



**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF REFUSAL SPEECH ACTS USED BY TURKISH EFL LEARNERS
AND NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH**

Alize CAN¹ & Lutfiye CENGİZHAN²

ABSTRACT

This study aims at comparing the pragmatic competence of Turkish EFL Learners to that of native speakers of English when performing the speech acts of refusals. The study was conducted with 26 Turkish EFL Learners, who were junior year ELT students at Trakya University, and 10 Native Speakers of English. To elicit data, Discourse Completion Task was implemented and obtained data was analyzed with content analysis technique. The frequencies of formulaic refusal expressions applied by Turkish EFL Learners were compared to the ones of native speakers' of English by means of qualitative methods. The qualitative data gathered from participants revealed that the quality of the refusal strategies uttered by Turkish EFL Learners differed significantly from those made by the native speakers of English. Besides, it is apparent that the quality of linguistic and socio-pragmatic knowledge of Turkish EFL Learners is not native-like as they do not prefer appropriate refusal strategies used by native speakers of English.

Key Words: Speech acts, refusal strategies, pragmatic competence, Turkish efl learners, discourse completion task.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrenciler ve İngilizce anadil konuşurları tarafından tercih edilen ret söz eylemleri karşılaştırmalı olarak ele alınmaktadır. Çalışma 26 Trakya Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi 3. Sınıf öğrencisi ve 10 İngilizce anadil konuşuru ile yürütülmüştür. Veri toplama aracı olarak Söylem Tamamlama Testi kullanılmış ve elde edilen veriler içerik çözümlemesi ile analiz edilmiştir. İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrenciler tarafından kullanılan formüleleştirilmiş ret ifadeleri İngilizce anadil konuşurlarınki ile nitel yöntemler vasıtasıyla karşılaştırılmıştır. Katılımcılardan elde edilen nitel veriler İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin ret söz eylem kullanımlarının İngilizce anadil kullanıcılarından büyük oranda farklılık gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, Türk öğrencilerin dilbilimsel ve toplum-edimbilimsel yetileri İngilizce anadil konuşurlarınki gibi olmadığı göze çarpmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: söz eylemler, reddetme stratejileri, edimbilim yetisi, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrenciler, söylem tamamlama testi.

¹ Öğr. Gör., Trakya Üniversitesi, (İngilizce) Mütercim-Tercümanlık Bölümü, e-posta: alizecan@trakya.edu.tr

² Yrd. Doç. Dr., Trakya Üniversitesi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölünü, e-posta: lutfiyecengizhan@trakya.edu.tr

1. INTRODUCTION

In language learning, the development of pragmatic and sociolinguistic rules is important for language learners. They should understand and use language that is convenient to the various situations, in the exact opposite situation, they may miss key points that are being communicated or have their messages misunderstood. For that reason, learning a language not only mean to master linguistic rules, but also to raise awareness of pragmatic and socio-cultural rules of target language and society. Hence, the language learners should be pragmatically and socio-culturally competent in using target language (Hymes, 1972:281). The inability of the language learners in creating appropriate utterances in appropriate contexts is one of the greatest problems in foreign language teaching.

Contexts can differ greatly from one culture to the next, often making it difficult for newcomers to effectively communicate with other members of their new culture. In her study, Savignon (2006:102) put an emphasis on sociolinguistic competence which has been seen integral to communicative competence. Second- or foreign language culture and its teaching should be a concern of language teachers. That is the basic idea behind socio-cultural competence and its use in EFL education.

Pragmatic competence, which is relevant to this study, necessitates knowledge of both pragmatic and sociolinguistic conventions to perform acceptable language functions (speech acts) as well as perform these functions appropriately (Bachman, 1990:82). To become pragmatically competent, one should have the ability to perform speech acts, to convey and interpret non-literal meanings, to perform politeness functions and discourse functions and to use cultural knowledge.

Speech Act Theory

The theory of speech acts has been studied and defined by many experts in pragmatics such as Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Grice (1975), Levinson (1983), Yule (1996) and others. All of them share a common idea that speech act is a unit of speaking and each unit performs certain functions in interaction such as request, invitation, complaint, compliment, prohibition, etc.

According to his performative hypothesis, Austin claimed that when people use language, they do more than just make statements; they perform actions. He is the first to design a classification system of the various speech acts and he believes that a single speech act actually contains three separate but related speech acts: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

In an effort to repair the shortcomings in Austin's schema, Searle (1976:1) regrouped the speech acts into the following divisions: representatives (or assertives), directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. The classification of illocutionary acts proposed by Searle (1976:15) is a development of ideas that appears in Austin's theory. They are five basic kind of action that can perform in speaking by means of the following five types of utterance (Searle, 1976:16). The focus of this study which is "refusal" is categorized as "commissive". This is the case where the speaker expresses his/her reluctance to a request, invitation or suggestion.

Speech Act of Refusal

Refusals are speech acts which are uttered by a speaker directly or indirectly indicating *no* to a request, invitation or suggestion. Like other speech acts, refusals are culture specific values which can be considered polite in a culture while impolite in another one. Therefore, while saying no, a speaker must have knowledge when to use the appropriate form and its function depending on each group and their cultural-linguistic values.

Besides, according to Chen (1996:7), as speech act of refusal is a face-threatening act and often realized through indirect strategies, it requires a high level of non-native pragmatic competence; the use of which depends on some other sociolinguistic variables such as social power influence, social distance influence, the form and the content of the refusals (invitation, request, offer or suggestion).

Empirical Studies on Speech Act of Refusal

There are numerous studies on refusals conducted by many researchers. In this study the best known ones such as Beebe & Cumming (1985); Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz (1990) will be presented. In addition to them, recent studies will also be mentioned.

To begin with, as cited in Cohen (1996:400), Beebe & Cumming (1985:13) compared refusals in spontaneous speech and written discourse completion tasks. In their study, twenty-two female native English-speaking ESL teachers were asked whether they could assist the local team in organizing an upcoming national TESOL conference, eleven by questionnaire and eleven by phone. According to findings of the research, for gathering large amount of data quickly to classify semantic formulas and to ascertain the structure of refusals, discourse completion task was used. Although the discourse completion task did not elicit the actual wording, researchers reported that the full range of formulas and strategies, the length of responses, or the number of turns necessary to fulfil a function, all of which normally occur in a natural speech.

As for the second study, Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz (1990:60) used discourse completion task formed twenty subjects in each category. The subjects are native speakers of

Japanese, native speakers of English and Japanese ESL learners. There were twelve situations and four types of refusals in the discourse completion task: three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions-one of each type to persons of higher, equal, and lower status. The researchers pointed out that pragmatic transfer had an effect on English of Japanese speakers in the USA in terms of order, frequency, and intrinsic content of the semantic formulas they selected for their refusals. From their study, they also concluded that native Japanese excuses in Japanese were less specific than American ones in English (e.g., in refusing an invitation, they just said that they were busy, whereas Americans specified what prevented them from accepting).

Next study conducted on refusals is Tanck's (2002:4-5). In this study, it was aimed to find out speech act sets of refusal and complaint, in which a comparison was made between native and non-native English speakers production. The subjects were twenty-five graduate students formed by twelve native speakers of English and thirteen non-native speakers of English from different backgrounds. The data was collected through Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The result obtained from the study is that frequency of use of three refusal strategies: expression of regret, excuse, and offering alternative were significantly higher. Another study related to refusals is by Al-Eryani (2007:20) who investigated the refusal strategies by Yemeni EFL Learners in his article. The subjects were twenty Yemeni learners of English. He compared their English performances to those of Yemeni Arabic native speakers and American English native speakers through DCT composed of six refusal situations. According to the results, although a similar range of refusal strategies were available to the two language groups; cross-cultural variation was evident in the frequency and content of semantic formulas used by each language group.

The most recent study is conducted by Sadeghi and Savojbolaghchilar (2011). They aimed to compare the refusal strategies used by four groups of native and nonnative speakers of English, namely, American English speakers, Persian/Azeri speakers with little working knowledge of English, advanced Iranian learners of English, and Iranians living in the U.S. for an average of ten years. According to their analysis, Iranian residents and advanced learners used different strategies to refuse requests, invitations, offers and suggestion from Iranians living aboard who acted more similarly to native speakers living in the U.S (Sadeghi & Savojbolaghchilar, 2011:602-3).

Taking these related studies into account, it is highly apparent that the performance of speech act in a second language is not easily accomplished in an appropriate way by non-native speakers as they could not perform the strategies of speech acts as native speakers do. Each culture has its own norms for setting, context, status and genders of speakers. As refusals are culture-specific, they are highly complex to be used by non-native speakers and language learners. In this study, to investigate the refusal strategies used by Turkish EFL Learners and to compare the strategies with that of native speakers, the research questions below are to be addressed.

Q1. Do Turkish EFL Learners adopt the native speakers' conventions when they perform the speech act of refusal?

Q2. Do Turkish EFL Learners choose the appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms when performing refusals in English?

2. METHOD

This study, a comparative analysis, is the case of refusal strategies utilized by Turkish EFL Learners and Native Speakers of English. Aiming at probing into the quality and appositeness of refusal preferences utilized by Turkish EFL, the research has a qualitative nature that relies on the semantic formulas. In this respect, content analysis results shed light on the pragmatic competence of Turkish EFL Learners.

Subjects and Research Contexts

The data for this study has been obtained from two groups of participants. In the study, there are ten (10) Native Speakers of English, whose preferences of speech acts are used as baseline data. Second group is composed of twenty-six (26) Turkish EFL learners, who are junior year ELT students at Trakya University. According to Student Identification Form, they have similar educational backgrounds. The group consists of twenty-one (21) female and five (5) male students. The mean age of this group is 21. (46%) of them reported that they speak English "only at school" while (23%) of use English "often". (19%) of the participants stated that they "sometimes" use English while (10%) of them reported "not very often". (46%) of the Turkish EFL Learners considered themselves "somewhat fluent" in English, while (15%) reported they were "not fluent". (27%) of the subjects considered themselves "fluent" while (11%) of them reported "very fluent" in English. None of the participants have lived in an English speaking country long enough to acquire English language.

The native speakers of English, being the first group, are both female and male participants aged between 23 and 52 (the mean age of this group is 36). Four of them are from the USA, three of them are from the UK and the rest (3) are from New Zealand. All the subjects were reached via internet.

Data Collection

To elicit data for this study, two instruments have been used: Student Identification Form which was adapted from Tanck (2002:19) and Discourse Completion Task. In the Student Identification Form, the participants (Turkish EFL Learners) are asked to give information related to age, gender, how many years they have studied English, how often they speak English and how fluent are they in English. All participants in this study were given Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and they were asked to write their responses to the situations. In

DCT, which have been used as the basis of many speech act studies including Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), Moon (2002), Tanck (2002) and Sadeghi & Savojbolaghchilar (2011), there are six situations in which participants would refuse requests and offers respecting to social status of the speakers. The contextual factors of DCT is as shown below.

Table 1: Contextual Factors of Refusal Situations in DCT

Situation	Addressor	Speech Act	Addressee	What to Refuse
1	Hotel manager (Superior)	refuses	waitress's (Inferior)	request
2	Surgeon (Inferior)	refuses	head surgeon's (Superior)	request
3	Friend (Equal Rank)	refuses	friend's (Equal Rank)	request
4	Office member (Inferior)	refuses	director's (Superior)	offer
5	Parent (Superior)	refuses	son's/daughter's (Inferior)	offer
6	Friend (Equal Rank)	refuses	friend's (Equal Rank)	offer

To verify reliability, contextual and cultural appropriateness of the items, DCT was sent to linguistics professors who are specialized in discourse analysis both from Turkish and foreign universities via internet. Taking suggestions made by the professors into consideration, some corrections were made to amend the DCT. Upon ensuring the appropriateness and reliability of DCT, it was pilot-tested with a group of ten Turkish EFL learners. The goal of the pilot test was to check whether the situations indeed elicited refusals and whether the situations were appropriate to the cultural expectations of the students. The results were checked and no change was made. At the end of the pilot study, the DCT was found reliable and feasible in eliciting the speech acts of refusals.

The data collection procedure includes two stages. First stage is collection of baseline data from Native Speakers of English with the purpose of having baseline data to determine differences between native and non-native groups' preferences of speech acts. Following this, the second stage is to collect data from Turkish EFL Learners.

Data Analysis

The data elicited via DCT from participants were analyzed by using content analysis technique which is a methodology in the social sciences for studying the content of communication and also a qualitative method. The semantic formulas of refusals responded by the subjects were coded in accordance with the ones from Beebe et. al. (1990:62). The responses of Native Speakers of English to DCT were used as criteria to decide the level of appropriateness of Turkish EFL Learners' refusal strategies.

3. FINDINGS

Responses of both native and non-native subjects will be compared and discussed separately for each situation. The conducted study revealed the following findings.

Findings Regarding Refusals Made to Requests

Table 2: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 1st Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFLL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Explanation/Excuse/Reason	3	30	8	31
Criticize	2	20	4	15
Regret+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	5	50	6	24
Empathy+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	5	19
Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	3	11

NSE= Native Speakers of English TEFLL= Turkish EFL Learners

As for the first situation, manager refuses his staff's extra pay request. The power relationship existing between hotel manager and waitress is unfamiliar in terms of social status and distance. It is apparent that the strategies used by NSE and TEFLL show discrepancy in the level of frequency and percentages of preferred strategies. NSE tend to use less but similar components than TEFLL do. However, preferences of TEFLL show variety in terms of frequency and percentage. NSE, for instance, use "Regret+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" component (%50) compared to (24%) by TEFLL. It is also noticed that none of the NSE use "Empathy+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" and "Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy component while TEFLL prefer these components (%19) and (%11). Through this frequencies, it can be deduced that NSE avoid use of "emphaty" and "direct no" while refusing a request made by a lower status interlocutor and prefer refusing in an explicit way. Contrary to these strategy components, strategy of "Explanation/Excuse/Reason" is used by NSE (%30) and (%31) by TEFLL. Similarly, strategy of "Criticize" is preferred by NSE (%20) and (%15) by TEFLL.

Considering the data presented above, NSE are consistent in refusing extra pay request made by a lower status interlocutor. Most of their refusals seem too modest showing consideration compared to that of TEFL. Preferences of TEFL show divergence and most of them prefer refusing in basic level by explaining only the reason. When compared the strategies uttered by TEFL to NSE, it can be clearly observed that TEFL use “empathy” and “direct no” components which were not preferred by NSE. This difference in expressing refusals can be resulted from socio-cultural differences and negative pragmatic transfer between two groups. It can be concluded from this analysis that TEFL group is not capable of producing native-like utterances in refusing a lower status request. In general, their responses linguistically correct but lacked the pragmatic elements to be received by the interlocutor. Below there are the sample responses of participants.

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 1st situation

Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “I’m afraid that it wouldn’t be possible as we are not officially in charge of staff transportation arrangements or fees.”

Criticize: “This is a personal problem and the hotel is not required to fix.”

Regret+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Sorry, but we don’t have money in our budget to pay extra or arrange your transportation.”

Sample refusals made by TEFL to the 1st situation

Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Hotel is not responsible to pay you extra money.”

Criticize: “I think it’s your business.”

Regret+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Sorry, but for now there is no way to fulfill your will”

Empathy+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “I see, but it’s your responsibility to deal with it.”

Direct No+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “No way, we don’t have enough money to pay you extra.”

Table 3: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 2nd Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Regret+Negative Willingness/Ability	1	10	6	24
Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason	2	20	0	0
Negative Consequence	1	10	0	0
Negative Consequence+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	6	60	12	45
Regret + Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	6	24
Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	2	7

In the second situation, a surgeon refuses head surgeon's extra operation request, the power relationship existing between surgeon and the head surgeon is not familiar and not close in terms of social status and distance. For that reason none of the NSE preferred direct no strategy. It is obvious that the most used strategy, "Negative Consequence + Explanation/Excuse/Reason", by NSE and TEFLL show similarities in the level of frequency and percentages. This strategy was preferred by (%60) of NSE and (%45) of TEFLL. Another used strategy by NSE and TEFLL is "Regret+Negative Willingness/Ability" with of (%10) and (%24) respectively. However, there are some strategies which were preferred by TEFLL and not preferred by NSE. For instance "Regret+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy components were used by (%24) of TEFLL. Another example is that TEFLL used Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" combination with (%7). Similarly, there are strategies used by NSE but not preferred by TEFLL. For example, semantic formula of "Positive Opinion+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason is used by (%20) of NSE and component of "Negative Consequence" with of (%10). Since the majority of TEFLL prefer "Negative Consequence + Explanation/Excuse/Reason" like NSE do, it can be inferred that most of the TEFLL are capable of refusing a request made by a high status interlocutor but the quality of utterances produced by TEFLL is not native-like. On the contrary, there are "Regret+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" and "Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategies preferred by TEFLL which are not used by any of NSE. Therefore, using these strategies may sound assertive and not appropriate in the target language context.

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 2nd situation

Regret+Negative Willingness/Ability: "I'm so sorry but I can't do another operation."
 Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "I'd very much like to help, but I feel so tired for another operation could we arrange someone else?"
 Negative Consequence: "I really couldn't safely do another operation."
 Negative Consequence+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "I've been here for 20 hours and performed two surgeries. My hand and eyes tired, and I'm afraid doing something wrong in the new operation"

Sample refusals made by TEFLL to the 2nd situation

Regret+Negative Willingness/Ability: "Forgive me but I don't feel myself well."
 Negative Consequence+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "I'm very tired and sleepy. I can't have one more operation. It can be dangerous for patients."
 Regret+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Forgive me this time because I've a dating out tonight."
 Direct No+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Oh no, I'm very tired today and I can't even stand up. I can't make another operation in this situation."

Table 4: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 3rd Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Criticize +Negative Willingness/Ability	6	60	11	43
Self Defence	3	30	7	27
Criticize	1	10	3	11
Positive	0	0	1	4
Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	1	4
Principle	0	0	4	15

In response to third situation, in which a friend refuses his/her classmate's request of making copies of lecture notes, TEFLL mainly prefer the same refusal strategies used by NSE. The power relationship existing between two friends is familiar and close in terms of social status and distance. According to the table above, the most used strategy by TEFLL and NSE is "Criticize +Negative Willingness/Ability" with of (%43) and (%60) respectively. Another strategy preferred by these groups is "Self Defence". This refusal strategy was used by (%30) of NSE and (%27) of TEFLL. The third strategy used for this situation was "Criticize" by (%10) of NSE and (%11) of TEFLL. Apart from these strategy combinations, there are two strategies used by only TEFLL. While any participant from NSE did not use strategies of "Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason" and "Principle", (%4) and (%15) of TEFLL preferred these strategies respectively. While refusing a request made by a peer, TEFLL tend to present a specific principle or positive opinion which indicated that they avoided direct refusal strategies and intended to express their refusing explicitly. In this situation, NSE may feel that it is not necessary to explain principle and positive opinion due to close social distance.

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 3rd situation

Self Defence: "I really don't feel like you deserve any help since you've clearly slacked off. I've really worked hard this semester and I need them for the exams now."

Criticize +Negative Willingness/Ability: "I know you are my friend but I feel like you're freeloading. You never come to class and study. Quite frankly, I don't feel comfortable giving you my notes."

Criticize: "It's not right for you to copy my notes when you missed so many lectures."

Sample refusals made by TEFLL to the 3rd situation

Criticize: "If you had come to lesson, you would have the notes."

Criticize +Negative Willingness/Ability: I can't. Come to lecture and take your notes yourself!"

Principle: "Principally, I don't share my notes with no one. Not even my close friends."

Findings Regarding Refusals Made to Offers

Table 5: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 4th Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFLL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	8	80	6	24
Positive				
Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason	2	20	14	54
Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	2	7
Negative				
W/A+Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	4	15

As for the fourth situation, an officer declines the promotion offered by the director. The power relationship existing between them is unfamiliar and not close in terms of social status and distance. The baseline data indicates that NSE generally prefers “Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” strategy combination with (80%) and “Positive Opinion + Explanation/Excuse/Reason” strategy combination with (20%). In this situation, NSE do not prefer other strategy combinations such as “Explanation/Excuse/Reason” and “Negative W/A+Explanation/Excuse/Reason”. However, preferences of TEFLL show divergence of frequency and percentages of refusal strategies. Only (24%) of them preferred “Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” strategy component which has the highest percentage of NSE. Similarly, “Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason” component was used by majority (54%) of TEFLL. In addition to these components, TEFLL deem suitable using a sole “Explanation/Excuse/Reason” and “Negative W/A+Explanation/Excuse/Reason” with of (7%) and (15%) respectively. Taking these semantic formulas into account, it is clear that NSE generally decline higher offers showing gratitude or positive opinion, while TEFLL participants refuse using negative willingness, which may not welcomed in English. To conclude, Turkish EFL Learners frequently use “Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” and “Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason” combinations, but, they also refuse higher offers showing unwillingness.

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 4th situation

Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Thank you so much for thinking me for this promotion. I feel honoured. However, while I would love the new responsibilities, I’m not sure if my family wants to change cities. My kids just started school and my husband’s job is here, as well.”

Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “This is such a compliment, thank you for considering me for this position. However, I’m not sure if my family wants to move.”

Sample refusals made by TEFLL to the 4th situation

Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Thanks a lot, but I don't want to leave my city."
 Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "I'm very proud of choosing me, but my family lives in this city and my kids go to school."
 Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "But I'm used to live in this city."
 Negative W/A+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "I can't simply move to another city, because my family lives in this city."

Table 6: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 5th Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFLL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	1	10	3	11
Explanation/Excuse/Reason	4	40	11	43
Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	5	50	12	46

In the fifth situation, a parent refuses his/her child's offer of giving lift. The power relationship existing between the two is familiar. The refusal strategy components were produced with almost the same frequency between NSE and TEFLL. The baseline data reveals that (50%) of NSE mostly prefer "Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy combination. Following this, they prefer "Explanation/Excuse/Reason" with (40%). The last strategy NSE prefer is "Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy combination with (10%). When analyzing TEFLL group, it is obvious that the majority prefers the same strategies, which are used by NSE, with (46%) "Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" and with (43%) "Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy combinations. Similar to NSE group, TEFLL use a different strategy combination in addition to common strategies, such as "Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" strategy combination with (11%). Considering the overall analysis of this situation, it is apparent that TEFLL prefer using the same semantic formulas used by NSE and they demonstrated an equal high level frequency in the usage of the combination of "Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason" and "Explanation/Excuse/Reason".

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 5th situation

Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "No, no need honey, I will hire a taxi for that."
 Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Your aunt will give me a lift."
 Gratitude+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Thanks honey! I've already called a taxi."
 Sample refusals made by TEFLL to the 5th situation
 Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "No need dear, I'll deal with it."
 Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "As you will be at school, I called a taxi."
 Gratitude+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: "Thank you dear, I called a taxi."

Table 7: Frequency Distributions of Refusal Strategies in 6th Situation

Refusal Strategies	NSE(n.10)		TEFLL(n.26)	
	f	%	f	%
Explanation/Excuse/Reason	7	70	4	15
Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	3	30	15	60
Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	4	15
Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason	0	0	3	10

In the sixth situation, a friend offers his friend to buy his second-hand phone. The power relationship existing between them is familiar and close in terms of social status and distance. The baseline data reveals that NSE generally prefer using “Explanation/Excuse/Reason” strategy with (70%). Following this high percentage, “Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” used by (30%) of NSE. The most used semantic formula by TEFLL group is “Gratitude+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” with (60%) and the second one is “Explanation/Excuse/Reason” and “Positive Opinion+Explanation/Excuse/Reason” strategy combinations with 15% for each. These small percentages may indicate that the participants who prefer these strategies could not develop native-like performances as they lack of the sociopragmatic norms of English. In addition to these strategy components, strategy of “Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason” was preferred by (10%) of TEFLL. According to the frequencies and percentages above, the point that attacks attention is the majority of TEFLL feel need to show gratitude while refusing an offer made by a friend. On the other hand, most of the NSE only explains the reason of their refusal. This difference may due to cultural divergence. These small percentages may indicate that the participants who prefer these strategies could not develop native-like performances as they lack of the sociopragmatic norms of English.

Sample refusals made by NSE to the 6th situation

Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “No, this model is not the one I’d like to buy.”

Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Buying second hand things is always risky”

Gratitude+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Thanks but buying a second hand thing always risky. If a new product fails, I can complain to the shop.”

Sample refusals made by TEFLL to the 6th situation

Direct No+ Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Oh, no. I don’t want to buy a second hand phone.”

Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “But I would like to buy a new one.”

Gratitude+Explanation/Excuse/Reason: “Thank you for your offer, I’m looking for a brand new one.”

4. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this investigation is to compare the differences between native and non-native English speakers' preferences of refusal strategies. In relation to this aim, the research questions were if Turkish EFL Learners adopt the native speakers' conventions when they perform the speech act of refusals and if Turkish EFL Learners choose the appropriate linguistic and pragmatic forms when performing refusals in English.

As the answer to the first research question, it is found that Turkish EFL Learners (TEFLL) are not capable of performing appropriate refusals in English. Their utterances are not always consistent with native speakers in terms of appropriateness to the situation. It is also found that TEFLL tend to produce more explicit refusal components of semantic formulas (use of direct no) than NSE do while refusing a superior, inferior and equal social level interlocutor. Oppositely, NSE generally prefer expressing their refusals explicitly mostly through using "Explanation/Excuse/Reason" semantic formula. TEFLL seem to preserve the cultural conventions while uttering speech acts of refusals. Thus, their choice of refusal strategies will not be convenient if used in English language context.

As for the linguistic and pragmatic forms produced by TEFLL, the results revealed that the quality of speech act components of refusals is different from the ones uttered by NSE. NSE are consistent in their speech act realizations, they prefer using simple strategy combinations but their preferences are varied as they prefer different semantic formulas. TEFLL is not capable of using varied semantic formulas of speech act sets of refusals like NSE do. Besides, the qualities of these formulas produced by non-native speakers (Turkish EFL Learners) in these situations are less appropriate than those produced by NSE. From this finding, as the answer to the second research question, it can be inferred that while using refusal strategies, TEFLL did not pay careful attention to factors of social status of speakers, cultural difference and context.

Implications

Use of speech acts requires sociopragmatic knowledge. For that reason, learners should be aware of sociopragmatic norms considered by Hymes (1972:290) under the term communicative competence. In this respect, knowing what to say to whom, when to speak and in what circumstance is the gist of Hymes' argument. Concordantly, in language teaching settings, teaching speech acts of apologizing, requesting, greeting, rejecting, thanking and many others have important role and learners need information on the rules of what to say and the context in which they are needed. Considering this belief, it can be inferred that target language socio-cultural norms can be taught through a program which is designed in raising awareness of learners about cultural differences in speech acts realizations across languages. They can compare and contrast the norms of target language and their native language.

REFERENCES

- Al-Eryani, A. A., (2007). Refusal strategies by Yemeni EFL learners. *Asian EFL Journal*. Vol: 9, No: 2, pp. 19-34.
- Austin, J.L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beebe, L. M., & Cummings, M. C. (1985). Speech act performance: A function of the data collection procedure? *Paper presented at the TESOL Convention*. New York.
- Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Andersen, & S. D. Krashen (Eds.). *Developing communicative competence in a second language*, pp. 55-73, New York: Newbury House.
- Chen, H.J. (1996). Cross-cultural comparison of English and Chinese metapragmatics in refusal, Indiana University.", (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 408860).
- Cohen, D.A. (1996). Developing the ability to perform speech acts. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, Vol: 18, pp. 253-267.
- Grice, H.P. (1975). Logic and conversation, In: P. Cole and J.L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, pp. 41-58, Academic Press, New York.
- Hymes, D. H. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings*, pp. 269-293.
- Levinson, S.C. (1983). *Pragmatic*, Cambridge textbooks in linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moon, K. (2009). Speech act study: differences between native and non-native speaker complaint strategies." Retrieved from World Wide Web: http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/1961/5225/1/Kyunghye_Moon.pdf
- Olshtain, E. & Weinbach, L. (1987). Interlanguage features of speech acts of complaining in Kasper, G. and Blum-Kulka, S. (eds.), *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sadeghi, K. & Savojbolaghchilar, S. (2011). A comparative study of refusal strategies used by Iranians and Americans. *International Journal of Academic Research*, Vol:3 No:2, pp. 601-606.
- Savignon, S. J. (2006). Communicative language teaching. In Jacob L. Mey (Eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of pragmatics*, pp.99-106, Elsevier, Denmark.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J.R. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society*, Vol: 5, pp. 1-23.
- Tanck, S. (2002). Speech act sets of refusal and complaint: a comparison of native and non-Native English Speakers' production.", Retrieved from <http://www.american.edu/cas/tesol/resources/working-paper-2.cfm>
- Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language 2nd ed.*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.