Refusal strategies in Turkish and English: a cross-cultural study[1]

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Abstract

This study examines the use of refusal strategies by Turkish EFL speakers in comparison with native speakers of English and Turkish. Considering refusals as a face-threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the study explores semantic formulas of refusals in a discourse completion test with six different situations. In doing so, the analysis of the data draws on both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of pragmatic competence (Thomas, 1983). A total of 45 participants were involved in the study. The findings demonstrated that both Turkish EFL speakers and native speakers of Turkish and English utilized a wide range of refusal strategies (N=688 in total). Similar to previous studies, explanations or reasons were the most frequent semantic category among 21 refusal strategies in this study. However, the analysis of the data for the status of the interlocutors and the content of the semantic formulas as well as the directness/indirectness revealed divergence in the use of refusal strategies across groups. Finally, the study provides pedagogical implications and recommendations for future directions.

Keywords: pragmatic competence, refusals, linguistic politeness, EFL speakers, speech acts

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Introduction

A growing interest in interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), the study of nonnative speakers' (NNSs) use and acquisition of linguistic action in context (Kasper, 1992), has been prevalent in the last three decades because of the emphasis on pragmatic competence. The speech act realization as an important component of ILP is one of the most widely studied areas and has shed light on how foreign/second language (L2) learners use linguistic forms and functions in specific situations when involved in a communicative act. Refusals as one of the face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987) have been ubiquitously perused in several cross-cultural/linguistic and interlanguage studies. The main focus of these empirical studies has usually been on the frequency and content of refusal strategies employed by both native speakers (NSs) and NNSs of different languages; pragmatic transfer; and language proficiency (e.g. Al-Issa, 2003; Beebe et al., 1990; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Gass & Houck, 1999; Morrow, 1995; Wannaruk, 2008).

Research on refusals that has adopted an ILP perspective has three major lines: production of refusal strategies by L2 learners from a linguistic politeness perspective (Beebe et al., 1990; Chang, 2009; Wannaruk, 2008); development of refusals in natural interaction over a period of time (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993); and L2 learners' perceptions (Al-Issa, 2003; Chang, 2011; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). The present study contributes to the first research line by examining refusal strategies of Turkish EFL speakers in comparison with the NSs of English and Turkish.

Considered as a "sticking point" in cross-cultural communication (Beebe et al., 1990, p.56), refusals by Turkish EFL speakers are important to examine carefully to gain insights into some potential sources of pragmatic failure that they might experience in English. Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said" (p.22). She also makes a distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure by underlying that the second one is much more difficult to overcome since it requires not only the knowledge of language or linguistic forms but also learners' belief systems. For example, if a language learner makes a linguistic error, this is simply attested to language proficiency but sociopragmatic failure originating from diverse perceptions of social parameter such as social status and distance of interlocutors might result in judgments of being rude or impolite on the part of language learners. Therefore, this study investigates how Turkish EFL speakers employ refusal strategies with interlocutors from different social status in comparison with the use of refusal strategies in Turkish and English by the NSs of these languages.

Previous research on refusals

Research on the speech act of refusals falls into two broad strands: one investigated refusals across different languages and cultures; the other examined the certain features of refusals by NNSs in their target language. The following section presents an overview of these two major research categories with a focus on NNSs' refusals in English in comparison with the NSs' refusals.

The majority of the ILP research on refusals has tended to use refusal strategies as the unit of analysis. These strategies have been analyzed by classifying the semantic formulas - expressions that are used to perform refusals in a language. Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification has become the mostly used refusals taxonomy and categorized the strategies according to refusals to requests, invitations, suggestions, and offers in English and Japanese by both native speakers and Japanese EFL speakers. Their taxonomy includes direct, indirect, and adjunct strategies. Direct strategies are performative (e.g. *I refuse you*) and nonperformative statements (e.g. *No*, and *I can't / I won't*). Indirect strategies incorporate eleven main refusal strategies such as statement of regret (e.g. *I'm sorry*; *I feel terrible*) and explanation/reason/excuse (ERE henceforth). Adjunct strategies are defined as "preliminary remarks that could not stand alone and function as refusals" because they would sound like an acceptance without a direct or indirect refusal strategy (Beebe et al., 1990, p.57). This category contains positive opinion (e.g. *That's a good idea*; *I'd love to*), statement of empathy (e.g. *I realize you are in a difficult situation*), pause fillers (e.g. *uhh*; *well*; *oh*; *uhm*) and gratitude/appreciation. More recent studies have also used or adapted this taxonomy to analyze the refusal strategies of NNSs of English. For example, Chang (2009) have analyzed the refusal strategies of Chinese EFL learners in comparison with American NSs of English and Chinese NSs of Mandarin. The study shows Chinese EFL learners employ as many direct, indirect, and adjunct strategies as American NSs of English and Chinese NSs of Mandarin while refusing requests, suggestions, invitations, and offers.

However, detailed examinations of interlanguage refusals in English in the frequency and content of these semantic formulas have revealed differences among American NSs and ESL/EFL learners. First of all, several studies indicate that ERE is the most frequent refusal strategy both in NS and NNS refusals in all situations (Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Beebe et al., 1990; Nelson et al., 2002). However, the second and third most frequent strategies can show variation among groups. For example, Wannaruk (2008) reports that Thai EFL learners prefer negative ability as the most frequent refusal strategy while refusing an invitation from a higher status interlocutor, whereas American NSs of English use the refusal strategy of positive opinion in the same situation. Similarly, Beebe et al. (1990) show that statement of regret is included in 85% of responses by Japanese speakers of English in the situation where an employee has to refuse the boss's request. However, only 40% of responses by American NSs of English incorporate the same strategy in the same situation. Second, the content of interlanguage refusals in English is shown to be diverse when compared to that of NSs refusals. Chang (2009), for example, compares the content of EREs by Americans and Chinese English learners. The study indicates that the second group provides more specific EREs in their refusals such as dates, sickness, birthday or wedding, etc. Another difference reported in the study related to the content of refusal strategies is the degree of directness. Forty-eight percent of American NSs utilized direct strategies while refusing to lend notes to a classmate but Chinese English learners expressed their unwillingness indirectly as Chinese NSs did. In an earlier study, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1993) also provide evidence for the differences in the content of rejections by NSs and NNSs of English. After analyzing the development of ILP over advising sessions in a US university, the study explores that

specifically rejections by NNSs in earlier session did not have credible content when compared to those by NSs.

Contextual variables have also shown to be impact on the choice of refusal semantic formulas. Several studies in refusals have examined how the perception of social status in different languages and cultures influence the ESL/EFL learners' refusal use. As it was discussed above, Chang (2009) finds differences in the degree of directness and specific of content between American NSs of English and Chinese EFL learners. Elsewhere, she explains the role of social status related to the content of refusals by stating that "social status plays a role in some participants' selection of the appropriate refusal reason (Chang, 2011, p. 79). In other words, Chang (2011) highlights how the degree of specificity of content in Chinese EFL refusals shifts while refusing a request from a higher status interlocutor (e.g. the boss's request to stay late), and from an equal status interlocutor (e.g. a friend's invitation to dinner). Moreover, in a cross-cultural comparison of American and Egyptian American refusals, Nelson et al. (2002) report some variability among three social status groups (lower, equal, and higher). Both Egyptians and Americans prefer fewer indirect strategies in their refusals to equal status interlocutors than refusals to lower and higher status interlocutors. As for the refusal strategy of reason, Egyptians have employed it more frequently than American in their refusals to lower status interlocutors. However, the study mainly focuses on the frequency of refusal strategies by the NSs of each language and does not include interlanguage data. Therefore, social status of interlocutors and its relative impact on other aspects such as content, directness/indirectness in interlanguage refusals also need a closer examination.

Another important factor that has been studied in speech act realization of refusals is language proficiency, specifically its role in negative pragmatic transfer by ESL/EFL learners. Negative pragmatic transfer takes place "when speakers apply rules from their first language (L1) to their second language (L2)" (Eslami, 2010, p. 221). Kasper (1992) suggests two types of negative pragmatic transfer: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic. The first type of negative transfer refers to the situation where L2 learners show similarity in their use of forms and functions in both L1 and L2. The second type of negative transfer occurs where L2 learners transfers their perceptions of L1 contexts to their L2 situations. For example, Chang (2009) compares the frequency of the semantic formulas by Chinese EFL learners, American NSs, and Chinese NSs of Mandarin to investigate the relationship between L2 proficiency and pragmatic transfer. The study suggests that there is not an apparent difference in the amount of pragmatic transfer with regard to the frequency of semantic formulas between the learners of different proficiency levels. However, studies in the relationship between L2 proficiency and negative pragmatic transfer present inconclusive results. In that sense, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) claim that there is positive correlation between these two notions. That is, L2 learners with higher proficiency levels tend to transfer more. More recently, Allami and Naeimi (2011) comply with this hypothesis and suggest that upper intermediate Iranian EFL learners in their study have displayed more similarities to their L1 forms than lower-intermediate and intermediate learners. On the contrary, Chang (2009) discusses that the results in her study do not support such a hypothesis, and suggests that other contextual factors such as social status, as mentioned before in this paper, might influence the use of refusals by EFL learners. Therefore, whether low or high L2 proficiency levels, it should be

reminded that it is fundamental to understand first how L2 learners in each proficiency level use refusals not only in terms of frequency but also content, directness/indirectness, and how interlocutors with varying social status influence this in order to make sound comparisons. Given the greater complexity of refusals, researchers emphasize that this speech act involve longer negotiated sequences in natural conversations and extensive planning by the refuser to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships (Beebe et al., 1990; Gass & Houck, 1999).

In addition, the majority of research on refusals has used various elicitation speech acts for NSs and NNSs refusal strategies. However, the linguistic form and content of refusals show variation depending on the elicitation speech act (Chang, 2009; Eslami, 2010; Wannaruk, 2008). As the most influential typology of speech acts, Searle (1969) suggests five categories: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Specifically directives and commissives are more relevant to the role of elicitation speech acts for variation in refusals. Directives are the speech acts by which the speaker makes the addressee do something such as suggestions and requests. By using a directive, the speaker expresses his/her desire for the addressee to do something. Commissives include the speech acts that commit the speakers to a future course of action and they state the speaker's intention to do something. They include offers, invitations, and refusals. The main difference between directives and commissives is that the first one expresses the speaker's wish for the addressee to do the act whereas the second one states the speaker's intention to do something. (Allot, 2010; Cutting, 2008; Huang, 2007). Therefore, the level of imposition to the hearer/respondent in requests and suggestions would be different from the level of imposition in offers and invitations when these speech acts are used to elicit refusals. For example, Wannaruk (2008) provides evidence for the differences in the frequency of Thai EFL learners refusals strategies while responding to requests (directives) and invitations (commissives). Although Thai EFL learners prefer ERE, negative ability, positive opinion, and regret in response to both elicitation speech acts, they use statement of alternative and future acceptance only while refusing requests among the three most frequent refusal strategies. Similarly, Chang (2009) indicates that 'thanking' has not been employed while refusing requests and the strategy of 'off the hook' has taken place in a refusal to the maid's offer to pay for the broken vase. She explains similar results by stating, "the analysis of the data revealed that the stimulus type constrains the occurrence of certain semantic formulas" (Chang, 2009, p.490).

After surveying both cross-cultural/linguistic and ILP research on refusals, it is clear that in the majority of these studies, written discourse completion tests (DCTs) have been utilized as the main data collection method. DCTs are a method of eliciting refusals through given situations where respondents are supposed to make refusals. Researchers argue limitations of using DCTs with regard to their tendency for controlling the interlocutors' responses and inability to collect pragmatic information (e.g. prosody or nonverbal features that occur in oral interaction) or sufficient range of responses (Beebe et al., 1990; Cohen, 1996; Nelson et al., 2002). For example, Houck and Gass (1996) express their criticism by defining DCTs as written responses that are "sandwiched between an opening statement and a follow-up statement" (p.47). However, such limitations can turn into advantages when the purpose is to focus on very specific variables such as social status and instance of

interlocutors and one L2 proficiency group as well as their impact on L2 learners' strategy choice. Similarly, Kasper (2000) underscores the fact that when the purpose of research is to analyze conversational interaction or sequences of turn-taking, more discursive or interactive methods are necessary. However, when the purpose is to gain insights into linguistic forms and strategies as well as contextual factors where these linguistic and strategic preferences are appropriate, then DCTs are effective means of collecting data. Therefore, several benefits of using DCTs in refusals research, as in the context of this study, are in order. First of all, it is a controlled elicitation method that is especially convenient for the purposes of cross-cultural and intralinguistic comparability (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Kwon, 2004; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). Second, it is "a highly effective research tool as a means of creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural data" (Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p.80). Finally, it has been a rapid and effective way of collecting data with larger samples in different context, as Beebe et al. (1990) have shown already.

As the review of literature in this paper has shown, the majority of studies of interlanguage refusals have focused on speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Thai. A few other studies have been conducted which have examined Turkish EFL learners or speakers. For example, Genç and Tekyıldız (2009) conducted a study on the refusal strategies of Turkish EFL learners and examined the influence of regional variety. Data collection method was similar to the other studies. Like most of the other studies discussed above, this study employed a DCT and compared Turkish language learner with data from native speakers of English. The results suggested that participants in all the groups had similarities in the manner of using refusal strategies and had similar notions of using mitigations in a face threatening refusal situation. Most of them also preferred direct refusal strategies in refusals to equal and lower status interlocutors than in refusals to higher status interlocutors. In other words, there were few differences between the refusals produced by L1 English and L1 Turkish speakers and also no differences found in the refusals produced by Turkish speakers from urban and rural areas.

In another study, Sadler and Eröz (2002) examined refusals in English performed by 30 subjects from three different native language backgrounds: American, Lao, and Turkish. The primary data collection tool was the DCT created by Beebe et al. (1990). Similar to other studies in interlanguage refusals, the Turkish group utilized explanations or reasons, and statement of regret as the two most frequent refusal strategies. The study has also examined the role of gender in refusal strategy choices of Turkish speakers of English and found that women tend to use more refusals than men.

Overall, recent research on both cross-cultural and interlanguage refusals has indicated that refusals vary by language and culture, and speakers from different cultural backgrounds perform refusals differently, in terms of their degree of directness/indirectness, frequencies, sensitivity to social variables, and performance with respect to the content of strategies (Al-Issa, 2003; Beebe et al., 1990; Chang, 2009; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Kwon, 2004; Liao & Bresnahan, 1996; Nelson et. al., 2002; Wannaruk, 2008). In that sense, the majority of these studies have made comparisons among responses to different elicitation acts to interpret results pertaining to these aforementioned variables. As discussed earlier, this indeed directly influences the refusal strategy use because of the difference between levels of imposition by

various elicitation acts on the part of the respondent. Therefore, it is highly needed to have sufficient amount of data in each elicitation act by focusing on one at a time. It is one of the assumptions in this study that specifically requests as directives with a higher level of imposition might be more challenging to refuse for Turkish EFL speakers, and require the use of various refusal strategies appropriately to prevent pragmatic failure while communicating in English. Finally, aligning with previous literature, this study aims to attest what similarities and difference Turkish NSs, American NSs, and Turkish EFL speakers do share while accomplishing the speech act of refusals. Such a contrastive analysis among Turkish, English, and Turkish EFL refusals might enable us to understand some possible reasons for miscommunication between Americans and Turkish speakers of English, and provide several implications for instructional pragmatics at EFL programs in Turkey.

Methodology

The research design in this study involves a written DCT, a form of questionnaire, as the main data source and its qualitative analysis. This section explicates the details about the study, such as research questions, participants, data collection instrument, and data analysis.

Research questions

Drawing on prior research, which mainly focused on semantic formulas produced in response to various social scenarios with different status relationship among interlocutors, the following research questions guided this research:

1. What refusal strategies are used by Turkish and American native speakers in their first languages (L1), and by Turkish EFL speakers in English?
2. What similarities or differences can be found in refusal strategies in the three groups with regard to the given situations?
3. Are there differences in the degree of directness/indirectness in refusing people from different status across the three groups?

Participants

Forty-five individuals participated in this study: 15 Turkish native speakers of Turkish (TTs), 15 North American native speakers of English (AEs), and 15 Turkish EFL speakers of English (Turkish EFLs). The three groups were relatively balanced for gender: TTs included 8 females and 7 males, AEs were 9 females and 6 males, and Turkish EFLs included 10 females and 5 males. The TTs showed varying background in their education, language, and profession. All the individuals in this group knew, or exposed to, English at different levels as their foreign language. Three individuals were freshmen at an English Language Teaching program in Turkey, four individuals were seniors in different undergraduate programs in Turkey, six individuals were doctoral students both in Turkey and the US, and two individuals were university graduates in Turkey. Similarly, Americans in this study incorporated three undergraduate students at a US university, two ESL instructors with master's degrees, six master students in Applied Linguistics or TESL, three doctoral students, and one Ph.D graduate. They all had a foreign or second language, and most of the individuals even had their third and fourth languages. Finally, Turkish EFL speakers also included individuals from

undergraduate and graduate programs at universities in Turkey, where the medium of instruction is English, and where students have to show language proficiency in all four skills that is equivalent to the requirements for international students in the US. Fourteen individuals have reported that they have been learning or using English for between 7 to 29 years, and one individual has two-year extensive instruction and provided the abovementioned proficiency requirement. Thus, Turkish EFL speakers in this study showed at least B1 level language abilities according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Additionally, four individuals in this group also speak a third language. The age range for all groups was 18 to 50. As discussed in the literature review, speech act performance is liable to social factors, such as social distance, power, age, gender, and cultural background, as well as participants' perceptions of the speech act situation accordingly (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Leech, 1983). In a similar vein, the participants in this study demonstrated varying social background that is closely linked to their refusal performance.

Data collection instrument

Similar to previous research (Al-Issa, 2003; Beebe et al., 1990; Chang, 2009; Kwon, 2004; Nelson et al., 2002; Wannaruk, 2008), the data was collected by using a DCT (see Appendix A) with six situations. However, unlike the adopted version of Beebe et al.'s situation in these studies, new situations were created in order to highlight requests from equal and unequal (higher and lower) interlocutors. In that sense, the approach in this study was aligned to Liao and Bresnahan (1996) by focusing on both situations, or requests, and possible variation in perceptions of social status of the requestors. Two questionnaires were prepared; one in Turkish and one in English.

DCTs are described as written responses that are sandwiched between an opening statement and a follow-up statement, and criticized for several reasons because of methodological concerns (Golato, 2003; Houck & Gass, 1996; Wolfson, 1981). One of the first critiques is that such written situations constraint the type and amount of talk, and reflect what speakers think they would do rather than what they do in real interactions. Nevertheless, a number of scholars agree that, depending on the purpose of the study, DCTs may be appropriate. In this study, a DCT was employed for several reasons. First of all, since the purpose was to explore the similarities and differences in the frequency and content of semantic formulae in Turkish, English, and EFL, the DCT served as a controlled elicitation method that is especially convenient for the purposes of cross-cultural comparability (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Kwon, 2004). Second, it is "a highly effective research tool as a means of creating an initial classification of semantic formulas and strategies that will likely occur in natural data" (Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p.80). In other words, this study plays a preliminary role in identifying and describing Turkish refusals, and such an initial analysis might give idea about what to do with naturally occurring data. In addition, it is possible to have more focus on some social variables through situations and the status of the interlocutors. By giving scenarios and describing situations, which are less frequent in naturally occurring data, DCTs might be helpful emphasizing specific contextual factors such as social status of interlocutors, power and solidarity issues, type of elicitation speech acts, etc. Finally, in terms of

practicality, a DCT can be used to quickly and efficiently collect data internationally through online tools.

Data analysis

To begin with, once 45 instruments were collected from the participants, their refusal strategies were coded based on the classification by Beebe et al., (1990). Often, responses to the scenarios consisted of multiple strategies. For example, if a respondent refused a request saying *Sorry, I'm busy this afternoon. So I can't go this afternoon. How about if we go tomorrow?,* it was coded as [statement of regret]+[excuse, reason, or explanation]+[negative ability]+[statement or offer of alternative]. A second party also coded the entire dataset after a training and pilot coding session according to Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification. Then two sets of coding refusal strategies were compared for intercoder reliability, and 96% similarity was obtained between the two coders. Second, after coding all the strategies, semantic formulas in each situation were calculated for the total number and then the number of each formula in the 3 groups (TTs, AEs, and Turkish EFLs) and 3 different status (higher, equal, and lower). This overall analysis of refusal strategies addresses the first research question and presents what strategies are utilized in groups and different status.

Next, a comparison of semantic formulas across groups and status were made. Following the overall comparisons, the study highlighted the similarities and differences in the most frequently employed 7 strategies considering the status of the interlocutors. The comparisons across groups and status involved the analysis of content of ERE as the most frequent semantic formula in all groups and status to provide further understanding of similarities and differences in Turkish, English, and Turkish EFL refusals. In doing so, the study aimed to answer the second research question in detail. Finally, the use of direct and indirect strategies in groups was analyzed to address the third research question in this study.

Findings related to the type and number of refusal strategies

The findings of the present study indicated that the total number of the refusal strategies employed by 45 participants was 688 (TTs, N=249; AEs, N=235; Turkish EFLs, N=204). Turkish EFL speakers produced the least number while refusing the given requests for all groups. When we looked at the status differences, all the groups used the highest number of strategies with equal status, next with lower, and least with higher status. Again, Turkish EFL speakers employed the lowest number of strategies in each status when compared to the other two groups whereas TTs had the highest numbers. Table 1 presents overall findings in relation to the numbers of refusal strategies per group in consideration with equal, higher, and lower status of interlocutors.

Table 1

Overall Numbers and Percentages of Refusal Strategies

| Refusal Strategies (RS) | Number (N) of RSs | | | |
| | | Turkish | | |
	TTs	AEs	EFLs	Total
Total	249	235	204	688
Equal Status	91	91	76	258
Higher Status	74	64	61	199
Lower Status	84	80	67	231

The findings also showed that the participants employed 21 out of 32 different semantic formulas in Beebe et al.'s (1990) category. Among these 21 strategies found in our data, we identified both commonalities and differences in the use of refusal strategies across the groups. First, as Figure 1 shows the overall distribution of the number of the refusal strategies, ERE was the most frequently used one in all three groups. However, this strategy was preferred by TTs more when compared to the other two groups. Second, Statement of Alternative and Statement of Regret were the next most frequent strategies in groups but Alternative was utilized more by TTs and AEs, whereas Regret was equally more frequent in AEs and Turkish EFLs. In other words, although these two strategies were employed almost equally by AEs, there was a difference between in TTs and Turkish EFLs. Next, the distribution of the number of the strategies also revealed that Negative Willingness and Agreement (or Positive Opinion as the adjunct strategy) were among the frequent strategies. The number of Negative Willingness was higher in AEs and Turkish EFLs when compared to TTs but Agreement was not as much frequent in Turkish EFLs as in TTs and AEs. As for the Statement of Principle, TTs and Turkish EFLs used this strategy twice as many as AEs did while refusing the given requests. Request for Help/Empathy was also more frequent in TTs than AEs and Turkish EFLs but they never employed strategies such as Pause Filler and Hedging. Finally, Turkish EFLs missed the semantic formula of Hedging but Guilt Trip was evident in their data whereas the other two groups never used it.

The data presented a few exceptions with regard to the use of refusal strategies in groups. The groups employed two new semantic formulas that are not included in the taxonomy, which are namely Confirmation and Clarification strategies. Clarifications were mostly preferred by AEs. Lastly, five instances of direct acceptance of the given situations in Turkish EFLs were observed.

To address the second research question, the next two sections present the findings with the use of the most frequent 7 refusal strategies in the overall distribution considering 3 different status and groups, and the content of the most frequent strategy, which was ERE, in

all groups and status. The following section starts with the higher status considering the importance of the findings. Then, it continues with equal and lower status situations.

Findings related to the status of the interlocutor

The findings pertaining to the status of interlocutor in the six situations also showed some similarities and differences in the use of 7 most frequent refusal strategies by 3 groups. Figures 2, 3, and 4 indicate the distribution of these most frequent refusal strategies by all three groups in each status relying on the overall number of strategies. In order to avoid repetitions, it needs to be highlighted that ERE was the most frequent strategy in all 3 status and groups.

The situations with higher status interlocutors were the 4th and 5th situations in the DCT. The participants were supposed to refuse a request from their father for attending to a dinner with their neighbor in situation 4; and they refused a request by their professor for a conference attendance as the department representative.

First, all three groups utilized Statement of Alternative with their high status interlocutors but it was more frequent in TTs and AEs than Turkish EFLs. Second, Negative Willingness was much higher in AEs when compared to TTs and Turkish EFLs, who preferred to use this strategy almost at the same amount. Next, Statement of Regret was noticeably the least utilized strategy in TTs whereas they employed much more Request for Help/Empathy with a higher status interlocutor in comparison with the two other groups. Additionally, although AEs never used Statement of Principle with a higher status interlocutor, TTs and Turkish EFLs employed this strategy and Turkish EFLs indeed used this twice as often as TTs in higher status situations. As for Statement of Agreement, AEs used this strategy more than the other two groups. In contrast, TTs and Turkish EFLs preferred to make more ERE than AEs with their higher status interlocutor.
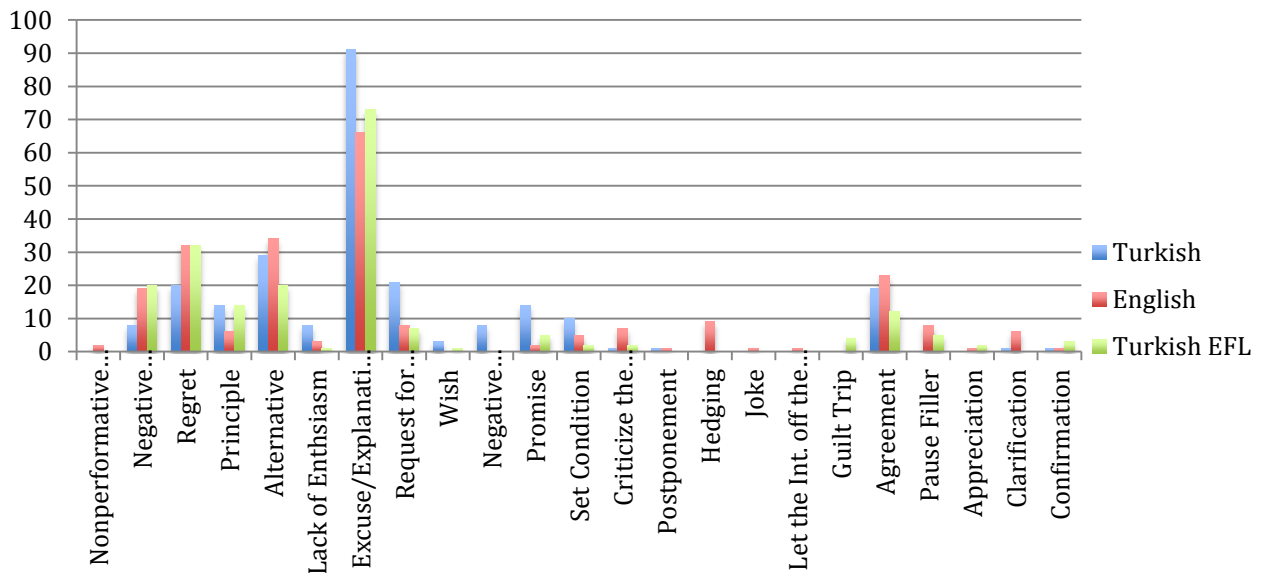

Figure 1

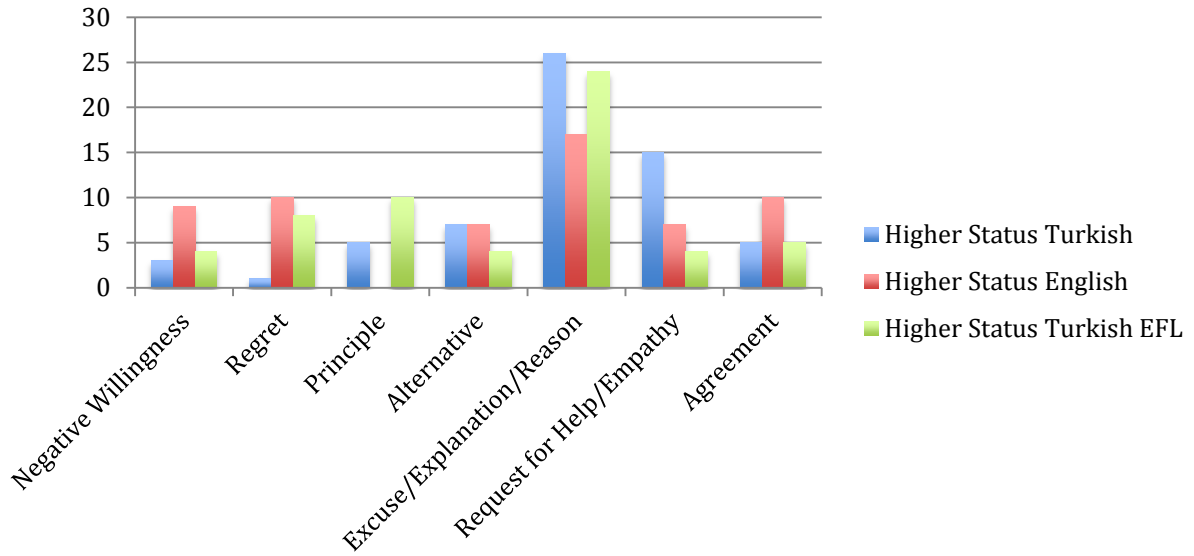*Overall Distribution of the Number of Semantic Formulas in Groups*

Figure 2

Distribution of Strategy Use in Higher Status Situations for the Most Frequent 7 Refusal Strategies

Turning now to equal status situations, as seen in Figure 3, the refusal strategy use in these situations, which were the 1st and 2nd ones in the DCT, included requests by a friend and classmate. The distribution of strategy use among groups indicated both similarities and differences in these situations, too. Negative Willingness/Ability was evident only few times in TTs and AEs whereas Turkish EFLs employed this strategy much more than these two groups. All three groups utilized Statement of Regret, Principle, and Alternative with their
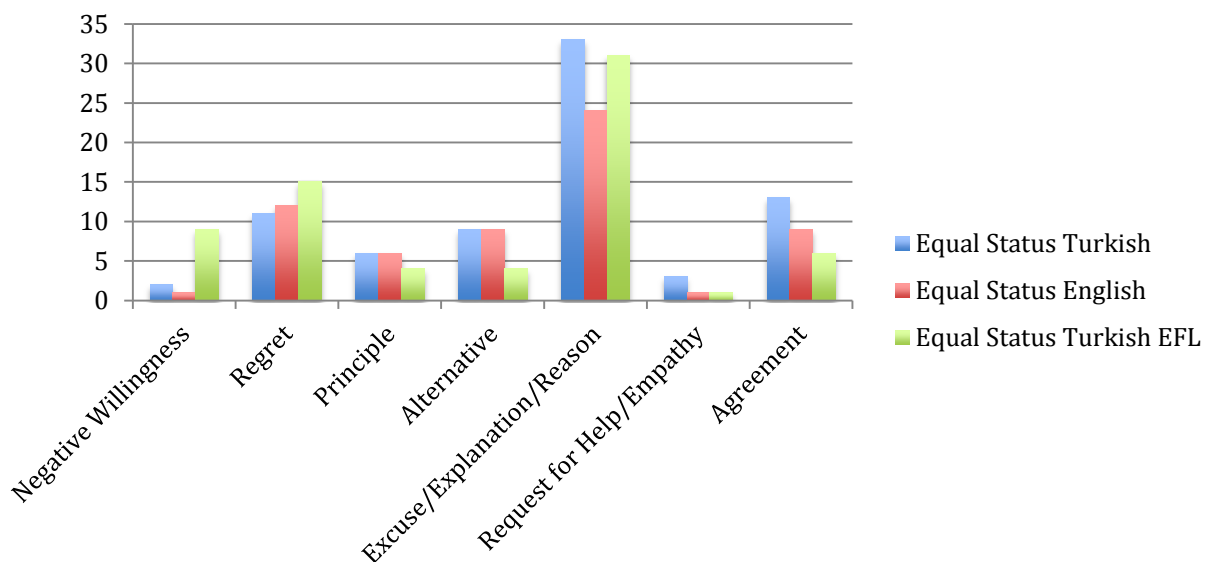

Figure 3

Distribution of Strategy Use in Equal Status Situations For the Most Frequent 7 Refusal Strategies

equal status interlocutors although Turkish EFLs did not favor giving alternatives as much as the other two groups. The situation for ERE was similar to the higher status situations with regard to the groups while the use of Statement of Agreement doubled in TTs in comparison with Turkish EFLs. Finally, Request for Help/Empathy with equal status situations was much lower in three groups when compared to the higher status interlocutors.

Finally, the lower status situations in the DCT were the 3rd and 6th situations where the participants were supposed to refuse a request from their little sister and brother. As seen in Figure 4, all three groups employed Negative Willingness/Ability although AEs and Turkish EFLs preferred it more than TTs with their lower status interlocutors. However, they utilized Statement of Regret similar to AEs and Turkish EFLs in these situations although they did not do so with their higher status interlocutors. Statement of Principle was not existent in the AEs and Turkish EFLs' data with lower status situations whereas Statement of Alternative was much higher in all three groups when compared to equal and higher status situations. Although ERE was the most frequent strategy in the groups, Turkish EFLs had a quite lower number when compared to their use of this strategy with the high and equal status interlocutors. Similar to the equal status situations, the groups used Request for Help/Empathy at a very low frequency, which they usually preferred for a higher status interlocutor. Indeed, AEs did not prefer it for lower status at all. Finally, the groups also employed Statement of Agreement but the number was much lower in comparison with their use of this strategy in higher and equal status situations.
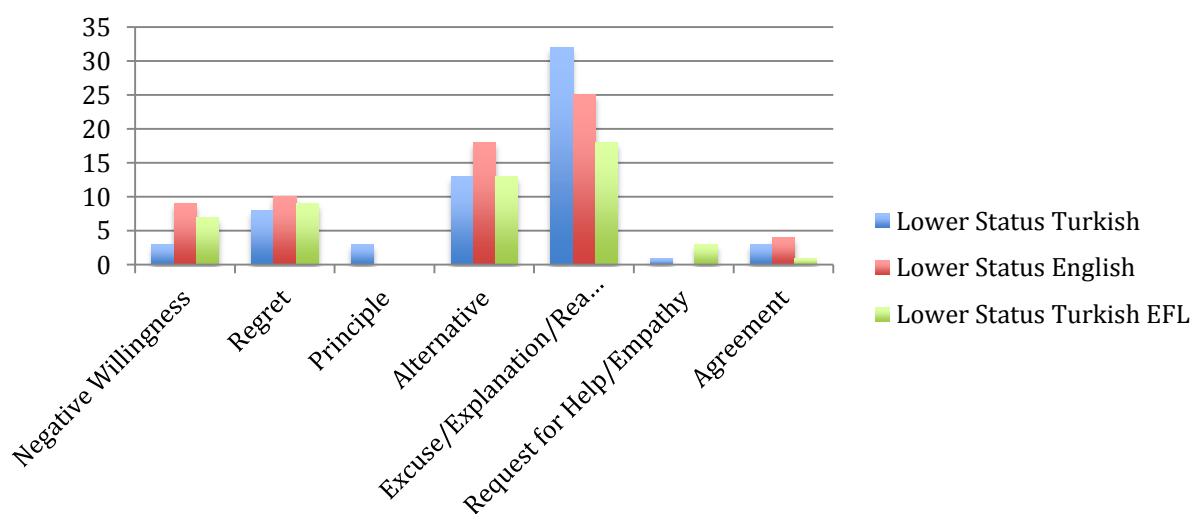

Figure 4

Distribution of Strategy Use in Lower Status Situations for the Most Frequent 7 Refusal Strategies

Findings related to the content of the semantic formulas

The purpose for analyzing the content of semantic formulas was to provide some further qualitative details to better address the second research question. Since ERE was the

most frequent one in all groups and different status, we compared the groups according to the content or topic of this strategy. In the following section, the findings are presented by regarding the status of the interlocutors, or situations, and start with the high status person first.

The findings with regard to the use of ERE with high status interlocutors indicated both similarities and differences among three groups. Table 2 illustrates examples of ERE and how participants combined this strategy with other refusal strategies in high status scenarios. All three groups usually referred to some general plans or excuses while refusing a higher status interlocutor. Common content of these refusals included examples, such as they were tired or it would be boring to be there while refusing their father as well as they had some plans with their families or friends while refusing their professor. However, both TTs and Turkish EFLs included more detailed reasons by mentioning doctor appointment, and guests coming from abroad, cousin's or brother's wedding while refusing their professor, and exam papers to evaluate or an important exam the following day while refusing their father. In one situation, one of the Turkish EFL participants provided a great deal of interesting details and background information for his excuse in the following excerpt:

Oh Professor X, thank you so much for offering this great opportunity to me. It is an honor but I am afraid **I have already promised to stay at the hospital accompanying my old aunt, who is sick. There is nobody else in the family who could do that, so I really need to be there**. *Would it be a problem for you if another colleague went instead?*

This reply to the situation with a professor was one of the longest ones and was used in combination with several other refusal strategies before and after the ERE as the head act for refusing. This participant started with a pause filler and addressing expression and then showed Gratitude/Appreciation in the first sentence. Then, he expressed his Regret (*I am afraid*) before using three separate examples of ERE. Finally, this participant provided a Statement of Alternative (*Would it be a problem for you if another colleague went instead?*) after refusing the request. Similar to this situation, most participants, as shown in Table 2, incorporated multiple refusal strategies before they made an ERE but they appeared in different order in most situations with higher status. The TTs and Turkish EFLs in fact utilized explanations at an earlier order in most of their refusals with a higher status interlocutor with lesser mitigation. While AEs often utilized Statement of Agreement/Positive Opinion, Negative Willingness, and Regret, the TTs and Turkish EFLs usually preferred Lack of Enthusiasm or Request for Help, and Alternative in their combinations. Another common observation in these two groups was the use of Statement of Principle, which was almost never used by AEs in a higher status situation (see Figure 2), specifically with their father, such as *you know I don't like such ceremonies*, or *böyle davetlerden hoşlanmıyorum* (*I don't like such invitations*). Similarly, the use of Request for Empathy was evident in TTs and Turkish EFLs while refusing their professors, such as *Please accept my request*, or *Umarım beni anlarsınız* (*I hope you understand me*).

A detailed and varied content of ERE by TTs and Turkish EFLs differently from AEs showed that most of them wanted to assure that both groups of Turkish participants had some serious and specific reasons to refuse especially their professors, suggesting a possible difference in their perception of the status of professor-student relationship.

Secondly, the groups also showed some interesting features with equal status interlocutors in the first two situations in the DCT. In the first situation, where a friend makes a request to borrow a dress/suit, they only mentioned their concerns with keeping it in a good condition, having different sizes with the requestor, and need for the dress that night or weekend by saying, *I would like to keep it in a good condition*, *I don't know it will fit you,* or *I really doubt that my dress would fit you*, and *I was planning on wearing that dress myself*. The statements used by AEs were not only less specific in meaning but also included some

Table 2

Samples for Explanation/Excuse/Reason with a Higher Status Interlocutor*

	Situation with Father	Situation with Professor
AEs	*I'm really busy* and would prefer not to go.. I'm sorry. *I have a lot of work to do. I feel like I should tend to that.* I don't know if I can make it to the dinner. *I kinda have a lot to do for work.* Is it OK if I don't go? Sorry, I really can't go. *I have too much homework to do…*	Oh, I'm sorry professor. *I have already plans for the weekend.* I am sincerely sorry, but I won't be able to go to the conference as *I have prior obligations to attend to.* I would love to go but unfortunately *I have family plans that I cannot reschedule.* Sorry. I would love to go but *I already made plans.*
TTs	Baba, ben gelmesem. *Arkadaşlara söz verdim. Oraya gitmem gerek.* (Dad, what if I don't come. *I promised my friends. I have to go there.*) Babacığım, *son günlerde çok yoruldum.* Ben gelmesem olmaz mı? Tebrik ettiğimi soylersiniz benim yerime. (Daddy, *I feel very tired recently*. Is it okay if I don't come? You say, "I congratulate them" on behalf of me) Böyle davetlerden hoşlanmıyorum baba, *cok sıkıcılar.* Tüm gece yüzümü asıp otumaktansa hiç gitmem daha iyi olacak. (I don't like such events, dad, *they are very boring*. Instead of frouting the whole night, it would be better for me not to go) İnaniyorum ki sizin icin çok güzel bir gece olacak. Fakat ben hiç gelmek istemiyorum. *Çoğunluk benim yaşımda olmayacak ve gelirsem çok sıkılacağımı düşünüyorum…* (I believe it would be a nice evening for you. However, I really don't want to come. *Most of them won't be my age and if I come, I think I will get very bored...*)	Hocam gitmeyi çok isterdim ama *o hafta için başka planlarım var*. Umarım beni anlarsınız. (Professor, I really would like to go but *I have other plans for that week*. I hope you understand me.) Hocam *hafta sonu kardeşimin nişanı var. Ailevi durum.* Kusura bakmayın. (Professor, *my brother is getting engaged at the weekend. It is a family event*.I'm sorry.) Hocam, *haftasonu için arkadaşlarimla çok önceden plan yaptık ve mutlaka katılmam gerekiyor*, benim yerime başka bir arkadaşımı göndermenizi rica ediyorum. (Professor, *my friends and I made plans for the weekend beforehand and I really have to attend*. I ask you to send another friend instead of me.) Hocam, *ailemle önemli bir planımız vardi*. Başka öğrencinin gitme ihtimali var mı acaba? Lütfen hocam, başka bir fırsatta gideceğime söz veriyorum. (Professor, my family and I have a very important plan. Is it possible for another student to go? Please professor, I promise to go next time.)

Turkish EFLs	I'm fine here in my room really, *got some reading to do*. Say 'hi' to the newly-weds! *I need to get up early tomorrow*. I want to stay home. *I feel tired* and you know I don't like such ceremonies. I'm sorry but *I have a lot to do tonight. I have to finish my assignment*.	I'm sorry. I really would love to attend that conference but *I did make some plans for that weekend a long time ago*. *I have a very important doctor appointment to take my granma*. I would be honored to attend the conference, Professor but *I have some plans made for that weekend before*. Please accept my request. I would like to be there, Sir, but *my cousin is getting married this weekend, and I have to be there*. Is it possible for you to choose another colleague of mine to attend the conference?

*Italics indicate the refusal strategy of ERE

hedging such as *don't know* and *really doubt*, which makes the explanations by AEs sound more indirect. Similarly, they only expressed their being tired, not having time, or going to bed early in the second situation where their classmates wanted some help with a class project by using *so/very/really exhausted/tired*, *many obligations*, *don't have any time*, *going to bed early/need to go to bed now*, and *sort of beat from working on my own project*. As for the other refusal strategies combined with their explanations, AEs usually preferred Statement of Regret, Pause Fillers, Hedging, Statement of Agreement, and sometimes Lack of Enthusiasm before they give an excuse/reason, or make an explanation. The situation was similar in TTs when we considered the content of their use of ERE but they differed in integrating other refusal strategies. TTs preferred to use Promise, Wish, Statement of Principle, Statement of Alternative as well as Statement of Regret and Agreement together with their explanations. In some situations, they either directly started with ERE or used this strategy alone. The following typical statements exemplify what other strategies TTs employed before making their explanations or excuses.

> *Keşke daha önce söyleseydin*. (*I wish you had told me before/earlier*) ---Wish
>
> *Kusura bakma/Üzgünüm*. (*Excuse me/I'm sorry*.)---Regret
>
> *Yardım etmek isterim ama…*(*I would like to help but*) --Agreement
>
> *...biliyorsun çok önemli bi elbise o benim için*. (*...as you know, this is a very important dress for me*) --Principle
>
> *…biliyorsun bu konuda titizim*. (*…as you know, I'm fussy about this issue*) –Principle

As for Turkish EFLs, they incorporated more variety in both preceding strategies and the topics they mentioned in their use of ERE with an equal status. They had much more variety by using Request for Empathy, Setting Condition, Negative Ability/Willingness in addition to Statement of Regret, Agreement, and Pause Filler. They also started directly with ERE but it was not as much as TTs. The following statements from Turkish EFL speakers' data in the first situation where a friend wants to borrow a dress/suit indicate how they mentioned several aspects in their refusals.

> *I'm sorry but I'll wear it that night.*
>
> *Well, I don't think the color and the style of any of my dresses would suit you,*
>
> *and since I'm too small, they would probably be too tight…..*
>
> *They are all packed in boxes as I'm redecorating the house.*
>
> *That dress has a sentimental value for me because it is a gift.*

The statements Turkish EFL speakers produced while refusing the first situation included their need for that night, size, color, and style of the dress, even a 'sentimental value' as a gift. They also mentioned it was packed in a box, or they already lent it. Some Turkish EFLs even said it belonged to his/her mom, or he/she didn't have such a dress that a friend could borrow. Although Turkish EFLs showed more variety in the content of explanations and combination with other refusal strategies, they had both similarities and differences with TTs and AEs in their pragmaliguistic choices. Especially the second utterance in the examples above showed how that Turkish EFL speaker utilized a pause filler (e.g. *well*), which is also a common resource for prefacing disagreement, or a dispreferred response, and hedging (e.g. *I don't think*), whereas the same statement included intensifier 'too' to emphasize the reason.

Finally, in the lower status situations, which were the 3rd and 6th one in the DCT, participants displayed more similarities than differences in the content of their explanations. In scenario 3, respondents are asked to refuse their younger sisters' request to go to the playground together, and in scenario 6, to their little brother for a very expensive birthday present. All three groups mainly repeated the instructions by using the words *expensive*, *plan/meeting*, *busy*, *can't afford*, etc. In other words, their explanations/reasons did not vary in terms of the topics they mention. All the groups also integrated Alternative and Regret before or after their explanations. These similarities in the content and use of these two strategies commonly might suggest the perceptions of this type of relationship (older and younger sibling) are presumably shared across cultures. However, we observed differences in utilizing other refusal strategies in the lower status situations among the groups. Both TTs and Turkish EFLs employed the refusal strategy of Promise with their lower status interlocutors although AEs never did that.

Findings related to the directness and indirectness of refusal strategies

This section addresses the third research question related to the directness and indirectness of refusal strategies employed by the groups according to Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification. To do so, the data was examined to find out the proportion of direct, indirect, and adjunct strategies in the groups. Starting with the most direct refusal strategy in Beebe et al.'s (1990) categorization, the findings revealed that none of the groups employed the direct refusal strategy Performative (e.g. *I refuse*). Among the total number of refusal strategies utilized by all the participants (N= 688) did AEs employ the second most direct strategy, Nonperformative *no*, in two situations. The followings are the examples of the idiosyncratic use of *no* by the same respondent in AE group to refuse an interlocutor from an equal and

lower status. Both examples display AEs employ *no* to precede the Statement of Regret, which is *I'm sorry.*

> *No, I'm sorry…I don't loan that one out, but you could borrow one of my other suits.*

> *No, I'm sorry…I can't today. Maybe we can go tomorrow.*

In terms of the third most direct strategy in Beebe et al.'s classification of refusal strategies, the groups employed Negative Willingness/Ability 47 times out of the total number (N=688) of the refusal strategies. Although AEs and Turkish EFL speakers utilized that strategy at an almost similar rate (AEs, N=19, 8%; Turkish EFL speakers, N=20, 10%), TTs used it even less (TTs, N=8, 3%).

As for the indirectness of the refusal strategies, the findings indicated that the participants used 630 indirect refusal strategies including 46 adjuncts to refusals, 4 confirmation strategies, and 7 clarification strategies. In the overall group comparisons, clearly for all situations, the most frequent indirect strategy used by all the groups was ERE. Other indirect strategies, the next most frequent two in the order, included Statement of Alternative and Regret in the groups with the exception that TTs preferred Request for Help/Empathy as their third most frequent indirect refusal strategy instead of Statement of Regret. It was indeed the second most frequent refusal strategy with a higher status interlocutor in TTs whereas Turkish EFL speakers used Statement of Principle in the second order with the higher status interlocutors. The use of indirect strategies in group-by-status comparison also showed that all the groups utilized the indirect strategy of Statement of Alternative in the second order with a lower status interlocutor but they differed in their third choice in the sense that AEs and Turkish EFL speakers preferred Statement of Regret, whereas TTs used Promise.

Discussion

This study compared refusal strategies utilized by TTs, AEs, and Turkish EFLs. The findings indicated that three groups in this study displayed both similarities and differences in terms of frequency of their strategy use, type, content, and the awareness of different social status. Briefly, all three groups employed the least number of refusal strategies with high status interlocutors, and Turkish EFLs was the group with the lowest number of refusal strategies. The groups used the highest number of strategies with equal status interlocutors. In addition, ERE was the most frequent strategy in all groups and status. However, the TTs preferred this strategy more frequently than the other two groups. As for the type or strategy choice, Turkish EFLs incorporated similar features with both groups. Furthermore, participants in all three groups in this study showed awareness of different status by employing divergent strategies at varying degrees with the interlocutors from equal and unequal (higher and lower) status. Finally, all three groups utilized multiple strategies in combination with ERE but in different order. The TTs and Turkish EFLs provided more detailed and specific explanations especially with the high status situations.

First of all, all three groups used the lowest number of refusal strategies with higher status interlocutors but TTs employed the highest number of strategies whereas Turkish EFLs had the lowest number of refusal strategies with higher status interlocutors. This might suggest that TTs have more difficulty in refusing a higher status interlocutor and the speech act of refusing might require doing more facework for them. We also discuss that Turkish EFLs do not transfer from their L1 context regarding the amount, or frequency, of refusal strategies.

Similar to the previous research on languages such as Arabic, Spanish, Turkish, and Thai (Al-Issa, 2003; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Sadler & Eröz, 2002; Wannaruk, 2008), among the most frequently used three refusal strategies was the category of ERE in all groups. The similarity in the use of Statement of Regret and Negative Willingness/ Ability between AEs and Turkish EFLs was also evident. However, Agreement (or Positive Opinion) was not as much common in Turkish EFLs as the other two groups. The other two mostly used refusal strategies of TTs were Request for Help/ Empathy and Promise.

Similarly, overall distribution of refusal strategies in groups suggests that TTs was the group to use more Explanation/Excuse/Reason than AEs and Turkish EFLs. These findings relating to TTs suggest that the relation with a higher status interlocutor, especially with a professor or a manager, is a more 'marked' notion when compared to the US context, and refusing a request in these situations seems to be more difficult for Turkish people unless they have a serious reason or excuse.

Secondly, although all the groups used almost the same amount of refusal strategies, their frequencies were different when we considered the types of semantic formulas. With regard to the type and percentage of semantic formulas, AEs employed Statement of Regret, Alternative, Agreement, and Negative Willingness/ Ability as their most common strategies. Turkish EFLs also showed similarity with AEs in the use of Statement of Regret and Negative Willingness/Ability and Request for Help/Empathy, whereas TTs utilized the last strategy mentioned much more than these two groups. The similarities between Turkish EFLs and AEs might suggest that Turkish speakers of English are able to use the most common strategies in a similar way with the native speakers. Turkish EFLs show that they know how to use some strategies to refuse a request.

However, a higher number of Statement of Principle used by TTs and Turkish EFLs especially in the situation with their fathers when compared to AEs suggests that Turkish EFLs also make some sociopragmatic transfer since this is a very natural and common reply in Turkish culture. It is almost always a tradition to participate as a family in such events such as dinner, wedding/engagement, or other gatherings and this shows how you value the householder family. This might be one reason for Turkish participants' use of Statement of Principle both in their native language and EFL. Alternatively, such sociopragmatic transfer might be linked to the implausibility of the situation –a Turkish speaker would speak English with her father.

Finally, overall findings for Pause Filler and Hedging suggest that AEs are more tended to take mitigations when compared to TTs and Turkish EFLs although they both used indirect strategies mostly and Turkish EFLs indeed utilized Pause Fillers although it was not

as often as AEs. At this point, it is important to emphasize that AEs prefer to mitigate a refusal especially for an interlocutor of equal status like a friend but not of higher or lower status. However, it is interesting that the direct strategy of Negative Willingness/Ability was used by AEs more and that Nonperformative 'no' was only used by AEs. That is, AEs seem to be more indirect with their equal status interlocutors possibly to maintain their relationships. With regard to the use of mitigating devices, TTs and Turkish ELFs tend to utilize them less, and thus sound more direct when compared to AEs in this study.

In relation to the social status, the comparison of refusal strategies by three groups clearly indicated that both groups were aware of the different status of the interlocutors because of the fact that they employed different strategies for different social status or the same strategies in different numbers for the interlocutors from divergent status. However, it might be helpful to emphasize that it is appropriate to use some direct strategies such as Negative Willingness/Ability with a higher status interlocutor in English since AEs utilized that strategy much more than TTs and Turkish EFLs. Although Turkish EFLs employed this strategy at a considerable amount with an equal and lower status interlocutor, they might find it more direct for a higher status interlocutor.

The content analysis of the most frequent strategy ERE in all groups also revealed several interesting similarities and differences. AEs tended to produce more general explanations or excuses while refusing the interlocutors, whether they were equal, higher, or lower status. In addition, they also employed more mitigation than the other two groups using pause fillers, hedging, as well as downgraders. Interestingly, Turkish EFLs showed much more variety than two groups both in other strategies they employed in combination with their explanations and the topics they mentioned. They indeed displayed several similar features with AEs and TTs particularly while refusing a higher and equal status interlocutor, and this might be more related to the features of their interlanguage pragmatics rather than a solidarity or distance/power issues. Yet, the finding that Statement of Principle and Request for Help/Empathy were existent in both TTs and Turkish EFLs refusals with higher status interlocutors (father and professor) indicate that even quite proficient Turkish EFL speakers transfer some from their L1. In particular, in professor-student scenario, the findings suggest that the power relations with a professor are much more emphasized in Turkey when compared to the situation in North America. Consequently, Turkish speakers might be especially concerned about clarity of their valid reason for refusing such an interlocutor. Similarly, one interesting result was again the similarity in the use of Promise by both TTs and Turkish EFLs with their lower status interlocutors (sister and brother), whereas AEs did not use this strategy at all in their refusals in these situations. This points to another potential area for Turkish EFLs sociopragmatic transfer, since it is usually not expected to refuse friends, family members, and professors unless the person does have to do so, and it is usually more common to make some alternative arrangements or promises to compensate a refusal.

It is quite possible to consider all groups indirect in their refusal realization to requests because most of the refusal strategies employed by them were indirect ones, as Nelson et al.'s (2002) also indicated. However, similar to the situation between Korean speakers of Korean and American speakers of English (Kwon, 2004), most of the direct refusal strategies were

employed by AEs in this study, which means AEs are more inclined to be direct particularly in situations with a high and low status interlocutor, or when they feel it is necessary.

Limitations

The present study has several limitations including the relatively small number of participants. However, it should be considered preliminary insights in terms of cross-cultural and interlanguage variations among Turkish and American speakers in their refusal strategies to requests. Therefore, the findings in this study are not generalizable since the focus is dissimilar to other studies on refusal strategies used by Turkish EFL speakers (Genç & Tekyıldız, 2009; Sadler & Eröz, 2002). First of all, the study incorporated three groups, and thus findings are based on comparative and contrastive analysis across two languages and contexts. This study presents both first and interlanguage findings in Turkish and English focusing on not only the frequency but also the content of the refusal strategies employed by participants. Second, the study examined the refusals to requests only through six situations. It is one of the main purposes to highlight similarities and differences in the perception of social status in these situations. Finally, in addition to social and linguistic factors, other social variables such as education level, or other demographic variables might have had influence on the findings.

Implications for teaching EFL to Turkish students

Since Turkish students usually learn English in EFL context, this study of refusal strategies in Turkish, English, and EFL has important implications for both learning and teaching EFL. Pondering particularly the differences between three groups in this study, Turkish EFL classrooms can provide more variety in refusal strategies available to the speakers and facilitate the awareness of directness/indirectness, and perception of different social status in different contexts. First of all, relying on our findings that participants use multiple refusal strategies in each situation and both Turkish and American participants employed higher number of strategies, we can teach and provide a wide array of these strategies in our EFL classrooms. Second, we should underline the differences in the strategy choice among groups. For example, it might be quite important to teach Turkish EFL learners that they can use Negative Willingness with a high status person in North America, and employ more Statement of Agreement, or Positive Opinion, to mitigate such a direct strategy. Although Turkish EFLs employed this strategy at a considerable amount with an equal and lower status interlocutor, they might find it more direct for a higher status interlocutor. However, using Statement of Principle would be awkward with a high status interlocutor in English since AEs did not employ this strategy in high status situations at all. We can also teach how to utilize Hedging to mitigate our refusals in English. Finally, although all three groups provide a great amount of explanations, we can teach our Turkish EFL students how to provide solid excuses or reasons without using too serious or specific explanations in English.

Recommendations for future research

This study has contributed to our understanding of refusal strategies by Turkish and American speakers in their native language and Turkish speakers' EFL. Both the findings and methodology relate to the existing research on refusals in several ways (Al-Issa, 2003; Beebe et al., 1990; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Liao & Brasnahan, 1996; Sadler & Eröz, 2002; Wannaruk, 2008). However, it is still necessary to conduct more research on refusal in Turkish, English, and Turkish EFL. Namely, different speech acts for elicitation can also be utilized to if this makes a difference in their choice or use of refusal strategies. Considering that refusals are face-threatening acts and speakers usually employ multiple strategies, further studies might incorporate naturally occurring data and analyze the episodes or turn-takings. All in all, our study has made unique contributions to our knowledge about refusals and it can be expanded in numerous ways in addition to the above-mentioned aspects.

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Appendix A

Discourse Completion Test in English

Name (optional):

Age:

Gender:

Current Degree Program:

This questionnaire has been designed to gain insights into how you would respond to a set of situations. Below are six situations. Please read the situations, imagine how you would react to them in real life, and then write down **exactly what you would say** in each situation.

1. One of your friends is attending a wedding ceremony this weekend. She/he asks to borrow your nicest dress/suit for only one night…but you really don't like to loan out your fancy clothes. What do you say?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. A classmate wants your help on the final class project, which is due tomorrow. You are already exhausted because you have been working on your own project for days. What do you say?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Your little sister wants you to take her to the playground this afternoon, but you have already made plans to meet with your boyfriend/girlfriend at the same time. What do you say?

   _____
   _____
   _____

_____
_____
_____

4. Your family has been invited to a very nice dinner by your next door neighbor because they are celebrating their daughter's engagement. Your father wants you to go to the dinner, but you really don't want to go. What do you say?

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    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _

5. Your professor wants you to represent the department by attending a conference that will be held in another city. You have already made really fun plans for that weekend with your friends, and you don't want to go at all to the conference. What do you say?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

6. Your little brother asks you to buy him a very expensive present for his birthday. However, you don't want to buy it. What do you say?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

Discourse Completion Test in Turkish

Yaş:

Cinsiyet:

Şu anki Derece (Devam Edilen Program):

Bu Anket, sizin bir takım durumlara nasıl cevap vereceğinizle ilgili anlayış kazanmak amacıyla düzenlenmiştir. Aşağıda altı adet durum verilmiştir. Lütfen durumları okuyup, gerçek hayatınızda nasıl cevap vereceğinizi düşünün ve sonra her bir durumda aynen ne diyeceğinizi yazın.

1. Arkadaşlarından biri, bu hafta sonu bir düğün törenine katılıyor. Senden, en güzel elbise/takımını ödünç almak istiyor. Fakat, sen güzel kıyafetlerini vermekten hiç hoşlanmıyorsun. Ne dersin?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

2. Sınıf arkadaşın, senden yarın son günü olan final projesi için yardım istiyor. Sen günlerdir kendi projen üzerinde çalıştığın için çok yorgunsun. Ne dersin?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

3. Küçük kız kardeşin, senden kendisini oyun alanına/parkına götürmeni istiyor. Fakat, sen çoktan erkek/kız arkadaşınla aynı anda buluşmak için plan yaptın. Ne dersin?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

4. Ailen, yan komsu tarafından çok hoş bir akşam yemeğine davet edildi çünkü kızlarının nişanını kutluyorlar. Baban, senden bu davete katılmanı istiyor ama sen hiç istemiyorsun. Ne dersin?

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_____
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5. Hocan, bölüm temsilcisi olarak senin şehir dışında bir konferansa katılmanı istiyor. Sen ise o hafta sonu için arkadaşlarınızla birlikte çoktan eğlenceli planlar yaptın ve konferansa gitmek istemiyorsun. Ne dersin?

_____
_____
_____
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_____

6. Küçük erkek kardeşin, senden doğum günü için çok pahalı bir hediye almanı istiyor. Ancak, sen bu hediyeyi almak istemiyorsun. Ne dersin?

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_____
_____
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