish)	3	1	-	-	4	
2C (Excuse, reason,	38	52	12	26	128	

explanation)						
2D1 (I can do X instead of Y)	-	1	2	-	3	
2D2 (Why don't you do X instead of Y)	-	-	1	-	1	
2E (Set condition for future/past acceptance)	5	1	-	3	9	
2F (Promise of future acceptance)	-	1	4	-	5	
2G (Statement of principle)	2	3	3	1	9	
2I1 (Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester)	1	-	-	-	1	
2I3 (Criticize the request/requester)	4	-	12	-	16	58%
2I4 (Request for help/empathy/assistance by dropping or holding the request)	1	-	-	2	3	
2I5 (Let interlocutor off the hook)	-	-	2	20	22	
2I6 (Self-defense)	-	-	14	1	15	
2K2c (Repetition of part of request)	1	1	-	-	2	
2K2d (Postponement)	4	-	-	1	5	
2K2e (Hedging)	2	-	2	-	4	
Adj1 (Statement of positive opinion)	12	17	7	4	40	
Adj2 (Statement of empathy)	5	-	1	2	8	24%
Adj3 (Pause fillers)	5	3	3	5	16	
Adj4 (Statement of gratitude or appreciation)	1	12	7	34	54	

In the following parts of this section, the strategies of the participants are discussed in relation to Table 3 above under four headings: indirect refusal strategies, adjuncts, direct refusal strategies, and items requiring special attention.

4.1. Indirect Refusal Strategies

The participants mostly used indirect refusal strategies (58%), and the strategies that were used more than ten times are discussed in this section. The indirect strategy that has the highest number of choices is 2C (excuse, reason, explanation, 26%), and it was preferred over every eliciting speech act in DCT. It is certain that in Turkish culture, it is acknowledged as

inappropriate or disrespectful not to present any excuse or explanation especially when you are invited somewhere. That is the reason why 2C was used mostly for invitations. If someone invites you to a dinner or a party, it means that s/he gives you importance and honor through that invitation, and refusing that invitation without presenting any excuse is accepted as a very rude behavior. To clarify this issue further, a Turkish proverb can be given here: "*Çağrılan yere erinme; çağrılmadığın yere görünme"* which means "Run to the party if you are invited; do not even show your face if you are not".

The use of 2C varies according to the status of the interlocutor especially for requests and suggestions: while the number of participants using this strategy for the requests increases from a lower interlocutor to the higher ones, the opposite situation takes place for the suggestions. For the requests, six participants used 2C with a lower interlocutor, 11 participants used it with an equal interlocutor, and 19 participants used it with a higher interlocutor. However, for the suggestions, six participants used 2C with a lower interlocutor, four participants used it with an equal interlocutor, and only two participants used it with a higher interlocutor. This change may result from the very nature of the requests and suggestions as Geis (2006: 133) states that request takes place when the initiator wants the responder to do something for the initiator, yet suggestion occurs when the initiator wants the responder to do something that will be beneficial for the responder. This may come to mean that requests -in comparison with suggestions- are not so easy to refuse especially with a higher interlocutor.

The second most preferred indirect strategy is the strategy of 2A (statement of regret), and similar to 2C, it was used for every eliciting speech act in DCT. Nevertheless, although this strategy was used for all the items in requests and invitations, it is absent in Item 5 and Item 6 (suggestions from an equal and a higher interlocutor) and Item 7 (an offer from a lower interlocutor). Thus, it might be inferred that there is not much difference in the usage of 2A according to the status of the interlocutor but it changes according to the eliciting type of speech act in DCT. The strategy of 2I5 (let interlocutor off the hook) was not preferred for requests and invitations, and it was used only for two items (Item 7 which is an offer from a lower interlocutor and Item 8 which is a suggestion from a lower interlocutor). While all of the participants chose it for Item 7, only two participants used that for Item 8. As a result, it can be concluded that the participants seemed to reserve 2I5 for only suggestions and offers from a lower interlocutor. The strategy of 2I3 (criticize the request/requester) was used only for requests and suggestions. On the issue of the status of the interlocutor, 2I3 was never used with higher interlocutors, but instead was used with equal (Items 2 and 5) and lower interlocutors (Item 8). The strategy of 2I3 has the highest percentage (21%) for Item 8 which might have been stemmed from the fact that the participants are also teachers like in the scenario in DCT. They probably did not mind criticizing the student, which may be the consequence of hearing similar suggestions from their students before.

The strategy of 2I6 (self-defense) was never used for requests and invitations, but was used for only one of the offers (Item 9) and only by one participant. Nonetheless, this strategy was used for every suggestion item with a varying number of participants. While two participants used the strategy with a lower (Item 8) and an equal interlocutor (Item 5), ten participants used it with a higher interlocutor (Item 6). It is noteworthy that this strategy has the highest percentage for Item 6 in which the participant has to refuse her boss's suggestion of writing little reminders in order to be more organized. Since the scenario is set in an office atmosphere and since the workers get paid, the participants might have felt that they should show that they are not disorganized but they have some other methods to keep the works

going on. Despite their low frequency, the strategies of 2D1 (I can do X instead of Y) and 2D2 (why don't you do X instead of Y) need to be discussed here since they form a basis of comparison. 2D1 was used only for Item 10 (invitation from an equal interlocutor) and Item 6 (suggestion from a higher interlocutor); nevertheless, 2D2 was used only for Item 8 (suggestion from a lower interlocutor). Although the number of the participants using these strategies is not so high for a valid comparison, these examples show that 2D1 was reserved for equal and higher interlocutors while 2D2 was utilized for lower ones. From these outcomes, it is quite understandable that, giving advice (as in 2D2) to a higher interlocutor can be accepted as rude, for this reason, a much softer form of that which is 2D1 was preferred by the participants.

4.2. Adjuncts

Adjuncts are the second most preferred refusal strategies (24%), and the participants used all four adjuncts for every eliciting type of speech act of DCT, except for invitations, since Adj2 was not used for invitations. Among those four adjuncts, the participants used Adj4 (statement of gratitude or appreciation) much more than the others, and this adjunct was preferred especially for offers from equal and higher interlocutors. For instance, the participants used Adj4 for Items 9 and 11 with the highest percentage (34% and 33% respectively). The second mostly used adjunct is Adj1 (statement of positive opinion), which was favored largely for invitations, and the third and the fourth strategies are Adj3 (pause fillers), and Adj2 (statement of empathy) respectively. On the basis of these findings, it can be deduced that all the adjuncts were chosen for all types of eliciting speech act in DCT despite the fact that Adj4 was preferred mostly for offers while Adj1 was mainly chosen for invitations.

4.3. Direct Refusal Strategies

Direct refusal strategies are the least preferred strategies (18%) by the participants. For every item in DCT, the participants made use of direct strategies except for Item 8, and in every item that the direct strategies were used, the participants utilized the strategy of 1B2 (negative willingness/ability) except for Item 7; that is why this strategy is the most preferred direct strategy (especially for the requests). From a closer look, it was observed that the status of the interlocutor does not have a big impact on the frequency of this strategy. The second most preferred direct strategy is 1B1 (no), which was used for all of the offers and one of the suggestions (Item 8) but not for requests and invitations. This strategy was used for every offer (Items 7, 9, and 11) regardless of the status of the interlocutor but with a varying number of participants. While 14 participants used it for the equal interlocutor (Item 9), two participants chose it for a lower interlocutor (Item 7), and only one participant used it for a higher interlocutor (Item 11). This situation might have been caused by the reality that in Turkish culture, it is easier to say direct ‘No’ to your peers, friends and so on, yet it is not so easy when it comes to different status interlocutors, especially with a higher interlocutor. The least preferred direct strategy is 1A (performative- e.g., ‘I refuse’) and it was used only for the eleventh item (offer from a higher interlocutor) and only by one participant, which again shows the rare usage of direct strategies.

4.4. Items requiring special attention

Two items that deserve special attention in DCT are Item 7 and Item 8. The reason why Item 7 (in which the participant has a higher status and has to refuse her cleaning lady’s offer to pay for the broken vase) requires an extra interest is that it has the lowest total number of different strategies. Only five different refusal strategies were used for this item, which means that the participants do not vary much in their choice of refusal strategies. One other

interesting issue about Item 7 is that all of the participants made use of strategy 2I5 (let interlocutor off the hook), and there is no other item that all the participants unanimously used the same strategy. In every item that the direct strategies were used, the participants utilized the strategy of 1B2 (negative willingness/ability). Nevertheless, no participant used that strategy for Item 7 but instead only two participants used 1B1 (no) as a direct strategy with the aim of directly cutting the conversation short and giving the message transmitted to the cleaning lady as direct as possible. The strategy of 2C (excuse, reason, explanation) was used for every item in DCT with a varying percentage, it is, nevertheless, absent in Item 7. Moreover, the strategy of 2A (statement of regret) was chosen for all the items in requests, invitations, and two offers; however, it is absent in Item 7 despite it is an offer, too.

The next item that requires special attention is Item 8 in which the participants should take the role of a language teacher at a university and refuse one of her student's suggestions. The most striking thing about this item is that although the participants used direct refusal strategies for all the other items, there is no one participant who used a direct strategy for this item. In addition to that, the strategy of 2I3 (criticize the request/requester) is the most selected strategy, and it is used with a lower interlocutor only for this item. Another striking thing about this item is that the strategy of 2I5 (let interlocutor off the hook) was used only for Item 7 and Item 8, which shows the tendency of using this strategy with lower interlocutors. These findings might be the indication of the fact that since the participants are already language teachers at a university and since they probably have had similar experiences beforehand, they might have tended to be indirect and criticized the student. In the light of these analyses, it can be concluded that having experienced similar events may affect the use of the refusal strategy used for that item. The participants in this study are all language teachers at the same university (Item 8), and most of them are females who hire a cleaning lady regularly (Item 7). These realities might have an effect on the choice of the refusal strategies to a great extent; yet, it should -of course- be verified by some other participants who are not language teachers at universities or females who do not hire cleaning ladies.

5. Conclusion

This study is aimed at describing the refusal strategies of Turkish university instructors of English with respect to the type of eliciting speech act, and the status of the interlocutor. Participants used 496 strategies in total, and indirect strategies have the highest percentage (58%), which is also the case in many other refusal studies such as Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1991), Houck & Gass (1999), Nelson et al. (2002), and Tanck (2002). The second class of strategy is the adjuncts (24%), and direct strategies have the least percentage (18%). Turkish participants' preference for the indirect strategies might be due to the fact that Turkish people accept directness as a sign of rudeness towards the other. Thus, they prefer indirect strategies so as to be more polite (see also Aksoyalp, 2009; Asmalı, 2013; Bulut, 2000; Hergüner, 2009; Şahin, 2011; Türkmen, 2010). The three most favored strategies are 2C (excuse, reason, explanation, 26%), 1B2 (negative willingness/ability, 14%), and 2A (statement of regret, 13%). The fact that 2C is the most frequent strategy in previous research of refusals was also stated by Al-Issa (1998), Chang (2009), and Kwon (2004).

There are some indirect refusal strategies that were not used by the participants, and 2J1 (unspecific or indefinite reply) is one of them. In her study, Tekyıldız (2006) found that despite the fact that native speakers of English frequently used that strategy, Turkish participants used it the least, and she concluded that it might be accepted as an example of pragmatic transfer since Turkish participants almost never use the strategy in their native language. If this is the case, then the situation here -absence of 2J1- might signal the presence

of pragmatic transfer, too. Of the four eliciting speech act categories, the participants used the highest percentage of refusal strategies for requests (29%). As for the invitations and offers, the participants utilized almost the same percentage of strategies (27% and 26% respectively), and the lowest percentage was preferred for suggestions (18%). The percentage of the refusal strategies increases together with the status of the interlocutor; that is, Turkish participants used more strategies for the higher interlocutors, rather less for the equal and the least for the lower interlocutors.

All these refusal studies aim at a better conversation, and for the realization of an effective communication in a foreign language, language competence or grammatical competence is not sufficient. As Yule (2010: 136) states "understanding how successful communication works is actually a process of interpreting not just what speakers say, but what they 'intend to mean'". In other words, the learners should also be aware of the socio-cultural norms about that language, and this requires the learners to be exposed to authentic settings where that language is used. However, Turkish learners' exposure to English is almost always restricted to classroom settings where the only source is the teacher. This situation puts a lot of responsibilities on the shoulders of the teachers, especially in the university settings. When curriculum of ELT Departments in Turkey is examined, it can be observed that there are "Oral and Effective Communication Skills" and some elective courses where the appropriateness of speech act used in accordance with social status, gender and so forth can be scrutinized. Not only the scarcity of such courses but also the absence of native speakers within the departments might eliminate the possibility of creating communicative atmospheres where students hear and use refusals, apologies, suggestions and so forth.

Lyuh (1992: 119) states that awareness of diversity in terms of social behaviors makes it possible to view the differences as differences rather than inferiority or abnormality. Within this line of reasoning, presenting Turkish university instructors' refusal strategies performed in English is hoped to contribute to the field so as to observe the similarities or differences with native speakers' refusal strategies. However, it should be noted that the present study does reflect only the refusals of instructors of English at the university where the researcher works, and to have a generalization about Turkish university instructors of English, of course, more data is needed.

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Appendix 1
Discourse Completion Test

Please fill in the blanks in the following items by taking the example into consideration.

Example: You work in a department store. You are busy helping someone when one of your regular customers asks to see something in the display case.
You: I'm sorry, I'll be with you in a minute.
Customer: Okay, I'll wait then.

1. You are the owner of a bookstore. One of the best workers asks to speak to you in private.
Worker: As you know, I've been here just a little over a year now, and I know you've been pleased with my work. I really enjoy working here, but to be quite honest, I really need an increase in pay.
You: _____
Worker: Then I guess I'll have to look for another job.

2. You are a junior in college. You attend classes regularly and take good notes. Your classmate often misses classes and asks you for the lecture notes.
Classmate: Oh God! We have an exam tomorrow but I don't have the notes from last week. I am sorry to ask you this, but could you please lend me your notes again?
You: _____
Classmate: O.K., then I guess I'll have to ask somebody else.

3. You are the president of the printing company. A sales man from a printing machine company invites you to one of the most expensive restaurants in New York.
Salesman: We have met several times to discuss your purchase of my company's products. I was wondering if you would like to be my guest at Lutece in order to firm up a contract.
You: _____
Salesman: Perhaps another time.

4. You are a top executive at a very large accounting firm. One day the boss calls you into his office.
Boss: Next Sunday my wife and I are having a little party. I know it's short notice but I am hoping all my top executives will be there with their wives. What do you say?
You: _____
Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping everyone would be there.

5. You're at a friend's house watching T.V. He/she offers you a snack.
You: Thanks, but no thanks. I've been eating like a pig and I feel just terrible. My clothes don't even fit me.
Friend: Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about?
You: _____
Friend: You should try it anyway.

6. 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 walks over.
Boss: You now, maybe you should try to organize yourself better. I always write myself little notes to remind me of things. Perhaps you should give it a try!
You: _____
Boss: Well, it's an idea anyway.

7. You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to you.
Cleaning lady: Oh God, I'm 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: (Knowing that the cleaning lady is supporting three children.) _____
Cleaning lady: No, I'd feel better if I paid for it.

8. You're a language teacher at a university. It is just about the middle of the term now and one of your students asks to speak to you.
Student: Ah, 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 give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar.
You: _____
Student: O.K., it was only a suggestion.

9. You are at a friend's house for lunch.
Friend: How about another piece of cake?
You: _____
Friend: Come on, just a little piece?
You: _____

10. A friend invites you to dinner, but you really can't stand this friend's husband/wife.
Friend: How about coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party.
You: _____
Friend: O.K., maybe another time.

11. You've been working in an advertising agency now for some time. The boss offers you a raise and promotion, but it involves moving. You don't want to go. Today, the boss calls you into his office.
Boss: I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new offices in Hicktown. It's a great town – only three hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position.
You: _____
Boss: Well, maybe you should give it some more thought before turning it down.

12. 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.
Boss: If you don't mind, I'd like you to spend an extra hour or two tonight so that we can finish up with this work.
You: _____
Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping you could stay.

Appendix 2
Classification of Refusals (from Beebe et al., 1990)

1. Direct
A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse")
B. Nonperformative statement
    1. "No"
    2. Negative willingness/ability (e.g.,"I can't." "I won't." "I don't think so.")
2. Indirect
A. Statement of regret (e.g., "I'm sorry ..."; "I feel terrible ...")
B. Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help you ...")
C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; I have a headache.")
D. Statement of alternative
    1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., "I'd rather ..."; "I'd prefer ...")
    2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have ...")
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"; "I promise I'll ..." or "Next time I'll ..." -- using "will" of promise or "promise")
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 a living of people who just order coffee.")
    3. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack (e.g. "Who do you think you are?; 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." "You don't have to.")
    6. Self-defense (e.g. "I'm trying my best." "I'm doing all I can do." "I no do nutting wrong.")
J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal
    1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
    2. Lack of enthusiasm
K. Avoidance
    1. Nonverbal (a. Silence, b. Hesitation, c. Doing nothing, d. Physical departure)
    2. Verbal (a. Topic switch, b. Joke, c. Repetition of part of request etc. (e.g., "Monday?"), d. Postponement (e.g., "I'll think about it."), e. Hedging (e.g., "Gee, I don't know." "I'm not sure.")

Adjuncts to Refusals
Adj1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (e.g. "That's a good idea..." "I'd love to...")
Adj2. Statement of empathy (e.g. "I realize you are in a difficult situation.")
Adj3. Pause fillers (e.g. "uhh"; "well"; "oh"; "uhm")
Adj4. Statement of gratitude or appreciation (e.g. "thanks"; "I really appreciate it")

Appendix 3

Example Responses of the Participants

For each item, two examples are presented among the participants' refusal strategies. For ethical reasons, participants (Participant is referred to as P below) are represented by numbers: the first 12 participants (from 1 to 12) are females and the remaining eight participants (from 13 to 20) are males.

Item 1: (P4) *'I'm sorry, under these circumstances it is impossible'*

(P16) '*I understand you, but I can't help you, I am sorry. Just because of the economic crisis we are in'*

Item 2: (P9) '*I am afraid I can't since I'll need them'*

(P13) '*I would if I could but I left it at home'*

Item 3: (P6) '*I'm very busy, maybe next time'*

(P15) '*At the moment, I am not convenient'*

Item 4: (P5) '*I'm afraid we can't. We planned a weekend away'*

(P20) '*Sorry, but my son is getting married so I'll be at the wedding.*'

Item 5: (P2) '*I don't think it would work'*

(P17) '*Well, I have been undergoing some sort of heavy strain, so I'm eating a lot. I cannot go on a diet these days'*

Item 6: (P1) '*That's a good idea, but I prefer using a filing system.*'

(P18) '*Thank you very much, but I don't think it will work'*

Item 7: (P6) '*You don't need to pay for it, that was an accident'*

(P15) '*It doesn't matter'*

Item 8: (P8) '*Who do you think you are to tell me what I should do?*'

(P15) *'I'm sorry, but I don't have any time.'*

Item 9 (first part): (P7) '*No, thank you. I am on a diet'*

(P13) *'No, thanks'*

Item 9 (second part): (P9) '*Thank you. I can't.*'

(P15) '*No, thanks'*

Item 10: (P4) '*Sunday night? We were invited to my wife's boss's party'*

(P19) '*Thank you so much. But work, work, work. I'm just so crazy busy'*

Item 11: (P10) '*Well, that sounds good. But I think my husband will not like the idea of moving'*

(P15) '*No, thanks, but I have to take care of my family here'*

Item 12: (P3) '*I know that we need to finish up, but I promised my son to take him out for dinner since it is his birthday'*

(P18) '*I am terribly sorry, but today is my fiancee's birthday. I made some arrangements, so I can't stay'*