

**T.C.
İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

**ANALYSIS OF TURKISH EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' USE OF REFUSAL
STRATEGIES IN DIFFERENT LEVELS**

MEHMET ÇELİKBAŞ

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YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI

İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ PROGRAMI

YRD. DOÇ. DR. KIMBERLY ANNE BROOKS-LEWIS

TEZ DANIŞMANI

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ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE'Yİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN FARKLI SEVİYELERDEKİ TÜRK ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN REDDETME STRATEJİLERİNİN ANALİZİ

Bu çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen üniversite hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin, reddetme stratejilerini öğrenme sürecini keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Veri toplama yöntemi olarak Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) tarafından geliştirilen Söylem Tamamlama Aracı (Discourse Completion Task-DCT) ve öğrenci röportajları kullanılmıştır. Temel veriler anadili Türkçe olan (Türk) ve anadili İngilizce olan (Amerikalı) iki gruptan toplanmıştır. Bu temel veriler hazırlık öğrencilerinden elde edilen verilerin analizinde kullanılmıştır. Orijinal biçiminden farklı olarak, DCT'deki her sorunun sonuna "katılımcı muhakemesi" adı verilen bir açık uçlu kısım eklenerek öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. Nicel analizde, reddetme stratejilerinin sıklık sayımları değişkenler (cinsiyet, durum, statü, yeterlilik seviyesi) içerisinde incelenmiştir. Nitel analizde, öğrencilerin reddetme yanıtları içerik ve açıklık bakımından incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, belirttikleri "katılımcı muhakemesi" kısımları, verdikleri cevapların arkasında yatan mantığı anlamak amacı ile incelenmiştir. Son olarak öğrenci röportaj cevapları araştırmacı tarafından elde edilen veriler ışığında yorumlanmıştır. Sonuçlar, öğrencilerin seviyesi arttıkça daha fazla sayıda strateji kullandıklarına işaret etmektedir. Daha yüksek yeterlilik seviyelerinde, reddetme seçimleri daha dolaylı olmaktadır. Dolaylı reddetmelerde, mazeret/sebep ve pişmanlık stratejileri çokça kullanılmıştır. Dillerarası aktarım bakımından, öğrencilerin anadillerinden çok miktarda aktarım yapmadıkları sonucuna varılmıştır. Muhakeme kısımları incelendiğinde, pre-intermediate seviyedeki öğrencilerin dolaylı reddetme stratejilerini kullanabilecekken kullanmamayı tercih ettikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu da yeterli edimlilik yetisine sahip olmadıklarını ima etmektedir. Mazeret/sebep stratejisinde aile bireyleri sıkça kullanılmıştır. Röportajlar sonrasında öğrenciler arasındaki yaygın görüş, reddetme stratejilerini ve uygun dil kullanımı öğrenmek istedikleri yönündedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Reddetme stratejileri, Edimlilik, İngilizce öğretimi

ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF TURKISH EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' USE OF REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN DIFFERENT LEVELS

This study aims to explore the learning process of prep school EFL students in terms of refusal strategies. The Discourse Completion Task (DCT) developed by Beebe et. al. (1990) and interviews were used as data collection instruments. The baseline data was collected from native Turkish speakers and native English speakers (American). The baseline data was used for the analysis of the data from EFL students. Different from the original version, the DCT was administered to students with an additional open ended section in each question called “participant reasoning”. For quantitative analysis, frequency counts of refusal strategies are examined within variables (gender, situation, status, proficiency level). For qualitative analysis, students’ refusal responses were analyzed in terms of content and directness. Also, reasoning they provided was analyzed in order to tap into their reasoning behind their answers. Finally, student interviews are analyzed in the light of the data collected. Results suggest that students use more number of strategies as their level improves. Their refusal choices became more indirect in higher proficiency levels. In indirect refusals, excuse/reason and regret were widely used. As for interlanguage transfer, it was concluded that students did not transfer much from their first language. When reasoning sections are analyzed, it was found that pre-intermediate students actually had possibilities to use indirect refusals but they did not choose to. It implies that they did not possess the necessary pragmatic competence. Family members were frequently used for excuse/reason. After the interviews, common view among students was that they want to be taught refusal strategies and appropriate language use.

Key Words: Refusal strategies, Pragmatics, Teaching English

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

SYMBOL/ABBREVIATION

DCT	:	Discourse Completion Test
EFL	:	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	:	English Language Teaching
FLL	:	Foreign Language Learners
FTA	:	Face Threatening Act



CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

As social beings, humans are continuously in contact with each other. The purposes of contacts may differ from asking for information to simply saying hello. While carrying out these actions, interaction is inevitable. In each interaction, people want to be accepted as a member of the group. However, people may also sometimes want to be alone or be free to do whatever they desire. Life brings situations in which a person might choose either the action that will be accepted or the action that s/he desires. This struggle of choice shapes people's relationships and acceptance of self and others.

In certain situations, such as invitations and suggestions, a person is expected to offer an affirmative or negative answer. Everyone is free to choose either option. However, they both consciously and subconsciously think about possible consequences of their answers.

In certain situations, people choose to give a negative answer, which may lead to refusal. Refusal is performed "when a speaker directly or indirectly says 'no' to a request, invitation, suggestion or offer" (Allami and Naeimi, 2011). However, refusal is an action that may hurt, offend or simply make other people unhappy. Therefore, people may encounter negative responses such as miscommunications, misunderstandings, communication breakdowns, etc. Foreign Language Learners (FLL) are more likely to encounter such results because of two reasons:

- 1- the refusal strategies in their own culture and language may be different from those of their target language and culture, or
- 2- they are not exposed to the target culture or language and depend on what they are taught in class.

As a result, it is essential to provide language learners with strategies and knowledge of the target culture, including information about making refusals.

Misunderstanding is, of course, an undesired occurrence in interactions. It can derive from different linguistic domains such as the lexical, phonetic and pragmatic. The departure point of this study is to investigate and provide implications for possible miscommunications within the pragmatic domain in terms of making refusals. Pragmatic competence is defined as the way an addressee interprets what the speaker is saying and recognizes the meaning conveyed through utterances and attitudes (Fraser, 1983). Among other speech acts, Cohen (1996) states that pragmatic competence is the most difficult ability for a foreign language learner to attain, and refusal strategies require a high level of pragmatic competence.

Thomas (1995) states that pragmatic rules of a language are implicit and difficult to unveil. Therefore, it is a teacher's responsibility to focus on pragmatic rules and draw the FLL's attention to what is acceptable in the target language. Otherwise, it is almost impossible for a FLL to analyze, interpret and internalize the use of these rules, since the main interactive exposure to the target language for them is in classroom. Unfortunately, the study by Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan and Reynolds (1991) shows that English language teaching textbooks mostly focus on the correct use of grammar in a mechanical way and do not cover pragmatically convenient and naturally occurring conversations.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Pragmatic competence is such a demanding area to teach because it requires both a good grasp of the target culture and a high level of target language proficiency. Being in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context makes learning and internalizing this aspect of communication more difficult. Therefore, a teacher needs to review the reports of carefully conducted research to learn about methods for teaching pragmatic competence in the language classrooms. This study aims to contribute to teachers' knowledge, understanding and practice. The research focuses on refusal strategies of Turkish prep school students who were studying EFL in Istanbul, Turkey.

The present study has the goal of contributing to the areas of pragmatics in teaching EFL and of cognitive psychology of language students. The reasons that make this study significant are as follows:

First of all, considering studies on refusals in the Turkish context, the participants in this study were prep school students learning English who were at different proficiency levels and from different academic departments. Other studies have focused on English teacher trainees (Şahin, 2011; Çimen, 2009; Aksoyalp, 2009), highly proficient learners (Sadler and Eröz, 2011), only female students (Çapar, 2014), or participants who are not students (Moody, 2011).

Secondly, in a global context, I was unable to find any study with the aim of exploring the cognitive process, reasoning or thinking of the participants. This study provided participants with an open-ended section on the questionnaire that was used to collect data in order to allow participants to freely express the logic or their thoughts behind the responses they gave for their refusals. Other studies have only focused on the participants' short answer responses in answering written questions which require either affirmation or refusal.

Thirdly, the current study used randomly selected samples from the data collected in order to maintain the objectivity. A simple random sampling method was used to reduce the likelihood of bias.

Lastly, this study employs two data collection methods rather than only a questionnaire of discourse completion tasks. Interviews were also performed to collect further qualitative data to synthesize with the quantitative data to draw more precise and reliable implications and more complex and meaningful understanding as to learners' comprehension and grasp of the pragmatics of making refusals.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1- What are the most common refusal strategies employed by Turkish students learning English with regard to gender (male, female), different proficiency levels (pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate) different status of interlocutors (higher, equal, lower) and different speech acts (requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions)?

2- What are the differences between native Turkish speakers, Turkish EFL learners and native English speakers (American) in terms of refusal strategies?

3- If there is a difference to the previous question, does the proficiency level of Turkish EFL students affect the possible pragmatic transfer?

4- What is the cognitive processing and reasoning of Turkish students learning English when using refusal strategies?



CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 SPEECH ACTS

To begin with, J. L. Austin, an Oxford philosopher, gave William James Lectures at Harvard University in 1955, and these lectures were later published as a book called *How to Do Things with Words* in 1962. This work of Austin (1962) laid the foundations for the Speech Act Theory, which was developed further by Searle (1969, 1979).

As Yule (1996) succinctly explained, “actions performed via utterances are called speech acts”. Austin (1962) divides these utterances into three types: (1) locution, (2) illocution, (3) perlocution. Locution can be defined as the act producing a meaningful utterance or expression. Illocutionary acts carry the intention within the sentence. Perlocution is the effect on a listener as a result of locution. Cohen (1973) provides an interesting explanation:

“A locution is an act *of* saying something, an illocution is an act done *in* saying something, a perlocution is an act done *by* saying something.”

To illustrate, the sentence “Can we please close the window?” is an utterance. The oral production of this sentence is the locutionary act. An illocutionary act, on the other hand, is the intended meaning of speaker which may be “I am cold” or “The room is getting cold”. Perlocutionary act is the action of closing the window because the locution is not a question. It is actually a request and the final effect would be reaching to the requested act. Perlocution does not need words. It can only be an action.

An important point to consider is that not all the locutionary acts are interpreted as the intended illocutionary meaning. This may be because of a variety of circumstances. Yule (1996) provides an example on this issue. The locutionary sentence “I’ll see you later” can be interpreted as:

- a. I predict that ...
- b. I promise you that ...
- c. I warn you that

In the light of the Speech Act Theory, sentences are seen as tools to perform certain actions and perform certain reactions, not simply to transfer information.

Austin (1962) considered these kind of sentences to be performatives. However, for each performative to be successful, there are certain conditions called felicity conditions. The word “felicity” is defined by the Webster dictionary as “great happiness” or “something that is pleasing and well-chosen”, and felicity conditions help performatives to successfully bring about their intended actions. Austin (1962) grouped these conditions as follows:

- A. (i) There needs to be a conventional procedure with a conventional effect.
(ii) The situations and interlocutors should be appropriate.
- B. The procedure mentioned in A should be carried out
 - (i) correctly
 - (ii) completely
- C. (i) Interlocutors should have appropriate thoughts, feelings and intentions.
(ii) If the final outcome is obvious, then interlocutors should perform it.

Based on Austin’s ideas, Searle (1969) proposed four main types of felicity conditions. The first one, propositional content conditions, focuses mainly on the textual content or what the speech act is about. For example, including a past action is a propositional content condition for an apology. The second category includes preparatory conditions which is about background circumstances and includes requirements or assumptions for the speech act. For instance, when a speaker requests an action from someone, the preparatory condition is the speaker’s belief that the other person has the ability to perform the speech act. The third category is called ‘sincerity conditions’, which takes into account the psychological state or degree of sincerity on part of the speaker. To illustrate, in case of a promise, the speaker should have the sincere intention to keep the promise. The final group is essential conditions, where the main focus is on the illocutionary point. If a speaker asks “Is Jimmy there?” on the phone, the real intention is a request to speak to Jimmy rather than asking for information as to his whereabouts.

Searle (1969) refined the work of Austin (1962) and proposed 5 categories of speech acts:

1. Directives: The speaker’s intention is to make the listener perform an action in a linguistic form such as an order, a forbidding, an instruction, or a request.

2. Assertives: Aimed to express the speaker's belief and convince the listener of the proposed truth, this is expressed in such linguistic forms as reporting, claiming, announcing, or stating.
3. Declaratives: Used as an exercise of right or power make a change in an institutional state of affairs such as marriage, appointment, discharge from employment, or as a warning.
4. Expressives: Express the psychological state or attitude of the speaker to a certain condition or affair in such instances as showing thanks, apologizing, greeting, or congratulating.
5. Commissives: They state the speaker's action or commitment to do something such as promising, offering, inviting, or guaranteeing.

The focus of this study, refusal, belongs to the category of commissives.

Searle (1975) brings another differentiation to speech acts in terms of directness. Direct speech acts carry the same meaning both in locution and illocution, whereas an illocutionary act is performed indirectly through the use of another speech act. For instance, the question "Is it cold in here?" is an indirect speech act because it actually implies a request but the listener may need to read between the lines to understand the expected act. For a direct speech act, "Do you want another piece of cake?" can be given as an example because it requires an answer.

2.2 POLITENESS THEORY

Politeness can be described as the appropriate behavior which takes others into consideration (Kasper, 1994). Politeness is crucial in social interactions to act in accordance with the politeness concept to maintain a good relationship and understanding. In human interaction, it can act as a controlling mechanism (Huang, 2007).

Proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), Politeness Theory is the most comprehensive and influential theoretical base to date for the subject of politeness in the language teaching context. The theory is based on the concept of 'face', which was proposed by Goffman (1955). It is described by Brown and Levinson (1987) as "... the public self-image that every member [of a society] wants to claim for himself". They consider that face, as a concept, can be preserved, maintained or lost in certain

situations. They also state that people need to consider the face needs of themselves and others, and these needs may be different across cultures. Maintaining face for all interlocutors in an interaction holds the key to success in social contacts.

Expectations of a person's public self-image are called 'face wants'. Each person wishes their face wants to be respected by other people. Politeness helps interlocutors to uphold so that face is not lost by anyone in any situation.

It is also claimed in Brown and Levinson's (1987) work that face has two universal variations: negative face and positive face. Positive face refers to a person's desire to be accepted or to be considered as a member of community, and is seen in speech acts in which, speakers may seek approval, solidarity or agreement from others. Negative face refers to a person's wish to act freely without any imposition from others. In social interactions, negative face is expressed by being indirect or apologetic in order to protect face or face wants. Positive face is generally expressed by agreement or in an accepting way.

There are certain speech acts that have a high possibility of causing a loss of face if they are not expressed in a careful and appropriate way. These kinds of speech acts such as complaints, disagreements, and criticisms are called face threatening acts (FTAs). Refusal is also considered to be a highly face threatening act (Allami & Naeimi, 2011). In the case of a FTA, the speaker has two options: either to avoid or commit the FTA. Politeness strategies that can be used in this kind of a situation to mediate the effects are explained in Figure 2.1 below:

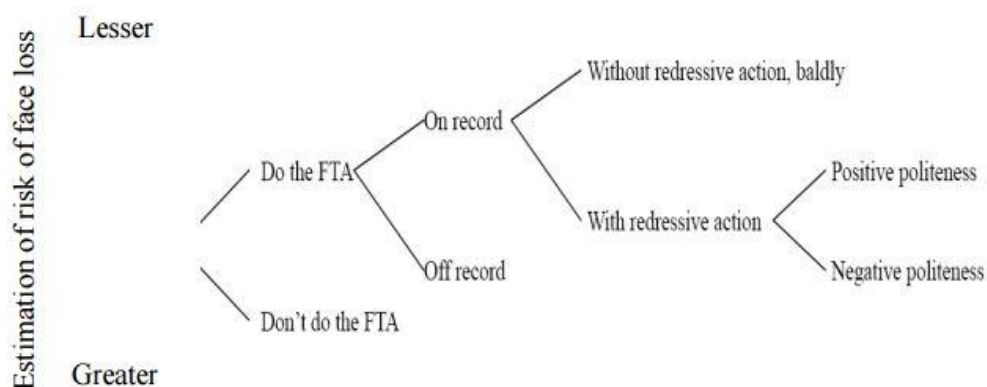


Figure 2-1: Brown and Levinson's (1987) Schematic Representation of Politeness Model

According to the figure, speakers go through stages if they choose to perform the FTA. In each stage, they are confronted with options to choose from. In the first stage, if on record is chosen, intentions are expressed directly in an open way. If off record, actions such as hints, implying or irony are used. If the decision is on record, there is a second stage of with or without redressive action. Redressive actions help interlocutors soften their way of performing the speech act. If continued without redressive action, the face threatening act is performed directly which may result in somebody losing the face. If it is performed with redressive action, it can be together with positive or negative politeness. In redressive action with positive politeness, speakers try to address the positive face of each other. If it is with negative politeness, the imposition of FTA is aimed to be reduced. Huang (2007) provides an example to explain these strategies:

Situation: John, a student, asks Mary, another student, to lend him her lecture notes.

1. On record, without redress, baldly:

Lend me your lecture notes.

2. On record, with positive politeness redress:

How about letting me have a look at your lecture notes?

3. On record, with negative politeness redress:

Could you please lend me your lecture notes?

4. Off-record:

I didn't take any notes for the last lecture.

5. Don't perform the FTA:

[John silently looks at Mary's lecture notes]

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), in selecting which strategy to use, speakers first make an assessment on the size of the FTA. The seriousness is assessed taking three factors into consideration: social distance, relative power, and absolute ranking. All three factors, of course, are considered by speakers as they are perceived by them. There is not any certain way of measure.

The first variable, social distance, refers to the familiarity between interlocutors. As the social distance increases, the degree of politeness is expected to increase. Second variable is relative power. It takes the power of hearer into

consideration. As the relative power of the hearer increase, speaker is expected to become more polite. The final variable of absolute ranking is to do with the imposition. If there is a greater level of imposition on the hearer, speaker needs to increase the politeness level. These variables hold great significance to the studies of politeness and speech acts as well as the current study.

2.3 PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

In language teaching, 20th century witnessed a huge paradigm shift. The focus of language teaching moved from single focus on structural grammar to more functional use of grammar in 1970s and 1980s (Brown, 2000). The first revolutionary change is the work of Chomsky (1965). He coined the terms competence, the ability to use linguistic forms, and performance, the knowledge of linguistic rules. However, he still paid attention to the use of single sentences rather than within context. Production of grammatically correct sentences was considered adequate.

The first person to criticize Chomskian view was Dell Hymes (1972). He suggested that communication is more than mere use of grammatically correct sentences. Speakers should have more than just linguistic competence to communicate in an effective and appropriate way. Hymes (1972) coined in the term “communicative competence”, which is key to successful communication. It includes “when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner”.

Following the notion of communicative competence, researchers attempted to define the components of communicative competence and develop theoretical frameworks. One of the first such models is the one proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). The model included three main components:

1. Grammatical competence: the syntactic and semantic rules of language system
2. Sociolinguistic competence: socio-cultural rules of language use
3. Strategic competence: verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies

Later, Canale (1983) revised this model and made a differentiation between sociolinguistic and discourse competence. Discourse competence (cohesion and coherence of language use) is distinguished from sociolinguistic competence (politeness and appropriateness of language use) and added as the fourth component.

Another model is developed by Savignon (1983). The model included the same four components but it is different in the sense that all components are considered interrelated. Savignon (1997) suggests that communicative competence has a greater role than the components.

The first criticism to these models in terms of pragmatic competence came from Schachter (1990). Both models did not mention about the pragmatic competence as if it does not exist. The first model to include pragmatic competence is proposed by Bachman (1990). The model divided language competence into two categories: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organizational competence includes grammatical and textual competence while pragmatic competence is consisted of illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence.

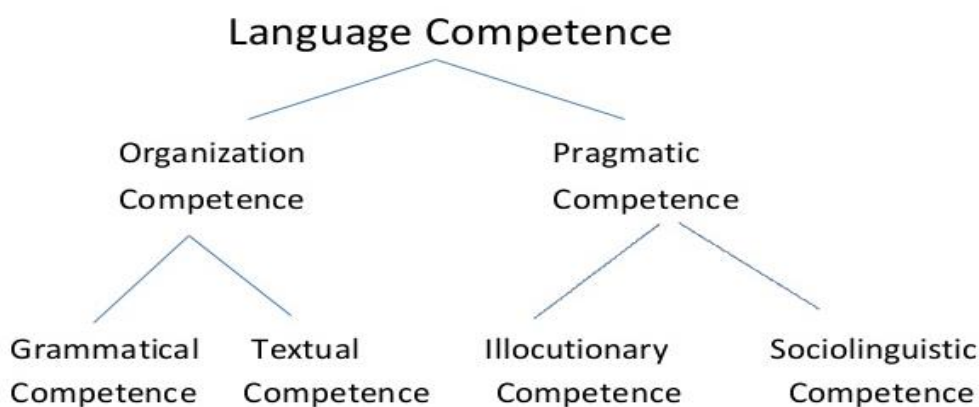


Figure 2-2: Bachman's (1990) Model of Language Competence

In a more recent and comprehensive study, Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) put emphasis on communicative learning of language. CEFR (2011) groups communicative language competences into three categories:

1. Linguistic competences: lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic, orthoepic competences
2. Sociolinguistic competence: linguistic markers, politeness conventions, expressions of folk wisdom, register differences, dialect and accent
3. Pragmatic competences: discourse competence and functional competence.

As can be concluded from the historical development, pragmatic competence has been gaining significance in language learning. It is now considered an

indispensable component in communicative language frameworks and models. However, more research and exploration are needed to reach at best ways to teach it in classrooms.

2.4 INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS AND PRAGMATIC TRANSFER

The term “interlanguage” is coined by Selinker in 1972. Interlanguage is a language system that is developed by second or foreign language learners who are in the process of learning. The system is developed as a combination of rules and features from L1, L2, or neither. It is different from learner’s both first language and target language (Ellis, 1994). The rules in interlanguage are dynamic and subject to changes. Learners add, delete, or alter the rules based on the influence from inside or outside.

The first to propose interlanguage in a pragmatic sense is Kasper (1992). “Interlanguage pragmatics” (ILP) is defined as “the branch of second language research which studies how non-native speakers understand and carry out linguistic action in a target language, and how they acquire L2 pragmatic knowledge” (Kasper, 1992).

The research model proposed by Kasper (1992) is used widely in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatic studies. The model compares three groups:

1. Students who are learning an L2
2. Native speakers of students’ L1
3. Native speakers of students’ L2

The data from second and third groups are used to provide a knowledge baseline of native and target language or cultures of students. Then, the data from students is examined under the light of baseline knowledge in order to explore pragmatic differences and transfers.

There can be two types of pragmatic transfer: positive and negative (Kasper, 1992). Positive pragmatic transfer is performed when socio-cultural and pragmatic norms are transferred by students to the target language which shares similar or the same norms. On the other hand, if the target language’s norms are different from those of students’ native language and students still transfer, it results in negative pragmatic

transfer. The reasons for negative transfer may be student's lack of pragmatic knowledge, low level of proficiency or deliberate commitment to the norms of first language.

Negative pragmatic transfer may result in unsuccessful communication or, in other words, "pragmatic failure" (Thomas, 1983). There are two types of pragmatic failure: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. Pragmalinguistic failure occurs when student lacks the necessary information to understand the illocutionary meaning or utterance appropriately. Sociopragmatic failure is a result of unfamiliarity with the norms of target culture.

2.5 REFUSALS

Refusal situations occur as a result of direct or indirect rejection of an act. They are considered as FTAs because they contradict the expectations (Allami & Naeimi, 2011). There are various strategies to use in a refusal situation but the choice may differ across cultures or languages (Al-Eryani, 2007). Interlocutors generally try to employ indirect strategies to reduce the risk of offending the other. Grammatical and lexical mistakes are generally tolerated by speakers of a language. However, it is not the same case for pragmatic failures. This situation makes refusals a delicate subject.

Al-Kahtani (2005) states that the way a person says no is more important than what the answer is in many cultures. He also suggests that refusals can provide an insight to a student's pragmatic knowledge because it is a sensitive act. Researchers tried to identify the set of strategies typically used by native speakers in order to define what to teach to students and be able to analyze the current state of students' use of refusal strategies.

2.6 STUDIES ON REFUSALS

There have been a number of studies on refusal strategies of English learners in countries all over the world. These studies included both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic aims. This section will provide examples of leading research in global and Turkish context respectively.

A major study is carried out by Beebe et. al. in 1990. They compared Japanese and American native speakers with a DCT consisting of 12 situations with different

status of interlocutors and different types of speech acts. The results show that there are many major differences between Japanese and American native speakers in the use of refusal strategies regarding order, frequency and content. The study also provided evidence for pragmatic transfer of Japanese ESL learners. American participants employed more indirect strategies than Japanese participants. The DCT and refusal taxonomy developed in this study is adopted by many other studies, including the present study.

A parallel study is done by Kwon (2004). Using the same DCT as Beebe et. al. (1990), this study aimed to discover the differences between Korean speakers in Korea and English speakers in USA in their use of refusal strategies in terms of order, frequency and content. The findings indicate that Korean speakers used more direct strategies and paused or apologized before refusing while Americans stated positive emotions and gratitude. Also, status of interlocutors made a bigger effect on Koreans' refusal utterances.

Nelson, Carson, Al Batal and El Bakary (2002) used a modified version of DCT by Beebe et al. for comparison of Egyptian Arabic and American English native speakers in terms of their refusal frequency and types of refusal strategies. The results suggested more similarities between two groups than differences. In this sense, the study differed from Al-Issa (1998), which found that Jordan Arabic speakers use more direct strategies than Americans, and Hussein (1995), which concluded that Arabic speakers use more indirect strategies with their close friends or acquaintances. In another Arabic context, Al-Eryani (2007) conducted a similar study on Yemeni Arabic native speakers, American native speakers and Yemeni learners of English. The results imply that Yemeni native speakers used more indirect refusal strategies than Americans. Also, Yemeni learners of English displayed some of their native norms and cultural background although they were mostly competent in their use of refusal strategies.

In Turkish context, there are various studies carried out in terms of refusal strategies of Turkish students learning English. They focused on different aspects such as cross-cultural differences, interlanguage transfer, and frequency of refusal strategy use.

Çapar (2014) examined 82 female EFL learners at intermediate and beginner levels with a DCT. 62 intermediate level students completed the English DCT while 20 beginner level students completed the Turkish DCT. Also, 10 randomly selected participants were interviewed. The data were coded by two people in terms of frequency of refusal strategy uses. Results showed that stating the reason and regret were the most frequently used refusal strategy by learners and that students who completed English DCT used more strategies than students who completed the Turkish one. The aim of this study is to describe refusal strategy use of Turkish learners. However, this study doesn't include any native speakers of English to compare cultures or language strategies. Also, its generalizability is limited since all participants are female.

Moody (2011) applied the DCT developed by Beebe et. al. (1990) to Turkish native speakers, American native speakers and bilingual Turkish-English speakers. The study examined both refusal strategy transfer and differences between both cultures. The results indicate that American participants tend to be positive whereas Turkish participants often use regret in their refusals. Bilingual participants used more pause fillers. In general, Turkish participants are found to use more indirect strategies. This study provides a comparative analysis of refusal strategies in Turkish and English.

Sadler and Eröz (2011) analyzed English, Turkish and Lao native speakers. The main aim of the study is to determine the role of L1 in formation of L2 refusals by non-native speakers. This study also used the DCT by Beebe et. al. (1990). The results suggest that pragmatic transfer from native language to target language significantly influences the use of refusal strategies, but not necessarily in a negative way. Limitation of this study is that participants were all highly proficient in English.

Şahin (2011) conducted a crosscultural study on native Turkish, native American and prospective English teachers at university level who are native Turkish. She developed her own refusal strategy DCT out of situations from a TV serial. Different from other studies in Turkish context, this study focused on situations in which interlocutors have equal status with different level of closeness while others focused only on different status and power relations. The results of this study revealed that native speakers of both languages combine direct strategies with at least one

indirect strategy. Closeness between interlocutors played a significant role in their use of refusals. American participants stated more positive emotions while Turkish participants mostly used 'clarifying the relationship' strategy.

Çimen (2009) investigated 20 native Turkish, 20 native American and 20 prospective English teachers at university level who are native Turkish. She used the DCT by Beebe et al. (1990). Results show that the frequency of refusal strategy use was similar for all three groups and that prospective English teachers produced valid refusal strategies.

In a parallel study, Aksoyalp (2009) applied the DCT by Beebe et al. (1990) to 16 native speakers of English, 16 native Turkish and 150 English teacher trainees. The results indicate that social status of interlocutors has an impact on the use of refusal strategies. Also, teacher trainee data show that they did not blindly copied their refusal use from their native language to target language, which is an evidence of creative transfer.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study aims to identify not only pragmatic transfer but also the reasoning of Turkish EFL students for their choice of refusal strategies. Therefore, the research design proposed by (Kasper and Dahl, 1991) is adopted. According to the design, all data is collected from three groups for comparison and analysis: a group of native speakers of the students' first language, a group of native speakers of the students' target language, and a student group. To provide a baseline set for interlanguage of students, quantitative data was collected from speakers of the students' first and target language; native Turkish speakers who did not speak English and American native speakers who did not speak Turkish. Both groups were provided with a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in their native language while randomly selected EFL students are given the DCT in English. Interviews with students were conducted to obtain the story behind their experiences and to further investigate their responses (McNamara, 1999).

The study done for this thesis is a descriptive one in that I tried to identify a current situation and the conditions of variables that were being examined (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989). In the same way, this research aims to explore interlanguage pragmatic transfers made by Turkish EFL students in a university prep-school and the reasoning behind their answers. This study does not include any intervention or instruction to students.

This study is also a case study that employs a qualitative approach. This is important because Rubin and Babbie (2009) states that a qualitative approach is "... more likely to tap the deeper meanings of particular human experiences, and generate theoretically richer observations that are not easily reduced to numbers". Accordingly, this study aims to concentrate on the case of Turkish EFL prep-school students in terms of their refusal strategy use, interlanguage pragmatic transfer and background reasoning.

In qualitative research, the data does not depend on numbers and analysis conducted by researcher. Another researcher may look at the same data and make a different analysis. Therefore, qualitative research is subjective. It includes personal

comments and conclusions of researcher. In order to emphasize the subjectivity of some ideas in this study, 1st person “I” is used as subject in some sentences.

3.2 PARTICIPANTS

Participants of this study are 108 university students in three groups. Kasper and Dahl (1991) suggests that in inter-language studies, using a DCT with 30 subjects can serve as an appropriate guide. To comply with this information, the number of groups is determined accordingly. The first group included 36 (18 males and 18 females) Turkish university students who were studying in different departments. They are all native Turkish-speaking students who do not speak English. The second group included 36 native American speakers (18 males and 18 females) who were studying at the university at different departments and do not speak any Turkish. The third group was the main group examined in this study. It consisted of 36 Turkish EFL preparatory school students (17 males and 19 females) with three subgroups of 12 students. The subgroups were selected from three proficiency levels: pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate.

The first and second groups were selected to provide a baseline data for the study. Therefore, they could be called baseline groups. The third group is the research participant group. For the baseline groups convenience sampling is employed whereas the participant group was randomly selected. For the random selection, all students in the pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate classrooms are assigned numbers. Then, the tool on randomizer.org is used for the random assignment. The tool randomly selected students for each group from the population.

The summary of information on participants can be found in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3-1: Summary of the Participants’ Information

	36 Turkish EFL preparatory school students	36 native Turkish speakers	36 native American speakers
Age (means)	19.2	20.4	20.9
Gender	17 Male 19 Female	18 Male 18 Female	18 Male 18 Female

In Turkey, English is a compulsory subject starting from the fourth grade. Up to the university level, students study English 2 to 4 hours a week in elementary, middle and high schools. In middle school (6th, 7th and 8th grade), students take national exams from main subjects, and English is included in these exams. Therefore, students tend to pay attention to English as much as other main subjects. However, at the high school level, a university entrance exam is taken at the end of the 4 years and students are not required to take any English test unless they want to study in language departments such as English Language and Literature or translation studies. Students who are preparing for university may neglect their English studies because it is not included in the exam. Although they study English for 9 years before going to the university, most are unable to pass the required proficiency test to enter their departments. For example, in the university in which this study is carried out, less than 5% of new students were able to pass the proficiency exam at the beginning of the academic year of 2015-2016.

3.3 SETTING

Participants in the study group were students who took the university entrance exam in Turkey to get a place in a department at a university. The medium of teaching in their departments is English. Therefore, they are required to complete the preparatory English school of the university. The university is a foundation (private) university in Istanbul which mostly focuses on commerce departments such as international trade, logistics, etc.

The levels in the preparatory school are determined according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). There are four levels: A1, A2, B1, and B2 which are elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate respectively. Each level takes 8 weeks to complete. Students are assessed with a mid-term, a final, two presentations, and two in-class essay writings. Mid-term and final exams include reading, vocabulary, listening and writing parts. Speaking is only included in the final exam of upper-intermediate level. Students are required to attend 90% of the lessons, and if they fail to complete the necessary attendance, they cannot take the final exam. Students who complete the B2 level are considered eligible to move on to their academic undergraduate study. Students are given a placement exam at the beginning of the year. Therefore, not all the students start from the very first

level. Even if they start at the A1 level, they can complete all four levels in an academic year if they complete the necessary requirements. In the classrooms, teachers pay utmost attention to not use any Turkish. Course materials, books and exams do not include Turkish by any means.

3.4 INSTRUMENTS

Two instruments were used to collect data. The Discourse Completion Task developed by Beebe et. al. (1990) is used as the main instrument (see Appendix 1). It consists of 12 situations in which students are required to perform a refusal act. Three questions are included for each situation of offers, suggestions, invitations, and requests. Within each 3 question set there is one question when the hearer has lower, equal or higher status. Content of tasks are presented below:

1. Offers

Situation 11: A boss offers the respondent a raise and promotion.

Situation 9: A friend offers the respondent another piece of cake.

Situation 7: A cleaning lady offers to pay for a broken vase.

2. Suggestions

Situation 6: A boss gives the respondent a suggestion on how to be better organized.

Situation 5: The respondent is asked by a friend to try a new diet.

Situation 8: A student gives the respondent a suggestion for more conversation practice.

3. Invitations

Situation 4: A boss invites the respondent to a party at short notice.

Situation 10: A friend invites the respondent to dinner.

Situation 3: A salesman from another company invites the respondent to dinner.

4. Requests

Situation 12: A boss asks an employee to spend an extra hour or two at work.

Situation 2: A classmate asks to borrow the respondent's notes.

Situation 1: An employee asks a boss for a raise.

Table 3-2 includes the numbers of situations in the DCT relative to the situation type and status of the interlocutor.

Table 3-2: Status and Situation Content of DCT

	Lower	Equal	Higher
Request	1	2	12
Invitation	3	10	4
Suggestion	8	5	6
Offer	7	9	11

With the aim of deeper analysis of refusals strategies of students, the researcher took a further step to add an open-ended part called ‘participant reasoning’ at the end of each situation. This section asked for an explanation or reasoning by participants for their refusals in each specific situation, and answers could be given in Turkish.

After the DCT, 9 students (3 students from each level) were selected from the research participant group for interviews. Interviews are performed in Turkish to allow students to better explain themselves. Interview questions were as follows:

1. How often do you think you face a situation that you want/need to refuse?
2. What factors do you consider when choosing your way of refusal?
3. If you had your daily refusal situations in English context, would it make a difference on how you refuse?
4. Are you being/Do you wish to be taught "how to refuse" in your English lessons?

3.5 PROCEDURE

Data collection is conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016. Students studied two modules in the first semester. Therefore, if students were in a pre-intermediate (A2) level in the second semester, it means that they failed at least once. If they were intermediate (B1), it means that they started from A1 level and regularly following the requirements or they started at a higher level (A2 or B1) and failed once or twice. If they were at upper-intermediate level (B2), it means that they started at least from pre-intermediate level (A2).

Before the data collection, participants were asked to fill in a consent letter stating that they were willing to participate in this study (see Appendix 2). After they

agreed with the terms and content of the study, they were asked to complete the DCT. The original DCT is in English. To use in this study, a Turkish translation was done by the researcher (see Appendix 3). For the baseline groups, American native English speakers were given the English DCT and Turkish native speakers were given the Turkish DCT. Each baseline group answered the questionnaire in their native language.

The study group was given the English version of the DCT in class over the course of three days, since students were in different classrooms and some of them were absent for a day or two. Different from the DCTs of baseline groups, students' version of DCT included an open-ended section for them to give a reasoning for their refusal. Students were told that only for the reasoning part they were free to provide a response or leave that part blank because being obligated to write something might have led students to write something just for the sake of writing, and would not actually express their feelings. They were also free to write their reasoning in Turkish or English. The reasoning part was the section where students were expected to express their thoughts behind their answers. Therefore, it was important that they were able to write with the vocabulary and language they felt most comfortable with. All groups were asked to answer honestly as if it were a real situation that they faced. They are also asked to complete the answers as quickly as possible in order to have their answers closer to a real speaking situation. Two days later, 3 students from each proficiency level of the study group were selected for interviews. The interviews were recorded for further detailed analysis at a later time, again with the consent of participants.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. For quantitative analysis, responses given by participants were coded using the taxonomy developed by Beebe et. al. (1990) (see Appendix 4). Examples for coding are presented below:

Answer: I can't pay you more now because bookstore's sales are getting down.

direct refusal + excuse/reason

Answer: I am sorry. I can't this month.

regret + postponement

Answer: Thank you. I would love it but I am very ill.

gratitude + positive opinion + excuse/reason

To compare variables (gender, status, level, situation) and strategies that were used by the baseline and participant groups, the frequency rates of strategies for each variable were calculated. For calculation and creating tables, SPSS program's 'custom tables' command was used. Each table includes two variables. In the first phase, the participant group was analyzed in depth for strategy use according to different variables. Then, all groups were included in a table which includes situation and status as variables in order to look at overall strategy use, and interlanguage transfer.

Qualitative analysis includes three parts. In the first part, the contents of responses by the baseline groups and the participant group were analyzed. Content was analyzed in two aspects. Firstly, directness of language of the participant group was examined considering the vocabulary choice and sentence structure. This analysis provided more in-depth results. For example, the sentences 'I don't want to come' and 'No' are both considered direct refusals in quantitative analysis. However, it is essential to make a distinction between how direct the direct refusal is. Secondly, content was examined to find out if there were any literal translation of idioms or chunks of words from Turkish to English because direct translation of the first language into the target language may not provide the same meaning. Therefore, it is crucial to figure out if the students translated considering the target language and culture or if they directly translated without any considerations.

In the second part, participant reasoning provided by students in the study group were qualitatively analyzed. The aim was to explore their logic behind the responses. Some of the reasoning parts were written in Turkish. Responses in Turkish which are mentioned in the data analysis were translated into English by the researcher with utmost care and attention. Some examples are presented below:

Answer (pre-intermediate): I don't come to your party.

Reasoning: My wife's birthday is next week.

Answer (intermediate): I can't give money to you.

Reasoning: I do not have enough money.

Answer (upper-intermediate): I am really sorry. I can't do it now. I think your salary is better than other workers.

Reasoning: Because I bought a new car.

In the third part, participants' responses to the interview questions were analyzed. Recorded answers were analyzed carefully, and unclear sections are listened to again. The aim of this part was to explore what students might feel about their need to be taught refusal strategies, and their needs and suggestions were noted. In addition, students were asked about the relation that they created between their native and target language or culture. The goal of obtaining these responses was to provide further self-explanation by the participants to supplement the qualitative data and analysis.



CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

4.1.1 Total frequency and count of refusal strategies

To look at the descriptive results, the number of refusal strategies used in each group was counted. In addition, the counts of direct and indirect strategies and their relative rates to the total numbers were considered (see Table 4.1 below). The results revealed that the American group and EFL students used more number of strategies than the Turkish group. It was an evidence supporting that students adjusted their responses according to the target language because they moved closer to the target culture data. Among student groups, low number of strategy use by pre-intermediate students and high number by intermediate and upper-intermediate students also supported the adjustment by students.

When different strategy types were considered, both the American group and EFL students used a significantly higher rate of indirect strategies than the Turkish group. However, within the EFL students, pre-intermediate level students used a more similar rate of direct and indirect strategies to the Turkish baseline group while intermediate and upper-intermediate students had similar rate of direct and indirect strategies to the American baseline group. This data indicated that proficiency level was a factor in students' choices for appropriate type of strategy use.

Overall, it is sound to say that as the level of students' proficiency level increased, students showed a closer position to the target culture in terms of the number and type of refusal strategies.

Table 4-1: Descriptive Statistics of the Data

	AMERICAN		TURKISH		STUDENTS		pre-int.		int.		upper	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
DIRECT	149	19	262	46	196	27	71	41	65	23	60	22
INDIRECT	612	81	307	54	509	73	99	59	206	77	204	78
TOTAL	761	100	569	100	705	100	170	100	271	100	264	100

4.1.2 Analysis of student responses

This section aims to discover quantitative data of student responses in depth. Using crosstabs, it looks at two variables at the same time to reveal any connections or contrasts.

Situation and gender. This part focuses on student responses with the cross tabulation of situation and gender. In request situations, both genders used a similar amount of direct refusals. Although regret was used frequently, female students had a much higher rate of its use than male students. Excuse/reason was highly preferred by both genders in similar numbers. Setting a condition, gratitude, asking a question and stating an alternative were only used by female students although they were all infrequent. On the other hand, hesitation, promise, request and statement of frankness were used only by male students, but infrequently. Request was the only situation wherein students used empathy.

In invitation situations, excuse/reason had the highest rate of use by both genders when compared to all other strategies and situations. After excuse/reason, regret had a slightly lesser use by both genders. The third most-used refusal strategy was direct refusal. It had the least amount of use by both genders when compared to the other three situations. Although postponement, pause fillers, asking question and statement of philosophy were all used infrequently, they were used only by male students, while statement of positive opinion and gratitude were only used by female students. Promise was used by both genders in relatively greater numbers.

In suggestion situations, both genders gave a similar number of direct refusals. Male participants used excuse/reason the most. The most widely used strategy by female participants was direct refusals, but still they used more indirect refusal strategies than direct refusals. Female students preferred more expression of regret, postponement, promise and gratitude, whereas male students preferred to use more excuse/reason and criticizing responses.

In offer situations, both genders used direct refusals the most when compared to the other three situations. However, the number of indirect refusal strategies was higher in this situation too. Gratitude was frequently used by both genders. For male students, offer was the only situation where they used gratitude with frequency. "Let

off the hook” was only used in offers by both genders and in similar numbers. The indirect refusal strategies by both genders were direct refusal and excuse/reason.

To conclude, the highest rate of indirect strategies was used in invitation situations. This could suggest that students were trying to be more polite to invitations, especially using excuse/reason strategy. The refusal strategies that were used over 20% of the time did not show significant differences between genders except for regret in request and suggestion situations and excuse/reason in suggestion situations only. Female students tended to show more gratitude than male students.



Table 4-2: Frequency of Refusal Strategies Relative to Situation and Gender

	Request		Invitation		Suggestion		Offers	
	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male
s Direct	47.4%	51.0%	33.9%	36.7%	46.4%	44.4%	59.6%	57.4%
t Regret	40.4%	28.6%	53.6%	51.0%	10.7%	2.2%	7.0%	8.5%
r hesitation	.0%	2.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.8%	.0%
a postponement	1.8%	4.1%	.0%	2.0%	8.9%	2.2%	.0%	.0%
t Pause	3.5%	2.0%	.0%	6.1%	5.4%	.0%	1.8%	4.3%
e st.solidarity	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
g excuse	61.4%	55.1%	78.6%	75.5%	26.8%	46.7%	35.1%	27.7%
i set.condition	5.3%	.0%	1.8%	2.0%	.0%	.0%	1.8%	.0%
e promise	.0%	6.1%	8.9%	6.1%	10.7%	4.4%	1.8%	2.1%
s request	.0%	2.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	3.5%	.0%
gratitude	1.8%	.0%	10.7%	.0%	16.1%	2.2%	17.5%	21.3%
elaboration	3.5%	4.1%	.0%	.0%	3.6%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.po.opinion	1.8%	2.0%	7.1%	.0%	5.4%	2.2%	3.5%	2.1%
hedging	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	12.5%	2.2%	1.8%	2.1%
joke	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
self.defense	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
alternative	1.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.1%
repetition	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
criticize	3.5%	2.0%	.0%	.0%	3.6%	11.1%	.0%	.0%
st.principle	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.9%	.0%	2.1%
ask.question	1.8%	.0%	.0%	2.0%	3.6%	4.4%	1.8%	2.1%
st.philosophy	.0%	.0%	.0%	4.1%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%
topic.switch	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.8%	.0%
i.tried	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	3.6%	2.2%	.0%	.0%
empathy	5.3%	4.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
wish	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.frankness	.0%	2.0%	1.8%	2.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
let.off.the.hook	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	28.1%	25.5%

4.1.2 Situation and status

In this section, situation and status of the interlocutor variables were analyzed considering refusal responses of students in the participant group. An overall review of the data in Table 4.3 suggested that students used a high amount of direct refusals in request and suggestion situations to lower status interlocutors and in offer situations to higher status interlocutors. However, in all situations students preferred indirect refusal strategies more than direct strategies to interlocutors from every status.

In request situations, students used highest rate of direct refusals to lower status interlocutors. Interlocutors with equal and higher level were refused more indirectly by students but excuse/reason was used more instead. Empathy was only used for lower status interlocutors only in suggestion situations. Regret was mostly used for equal status interlocutors, which might be because of the fact that equal status interlocutor was their friend. Postponement, hesitation, gratitude, and statement of frankness were only used for lower status interlocutors but in small amounts. In a relatively higher amount, criticize is only used for equal status interlocutors.

In invitation situations, students used a much higher amount of direct refusal for higher status interlocutors relative to lower and equal. The reason for this might be that they wanted to be more open because the higher status person was their boss. Therefore, they may have wanted to express themselves clearly. Excuse/reason was used widely for interlocutors from all status levels. For lower status interlocutor in invitation situations, students preferred the least number of direct refusal among all situations to all interlocutor status levels. The reason behind might be that they did not wanted to offend the person or to look like they were taking advantage of their higher status. In addition, statement of positive opinion, gratitude and promise were used infrequently by students for interlocutors from all status levels.

In suggestion situations, students used direct refusal the most for lower status interlocutors. For interlocutors with higher status, hedging and gratitude are very frequently used together with criticizing responses. It may look interesting that refusal strategies which seem to express opposite feelings are used with the same frequency but the underlying reason for this is mentioned in the next section. Criticizing responses were most frequently used by pre-intermediate students who may not have reached the level of appropriate refusal use.

In offer situations, students used direct refusal more frequently as the status of the interlocutor got higher. Most of the indirect refusal strategies which were used for equal and higher status interlocutors were not used for lower status interlocutors, or vice versa. Pause fillers, promise, request, statement of alternative, statement of principle and letting off the hook were only used for lower status interlocutors whereas regret, excuse/reason, gratitude, statement of positive opinion and hedging were only used for equal and higher status interlocutors. Letting of the hook was used almost in every response for lower status interlocutor. The item includes an offer of payment for a broken vase by a cleaning lady. Students did not prefer to use this strategy for other offer situations. The reason might be that the particular item includes a money offer. Students may have thought that cleaning lady may not have the necessary amount or simply they did not want someone else's money.

To conclude, direct refusal was used more frequently for lower status interlocutors in request and suggestion situations whereas it was used more frequently for higher status interlocutors in invitation and offers. Letting off the hook was only and very frequently used in offer situation for lower status interlocutor. Most frequently used indirect refusal strategy, excuse/regret, was especially used in invitation situations for interlocutors from all status levels.

Table 4-3: Frequency of Refusal Strategies Relative to Situation and Status

	Request			Invitation			Suggestion			Offers		
	Lower	Equal	Higher	Lower	Equal	Higher	Lower	Equal	Higher	Lower	Equal	Higher
s direct	72.2%	38.9%	35.3%	16.7%	30.3%	58.3%	65.6%	36.1%	36.4%	34.3%	60.0%	82.4%
r regret	38.9%	44.4%	20.6%	66.7%	30.3%	58.3%	9.4%	8.3%	3.0%	.0%	14.3%	8.8%
a hesitation	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
t postponement	8.3%	.0%	.0%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	6.3%	11.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
e pause	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	5.6%	.0%	2.8%	6.3%	.0%	3.0%	8.6%	.0%	.0%
g st.solidarity	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
i excuse	38.9%	63.9%	73.5%	77.8%	75.8%	77.8%	31.3%	52.8%	21.2%	.0%	51.4%	44.1%
e set.condition	.0%	5.6%	2.9%	5.6%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
s promise	.0%	.0%	8.8%	5.6%	12.1%	5.6%	9.4%	5.6%	9.1%	5.7%	.0%	.0%
request	.0%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.7%	.0%	.0%
gratitude	2.8%	.0%	.0%	5.6%	6.1%	5.6%	.0%	5.6%	24.2%	.0%	40.0%	17.6%
elaboration	8.3%	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	3.1%	.0%	3.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.po.opinion	2.8%	2.8%	.0%	2.8%	6.1%	2.8%	3.1%	.0%	9.1%	.0%	2.9%	5.9%
hedging	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	6.3%	.0%	18.2%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%
joke	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
alternative	.0%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%
repetition	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
criticize	.0%	8.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	3.1%	2.8%	15.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.principle	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.6%	6.1%	2.9%	.0%	.0%
ask.question	.0%	2.8%	.0%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	6.3%	5.6%	.0%	.0%	5.7%	.0%
st.philosophy	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.8%	.0%	2.8%	.0%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
topic.switch	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%
i.tried	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.6%	3.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
empathy	13.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.frankness	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	6.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
let.off.thehook	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	80.0%	.0%	.0%

4.1.3 Situation and level

In this section, situation and proficiency level variables were taken into consideration in analyzing the refusal strategy use of students in participant group. An overall analysis of the data in Table 4.4 suggested that pre-intermediate level students used direct refusal more frequently, especially in offer situations. The most frequent indirect refusal strategy, excuse/reason, was used more by intermediate and upper-intermediate level students, especially in offers.

In request situations, pre-intermediate level students used regret very infrequently while intermediate and upper-intermediate level students used it as frequently as direct refusal. Pre-intermediate level students made use of only 6 different strategies while this number is 11 for intermediate level students and 10 for upper-intermediate level students. Pre-intermediate level students also did not use any empathy while intermediate and upper-intermediate level students both used it infrequently.

In invitation situations, students from all proficiency levels used fewer direct refusals when compared to other three situations. Intermediate and upper-intermediate students used regret and promise more frequently than pre-intermediate students. Excuse/reason had the highest rates by all proficiency levels in invitation situations when compared to other three situations.

In suggestion situations, pre-intermediate level students used a higher amount of direct refusals than other two levels. Regret, gratitude, hedging, statement of principle and saying I tried were only used by intermediate and upper-intermediate level students although they were infrequent. Excuse/reason was the second most frequent indirect refusal strategy after direct refusals. It was more frequent in the responses of intermediate and upper intermediate level students.

In offer situations, pre-intermediate level students had a higher frequency of direct refusals than indirect refusal strategies. Intermediate level students had a slightly higher frequency of indirect refusal strategies than direct refusals. Upper-intermediate level students had a higher difference in frequency in favor of indirect refusal strategies. Excuse/reason was widely used by intermediate and upper-intermediate level students but pre-intermediate level students rarely used it. Gratitude was also

used fairly common by intermediate and upper-intermediate level students. It was hardly used by pre-intermediate level students. Letting off the hook was used fairly frequently by students from all proficiency levels.

To conclude, pre-intermediate level students used considerably lesser amount of indirect refusal strategies than intermediate and upper-intermediate students. Only suggestion situations were responded with criticizing by students from all proficiency levels. Although it was infrequent, it is still plausible to say that certain students in each level were not open to different ideas in DCT items. Regret was frequently used in requests and invitations by students from all proficiency levels.



Table 4-4: Frequency of Refusal Strategies Relative to Situation and Level

	Request			Invitation			Suggestion			Offers		
	pre-int	int	upper	pre-int	int	upper	pre-int	int	upper	pre-int	int	upper
direct	38.9%	51.4%	57.1%	34.3%	37.1%	34.3%	54.5%	44.1%	38.2%	75.0%	55.9%	44.1%
regret	8.3%	51.4%	45.7%	37.1%	57.1%	62.9%	.0%	5.9%	14.7%	2.8%	11.8%	8.8%
hesitation	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
postponement	5.6%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	9.1%	2.9%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%
pause	.0%	8.6%	.0%	.0%	8.6%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	5.9%	.0%	5.9%	2.9%
st.solidarity	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
excuse	55.6%	62.9%	57.1%	77.1%	71.4%	82.9%	24.2%	44.1%	38.2%	5.6%	50.0%	41.2%
set.condition	.0%	.0%	8.6%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
promise	5.6%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%	11.4%	8.6%	.0%	8.8%	14.7%	.0%	5.9%	.0%
request	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%
gratitude	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%	8.6%	8.6%	.0%	14.7%	14.7%	5.6%	20.6%	32.4%
elaboration	.0%	5.7%	5.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.po.opinion	.0%	.0%	5.7%	.0%	11.4%	.0%	3.0%	8.8%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	2.9%
hedging	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	17.6%	.0%	.0%	5.9%
joke	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
self.defense	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
alternative	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
repetition	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
criticize	.0%	8.6%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	12.1%	5.9%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.principle	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
ask.question	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	11.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%
st.philosophy	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%	.0%	3.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
topic.switch	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	.0%
i.tried	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%
empathy	.0%	11.4%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
wish	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.frankness	.0%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
let.off.thehook	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	26.5%	32.4%

4.1.4 Gender and status

Table 4-5: Frequency of Refusal Strategies Relative to Gender and Status

	Female			Male		
	Lower	Equal	Higher	Lower	Equal	Higher
direct	44.7%	44.0%	52.0%	49.2%	38.5%	54.8%
regret	34.2%	21.3%	28.0%	23.8%	27.7%	17.7%
hesitation	.0%	.0%	1.3%	1.6%	.0%	.0%
postponement	2.6%	5.3%	.0%	6.3%	.0%	.0%
pause	5.3%	.0%	2.7%	6.3%	1.5%	1.6%
st.solidarity	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
excuse	36.8%	54.7%	60.0%	38.1%	67.7%	48.4%
set.condition	1.3%	2.7%	2.7%	1.6%	.0%	.0%
promise	3.9%	6.7%	5.3%	6.3%	1.5%	6.5%
request	2.6%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.5%	.0%
gratitude	3.9%	14.7%	16.0%	.0%	10.8%	6.5%
elaboration	3.9%	.0%	1.3%	1.6%	.0%	1.6%
st.po.opinion	3.9%	4.0%	5.3%	.0%	1.5%	3.2%
hedging	2.6%	1.3%	6.7%	.0%	.0%	3.2%
joke	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
self.defense	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
alternative	.0%	1.3%	.0%	1.6%	.0%	.0%
repetition	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
criticize	1.3%	2.7%	1.3%	.0%	3.1%	6.5%
st.principle	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.6%	3.1%	3.2%
ask.question	.0%	5.3%	.0%	4.8%	1.5%	.0%
st.philosophy	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.6%	1.5%	1.6%
topic.switch	.0%	1.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
i.tried	.0%	2.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.6%
empathy	3.9%	.0%	.0%	3.2%	.0%	.0%
wish	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.frankness	.0%	1.3%	.0%	1.6%	1.5%	.0%
let.off.the.hook	21.1%	.0%	.0%	19.0%	.0%	.0%

In this section, gender and status variables were taken into consideration in analyzing the refusal strategy use of students in participant group. An overall analysis of the data in Table 4.5 suggests that both genders used similar rate of direct refusals for all interlocutors with different status levels. As for indirect refusal strategies, excuse/reason is frequently used by both genders for all status levels.

Both male and female students used gratitude more frequently for interlocutors with equal or higher status. Female students used hedging more frequently than male students, especially for higher status interlocutors. Despite its infrequent use, empathy was only used for lower status interlocutors by both genders. Male students very infrequently used statement of philosophy which is never used by male students.

4.1.5 Comparison of all groups

In this section, both baseline groups and the study group were compared in the frequency of their refusal strategies. The overall analysis of the data in the Table 4.6 suggests that Turkish EFL students were closer to the native Turkish group in the frequency of their direct refusals. It is quite possible that students were applying their knowledge of their native language to their target language because they did not have enough exposure to target language in general and refusal situations in target language.

Students started to use more indirect strategies as their level improved. This trend seems to imply that as proficiency level increases, students will be competent in target language refusal situations. However, students' answers were different from both baseline groups in kinds and frequencies of refusal strategies. This is an evidence of a development of interlanguage by EFL students. It can be imagined that students try to internalize the target structures and conventions, but also they are contributing to this knowledge with their first language knowledge and personal evaluations of situations and structures.

Native English speaking group used excuse/reason and regret more frequently than all other groups. The reason for this could be that it is perceived more polite than direct refusal in their culture. Also, EFL students' frequency of excuse/reason increased at higher proficiency levels. This increase points that students understand the conventions of target culture and try to employ the same strategy.

As for regret, native Turkish group, intermediate and upper-intermediate groups had similar frequencies. It can be concluded that stating regret by saying “I am sorry to say that ...”, “I regret to say that ...”, etc. is an appropriate refusal in both baseline groups.

All groups used direct refusals more frequently for interlocutors with lower or equal status levels. Native English speaking group never used postponement while EFL students used it infrequently for interlocutors from all status levels. All groups used excuse/reason more frequently for equal status interlocutors.



Table 4-6: Frequency of Refusal Strategies Relative to Groups and Status

	pre-int			int			upper			Turkish			American		
	Lowr	Equal	Higher	Lowr	Equal	Higher	Lowr	Equal	Higher	Lowr	Equal	Higher	Lowr	Equal	Higher
Direct	56.5%	40.4%	55.3%	46.8%	41.3%	53.3%	37.0%	42.6%	51.1%	63.4%	48.2%	51.7%	43.8%	35.6%	41.3%
Regret	21.7%	8.5%	6.4%	31.9%	34.8%	28.9%	34.8%	29.8%	35.6%	30.2%	32.5%	31.7%	51.7%	53.8%	54.6%
hesitation	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
Postpomnt	6.5%	4.3%	.0%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	4.3%	2.1%	.0%	3.2%	3.9%	2.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%
Pause	.0%	.0%	.0%	12.8%	2.2%	4.4%	4.3%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.3%	12.1%	14.9%
Excuse	21.7%	59.6%	40.4%	42.6%	60.9%	68.9%	47.8%	61.7%	55.6%	35.9%	45.2%	40.6%	42.3%	68.9%	71.7%
setcondition	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	4.3%	4.4%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
Promise	.0%	2.1%	4.3%	8.5%	4.3%	6.7%	6.5%	6.4%	6.7%	5.1%	4.7%	6.8%	4.3%	2.1%	6.5%
Request	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
gratitude	.0%	4.3%	.0%	2.1%	15.2%	15.6%	4.3%	19.1%	20.0%	5.1%	8.5%	10.8%	17.2%	15.6%	.%
elaboration	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	.0%	2.2%	6.5%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
stpoopinon	.0%	.0%	2.1%	4.3%	6.5%	8.9%	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
hedging	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	4.4%	4.3%	2.1%	11.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
alternative	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	2.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
repetition	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
criticize	.0%	.0%	8.5%	.0%	8.7%	2.2%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
st.principle	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
askquestion	.0%	.0%	.0%	6.4%	6.5%	.0%	.0%	4.3%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
stphilosphy	.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
topicswitch	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
i.tried	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
empathy	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.5%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.7%	2.2%	2.2%	.0%	.0%
st.franknes	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	2.1%	.0%	8.5%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.0%	.0%
letoffhook	17.4%	.0%	.0%	19.1%	.0%	.0%	23.9%	.0%	.0%	16.3%	.0%	.0%	26.7%	.0%	.0%

4.1.6 Order of semantic formulas

Semantic formulas are the formulation of refusal strategies that students used in their responses to situations in DCT. This analysis is important because it provides insights into how refusal responses were formed rather than which refusal strategies are used. Formulas had already been formed for quantitative analysis. For this section, common patterns in the responses of both baseline groups and the study group were analyzed.

In Turkish baseline group generally used regret + direct refusal formula for invitations and suggestions.

Example: “I am sorry. I don’t want to.”

They used gratitude or excuse/reason + direct refusal for offers and invitations.

Example: “I need to be somewhere at that time. I can’t join you.”

EFL student group most frequently used excuse/reason + direct refusal for all situations.

Example: “I have my wife’s birthday that day. I can’t come.”

They often added regret at the beginning of their responses. Pre-intermediate students frequently used just one refusal strategy in their responses. Their formulas generally included at least one direct refusal and infrequent use of regret or excuse/reason.

Example: I can’t come. I don’t have time.”

It was also common for intermediate and upper-intermediate students to use regret + excuse/reason without any direct refusal.

Example: “I am so sorry. I have an important meeting.”

Native English speaking group made use of pause fillers more frequently than all other groups. Their responses most frequently made up of regret + excuse/reason. They also infrequently included direct refusals at the end of their responses. They never used only direct refusal.

4.1.7 Language directness

In this section, the directness of vocabulary and language of responses by the participants are analyzed. This is important because direct refusals have different directness levels within themselves. For example, “I don’t want to come” and “It is not possible for me to come” are both considered as direct refusals in quantitative analysis. However, there is a significant difference between the two sentences in terms of directness.

Native Turkish speaking group and pre-intermediate EFL students used a much more direct vocabulary and language when compared to all other groups. In their direct refusal responses, they frequently started their sentences with “I don’t ...”. For Turkish native speaker group it may be a sign of frankness or open expression. For the pre-intermediate group, however, it may refer to their lack of grammar knowledge because they do not learn structures such as “I can’t”. In higher proficiency levels, there is a tendency for EFL students to use less direct language and vocabulary. Therefore, it can be concluded that EFL student group used a much more direct language in pre-intermediate level because of the lack of redundant grammar structures in their target language knowledge.

Native English speaking group used the most indirect language among all groups. In line with other studies such as Allami and Naeimi (2011), American refusal conventions seem to be indirect.

As for excuse/reason use, Turkish native speaker group and EFL students gave to the point excuses or reasons.

Example: “I can’t come because my mom is ill. I need to take care of her.”

On the other hand, native English speaking group preferred relatively less open excuses or reasons.

Example: “Thank you but I really need to finish something first.”

4.1.8 Interlanguage pragmatic transfer

In this section, content of native Turkish speaking group and the EFL student groups were analyzed in content with the aim to explore possible linguistic transfer, positive or negative, from students' native language to their target language.

Pre-intermediate level students did not present a significant transfer in any of the situations. It might be because of their limitations in language knowledge. It is possible that if they had been more competent in their target language, they would have transferred some pragmatic conventions.

Students only transferred critical language from their native language to their interlanguage. Especially in pre-intermediate and intermediate levels, students' refusal responses included an infrequent critical language.

Students transferred more language use and knowledge from the target language to their interlanguage. The biggest interlanguage transfer is about gratitude. At intermediate and upper-intermediate levels, students started to use gratitude more in their refusal responses. Also, students used regret more frequently at intermediate and upper-intermediate levels. This increase hints a convergence by EFL students to native English speaking group. In addition, EFL students at intermediate and upper-intermediate levels started to use hedging, which also showed that students were getting closer to the refusal conventions of the target language even if the use was infrequent.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT REASONING

In the following sections, analysis of students' responses to the 'reasoning' parts in DCT situations is presented.

4.2.1 Pre-intermediate participant reasoning

The analysis of reasoning by pre-intermediate level EFL students revealed three conclusions. Firstly, students sometimes failed to produce refusals appropriate to target culture even though they have the opportunity.

Example: I don't come to your party.

Reasoning: My wife's birthday next week.

In the example above, student actually had an excuse/reason to provide but s/he did not choose to give it in the response.

Secondly, students generally gave their reason without any modifications.

Example: Sorry, I am busy.

Reasoning: I don't have any time.

In the example above, using a softer excuse/reason such as "I have an important job to finish" would be more acceptable with the target culture regarding the responses of native English group's responses.

Thirdly, students cared more about someone not getting hurt rather than money.

Example: I don't want it.

Reasoning: It is not important.

In the example situation, they refused to take the money offered by cleaning lady and their reasoning was mostly about feelings.

4.2.2 Intermediate participant reasoning

The analysis of reasoning by intermediate level EFL students revealed three conclusions. Firstly, students started to produce modified reason/excuses.

Example: I won't go with you.

Reasoning: I will meet another person

Example: What a shame! I can't come. Maybe next time.

Reasoning: I don't want to be with my workmates.

They did not choose to provide their excuses or reasons. If they did, it would probably be inappropriate considering the conventions of target culture.

Secondly, students know that they need to be polite even if they fail to do so.

Example: I can't come because I am a Muslim.

Reasoning: In order to refuse politely.

In the example above, the refusal was actually not a very polite one but the student stated that s/he was aware of the need to be polite. It is plausible to say that they started to

develop more awareness about refusal conventions and politeness situations at intermediate level.

Thirdly, mentioning family in excuse/reason increased. Students generally included their family rather than relatives or friends for their refusal responses.

Example: I not want moved because my all family live in this city.

Reasoning: I don't want to move because of my family.

4.2.3 Upper-intermediate participant reasoning

The analysis of reasoning by upper-intermediate level EFL students revealed five conclusions. Firstly, students were successful in giving and modifying reasons that are acceptable and appropriate although the real reason is not the same.

Example: I am really sorry. I can't do it. I think your salary is better than other workers.

Reasoning: I bought a new car.

Secondly, students included a more empathetic language, especially towards lower status interlocutors.

Example: It is not important. You don't have to pay for it.

Reasoning: Maybe she has three children. Maybe she doesn't have enough money.

Students generally used their family members in their reason/excuses.

Example: Sorry, we have wedding anniversary. If we don't celebrate this day, my wife will feel bad. I love my wife.

Reasoning: My wife is more important than my job.

Students seemed more sensitive and responded like they got offended by their friends or equal status.

Example: I don't want to try a new diet. Maybe later.

Reasoning: I am hurt very much :(

Students were not very open to suggestions.

Example: Thank you but I am OK with that.

Reasoning: I like my style.

Reasoning: My desk my rules.

4.2.4 Overall analysis of participant reasoning

As students' proficiency level improved, they used more appropriate refusal responses to target language. Also, family members were attributed significant value. Especially male students made excuses or gave reasoning which included their mother or wife.

While using empathy, students guessed that their worker may have three children. It seems that 3 was a culturally accepted number for Turkish.

Students had prejudice towards their boss (higher status) and salesmen (equal status).

Example reasoning: I never trust the salesmen.

Students seemed to have valued feelings more than materials or money.

Reasoning: Emotions are more important than a vase.

Reasoning: Money is less important than family.

Students were more direct and open to their friends. They did not hesitate to give reasons which might not be appropriate for American group.

Example: You aren't a dictator. You know nothing Ahmet.

Reasoning: He is my friend. I can tell him everything.

Students tended to use their authority much more as a teacher in a classroom setting when compared to boss-worker relationship in situations where they had the higher status in both situations.

Example (boss-worker): It is not your job. It is my job.

Reasoning: I would snap a little because this is what I am trained for.

Example (teacher-student): I don't want to do that.

Reasoning: If it is my classroom, they need to respect my decisions.

Students provided more reasons at higher proficiency levels which indicates that they think more about situations and consider more number of conditions.

4.3 INTERVIEWS

Students stated that they generally faced refusal situations in their first language context and daily life. The most common condition they consider before they decide on how to refuse was their level of closeness rather than status. A student mentioned that “Formality of the situation does not affect my sentences. I look at how close I am to the person even if it is my boss.” Therefore, a DCT with situations in which students respond to interlocutors with an equal status but from different closeness levels is needed.

All students stated that they were mostly confident in refusal situations in Turkish. Students told sentences such as “Of course, it is my native language” or “I can express myself very well in Turkish.” It may be impossible for every student to reach this confidence level in their target language, but it is quite possible to help students to reach at a level that they are comfortable.

As for students’ confidence level in their target language, some students stated that their level of confidence for situations in English increased as their proficiency increase. However, a student showed that this is not true for everybody saying that “I have now passed two levels but I am still not sure how to refuse a person in English.” Another student mentioned that “modals such as cannot are taught in class but I would not know how appropriate that is in a situation.” This sentence has two implications. First, teachers actually have the opportunity to teach refusal in certain subjects such as modals and tenses. Second, students may never reach a confident level at refusal situations unless they are provided with real life situations and authentic materials. In EFL environment, classroom is the main source of input for students. Therefore, the authenticity of teacher-talk and the classroom materials plays a vital role.

Student responses also revealed that the gap of self-confidence between pre-intermediate and intermediate levels was much wider than the gap between intermediate and upper-intermediate levels. When following sentences from students at different proficiency levels are analyzed,

- A pre-intermediate student: “For some situations in the questionnaire I had no idea how to refuse.”
- An intermediate student: “I know some structures and I think they are appropriate.”
- An upper-intermediate student: “I think all the answers I gave were appropriate.”

it is obvious that intermediate and upper-intermediate level students have a judgement over what they say in refusal situations. However, pre-intermediate student had a very little confidence in some situations.

Pre-intermediate students stated that they should definitely be taught how to appropriately use refusals. Intermediate and upper-intermediate students thought that they were at an acceptable appropriateness level in refusals and getting better. However, they also said that being taught about refusals in classroom would be a quicker and easier way for them to learn. Especially pre-intermediate students felt that grammar could be restrictive for them to utter sentences that they desired. All students believed that their answers would be different in English context at varying rates.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

An overall conclusion of both quantitative and qualitative analysis suggests that Turkish EFL students follow a regular continuum to more appropriate refusal use as their proficiency levels increase. In fact, students' appropriateness level at upper-intermediate level is highly acceptable in terms of target language conventions. However, it should be kept in mind that not all the students who are learning English as a foreign language will reach high proficiency levels. Interview responses suggested that refusal is a common everyday situation. Therefore, EFL students who are at beginner or intermediate levels should be able to use appropriate refusals. As a result, it is a need for teachers to teach and for EFL course books to include appropriate refusal conventions in target language starting from the lower levels.

It is also obvious from students' responses to interview questions and analysis of the content in different situations that language incompetence is a limiting factor. Even if students are aware of the appropriate refusal conventions of target language and culture, they still need adequate level of proficiency in target language. A good way to deal with this condition, especially at lower proficiency levels, can be to teach chunks. Several sentences or word chunks that are necessary for a survival level of target language may at least save students some time until they reach higher levels of proficiency.

On the other hand, high level of appropriateness does not imply that instruction is not needed for refusal situations. It is clear from the interviews that students have doubts about their answers although answers are acceptable. Students need guidance and input specific to refusal situation in order to reach a level that they are confident in their target language use.

In this study, 'reasoning' part added to the end of each refusal situation proved to be very effective for exploring beyond the students' answers. This part provided students to freely express their feelings and logic. The analysis of this part may help EFL teachers in construction process of curriculum and classroom materials. However, there is a need

for a number of research that analyze EFL students' reasoning behind their refusal answers.

Overall, Turkish EFL students in the university in which the study was carried out showed that they reach an acceptable level of appropriateness in refusal situations if they succeed to complete their prep school program even if they are not specifically taught about the subject. However, refusals and other speech acts are necessary for EFL students to develop a good communicative competence starting from the beginner level.

Implication of this study for teachers is that students need to be taught speech acts, including refusals, starting at early stages of their language development. It is obvious that refusal situations are often encountered in daily life. Therefore, teachers should try to build a self-confidence for students in terms of refusing an invitation, offer, etc. In instruction, refusal should be included in curriculum and lesson outcomes. This way, it will be an objective for both students and teachers.

Further research can focus more on the participant reasoning. It requires a number of studies to explore cognitive processes of students. Data collection methods which give freedom for students to express themselves such as interviews and open-ended questions seem to be very suitable for that purpose. Answers of students should be meticulously analyzed. The same procedure can be applied to the baseline groups with the aim of discovering the background thinking of native speakers. The comparison between native speakers of students' native and target languages can also provide fruitful ideas.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Instruction: Please read the following 12 situations. After each situation you will be asked to write a response in the blank after 'you'. Imagine that you don't want to comply with their request, invitation, etc. Please respond as naturally as possible and try to write your response as you feel you would say it in the situation. The data will be used for research purposes only.

1. You are the owner of a book store. One of your best workers asks to speak to you in private.

Worker: As you know, I have been here just a little over a year now, and I know you have been pleased with my work. I really enjoy working here, but to be honest I really need an increase in pay.

You: _____

Worker: Well... then I guess I will 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 class and asks you for the lecture notes.

Classmate: Oh God! 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: _____

Classmate: Well... then I guess I will have to ask someone else.

3. You are the president of a big printing company. A salesman from a printing machine company invites you to one of the most expensive restaurants, Milat.

Salesman: We have met several times now, and I am hoping you will buy my company's printing machine. Would you like to have dinner with me at Milat to sign contract?

You: _____

Salesman: Well... maybe we can meet another time.

4. You are an executive at a very large software company. One day the boss calls you into his office.

Boss: Next Friday my wife and I are having a little party at my house. I know it's sudden... but I'm hoping all my executives will be there with their wives/husbands. Will you come to the party?

You: _____

Boss: Well, that's too bad... I was hoping everyone would be there.

5. You are at a friend's house watching TV. Your friend offers you a snack.

You: Thanks, but no, thanks. I have 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: Well... you should try it anyway.

6. Your boss just asked you to bring a report to him. You can't find the report on your desk because your desk is much disorganized. Your boss walks over.

Boss: You know, maybe you should try to organize yourself better. I always write things down on a piece of paper so I don't forget them. Why don't you try it?

You: _____

Boss: Well... it was only 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 so sorry! I had a terrible accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel very bad 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 teach English at a university. It is just about the middle of the semester now. One of your students asks to speak to you.

Student: Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class yesterday. We kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less grammar.

You: _____

Student: Well... 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?

10. A friend invites you to dinner, but you really don't like this friend's husband/wife.

Friend: How about coming to my house Friday night? We're having a small dinner party.

You: _____

Friend: Well... maybe next time.

11. You have been working in an advertising company now for some time. The boss offers you an increase in salary and a better position, but you have to move to another city. 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 office in Shiraz. It's a great city, only 3 hours from here by airplane! And, your salary will increase with the new position.

You: _____

Boss: Well... maybe you should think about it some more before declining.

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 the office.

Boss: If it's okay with you, I'd like you to spend an extra hour or two tonight so that we can finish up with this work. Can you stay a little longer at the office?

You: _____

Boss: Well, that's too bad... I was hoping you could stay.

APPENDIX 2

Informed Consent Form

This study is conducted for a thesis about “refusal strategies of L2 English learners in Turkey” by Mehmet Çelikbaş and his advisor Kimberly Anne Brooks-Lewis. The study aims to describe the strategies used by learners and propose implications for teaching. It also aims to compare students in terms of their proficiency levels.

Participation is on a voluntary basis. Any kind of personal information is not needed. Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes by the researcher. It will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

The questionnaire does not include any disturbing questions. However, if you feel uncomfortable for any reason, you are free to quit any time. In such a case, please inform the person conducting the questionnaire that you did not complete yours.

If you want to be informed about the results of the study, please contact the researcher after June, 2016. We would like to thank you in advance for your contributions. Contact information is below:

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Kimberly Anne Brooks-Lewis
Fatih University
Institute of Social Sciences
English Language Teaching

I am participating in this study totally on my own will and am aware that I can quit participating at any time I want/ I give my consent for the use of the information I provide for scientific purposes. (Please return this form to the data collector after you have filled it in and signed it).

Name Surname

Date
29.02.2016

Signature

APPENDIX 3

SÖYLEM TAMAMLAMA ANKETİ

Yaşınız: _____ Cinsiyetiniz: K () / E ()

1. Bir kitap mağazasının sahibisiniz. En iyi elemanlarınızdan biri sizinle özel olarak konuşmak istiyor.

Eleman: Bildiğiniz gibi burada bir seneden uzun bir süredir çalışıyorum ve çalışmamdan memnun olduğunuzu biliyorum. Ben de burada çalışmaktan çok memnunum. Ancak dürüst olmam gerekirse, maaşımda gerçekten bir artışa ihtiyacım var.

Siz: _____

Eleman: O zaman sanırım başka bir iş aramam gerekecek.

2. Bir üniversitede üçüncü sınıf öğrencisisiniz. Derslere düzenli olarak devam ediyor ve iyi notlar alıyorsunuz. Sınıf arkadaşlarınızdan biri sürekli dersleri kaçıyor ve sizden ders notlarınızı istiyor.

Sınıf arkadaşınız: Hay Allah! Yarın bir sınavımız var ama geçen haftanın ders notları bende yok. Senden bunu istediğim için üzgünüm ama ders notlarını bir kere daha bana ödünç verebilir misin?

Siz: _____

Sınıf arkadaşınız: Peki, sanırım başkasından istemek zorundayım.

3. Büyük bir basım evinin müdürüsünüz. Basım makineleri satan bir şirketin satış elemanı sizi İstanbul'un en pahalı lokantalarından birine davet ediyor.

Satış elemanı: Sizinle daha önce birkaç kez görüşmüştük. Şirketimizin matbaa makinesini alacağınızı umuyorum. Bir anlaşma imzalamak için Hilton'da benim misafirim olur musunuz?

Siz: _____

Satış elemanı: O halde başka bir zaman.

4. Çok büyük bir yazılım şirketinin üst düzey yöneticisiniz. Bir gün patronunuz sizi odasına çağırır.

Patronunuz: Önümüzdeki Pazar eşim ve ben, evimizde küçük bir parti veriyoruz. Biliyorum Pazar'a çok kalmadı ama üst düzey yöneticilerimin hepsinin eşleriyle orada olacaklarını umuyorum.

Siz: _____

Patron: Bu çok kötü oldu. Herkesin orada olacağını umuyordum.

5. Bir arkadaşınızın evinde televizyon seyrediyorsunuz. Arkadaşınız size yiyecek hafif bir şeyler ikram ediyor.

Siz: Hayır, teşekkür ederim. Zaten bütün gün yiyorum ve bundan gerçekten rahatsız oluyorum. Artık elbiselerim bile olmuyor.

Arkadaşınız: Neden sana bahsettiğim şu yeni diyeti denemiyorsun?

Siz: _____

Arkadaşınız: Yine de denemelisin.

6. Patronunuz, sizden kendisine bir rapor getirmenizi istedi. Masanızın üzerindeki dağınıklık yüzünden raporu bulamıyorsunuz ve bu esnada patronunuz içeri giriyor.

Patron: Belki biraz daha düzenli olmaya çalışmalısın. Ben her zaman yapmam gereken şeyleri unutmamak için küçük notlar alırım. Belki sen de denemelisin.

Siz: _____

Patron: Peki, sadece bir fikirdi.

7. Eve geliyorsunuz ve evi temizleyen yardımcınızın çok üzgün olduğunu görüyorsunuz. Koşarak size geliyor.

Temizlikçi: Aman Allah'ım! Çok üzgünüm. Çok kötü bir kaza oldu. Temizlik yaparken masaya çarptım ve sizin porselen Çin vazanız düşüp kırıldı. Gerçekten çok üzgünüm. Parasını ödeyeyim.

Siz: (Yardımcınızın üç çocuğa bakmak zorunda olduğunu biliyorsunuz).

Temizlikçi: Hayır, ödersem vicdanen daha rahat olurum.

8. Bir üniversitede İngilizce dersleri veriyorsunuz. Dönemin neredeyse ortasındasınız. Öğrencilerinizden biri sizinle konuşmak istiyor.

Öğrenci: Affedersiniz, dün dersten sonra birkaç öğrenci konuşuyorduk. Biz

düşündük de eğer konuşmaya daha çok ağırlık verip dilbilgisi (gramer) konularının üstünde daha az durursanız, bizce dersler daha iyi geçecek.

Siz: _____

Öğrenci: Tamam, hocam. Sadece bir öneriydi.

9. Öğle yemeği için bir arkadaşınızın evindesiniz.

Arkadaşınız: Biraz daha kek alır mısın?

Siz: _____

Arkadaşınız: Aman canım, sadece küçük bir parça?

10. Bir arkadaşınız sizi akşam yemeğine davet ediyor, ama arkadaşınızın eşini hiç sevmiyorsunuz.

Arkadaşınız: Pazar akşamı bize yemeğe gelmeye ne dersin? Ufak bir parti veriyoruz.

Siz: _____

Arkadaşınız: Peki, belki bir başka zaman.

11. Bir süredir bir reklam şirketinde çalışıyorsunuz. Patronunuz, size maaş artışı ve bir terfi teklif ediyor, ama bunun için başka bir şehre taşınmak zorundasınız. Oysa siz başka bir şehre gitmek istemiyorsunuz. Bugün patronunuz sizi odasına çağırıyor.

Patronunuz: İstanbul'daki yeni büromuz için size yöneticilik pozisyonu önermek istiyorum. Çok güzel bir şehir, buradan uçakla sadece bir saat sürüyor. Ve kabul etmeniz durumunda yeni bir terfi ile maaşınızda da bir artış olacak.

Siz: _____

Patronunuz: Peki, ama yine de reddetmeden önce biraz daha düşünmelisiniz.

12. Patronunuzla ofiste bir toplantıdasınız. Mesai bitmek üzere ve siz de gitmek istiyorsunuz.

Patronunuz: Eğer size de uygunsa, bu gece bir ya da iki saat kalıp bu işi bitirmek isterim.

Siz: _____

Patronunuz: Bu çok kötü oldu. Kalabileceğini umuyordum.

Appendix 4

I. Direct

1. Using performative verbs (I refuse)
2. Non performative statement
 - "No"
 - Negative willingness/ability (I can't./I won't./I don't think so)

II. Indirect

1. Statement of regret (I'm sorry.../I feel terrible...)
2. Wish (I wish I could help you...)
3. Excuse, reason, explanation (My children will be home that night./I have a headache)
4. Statement of alternative
 - I can do X instead of Y (I'd rather.../I'd prefer...)
 - Why don't you do X instead of Y (Why don't you ask someone else?)
5. Set condition for future or past acceptance (If you had asked me earlier, I would have...)
6. Promise of future acceptance (I'll do it next time./I promise I'll.../Next time I'll...)
7. Statement of principle (I never do business with friends.)
8. Statement of philosophy (One can't be too careful.)
9. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
 - Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (I won't be any fun tonight to refuse an invitation)
 - Guilt trip (waitress to customers who want to sit a while: I can't make a living off people who just order coffee.)
 - Criticize the request/requester (statement of negative feeling or opinion; insult/attack (Who do you think you are?/That's a terrible idea!))
 - Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request
 - Let interlocutor off the hook (Don't worry about it./That's okay./You don't have to.)
 - Self-defense (I'm trying my best./I'm doing all I can do.)
10. Acceptance that functions as a refusal
 - Unspecific or indefinite reply
 - Lack of enthusiasm
11. Avoidance
 - Nonverbal
 - Silence
 - Hesitation
 - Doing nothing
 - Physical departure
 - Verbal
 - Topic switch
 - Joke
 - Repetition of part of request (Monday?)
 - Postponement (I'll think about it.)

- Hedge (Gee, I don't know./I'm not sure.)

III. Adjuncts to Refusals

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (That's a good idea.../I'd love to...)
2. Statement of empathy (I realize you are in a difficult situation.)
3. Pause fillers (uhh/well/oh/uhm)
4. Gratitude/appreciation



CV

Mehmet Çelikbaş was born in Konya in 1992. He always wanted to be a teacher. Following his ambitions, he studied at Konya Atatürk Teacher Training High school between 2006-2010. In the university entrance exam he succeeded the best third place in foreign language exam scores in Turkey. He continued his undergraduate education at Fatih university and graduated in 2014. He worked there as a research assistant for 1 year. Now, he has been working as a lecturer at a private university since 2015. In the future, he wants to finish his PhD and become a successful contributor of academic research in ELT.

