

"I REFUSE YOU!" AN EXAMINATION OF ENGLISH REFUSALS BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH, LAO, AND TURKISH.

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The purpose of this study was to examine English refusals produced by native speakers of English, Turkish, and Lao to determine if the non-native speakers' first language played a role in the formation of L2 refusals. The two groups of L2 English speakers followed the same general pattern as the native English speakers, with members from each group using an excuse, reason, or explanation most often when forming a refusal statement. Males and females had different patterns of refusals, and pragmatic transfer seemed to have played a role in some cases.

In today's increasingly connected world, it is becoming more important than ever that language learners attain true communicative competence. Communicative competence, according to Ellis (1994), "entails both linguistic competence (for example, knowledge of grammatical rules) and pragmatic competence (for example, knowledge of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior in a particular situation)" (p. 696). These two aspects of communicative competence, however, are not necessarily tied together in terms of development. Most ESL instructors can relate instances where students participated in perfectly grammatical interchanges with native speakers in which there was a miscommunication due to pragmatic failure. The interchange below illustrates such a case:

A: How about another piece of cake?

B: Oh no, I couldn't, thank you.

A: Come on, just a little piece?

B: Everything was so tasty, I couldn't eat another bite.

While this may appear to be a perfectly acceptable conversation to an American audience, perhaps regarding a guest being offered seconds at dessert, it could very well not be satisfying for B. While it is traditional for a member of B's culture to politely refuse such a request twice before accepting the third offer, A, being from the United States, does not realize that this is the case. B's involvement in the communication was perfectly grammatical but was a pragmatic failure and, hence, he goes away hungry and, perhaps, a bit confused and frustrated.

Refusals have been called a "major cross-cultural 'sticking point' for many nonnative speakers" (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990, p. 56). Due to their inherently face threatening nature, refusals are of an especially sensitive nature, and a pragmatic breakdown in this act may easily lead to unintended offense and/or breakdowns in communication. Refusals are also of interest due to their typically complex constructions. They are often negotiated over several turns and involve some degree of indirectness. In

addition to this, their form and content tends to vary depending on the type of speech act that elicits them (request, offer, etc.), and they usually vary in degree of directness depending on the status of the participants (Beebe et al., 1990, p. 56).

While there are a great number of studies which examine certain speech acts, the amount of research on refusals is much more limited. Of the fifteen studies found which dealt with the topic of refusals, only six included nonnative speakers of English (Beebe et al., 1990; Chao-chih & Bresnahan, 1996; Chen, 1995; García, 1996; King & Silver, 1993; Kinjo, 1987; Naka, 1986). However, only four of these studies examined how native speakers of languages other than English utilized English in making refusals (Beebe et al., 1990; Chen, 1995; King & Silver, 1993). The lack of research in this field, and most especially in the case of second language speakers of English, demonstrates the need for further investigation in this area.

The available studies on L2 refusals do, however, have a number of interesting findings. Chen (1995) asked 42 undergraduate Native Speakers (NSs) of English to holistically rate (using a 5-point Likert Scale) the pragmatic appropriateness of refusals obtained from Native and Non-Native Speakers (NNSs) in an earlier study. The previous project included Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Europeans and U.S. citizens (total number 26). The author found that NSs of English had high consistency of agreement in the identification of which refusals were pragmatically appropriate, and that their pragmatic judgments also remained consistent over time. She also found that NSs considered the refusals by other NSs to be more pragmatically appropriate.

King and Silver (1993) examined the effect on NNS refusal strategies of teaching sociolinguistic variables which are important in refusing for American English. In comparison with the data from a pretest Discourse Completion Questionnaire (DCQ), the researchers found little effect from instruction on the post-test. They also found no effect of instruction in telephone interactions designed to elicit disagreement. Contrary to their expectations, the researchers did find that the telephone interaction caused more elaboration, negotiations, and total talk than did the DCQ.

Chao-chih and Bresnahan's (1996) study examined the 'tokens of strategies' used by Chinese (n=570) and American (n=516) undergraduates studying in their own countries. Examples of their 24 tokens of strategies include: silence, direct "no", excuse, criticism, and conditional "yes." They used six request scenarios designed to elicit refusals from the study participants and found that Americans use significantly more strategies in refusing. Secondly, they found that Chinese students were least likely to refuse family members while Americans saw family and friends as being approximately equal in difficulty of refusing. Finally, they found that females from both cultures were less likely to refuse than their male counterparts.

The issue of pragmatic transfer, as discussed by Beebe et al. (1990), is also of interest. While Dulay and Burt's (1974) study seemed to discredit the role of language transfer in learning an L2, this study suggests the opposite

for refusals: that language transfer at the pragmatic level does exist, specifically in the form of native, discourse-level sociocultural competence. Based on the results of a 12 item written role-play questionnaire which required a refusal, subject responses (subjects were Japanese speaking Japanese (n=20), Japanese speaking English (n=20), and Americans speaking English (n=20)) were coded using a 33 category classification system (discussed further in the research design section of this study) and analyzed for evidence of language transfer. The authors found evidence of negative transfer from Japanese in three areas: order of semantic formulas, the frequency of semantic formulas, and the content of semantic formulas.

In short, the main difficulty in summarizing the state of knowledge on this topic is the lack of studies on the issue. This is problematic in several respects. First, the small number of languages studied prevents the possibility of any generalizations being made based on the present data. While additional studies involving NS of Asian languages would be useful, it seems especially important that adequate samples from a wider variety of languages be obtained. Of special interest in this field would be studies like that of Beebe et al. (1990) which include a native language control group and an L2 group speaking English.

The second problem resulting from the small number of studies is the lack of replication. While a number of these studies have interesting findings, none of them, apparently, have been replicated by other researchers. This is problematic in terms of generalizations being made based on these studies. This may also help to explain the lack of disagreement on this topic. Until these studies are replicated, such disagreement is unlikely.

This study will examine refusals in English elicited from native speakers of three different languages and compare them to determine if the native language of the refuser plays a role in the formation of L2 refusals in English.

METHOD

Subjects

The present study involves 30 subjects from three different native language backgrounds: American, Lao, and Turkish. Each group includes 10 subjects, 5 males and 5 females¹. The subjects for the current study are subjects of convenience. The subjects from the American group are graduate students, most of whom are studying in either the English Language and Linguistics (EL/L), or the Second Language Acquisition and Teaching (SLAT) program at The University of Arizona. The Lao subjects include six immigrants and four Lao students studying at U.S. universities. The Turkish subjects are graduate students at the University of Arizona in various programs, including Electrical Engineering, Economics, Language Reading and Culture, and Mechanical Engineering.

Data Elicitation

The primary data collection tool for this study was the Discourse

Completion Test (DCT) created by Beebe et al. (1990). The DCT consists of twelve situations designed to elicit refusals for requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Each of these four categories contains three situations aiming to find out the distinction between the relationship of the participants, i.e. when the speaker is of lower, equal or higher status (see Appendix A).

First, the DCT was given to one subject in each language group as a pilot study. After the subjects completed the questionnaires, the researchers discussed the instrument with the pilot subjects to determine whether there were any ambiguities or inconsistencies. Then, the results of the pilot were discussed among the researchers (see data analysis). The finalized DCT's were then mailed or handed directly to the subjects. Follow-up interviews were also conducted after the initial data was analyzed to investigate the reasons behind any incongruities within each language group.

Data Analysis

The refusals obtained from the DCT were analyzed as consisting of a sequence of semantic formulas (Beebe et al., 1990) following the listing provided in the appendices. For example, this response from a Lao subject, "I'd love to. I'm sorry I can't make it today as I'm meeting one of my client," was coded as follows:

I'd love to = statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement (Adjunct 1).

I'm sorry = statement of regret (IIA).

I can't make it today = negative willingness/ability (IB2).

As I am meeting one of my client = excuse, reason, explanation (C).

Preliminary remarks that could not appear alone and function as refusals were termed 'adjuncts.' For example, subjects often expressed gratitude or appreciation (e.g., 'thank you') before giving their excuse ('but I've already made other plans'). Without the excuse, the expression of positive feeling would sound like an acceptance.

Prior to the actual coding of our subjects' questionnaires, an initial pilot coding session was performed and a training session held for the three researchers to carefully develop and ensure our cross-group coder reliability. Once each group's questionnaires were collected, they were coded and then recoded by a different researcher to ensure coding reliability. For any situation in which a coding disagreement arose, the coding in question was discussed and decided on by all three coders.

In our analysis of the data, we coded the frequencies of semantic formulas used by men and women in each situation for the three groups and calculated the inter-group and intra-group percentages of formulas. In addition, we analyzed the content of certain semantic formulas in the situations. For example, we particularly noted whether the subjects in one group provided semantic formulas which none of the subjects in other groups gave.

RESULTS

Refusals by American Native Speakers of English

The ten American subjects produced a total of 285 refusal semantic formulas. Of the 29 categories of refusal formulas contained in the coding classifications, as shown in chart 1 (see Appendix C for further description), only seven of these were used more than five percent of the time by the American subjects. Category C, which includes excuses, explanations, and reasons, contained the most responses, with 29.8% of the American refusal formulas falling in this area. Given this percentage, it is important to note that category C was used in 70.8% of the general refusal statements. This large difference may be attributed to the fact that the semantic formulas rarely occurred alone when refusals were made. For example, a typical refusal statement might look something like this:

I'm sorry.	I wish I could have dinner with you	but I have a class that night.
2A— Statement of regret	2B— Wish	2C— Excuse, reason, explanation

As the table indicates, most refusal statements included an excuse, as well as additional semantic formulas, such as statements of regret or wish statements. Of the 85 occurrences of C, only seven occurred without additional formulas. A further pattern which seems important to native speakers of English is the placement of C among the other formulas. In 56 of the 78 (71.7%) cases where C was utilized with other semantic formulas, it occurred at the end of the refusal. Subject seven's (female) reply to a classmate requesting to borrow her notes exemplifies this pattern: "I'm sorry, but I need them to study for myself and really don't have time to lend them to you." In only 12.8% of the cases did C occur at the beginning of the refusal.

The second most common type of refusal formula was a statement of regret (2A), which occurred in 9.8% of the responses. This formula was used in 23.3 percent of all the refusals. Unlike the case of excuses, statements of regret occurred at the beginning of the refusal in 71.4% (20/28) of the cases. Furthermore, a statement of regret never occurred alone and was found at the end of the refusal in only 3 cases (10.7%). Statements of regret (2A) and excuses (C) were usually closely linked; in 23 of 28 uses of statements of regret (2A), an excuse (C) either immediately preceded or followed it. In twenty of these cases (87%), the statement of regret (2A) came immediately before the explanation (C) as illustrated in this response from subject 9 (F): "I'm sorry- I have to pick up my daughter at 5:00." In this case the statement of regret (I'm sorry) is immediately followed by a reason ('I have to pick up my daughter at 5:00').

The third most commonly used formula in American subjects' refusals falls in the Adjunct section of the coding. Pause fillers (Adjunct 3) accounted for 8.1% of the refusal formulas. In the 22 refusals which used pause fillers, this formula occurred at the beginning of the refusal in every case

(100%). Pause fillers were followed by a number of different semantic formulas. This variety of following formulas is not unexpected as pause fillers are typically used to give the speaker time to form their reply. Subject 3 (male) uses a pause filler in a manner which would often be found in spoken data: "Well, I was thinking about this possibility just the other day...". It appears that the subjects, following the instruction "as you would in a normal conversation," carried over this formula from speech. The nonperformative statement "No" (1B1) was the fourth most commonly used formula, with 6.7% of the refusal formulas falling into this category. Adjunct three (Gratitude/appreciation) was used 6.3% of the time, with Adjunct one (Statement of positive feeling/agreement) and 1B2 (Negative willingness/ability) being used 6% and 5.3% of the time respectively.

There were six refusal formulas which were never used by the American subjects. These are direct performatives (1A), statements of principle (G), statements of philosophy (H), requests for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request (I4), acceptance that functions as a refusal/lack of enthusiasm (J2), and topic switch (K2A). The first of these refusal formulas is the most direct, and would consist of an utterance like "I refuse." While Americans did seem to favor direct responses ("No" (1B1): 6.7%; negative willingness/ability (1B2): 5.3%), the use of a refusal of such an abrupt and final nature is not favored. In the case of 1B1 ("No") and 1B2 ("I can't"), on the other hand, additional explanations for the refusal were commonly added. In the case of G and H, it would appear that using such refusals is seen as being overly philosophical in nature. The same seems to hold true in the case of K2A and J2. In later face-to-face interviews with the subjects, subject 4 (male) stated that showing a lack of enthusiasm or using a topic switch did seem quite acceptable to use, but that the first four refusal formulas (1A, G, H, I4), seemed "a little bit too direct" to be polite.

An examination of the differences in the use of refusal formulas among American men and women shows that there are important differences in how refusals are used by these two groups. In general, women tended to use more refusal formulas, with women accounting for 53% (152) and men providing 46% (133). While both men and women shared the characteristic of not using the above-mentioned six refusal formulas, the men had an additional four formulas which were not utilized: wish (2B), guilt trip (I2), repetition of part of the request (K2C), and hedging (K2E). While a discussion of the use of these formulas by women is of interest, it is important to note that two of them (guilt trip (I2) and repetition (K2C)) contained only one formula each, and that a third (hedging (K2E)) had only two responses. Wishes (2B), however, accounted for 4.6% of the formulas for the overall sample, with 7 formulas from 4 different subjects. In the case of using "wish", both male and female responses gathered from interviews indicated that while it was quite acceptable for women to use this formula, its use by males was less acceptable. Subject 10 (F) believed that women used this formula more than men because "men aren't trained to be in the helper role."

While the majority of the refusal categories were quite similar

concerning men and women's responses, there were also a number of categories where the differences were apparent. In all, there were eight categories where the men and women differed in their usage by more than two percent (see table 1).

Table 1: Differences of more than two percent between men and women

Category	% for Men	% for Women	Difference
IB1(No)	9.0	4.6	4.4
I3 (Criticize request)	4.5	1.3	3.2
K2B (Joke)	6.0	3.3	2.7
Adj1 (Positive opinion)	7.5	4.6	2.9
1B2 (Negative ability)	3.8	6.6	2.8
2B (Wish)	0.0	4.6	4.6
C (Explanation)	27.8	31.6	3.8
Adj4 (Gratitude)	3.8	8.6	4.8

It is interesting to note that while all of the latter formulas could be termed face saving, three of the first four formulas fall on the side of face threatening acts. This is to say that in the case of 1B2, 2B, C, and Adj4, the refuser is using formulas that may have the effect of lessening the "threat" of the refusal. Female subject 8, for example, refused a request for a raise by saying "You have been a great worker + we have been pleased with your work. I wish I could offer you a raise but we just can't afford it..." The first underlined section contained the wish (2B) statement, and it is followed by a negative ability (1B2) phrase. Both of these have the effect of minimizing the threat of the refusal to both the refusee and the refuser. In the case of 1B1 and I3, the refuser is using formulas which are more direct and, especially in the case of I3, more forceful in nature. Male subject 1 illustrates the use of a criticism of the requester (I3) when refusing a request to borrow class notes: "Last time you borrowed them you kept them too long and I didn't do so well on the test." Clearly, such criticism is face threatening in nature. It is interesting to note that, when interviewed, both American men and women agreed that refusals from those two genders are different. Subject 4 (male) represents many of the replies by stating that "the ones from the American men would be more direct [and] more terse." The case of the use of jokes/humor (K2B) seems to be different from the previous two; depending on the nature of the joke it may be seen as either face threatening or saving in nature.

Requests: The three situations included in the request category (see Appendix A: 1, 2, & 12) resulted in a similar use of formulas between men and women. In the case of explanations (C), men used it 11 times while women used it 13 times. The use of statements of regret (2A) followed a similar pattern, with 6 occurrences for men and 7 for women. In the case of the refuser being of lower (the boss requests that the worker stay late) or equal (request to borrow class notes) status (#1 & 2), the women used more explanations than did the

men. The women also used more “sorry” expressions in the case where they were of lower status (3 versus 1), but the numbers were equal to men in the case of equal status refusals. In the case of the refuser being of a higher status, however, this trend was reversed: the men used “sorry” more often and also used more explanations than did the women (four C’s and three 2A’s for men; three C’s and two 2A’s for women).

Invitations: In the case of situations 4, 10, and 3 (see Appendix A), a similar pattern was found. Once again, the women’s usage of explanations and reasons (C) was higher than the men’s in both the lower and equal refuser status situations (4 vs. 5 and 3 vs. 5). The use of statements of regret (2A) differed from the previous section. In the lower refuser situation (an invitation by the boss for a party), the men used 2A twice while the women used it three times. In the equal status case (dinner at a friend’s house), however, men used 2A three times while the women only used it once. It is interesting to note that, in this situation, the women used a wish statement (2B) three times, perhaps eliminating the need to use the “sorry” expression. Female subject 7, for example, responded to the invitation by replying, “I wish I could, but I promised that I would babysit that evening.” The presence of the wish phrase, in this case, may very well fulfill the same function as “sorry.” The pattern for the case of the refuser being of higher status followed the same pattern as in the case of requests. The men used both C and 2A more than did the women (4C’s and three 2A’s for men; 2C’s and one 2A for women). The similar use of C in both invitations and requests seems to suggest that status does, indeed, play a role in the formation of refusals. The need for men to explain their refusal to people of lower status would seem to indicate that they feel a need to help the refusee “save face” in such situations. Adjunct 3 (pause fillers) also played a greater role in the case of invitations, with men using three and women using six. In the case of invitations, women used a greater number of pause fillers in each status.

Offers: The trend with regard to explanations and statements of regret continued with DCQ item #11 (Promotion with move to small town). While men used an explanation (C) three times, women used them four times. The case with statements of regret (2A) were more pronounced: women used it twice while men did not make use of this formula at all. In addition, women expressed gratitude for the offer (Adj4) four times and men, once again, did not use the formula. In the case of the equal status refusal of a piece of cake, the C/2A pattern falters. The men responded to the offer with a total of 5 uses of C and zero uses of 2A, and the women used C only three times and, as with the men, did not use 2A at all. Men, it would seem, felt a greater need to explain their reason for not wishing more food while women did not appear to have this constraint. Interview data confirmed this, with both men and women agreeing that it was more acceptable for women to reject an offer of more food, perhaps due to issues of body image and weight concerns. Both sexes also made heavy use of “no” in this case: 7 for the men and 5 for the women. Finally, it is interesting to note that women made greater use of expressions of gratitude in this case (Adj4), using them six times versus four for men.

In response to the offer for repayment for a broken vase (DCQ item #7), the refusals followed a very different pattern from the previous sections. First, item 2A was not used by either sex, probably due to the nature of the offer. In addition to this, the use of C was not, as in the case of requests and invitations, reversed (men used 4 and women used 5). Finally, while the nature of this item would seem to require (at least for Americans) that the breaker of the vase be "let off the hook" (I5), this was only done by the men in four of five cases. The women, on the other hand, did this in all five cases, with subject five doing so twice: "Please, don't worry about it - I didn't even need that vase - it was ugly. No problem at all- please." The only man who did not provide a direct "let off the hook" formula instead offered an alternative (D2) which, through its phrasing, seemed to have the same effect: "Can you just give it back on the table?" This case displays the difficulty, at times, of coding the refusals due to the fact that they may fulfill more than one formula category, and because even native speakers may produce unusual sentences.

Suggestions: With regard to the use of excuses (C), refusals from refusers of lower or equal status followed the pattern of the first two stimulus types. When refusing the suggestion from the boss to "write little reminders," the men did not use an explanation in their refusals, but three of the women chose to do so. Interestingly, unlike in the previous three stimulus types, neither group chose to use a statement of regret when refusing their superior in this case. Three women also chose to explain their refusal when asked to try a new diet by an equal (DCQ item #5); men used two in this response. The most significant difference in the use of refusal formulas with this item, however, lies in the use of attempts to dissuade the interlocutor (I). The men used these formulas three times: twice by criticizing the request/requester (I3) and once with a statement of negative consequences to the requester (I1). A typical use of the former case (I3) was given by subject 5 when he replied by saying "Those diets are all just gimmicks." In general, the subjects usually chose to criticize the request rather than the requester when using this formula. The women, on the other hand, attempted to dissuade the interlocutor only once by, again, criticizing the request (I3) rather than the person giving it: "I don't believe in diets...." The pattern of C usage in the case where the teacher (higher status) refuses the request for more conversation practice, the domination by women continues. While the men used C only once, each woman chose to explain her refusal. Instead of providing an explanation, men were more likely to offer their students an alternative (D) instead (3 for men versus 1 for women).

Results from Lao subjects

Lao subjects produced a total of 292 refusal tokens. As shown in chart 2, out of the total 292 tokens, the most commonly used refusal category is excuse, reason, or explanation (C), with 31.2% of the formulas. This is followed by the statement of regret (2A), at 12.3%; negative willingness or ability (1B2), 11.3%; gratitude or appreciation (Adj4), 10.3%; statement of

positive opinion, feeling or agreement (Adj1), 7.5%; and nonperformative statement "no," 6.2%.

None of the Lao subjects, however, produced direct performatives (1A), statements of principle (G), statements of philosophy (H), threats or statements of negative consequences to the requester (I1), requests for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request (I4), topic switches (K2a), or repetition of part of the refusal (K2c).

The pattern in which the refusal classification types occur is fairly consistent. Statements of regret (2A) and/or statements of positive opinion (Adj1) were commonly found at the beginning of the refusals, with explanations (C) usually occurring at the end. Statements of negative ability (1B2) and gratitude (Adj4), on the other hand, normally appeared in the middle of the refusal statements. This pattern is exemplified by Lao speaker 2 when she used the Adj1 + 2A + 1B2 + C pattern: "I'd like to lend you my note, but I'm sorry I can't as I'm having a study group with my friend soon and I need it myself." Statements of regret (2A) appeared in the initial position 80.5% of the time when they were used. Similarly, 86.4% of Adj1 were found at the beginning of the responses. 1B2 usually occurred either after 2A or at the initial position, doing so 75.7% of the time when it was used. Half of the time, Adj4 occurred before C, and, finally, 72% of C's were in the final position of the refusal.

Some distinctions were found in the use of refusal classification types between male and female Lao subjects. The biggest difference was in the use of statements of positive opinion/feelings or agreement (Adj1). The women used Adj1 6.0% more than the men did. Another fairly distinctive area (one in which the gender trend was reversed) regards the use of unspecific or indefinite replies (J1) and statements of regret (2A), with men using 4.4% and 4.1% more respectively. Interestingly, Lao women used self-defense (I6) in 2.6% out of the total tokens while none of the Lao men used it. In addition, while no men used wish (2B), guilt trip (I2), lack of enthusiasm (J2), and empathy (Adj2), Lao women used them almost 1% of the time. On the other hand, Lao men set conditions for future or past acceptance (E) and made jokes (K2b), both 2.9%; used statements of alternative (D1), 1.4%; and criticized the request or requester (I3) 0.7% of the time whereas none of the women used these classification types. There are, however, great similarities in the use of refusal classification types between Lao men and women as well. The categories in which there was a difference of less than 2% included "No" (1B1), negative willingness (1B2), explanation (C), alternative (D2), promise of future acceptance (F), letting off the hook (I5), hedging (K2e), pause fillers (Adj3), and gratitude (Adj4).

These results seem to contradict our initial assumption. We hypothesized that far more Lao women would produce explanations (C), statements of regret (2A), positive opinion (Adj1), empathy (Adj2), and gratitude (Adj4) due to the influence of Lao society, which expects women to be more polite and respectful than men. There may be several reasons behind these findings. Perhaps this conflicting finding may be explained by the fact

that the Lao women in the study have acculturated into U.S. society more than the men. As explained by one of the Lao men in a later interview: "Lao women here tend to behave differently from the women in Laos because they over believe in the equal right between males and females...." This means that women try hard to adapt to a new culture while men keep their traditional communication style. This may be the reason why the refusal formulas produced by the two genders were so similar. Second, the formulaic expressions taught in ESL classes may have influenced the refusal production by the Lao speakers. A few subjects, for example, began their refusals with "I'm sorry" in almost all situations. Perhaps the use of certain formula like "I'm sorry" may have resulted from overuse of formulaic expressions learned in ESL classes. Third, there could be an influence of native language on the use of classification types. In Lao, the core refusal pattern is "nonperformative statement (1B2) + excuses, reason, explanation (C)." In English, this would take the form of a refusal like, "I can't, because I my wife is sick." This may play an important role in the findings as the Lao results show a high percentage of these categories: 11.3% of 1B2, and 31.2% of C. This is particularly evident in the case of 1B2, which was used by the Lao subjects much more frequently than all other language groups. Finally, in later interviews some of the subjects mentioned that it is hard to refuse politely in any language. The reason behind this may be that the polite refusal forms in Lao and in English are so different. Keovilay (1993) studied how Lao ESL learners use requests and found that Lao subjects use address terms, titles, endearment, and kinship terms as politeness forms. One piece of evidence to support this claim comes from the data by male subject 5, who used terms such as "sir," "my dear friend," "dear," "friend," and "boss" extensively at the beginning of the refusals. It can be assumed that when there are no equivalent politeness terms in making a polite refusal, the Lao subjects who had limited language proficiency may either use terms such as "I'm sorry" or transfer the terminology from the first language as a polite refusal.

Requests: The use of C is fairly distinctive depending on the status of the refuser. The lower and equal status refusers used C 8 times while the higher status ones used it only 5 times. However, there was no difference between men and women in their overall use of C. This means that the Lao speakers of higher position used fewer excuses, reasons, or explanations than did members of the equal or lower statuses. Another interesting finding is on the use of postponement (K2d). The higher status speakers used this 5 times, of which 4 were produced by women. None of the lower or equal status subjects used K2d. In the use of negative willingness/ability (1B2), lower status speakers produced 4 tokens, but the equal and higher status speakers produced 6 tokens each. The use of 1B2 is varied between women and men of different status. Men of lower and higher status used 1B2 twice as much as women while women with equal status used 1B2 two times more than men. The use of statements of regret (2A) varied between all statuses: the equal status subjects produced statements of regret 7 times, followed by the lower status (5), and higher status (4). In all cases, men use 2A more than women.

Not many subjects used gratitude or appreciation in refusing requests, with only two each from lower and equal statuses, and one for the higher status. It is interesting to note, however, that these were all produced by women.

Invitations: There is an interesting pattern in refusing invitations among Lao subjects. The higher status speakers used C less frequently (only 5 tokens) than the lower and equal status refusers (10 tokens). Men and women of lower and equal status produced equal tokens of C while the women of higher status used C far more than the men of higher status (4 to 1). Negative willingness/ability (1B2) and 2A were used less by lower status than equal status refusers (2, 4 and 1, 3, respectively). The higher status refusers used the most 1B2 and 2A (5 tokens each). Lower status speakers used Adj1 twice whereas the higher status ones used it 4 times, and the equal status refusers used it 5 times. Very few subjects use Adj4 in refusing invitations. The equal status refusers used 3 tokens, the lower status 2 tokens, and the higher status only 1 token.

Offers: Similar to requests and invitations, the higher status speakers used less C (only 4 tokens) than the lower status (9 tokens) and the equal status ones (10 tokens). There was no significant distinction between the genders in the use of C. The higher status speakers did not use 1B2, Adj1, or Adj4 while the other two statuses used some of these formulas, each of which accounted for two tokens (all by women). Lower status speakers used Adj1 marginally more than the equal status (2 to 1) while the equal status used Adj4 far more often than the lower status (8 to 3). The higher status person, on the other hand, used 10 tokens of letting the interlocutor off the hook (I5) while none of the lower and equal status subjects used any. In this case, the situation in which the speaker refused may have influenced how they made a refusal. All the Lao subjects let the interlocutor off the hook, i.e. they did not allow the cleaner to replace the broken vase. Interestingly, equal status refusers produced 7 tokens of 1B1 while only 2 tokens of 1B1 were produced by the higher status refusers, and 1 by those of the lower status. Two refusers of lower status produced 2A and 2 subjects from the higher status produced statements setting conditions for future acceptance (E).

Suggestions: The higher status refusers produced C marginally less than the other two statuses (5 to 6 respectively). It is worth noting that women in all statuses used C twice as often as the men did. The equal status speakers used 2 tokens of the nonperformative statement "no" (1B1) and 3 tokens of jokes (K2b) while the others did not. On the other hand, lower status refusers produced 2 tokens of promise of future acceptance (F) and 4 tokens of self-defense (I6), but refusers from other statuses did not use any of them. The self-defense tokens were all produced by women. None of the higher status speakers used gratitude or appreciation (Adj4), but lower status ones used 4 and the equal status, 5 of them. The higher status refusers, on the other hand, produced the highest number of tokens in negative willingness or ability (1B2) (5 tokens) while only 3 tokens were produced by equal status, and 1 by the lower status.

From all four situations, it can be observed that the higher status

refusers used fewer excuses, reasons, and explanations. They also did not use gratitude or appreciation formulas in the refusals. In invitations and suggestions, the higher status speakers used far more negative willingness or ability formulas. In requests, the higher status used many postponements.

Refusals by Turkish subjects

A total of 262 refusals were used by the 10 Turkish subjects who participated in this study. As shown in chart 3, 42% of the total refusal formulas were excuses, explanations, or reasons (C). This formula was typically preceded by some adjunct, mostly by an expression suggesting gratitude or appreciation (Adj4), which consisted of 12% of all the refusal formulas. For example, when offered an executive position in another town, T6 says, "Thank you, but I think my current position is satisfactory." Similarly, T10 says, "Thanks boss, really appreciated. However, I can't leave town now. Just bought a house, moved in with my girlfriend and all you know." Likewise, T5's response is, "I am quite honored by your offer; however, due to my family situation, I do not intend to relocate."

Another refusal formula that was frequently used by the Turkish subjects was the statement of regret (2A), which made up 8% of all refusal types used by this group. We observe an interesting pattern with this refusal formula because 95% of the time it was used, it preceded or followed an explanation, a reason, or an excuse (C). For example, when an employee asks for an increase in pay, T3 replied, "Sorry (name). There is nothing we can do about increasing your pay." A similar response comes from T5, "I am sorry, but I can't afford it at this time." Likewise, T9 responds, "Sorry, but your current wage is the most I can pay you."

Among all the refusal patterns, 9 of them were not used by the Turkish subjects even once. These are the direct, performative refusal (1A), statement of philosophy (H), threat or statement of negative consequence to the requester (I1), guilt trip (I2), unspecific or indefinite reply (J1), lack of enthusiasm (J2), topic switch (K2a), and joke (K2b). This shows that it is important for Turkish people to give a reason for refusing because a showing lack of enthusiasm, making a joke about the invitation, request or suggestion, or switching the topic is considered rude and may be taken as a personal insult. Social roles and how well you play them according to the norms of the society are important issues in Turkish culture. If they do not give an excuse or reason for refusing someone, the interlocutors may think that the refusers do not want to socialize with them or that they do not like them. In order to refuse without feeling guilty or frustrating others, a good reason, preferably preceded by an introductory statement (an adjunct), is necessary. This explains the commonly used pattern Adj4 + C (which accounted for 22% of all responses with C) in Turkish subjects' responses.

When a Turkish person says, "I won't be any fun tonight" (I1) in order to refuse a dinner or party invitation, to another Turkish speaker it may mean "I will come if you insist"; therefore, it may not work as a refusal for speakers of Turkish. The interlocutor may think that you want them to insist

on the suggestion or invitation. That is the main reason behind 2 out of 10 Turkish subjects' acceptance when offered another piece of cake (CCQ item 9). For example, in Turkey, when someone is offered to eat something, usually it is polite, or at least more common, to refuse it the first time although the guest would really like to eat it. The host is expected to offer it the second time and insist that the guest should eat. After this, the guest accepts the food that is offered. This is a very common social phenomena in Turkey, and it is so part of daily life that people expect it from the hosts; if the hosts do not insist it may be frustrating for the guest who is actually craving to eat more.

As for gender differences, women tended to use more refusals than men. The total number of refusal formulas used by Turkish women was 138 while there were 124 by the men. Responses by the men and women differed slightly for each refusal formula, except for statements of principle (G), and postponement (K2d), which were not used by any of the women; and "X instead of Y" (D2) and repetition (K2c) which were not used by any of the Turkish men. However, for G, K2c, and D2 there was only one response from the women or men, and for K2d, there were 2 responses by the men. However, we see a very distinctive difference between responses by men and women in their use of statements of gratitude and appreciation (Adj4). Fifteen percent of refusal formulas produced by women consisted of Adj4 ("thank you") whereas only 9% of the men's responses consisted of this formula. Similarly, Turkish women used statements of positive opinion/feeling (Adj1) 2% more than men did. On the other hand, Turkish men's use of C was 4% higher and their use of "No" (1B1) was 3% higher than those of Turkish women. From this information we can infer that women tend to be more indirect while refusing whereas men can sometimes criticize the requesters or avoid refusing by postponing it. In addition to that, Turkish men tend to give more importance to giving a reason or excuse while refusing while Turkish women try to find a way to introduce their refusals by using an adjunct.

Generally, Turkish women are brought up to be respectful and obedient towards others, especially to the elderly and men. On the contrary, men are given more freedom to do what they want to do or to say. By and large, Turkish men are expected to be more forceful, but it is appropriate for women to be polite and thoughtful. This may be why none of the Turkish women used a statement of negative feeling or opinion (I3). This is also another reason why Turkish women used more of the refusal patterns; by showing their gratitude and appreciation as much as they could (Adj4), they were trying to make sure their interlocutor did not take the refusal personally and be offended.

Requests: For the three situations in this category (DCQ items 1, 2, and 12), Turkish men and women responded similarly. Men used C 13 times and women 14 times. Except for 2 instances, the responses were followed or preceded by a statement of gratitude/appreciation, a statement of positive feeling/opinion, or a statement of regret. Men followed a similar pattern in responding to interlocutors with a different status; for both higher and equal status people, they replied by using the pattern 2A+C whereas women used a

similar pattern while addressing interlocutors of higher and lower status (Adj/2A +C). Turkish women tended to use various refusal formulas ("X instead of Y" (D2), negative willingness/ability (1B2), set condition for future or past acceptance (E), criticize the request/requester (I3)) when addressing interlocutors of equal status (e.g. T2: "You always do this. Could you try attending to class and taking notes once in a while?"; T5: "I sure don't want to. You didn't return them on time last time I lend you my notes."). It can easily be observed that these formulas have a more directly negative tone than the others; therefore, the women could use these only with interlocutors of equal status.

Invitations: We observed a similar use of refusal patterns for invitations. Both men and women tended to refuse by using C in all the invitation refusal situations. Eleven out of 15 responses given by women contained an adjunct before or after the reason or excuse. Similarly, 3 out of 5 men always used a statement of gratitude or a statement of regret before or after all their refusals. Women tended to use statements of gratitude and positive opinion more whereas a statement of regret was preferred by men (e.g. T1 (F): "I am honored by your invitation, unfortunately my husband and I will be away for the weekend to celebrate our anniversary..."; T6 (M): "I'm sorry, but we will be at one of our friend's house for dinner"). Interestingly, when refusing an interlocutor with lower or equal status, more adjuncts or 2A's were used than when refusing someone with higher status. This shows that it is more face threatening for Turkish people to refuse an invitation by a friend or someone who has lower status (cleaning lady, employee, etc.).

Offers: When refusing to take the money offered by the cleaning lady who breaks a vase, there was a 100% agreement with the use of the refusal formula I5 (letting interlocutor off the hook by saying "It is OK," "Don't worry about it"). Three of the 5 men added a reason or explanation as to why the woman should not worry about breaking the vase or paying the money whereas 5 of the 5 women used only I5. Turkish women and men were also in agreement when refusing the offer of the boss; a reason or explanation (C) preceded by a statement of gratitude or appreciation (Adj4) was the common pattern in this case. Refusing the food offered by a friend displays an interestingly similar pattern. Four out of 5 men used the pattern, 1B1+Adj4+C (e.g. T8: "No, thanks. I am full"; T9: "No thanks. I am really full"). We see a similar pattern in the responses by the women, too.

Suggestions: While refusing suggestions, most of the participants chose to respond by using only C without any following statements, especially when refusing someone with lower status. However, we see the use of hedging (K2e) by 2 women while refusing someone of equal status and the use of self-defense (I6) by 2 women and 2 men while refusing someone of lower status. It seems that women may find it difficult to refuse a suggestion by a friend and may choose to avoid a refusal by hedging. Also, when refusing the suggestion of their boss, most Turkish subjects defended themselves (e.g. T6: "Actually, I have never forgotten any of my duties") as well as giving a reason or explanation (e.g. T5: "I do keep a little 'things to do list', too. But it's not what

I'm looking for now. I'm trying to recall the last place where I put the report. So little notes, despite their convenience, wouldn't really help me in this case").

DISCUSSION

From the gathered data in chart 4, we can see that the 2 refusal formulas that were used most commonly by all language groups were excuses, explanations, or reasons (C) with a statement of regret (2A) preceding or following these reasons or excuses. The next most common semantic formulas for Turkish and American subjects were pause fillers (Adj3), and statements of gratitude and appreciation (Adj4), very frequently whereas for Lao subjects, the third most commonly used formula was statements of regret, followed by adjuncts.

Turkish subjects were the most conservative in their choice of refusals. While Turkish participants avoided using 9 of the 29 refusal formulas and adjuncts, Lao subjects did not use 7, and American subjects, 6. Despite the number of formulas they avoided, Lao participants used the highest number of total formulas in their refusals (292). The American participants followed them with 285. Turkish participants had the smallest total number of refusals (262). In all three language groups, the 4 refusal formulas that were totally avoided were direct performative (1A), "I refuse"; statement of philosophy (H), "One can't be too careful"; request for help (I4), "Can you help me out here?"; and a topic switch (K2a).

The other two refusal formulas that were avoided by most of the groups were the statement of principle (G), "I never do business with friends" and lack of enthusiasm (J2), "If I have to." Individually, each of these structures was avoided by 2 of the 3 language groups. The American subjects, however, never used either of these structures. In each case, the group that made an exception and used the formulas avoided by the others was always a nonnative speaker group. For example, G was used only by the Turkish group while J2 was used by the Lao group only. This contradicts our initial assumption that nonnative speakers' use of the types of refusals would be more limited than that of the American subjects. We based our assumptions on the fact that nonnative speakers learn these refusals as patterns in their English-as-a-foreign-language learning process in contrast to native speakers who learn them contextually. However, we see that pragmatic transfer from the L1 is influential only in certain instances in their choice of refusals. Mostly, the subjects used the fixed patterns or expressions such as those commonly taught in ESL courses.

Patterns

Certain patterns preferred by the three language groups displayed some similarities. In all three groups, more than 70% of the excuse, reason or explanation formulas that were used occurred at the end of the refusal statement. Another similar pattern was the use of the statement of regret (2A).

In all three groups, in more than 60% of all the instances when 2A was used, it was placed at the beginning of the refusal statement. Also, the Lao and Turkish participants responded by placing a statement of gratitude and appreciation (Adj4) with a reason or excuse (C) for their refusal more than did Americans. The Turkish subjects used C in 108 responses and in 22% of these, C was preceded by Adj4. Similarly, in 50% of all the instances that C was used, the Lao subjects responded by placing Adj4 before it. A further similarity was observed in placing the adjuncts in the initial position in the refusal statement. Twenty-six percent of all the Turkish responses began with a statement of positive opinion (Adj1), a statement of gratitude or appreciation (Adj4), or a pause filler (Adj3). In the Lao group, in 86% of the instances when a statement of positive response (Adj1) was used, it occurred at the beginning of the sentence.

Responses by men and women

Whereas no similarities could be observed with the women's avoidance of refusal formulas, there were some similarities within the men's responses. One similarity was between American and Lao men. None of the men in these groups used a wish (2B) as a refusal formula. Lao women used this formula twice while American women responded with this formula 7 times. A further similarity was between American and Turkish men is that none of them repeated a part of the request (K2c). Like the Lao example, only 1 response was seen from the women of each group (for further details see charts 5 and 6, Appendix D).

Four categories of refusals

As for the four categories of refusals, *requests* seemed to be refused by an excuse or explanation (C) mostly preceded or followed by a statement of regret (2A). In refusing *invitations*, a distinctive use of adjuncts was observed in all the language groups. An interesting similarity was seen in the participants' use of the statement of regret very commonly when refusing someone with higher status. There was almost 100% agreement on letting the cleaning lady off the hook when she offers to pay for the broken vase. In addition, a statement of gratitude and appreciation was commonly used along with an excuse or reason when refusing an *offer*. For *suggestions*, however, various formulas were employed within and among all the groups. The most common formula was, again, a reason, explanation, or excuse (C). An interesting parallel was seen in refusing a suggestion by the boss; some participants from all the groups tended to use self-defense (I6), which was not used very commonly for other situations.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study have shown that pragmatic transfer from nonnative speakers' native languages influences, to a significant degree, their English in terms of the frequency, order, and content of semantic formulas

utilized in their refusals. However, contrary to findings of previous studies, our results suggest that negative transfer does not necessarily play a significant role in the production of refusals. This result may be explained by the fact that, unlike previous studies, the subjects in our study generally had acquired an extremely high level of English proficiency.

Although this evidence is quite interesting, at this point it should not be considered conclusive. One of the reasons why we consider this evidence to be preliminary has to do with the fact that a relatively small number of subjects were considered in our study. Ideally, in the future we would like to increase the number of subjects in order to determine if the results obtained can be generalized to a much larger population. Secondly, the written role-play questionnaire used in our study may have biased the results since a few of the situations were awkward to refuse, even for some of the American subjects. For example, in the situation where the boss invites the employee to a party at his home, it would be quite difficult for employees from any country to refuse such a request. Furthermore, the classification of semantic formulas employed in the analysis of our data could be simplified to be comprised of only broad categories whereby those formulas never used or found insignificant could be eliminated. Lastly, the data from the demographic questionnaire and from future studies could be analyzed to reveal whether possible correlations exist between length of residence in the U.S., number of years of English study, and ordering of nonnative English refusals.

While having acknowledged these problems, it would appear that the evidence obtained in our study is of significant value and that pragmatic transfer in the frequency, order, and content of refusals merits further study. We also believe that the differences observed between women and men in their refusals is of great interest and could prove to be an exciting and illuminating area of future research.

ENDNOTES

1 In this study, the terms for both sex (male and female) and gender (men and women) are utilized. Because the focus of this paper is on the influence of cultural and social factors affecting the use of refusals, the terms men and women are used as the norm in this paper. However, when referring to individual subjects (e.g. "In the case of subject number 5 (female)") the terms female and male are used because the sex of the participants was the deciding factor in the subdivision of each group (i.e. 5 male Lao participants and 5 female Lao participants.) In this situation, the cultural and social characteristics of the individual are not the distinguishing factor that the authors wish to emphasize.

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APPENDIX A

DCT Questionnaire

We are students at the University of Arizona and we would like to ask for your help on our class project. For this project we are gathering information on how people respond to the types of situations found on the following pages. The information gathered by this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes only. The names of the participants will **not** be used in the study itself. The information requested below is gathered so that the researchers may consider whether these factors may have a possible influence on the answers given in the questionnaire.

We, the researchers, thank you for your participation.

What is your name? _____

What is your age? _____

What is your sex? Male or Female

What is your nationality? _____
What is your native language? _____
What other languages do you speak? _____
What is the primary language you speak at home? _____
How many years did you study English in your native country? _____
How long have you studied English in the U.S.? _____
How long have you lived in the U.S.? _____

You work in a department store. You are busy helping someone when one of your regular customers asks to see something in the display case.

You: I'm sorry, I'll be with you in a minute.

Customer: Okay, I'll wait then.

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

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

You:

Worker: Then I guess I'll have to look for another job.

2. You are a junior in college. You attend classes regularly and take good notes. Your classmate often misses classes and asks you for the lecture notes.

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

You:

Classmate: O.K., then I guess I'll have to ask somebody else.

3. You are the president of the printing company. A sales man from a printing machine company invites you to one of the most expensive restaurants in New York.

Salesman: We have met several times to discuss your purchase of my company's products. I was wondering if you would like to be my guest at Lutece in order to firm up a contract.

You:

Salesman: Perhaps another time.

4. You are a top executive at a very large accounting firm. One day the boss calls you into his office.

Boss: Next Sunday my wife and I are having a little party. I know it's short notice but I am hoping all my top executives will be there

with their wives. What do you say?

You:

Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping everyone would be there.

5. **You're at a friend's house watching T.V. He/she offers you a snack.**

You: Thanks, but no thanks. I've been eating like a pig and I feel just terrible. My clothes don't even fit me.

Friend: Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about?

You:

Friend: You should try it anyway.

6. **You're at your desk trying to find a report that your boss just asked for. While you're searching through the mess on your desk, your boss walks over.**

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

You:

Boss: Well, it's an idea anyway.

7. **You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to you.**

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

You: (Knowing that the cleaning lady is supporting three children.)

You:

Cleaning lady: No, I'd feel better if I paid for it.

8. **You're a language teacher at a university. It is just about the middle of the term now and one of your students asks to speak to you.**

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

You:

Student: O.K., it was only a suggestion.

9. **You are at a friend's house for lunch.**

Friend: How about another piece of cake?

You:

Friend: Come on, just a little piece?

You:

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

Friend: How about coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party.

You:

Friend: O.K., maybe another time.

11. You've been working in an advertising agency now for some time. The boss offers you a raise and promotion, but it involves moving. You don't want to go. Today, the boss calls you into his office.

Boss: I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new offices in Hicktown. It's a great town – only three hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position.

You:

Boss: Well, maybe you should give it some more thought before turning it down.

12. You are at the office in a meeting with your boss. It is getting close to the end of the day and you want to leave work.

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

You:

Boss: That's too bad. I was hoping you could stay.

APPENDIX B

**Classification of Discourse Completion Test (DCT)
Stimulus According to Status of Refuser**

Stimulus types	Refuser Status (relative to interlocutor)	DCT item	Situation
Request	Lower	#12	Stay late at night
	Equal	#2	Borrow class notes
	Higher	#1	Request raise
Invitation	Lower	#4	Boss's party
	Equal	#10	Dinner at friend's house
Offer	Higher	#3	Fancy restaurant (bribe)
	Lower	#11	Promotion with move to small town
	Equal	#9	Piece of cake
Suggestion	Higher	#7	Pay for broken vase
	Lower	#6	Write little reminders
	Equal	#5	Try a new diet
	Higher	#8	More conversation in foreign language class

APPENDIX C

Classification of Refusals

- I. Direct
 - A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse")
 - B. Nonperformative statement
 - 1. "No"
 - 2. Negative willingness/ability ("I can't." "I won't." "I don't think so.")
- II. Indirect
 - A. Statement of regret (e.g., "I'm sorry ..."; "I feel terrible ...")
 - B. Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help you ...")
 - C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; "I have a headache.")
 - D. Statement of alternative
 - 1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., "I'd rather ..."; "I'd prefer ...")
 - 2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have ...")
 - E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have ...")
 - F. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., "I'll do it next time"; "I promise I'll ..." or "Next time I'll ..." -- using "will" of promise or "promise")
 - G. Statement of principle (e.g., "I never do business with friends.")
 - H. Statement of philosophy (e.g., "One can't be too careful.")
 - I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
 - 1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (e.g., "I won't be any fun tonight" to refuse an invitation.
 - 2. Guilt trip (e.g., waitress to customers who want to sit a while: "I can't make a living of people who just order coffee.")
 - 3. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack (e.g., "Who do you think you are?"; "That's a terrible idea!")
 - 4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
 - 5. Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., "Don't worry about it." "That's okay." "You don't have to.")
 - 6. Self-defense (e.g., "I'm trying my best." "I'm doing all I can do." "I no do nutting wrong.")
 - J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal
 - 1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
 - 2. Lack of enthusiasm
 - K. Avoidance
 - 1. Nonverbal

- a. Silence
 - b. Hesitation
 - c. Do nothing
 - d. Physical departure
2. Verbal
- a. Topic switch
 - b. Joke
 - c. Repetition of part of request, etc. (e.g., "Monday?")
 - d. Postponement (e.g., "I'll think about it.")
 - e. Hedging (e.g., "Gee, I don't know." "I'm not sure.")

Adjuncts to Refusals

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

Chart 1: Total Percentage of Refusals by American Subjects

Total tokens = 285

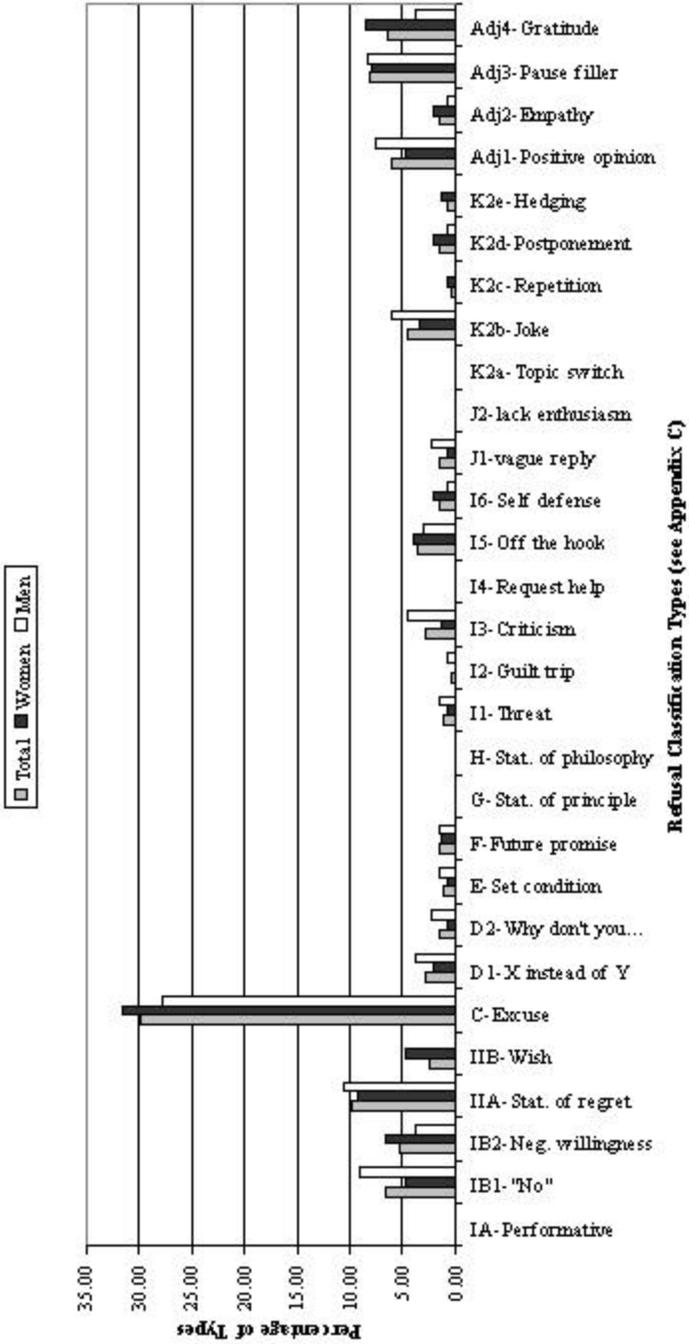


Chart 2: Total Percentage of Refusals by Lao Subjects

Total tokens = 273

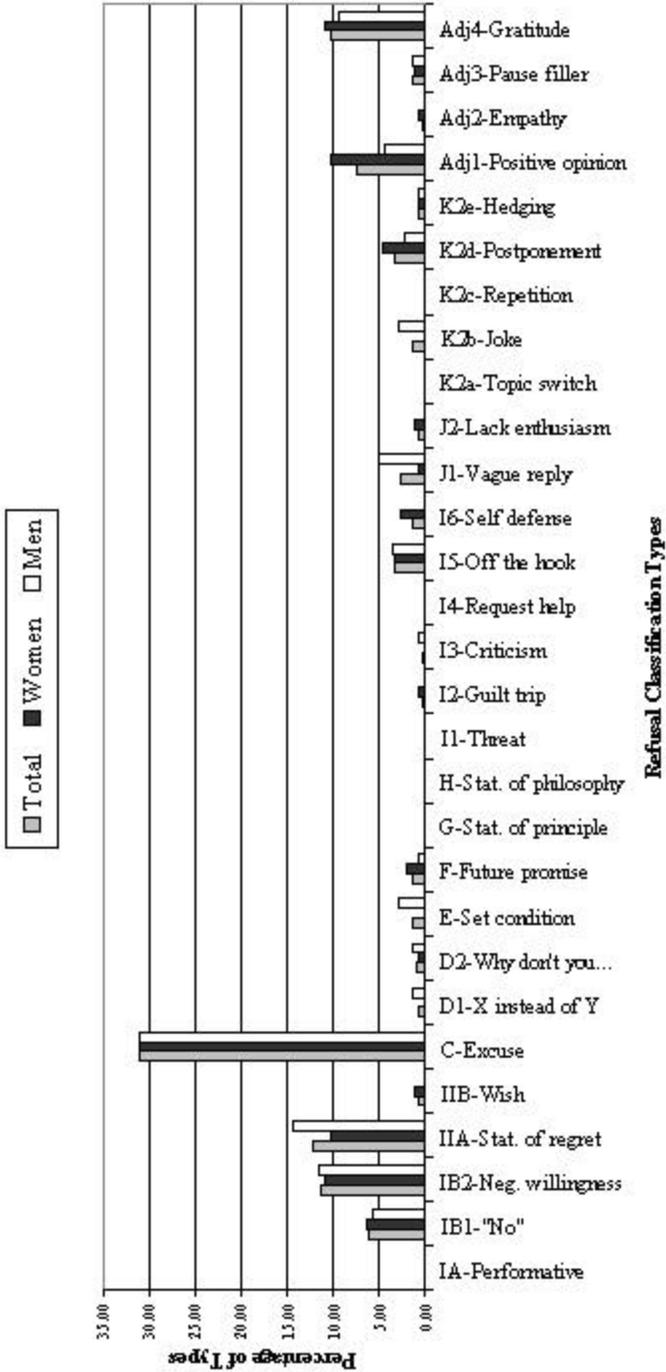


Chart 3 : Total percentage of Refusals by Turkish Subjects

Total tokens = 262

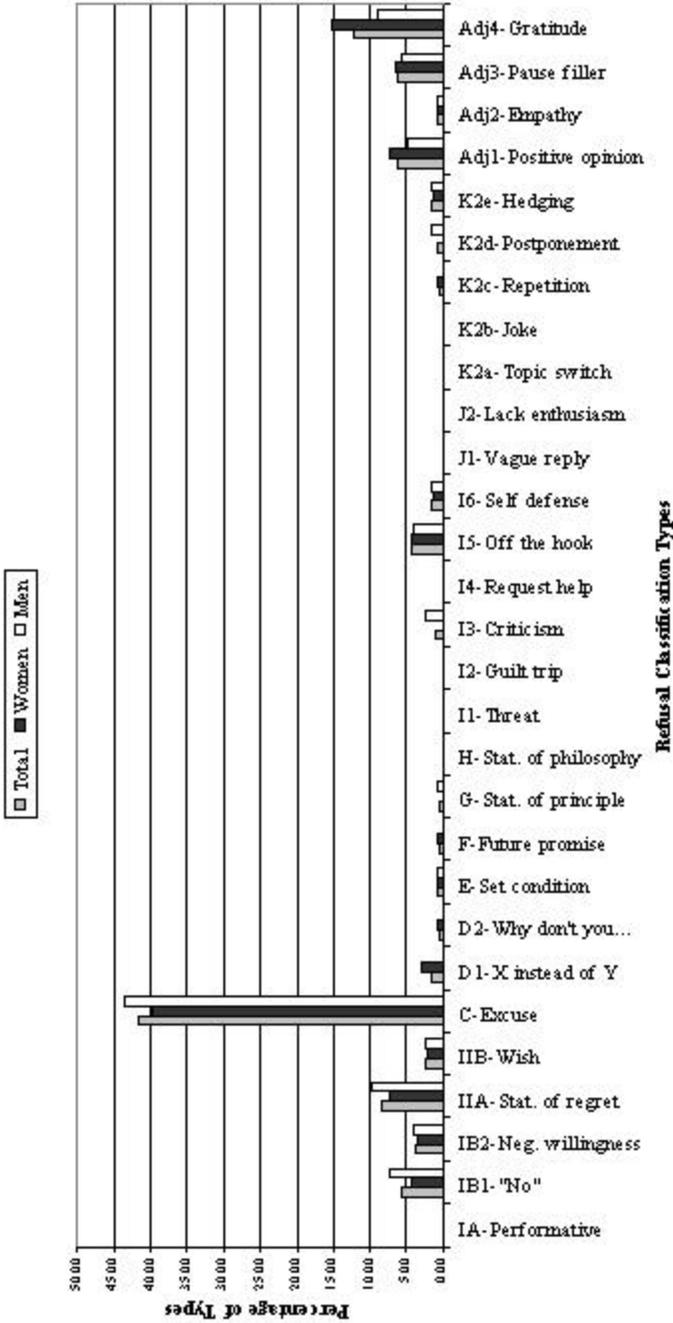


Chart 4: Percentage of Refusals by Three Language Groups

Total tokens = 839

