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# Not Just a “Bu”: Perception and Production of Chinese-as-Foreign-Language (CFL) learners’ Face-threatening Speech Acts of Refusal

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## Abstract

This study looks at refusal, one of the important face-threatening speech acts (FTAs) of human communication, and investigates how intermediate to advanced Chinese-as-Foreign-Language (CFL) learners’ perception of the correctness and appropriateness of refusal relates to their production, in both L1 context with native speakers of English and in L2 context with speakers of Chinese. Through a modified Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and a CFL learners’ demographic survey, this study examines how similarly or differently the participants perform the speech acts of refusal in both L1 and L2 contexts, the possible reasons behind the discrepancy or deviation, the role of pragmatic transfer, possibility of cross-cultural misunderstanding. Finally the implications for language teaching are discussed.

Keywords: Speech Act, Refusal, Perception, Production, Communicative Competence

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## 1. Introduction

Scholars in the field of second language acquisition have long suggested to move, or expand from the Chomskyan concept of grammatical or linguistic competence to a comprehensive communicative competence (Hymes, 1966; Rivers, 1973; Bachman, 1990; Habermas, 2001). Researchers have gradually come to a consensus that, the goal of language acquisition is communicative competence: the ability to use the language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communication goals (National Capital Language Resource Center [NCLRC], n.d.). However, more often than not, learners of a second language who can produce grammatically correct utterances may still find it difficult to produce language that is socioculturally appropriate from time to time.

This study focuses on the sociocultural dimension of second language acquisition, namely, pragmatic competence. As an important aspect of second language learners’ communicative competence, pragmatic competence is the ability to use language forms in a wide range of environments, factoring in the

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relationships between the speakers involved and the social and cultural context of the situation (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Gass & Selinker, 2001).

Speech acts play a central role in pragmatic competence. A speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication (Paltridge, 2000), be it greeting, complaint, invitation, compliment, request, or refusal. Searle (1969) pointed out that speaking a language is actually engaging in an act which is “a rule-governed form of behavior.” Oxford philosopher and speech acts theorist John Austin (1975) proposed that, as functional units in communication, the speech acts can be analyzed on three levels: The locution (the words the speaker uses); the illocution, or illocutionary force (what the speaker intends to do by using those words); and the perlocution (the effect of those words on the hearer).

Gass (1996) argued that “speech acts are realized from culture to culture in different ways and that these differences may result in communication difficulties that range from the humorous to the serious.” Many studies have been done on cross-cultural differences in the realization of speech acts; however, questions remain about if the L2 learners can accurately perceive the linguistic as well as cultural differences between the performances of those speech acts in both their native language and the target language, and how well they can overcome the differences they perceive and produce grammatically correct and culturally appropriate utterances in the target language. , As a result of their comparative study of refusals produced by native speakers of English, Beebe and Takahashi (1989) noted that native speakers of Japanese, Japanese ESL students in the United States, and Japanese EFL students in Japan very often, “do not perceive the differences accurately, or they exaggerate them.”(p. 200)

Some speech acts, such as refusals, can intrinsically threaten the speaker’s and the hearer’s face, thus are termed as “face-threatening speech acts” (FTAs). The speech act of refusal is not rare in everyday communication. Nevertheless, its importance can never be over-emphasized, since refusal is a powerful speech act that, due to its inherently face-threatening nature, carries the potential to arouse resentment, invoke tension, alienate the requester, elevate relative power, sometimes create a problematic context in the relationship, and even cause the requester to question the refuser. Refusal is a face-threatening act to the listener /requestor /inviter in communication, because it contradicts his or her expectations. It occurs when a speaker directly or indirectly says “No” to a request or invitation. However, to refuse is not always as easy and simple as saying “No”, or “Bu” in Chinese directly. Rather it is often realized through indirect strategies, and is very cultural specific. Thus, it is known as a “sticking point” in cross-cultural communication, and requires a high level of pragmatic competence (Beebe et al., 1990; Chen, 1996). It sometimes may even cause “cross-cultural communication breakdown”, and “pragmatic failure” (Thomas, 1983), or become “the source of many cross-cultural miscommunication” (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989), if not handled well. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) thus warned that second language learners, when performing FTAs, are “faced with the great risk of offending their interlocutors or of miscommunication”.

In human communication, unlike other speech acts, refusals are unique in that they can be characterized as a response to or engaging in an action (e.g., a request, invitation, offer, suggestion) proposed by the interlocutor, rather than an act initiated by the speaker (Chen, Ye, & Zhang, 1995; Gass & Houck, 1999). So refusals normally function as second pair parts, which mean they preclude extensive planning on the part of refuser, and for the most part, are unavoidable in daily life. That’s why it is very important to develop and strengthen communicative competence in this area.

This study looks at refusal, one of the important FTAs of human communication, perceived and produced by Chinese-as-Foreign-Language (CFL) learners in the United States. It investigates how CFL learners’ perception of the correctness and appropriateness of the refusals they produce relates to their production of those refusals. The study raises the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** Are there any differences in CFL learners’ production of refusal in L1 English context and L2 Chinese context?

- **RQ2:** Are there any differences in CFL learners' perception of refusal in L1 English context and L2 Chinese context? Is there a difference in terms of "individualistic perception" and "collectivistic perception" between the Chinese and English contexts?
- **RQ3:** In L2 Chinese context, are there any differences in terms of the production patterns of refusals for the students at different language levels (as indicated by # years of Chinese learning)?
- **RQ4:** Are there any differences in confidence level of appropriateness of the refusal they produce, language difficulty and cultural difficulty they perceive in producing refusal, respectively?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Refusal, Politeness, and Face

Politeness is a universal phenomenon and the basic principle of politeness is similar across cultures; however, the exact norms of politeness and value judgments vary from culture to culture. The linguistic strategies called for various social functions differ considerably across cultures. Knowing cultural values and norms is essential in sending and interpreting messages.

Politeness is considered to be "the heart of successful inter-cultural communication," and "context-dependent" (Holmes, 2012). Over the years, face concerns have become important part of politeness research. Politeness serves to enhance, maintain, or protect face. According to Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), face can be divided into two complementary sides, namely, negative face, the desire not to impose upon the other, and positive face, the desire to be liked and admired. Mao (1994) later furthered the understanding of the concept of face and cultural variations in the notions of face by proposing a relative face orientation construct. Mao identified two competing forces shaping our interactional behaviors: the ideal social identity and ideal individual autonomy. The state of face is never idealistically positive or negative, but it is rather relative, determined by either the ideal social identity or the ideal individual autonomy in a given speech community.

The concept of "face" is important in any culture, but is extremely so in Chinese culture. Chinese culture is a highly face conscious one. Ho (1976) suggested that the concept of face was of Chinese origin, and researchers have noted that the Chinese language has more words for concepts related to face, such as saving face, losing face, lending face, gaining face and regaining face. He tried to differentiate two aspects of the concept of face in Chinese: *mianzi* (面子) and *lian* (脸). The concept of "face" can strongly influence how relationships play out in Chinese culture.

### 2.2. Refusals across Cultures

People using different languages from different cultures perform speech acts of refusal differently. Nelson et al. (1998) compared American English (AE) and Egyptian Arabic (EA) speech acts of refusal in their L1 context, found though there is similar use of formulas, EA speakers used more direct refusals with peers than AE speakers. For unequal status, AE = mitigate + excuse, EA = excuse + mitigate or refuse + reason (depending on status balance).

Using the same language, people from different cultures can produce refusals differently as well. Beebe et al (1990) found that ESL/EFL learners' ways of expressing refusals in English were different from native speakers' in the order, frequency, and intrinsic content, and tone of semantic formulas. For instance, as compared with American native speakers, both Japanese speaking Japanese and Japanese speaking English as a L2 tended to use expressions of regret (or apologies) more frequently with higher-status interlocutors, but less frequently with lower-status interlocutors.

Kitao (1996)'s study on British English speakers found that the most common strategy of refusal was

an expression of regret followed by an excuse or reason (30% of the responses). Another 20% of the responses either reversed the order or added another element (such as promising future compliance of the request, or negative willingness). As it is in American English, giving a reason seemed to be central, and the reasons were found to be generally concrete and specific. Expression of regret occurred in more than half of the refusals (especially refusing a small request by those of equal status), although apologies were more often offered in response to a larger request.

### 2.3. Refusals in Chinese Culture

Chen, Ye, and Zhang (1995) found that, in Chinese culture, refusal is seen as having a potentially negative impact on future interaction, therefore great care is taken to follow implicit rules of appropriate behavior that shows respect for each person's role in the interaction. They related the act of refusals in Chinese to the concept of maintaining *mianzi* (面子) and *lian* (脸) (one's face and public image), and identified two types of refusals in Chinese culture: substantive and ritual refusals, both with different functions. According to them, Chinese perceive it imperative to "*liu mianzi*" (preserve face for the refusee) and "*liu houlu*" (leave oneself a way out for the refuser).

For expressing refusals in Chinese, Liao's (1994) study identified a total of 22 strategies in Chinese culture, some are more common than others: 1. Silence, hesitation, lack of enthusiasm; 2. Offering an alternative; 3. Postponement; 4. Putting the blame on a third party or something, over which that you have no control; 5. Avoidance; 6. General acceptance without giving details; 7. Diversion and distraction of the addressee; 8. General acceptance with excuse; 9. Saying what is offered or requested is inappropriate; 10. External yes, internal no; 11. Statement of philosophy; 12. Direct no; 13. Lie, excuse, reason, or explanation; 14. Complaining or appealing to feelings; 15. Rationale; 16. Joke; 17. Criticism; 18. Conditional yes; 19. Questioning the justification of the request; 20. Treat; 21. External no, internal yes; and 22. A composite of strategies.

Based on Grice's (1975) cooperative principles (quality, quantity, manner, relation), Leech's (1983) six maxims of absolute interpersonal maxims (tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy), Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) four super strategies for doing FTAs (bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record), and Gu's (1990) four maxims of Chinese politeness (the self-denigration, the address, the tact and the generosity maxims), Liao (1994) proposed six maxims of politeness in refusals for Mandarin Chinese: sincerity, address, tact, agreement, modesty, and economy. Here are some points raised by Liao:

1. It is more polite to use the address form than not, even if the refuser has the requester's attention already
2. Giving an alternative in a suggest-assertive is better than uttering a vague reason to refuse
3. A specific reason is more polite than giving an alternative in a why-not form
4. A composite strategy of vague reason plus alternative is better than an alternative plus a vague reason.
5. Indirectness in refusal is found in Chinese culture. The Chinese view the maxim of tact as an art of speaking and sometimes call it "*weiwan*" (subtlety). In the case of the refusal phenomenon, they call it "*wanju*" (refuse subtly). It is for keeping the face of the addressee and/or the speaker himself.

Some studies of Chinese EFL students also shed lights on cultural differences between native Chinese speakers and English speakers. Although simplistic cultural dichotomy of American as direct, assertive, and less face sensitive than Chinese was not fully supported by the findings of Bresnahan, Cai and Rivers' (1994) study of the cultural similarities and differences in strategies of refusal between Chinese and English, Chen's (1996) comparative study of native English speakers' and advanced Chinese EFL learners'

beliefs about how a face-threatening speech act, refusal, should be expressed did indicate that, asserting individuality and stressing the linguistic function of the speech act, the native speakers (of English) considered truthfulness, directness, clarity and effectiveness as the most important, whereas valuing social interaction and solidarity, the (Chinese) EFL learners were more concerned about being indirect, preserving face, and avoiding embarrassment. Chen attributed the differences to the high or low pragmatic context of the speech act community, the positive or negative face addressed, and the level at which communication occurs.

Li's (2007) comparative study of speech acts of refusal in Chinese and American English, also found that Americans are more direct than Chinese, and Chinese sincere refusals are considered as face-threatening acts, which call for politeness strategies to minimize the negative effects on the addressee(s). The author maintained that the cross-linguistic differences were due to basic differences in cultural values, i.e. individualism and collectivism. Similarly, Guo (2012)'s cross-cultural study confirmed that, although there were more similarities than differences among the Chinese and Americans in making refusals, the American groups utilized a greater proportion of direct strategies than did the Chinese subjects on average. Chang's (2009, 2011) studies of Chinese EFL learners' production and perception regarding refusing in English revealed a trend of the indirect L1 communication style manifested in the less frequent use of direct refusal strategies and the frequent use of excuse/ reason with specific and significant details in L2 refusals. The differences can be attributed to cultural differences between Chinese and American Culture.

To investigate specific refusal strategies that were used in making refusals, Liao and Bresnahan (1996) studied contrasted responses made by American and Chinese university students to six requests. The refusal patterns indicated that both groups refused requests from a teacher more easily than from either a friend or a family member, but Chinese gave more specific reasons than Americans. It was common for Americans to begin a refusal with a positive response, followed by a refusal, such as *I'd love to, but...*; however, it was rare for Chinese to use this strategy. Chinese students found requests from family members hard to turn down, whereas American students found friends' requests were hardest to refuse. When refusing to lend class notes to a friend, American students were more likely than Chinese students to add a comment on the inappropriateness of the request. Americans were more willing to lend a small amount of money to his/her friend, while Chinese students found it hard to refuse a request from a family member for a large amount of money. Compared with Chinese students, American students, especially male, were less likely to turn down a request for help someone move. But in cases where Americans refused to lend their cars to their friends, they provided a 'statement of principle' as an excuse, whereas Chinese students were more economical at using strategies in such refusals, following a principle of "*dian-dao-wei-zhi*" (点到为止, marginally touching the point).

Given the cultural differences exist among the interlocutors, Chen (1996) further suggested, to avoid pragmatic failure, it is important that the learners re-contextualize their sociocultural perspectives by having an ethnographer's mindset and taking an emic stand in viewing target language use with reference to the values and beliefs of the speech community, and to approach their home speech community with an etic stand to reflect upon the pragmatics of their own native language and to gain insights into why cross-cultural miscommunication would occur and how it can be avoided.

#### 2. 4. Refusal and Pragmatic Transfer

Wannaruk's (2008) investigation into similarities and differences between refusals in American English and Thai and incidences of pragmatic transfer by Thai EFL learners when making refusals, found that pragmatic transfer exists in the choice and content of refusal strategies. Awareness of a person of a higher status and the characteristics of being modest in L1 culture motivate pragmatic transfer.

Hong's (2011) study of refusal strategies in Chinese by native speakers (NS) and nonnative Chinese learners (NNS) found that L1 and L2 refusals in Chinese present fewer similarities and more differences. In direct refusals, the author noticed negative L1 (English) pragmatic transfer of NNS, which was attributed to the lack of L1 intercultural knowledge of L2 learners.

Allami and Naeimi's (2011) study of production of refusals by Iranian EFL learners echoed this view of pragmatic transfer. They further discovered that language proficiency is also an important factor in pragmatic transfer. The study found a positive correlation between L2 proficiency and pragmatic transfer, with upper-intermediate learners tend to transfer more L1 sociocultural norms to L2 and make more pragmatic errors than the lower-intermediate learners.

However, Su's (2010) study of making requests in English and Chinese by Chinese learners of English, showed that bi-directional transfer can occur at the pragmatic level in foreign language learners, rather than one directional transfer from L1 to L2. The results of the study indicated that EFL learners at both intermediate and advanced levels used conventionally indirect strategies significantly less often than English native speakers in making English requests but more often than Chinese native speakers did when requesting in Chinese.

Previous studies focus either on comparing Chinese with their western counterparts on how they perform speech acts of refusal similarly or differently, or on how Chinese EFL learners perform refusal in Chinese and English contexts. Since speech acts play a central role in pragmatic competence, or communicative competence in language acquisition, this study turns to look at second language learners of Chinese, and examine how CFL learners can perform speech acts of refusal in a grammatically correct and culturally appropriate way, and how culture plays a role behind the scene in their performance, to help better understand Chinese learning process and to shed lights on Chinese language pedagogy in the area of communicative competence.

### **3. Method and Data Collection**

#### *3.1. Overview*

This study involves experimental elicitation to collect samples of learner language. Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) were employed in this study. DCT is a technique used to elicit data in sociolinguistic research, and has been widely used in speech act studies. The DCT is a questionnaire containing situations, briefly described and designed to elicit a particular speech act. Subjects read each situation and respond in writing to a prompt.

To study American CFL learners perception and production of speech act of refusal, all participants were given a revised Discourse Completion Test wherein they were asked to write their responses to eight prompts, four in Chinese context, four in English context, with similar situations.

Unlike the traditional DCT, the revised DCT had been added with another part, which also looked into the students' perception of performing refusal under different circumstance and their confidence level of producing these refusals. Both Likert scales and rank order items were used in designing this revised DCT.

#### *3.2. Participants*

The participants were 37 students (N=37) at a major Midwest university in the United States. They were students from second-year Chinese class to fifth-year Chinese classes. Of the 37 subjects, 21 were male and 16 were female. 32 participants were native speakers of English While 11 participants were Chinese heritage students, 24 of them had no Chinese cultural background at all., the remaining 2

participants did not provide an answer to this question. 25 had various living experiences either in Mainland China or Taiwan.

### 3.3. Materials

The subjects were provided with a DCT packet comprised of an Informed Consent Form, A Demographic Survey, and a revised Discourse Completion Test (DCT) (Appendix A). In the Demographic Survey, they were asked to provide basic information about their gender, first language use, cultural heritage background, as well as the number of years they had studied Chinese in classroom, and their personal experiences on Mainland China or Taiwan.

The design of the DCT reflects the four different situations (request, offer, invitation and suggestion) that refusal may occur. Under these four different situations people need to perform face-threatening speech acts of refusal, four different scenarios were created, including refusal to a request, an offer, an invitation, and a suggestion. Accordingly, in the revised DCT, four scenarios were created for each of the situation. Since the relationship between speakers could be also a factor, four situations were created to reflect different hierarchical or equal relationship and distance between the speakers (between peers and friends, between students and professors, and friend's parents). Each prompt simulated a situation that could occur in daily life. Since the study will also compare how similarly or differently the CFL learners perform face-threatening speech acts of refusal in both Chinese and English cultural contexts, these four scenarios were slightly changed for its location from China to America, so there were eight scenarios in total, four in Chinese context, four in the American context. The subject of the four scenarios is listed below:

1. Refusal of invitation given by friend's parents
2. Refusal of offer of help from a friend
3. Refusal of a request from a peer friend
4. Refusal of a suggestion from a professor.

Here is an example of a situation:

Situation 1. **You are in China.** Your Chinese friend's parents invite you to have a family dinner with them at their home this weekend. But you'd like to hang out with your other friends at a bar on this weekend.

You: **(please answer in Chinese, or pinyin, if you don't know how to write Chinese characters).**

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In addition to that, since this study aims to investigate how the students make decisions to perform certain speech acts of refusal in certain ways, this DCT is revised, based on Chen's (1996) study, to incorporate the students' self-report of their perception of the speech act of refusal, including factors of truthfulness, directness, clarity, effectiveness, that are grouped under a concept of "individualistic perception", and face-preserving and embarrassment avoiding, that were grouped under an umbrella of "collectivistic perception".

Although Beebe and Cumming (1996) warned that data collection method can affect speech act performance, after comparing refusals in spontaneous speech and written discourse completion tests, the findings revealed that DCT is an effective means of gathering a large amount of data quickly, creating an initial classification of semantic formulas, and ascertaining the structure of refusals. However, the tests did not elicit natural speech with respect to actual wording, range of formulas and strategies, length of

responses (4 times as many words and sentences over the phone) or number of turns necessary to fulfill a function. Nor did they adequately represent the depth of emotion and general psycho-social dynamics of naturally occurring speech. (Please see appendix A)

### 3. 4. *Data collection and analysis procedures*

The subjects were invited to participate in this study. Then they were provided with a whole survey packet, including the Informed Consent, the Demographic Survey, and a revised Discourse Completion Test (DCT). It took them about 20 to 25 minutes to finish this survey packet. Considering the practice effects, counter balance measure was used to address this issue. There were two kinds of DCTs, one with China scenarios first, another with American scenarios first.

For their production of refusals in Chinese, four categories were created: a. grammatically correct, culturally appropriate; b. grammatically incorrect, culturally appropriate; c. grammatically correct, culturally inappropriate; d. grammatically incorrect, culturally inappropriate.

Responses of CFL learners were evaluated by two native speakers of Mandarin Chinese, one from Mainland China, one from Taiwan, for grammatical correctness and sociocultural appropriateness. The use of cultural insiders of native speaker in rating the grammatical correctness and sociocultural appropriateness of the speech acts of refusal produced is valid, since they have both language abilities and cultural insights in judging the situations. The two raters worked independently first, to judge the grammatical correctness and sociocultural appropriateness of the CFL learners' production of refusal in Chinese context. Then they worked together, discussed the differences in ratings between them, and finally came to a consensus, if they could. However, there were still questions they could not agree upon. Inter-rater reliability, the extent to which two raters agree, was computed.

For the current study, Cohen's Kappa was employed for assessing the degree of agreement between the two raters. For all of the four situations under the Chinese context, the observed values for Cohen's Kappa are, respectively, .859 ( p-value = .00), .880 (p-value = .00), .624 (p-value = .00) and .923 (p-value = .000). According to Robson (1993), Kappa in the range of .4 to 0.6 is considered fair, between .6 and .75 is good and above .75 is excellent.

Because of the small size of the study, nonparametric statistical procedures that had been widely applied to studies of small sample sizes using ordinal-level data, were used in this study (Marascuilo & Serlin 1988). Also, it is noted that these procedures possessed the ability to accommodate unusual sampling distribution. For instance, the Wilcoxon signed rank test is appropriate for comparing two levels of an independent variable in a within-subjects design with ordinal data. The test assumes a symmetrical distribution of the difference scores between two conditions form a symmetrical distribution. The Mann Whitney U test is analogical to the between-subject t-test and assumes scores are independent of each other.

## 4. Results

### 4. 1. *Research question 1*

**RQ1:** Are there any differences in CFL learners' production of refusal in L1 English context and L2 Chinese context?

Because we did not assign correctness and appropriateness of refusals produced in L1 context of English as we did for production of refusal in L2 context of Chinese, there was no statistical analysis that could be done on this. However, there were interesting observational data collected by the raters.

In some situations, the refusals produced in L1 and L2 were almost identical. For example, in response to a professor's request of taking a class that was not interesting, one student replied in English as "Nah, I am not really interested in that sort of thing," while in Chinese, he said, "我对这门功课不感兴趣。" (*I am not interested in this course.*) One of the possible answers to this is pragmatic transfer, both positive and negative, in their productions of refusal in L2 from L1 context. However, their limited language ability to express subtly in L2 and their failure to realize the cultural differences might also contribute to this phenomenon.

While many refusals produced in L1 and L2 were identical, and some students seemed to transfer what they produce in L1 environment to L2, there were some differentiated refusals deliberately made for certain contexts. For example, to respond to a friend who wanted to borrow a new car, one student responded in Chinese as "对不起, 我得要用" (*Sorry, I need it myself*), while in English, he responded with "No way, are you nuts? You are horrible driver." Another student responded in Chinese, "对不起, 我不舒服让别人开我的车" (*Sorry, I'm uncomfortable with letting others drive my car,*) while in English, he responded, "No way, I know how you drive."

#### 4. 2. Research question 2

**RQ2:** Are there any differences in CFL learners' perception of refusal in L1 English context and L2 Chinese context? Is there a difference in terms of "individualistic perception" and "collectivistic perception" between the Chinese and English contexts?

Since a 7-point rating scale, ranging from "not important" to "extremely important" with a higher score denoting a higher level of importance, was used in this study, the responses (data) are considered on an ordinal scale. The Wilcoxon signed rank test for matched pairs was employed to compare students' perceptions of producing a refusal in the two different contexts: L1 English context and L2 Chinese context. The following is a brief summary of the results of the significance tests.

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**Table 1.** Comparisons of CFL Learners' Perception of Refusal in L1 vs. in L2 Context

	Q1: invitation to dinner (n = 37)	Q2: coffee spills (n = 35)	Q3: lending your new car (n = 34)	Q4: professor's advice (n = 33)
Truthfulness	Z = -1.271 p = .204	Z = -1.347 p = .178	Z = -3.514* p = .000	Z = -.023 p = .982
Directness	Z = -1.855 p = .064	Z = -1.395 p = .163	Z = -3.004* p = .003	Z = -1.752 p = .080
Clarity	Z = -1.445 p = .148	Z = -.916 p = .360	Z = -1.955 p = .051	Z = -1.517 p = .129
Effectiveness	Z = -.605 p = .545	Z = -.618 p = .537	Z = -1.127 p = .260	Z = -1.882 p = .060
Face- preserving	Z = -2.169* p = .03	Z = -1.895 p = .058	Z = -2.759* p = .006	Z = -.734 p = .463
Embarrassment Avoiding	Z = -3.731* p = .000	Z = -.669 p = .503	Z = -3.024* p = .002	Z = -.952 p = .341

\* indicates statistical significance at  $\alpha = .05$

Under different situations, certain factors did play a larger role than others. As indicated in Table 1, in situation 1, to respond to an invitation to a family dinner by a friend's parents, the students perceived factors of face-preserving and embarrassment-avoiding differently in L1 and L2 contexts when they produced refusal. While in the situation 3, to respond to a friend's request of borrowing a new car, both factors of truthfulness and directness and the factors of face-preserving and embarrassment avoiding played a role, when the students produced refusals in different contexts.

As for if there are any differences in term of "individualistic perception" and "collectivistic perception" between the Chinese and English contexts, the Wilcoxon signed rank test for matched pairs was employed to compare students' "individualistic perception" and "collectivistic perception," respectively, under the two contexts of English and Chinese.

$$\text{Individualism perception (IN)} = (\text{TR} + \text{DI} + \text{CL} + \text{EF}) / 4$$

$$\text{Collectivism perception (CO)} = (\text{FA} + \text{EM}) / 2$$

**Table 2.** Comparisons of CFL Learners' Individualistic vs. Collectivistic Perception in Producing Refusals

	Situation 1 (n = 34)	Situation 2 (n = 35)	Situation 3 (n = 34)	Situation 4 (n = 33)
Individualistic perception	Z = -1.647 p = .099	Z = -1.033 p = .302	Z = -4.079* p = .000	Z = -1.892 p = .058
Collectivistic perception	Z = -2.821* p = .005	Z = -.998 p = .318	Z = -2.883* p = .004	Z = -.199 p = .842

\* indicates statistical significance at  $\alpha = .05$

Again, from table 2, we can see under situation 1, collectivistic perception became important when they produced refusals in different contexts. Also in situation 3, both individualistic and collectivistic perception were important when they produced refusal in two different contexts.

#### 4. 3. Research question 3

**RQ3:** In L2 Chinese context, are there any differences in terms of the production patterns of refusals for the students at different language levels (as indicated by # years of Chinese learning)?

The students were put into lower level (2 year or less) and upper level (3 year and more). Chi-square test of homogeneity was conducted to compare these two groups. According to the result, ( $\chi^2 = 1.803$  with degrees of freedom = 3 and  $p = .614$  for situation 1;  $\chi^2 = 3.675$  with degrees of freedom = 3 and  $p = .299$  for situation 2;  $\chi^2 = 1.610$  with degrees of freedom = 3 and  $p = .657$  for situation 3;  $\chi^2 = 2.728$  with degrees of freedom = 3 and  $p = .435$  for situation 4), no statistically significant difference was found in the production patterns. Which means, no matter what language level these CFL students were at, their productions of refusal in Chinese did not show statistically significant difference.

The Mann-Whitney U test was also conducted to compare the attitudes of two groups of students – those studying Chinese for less than or equal to two years and those studying Chinese for more than two years. No statistical significance was concluded either.

#### 4. 4. Research question 4

**RQ4:** Are there any differences in confidence level of appropriateness of the refusal they produce, language difficulty and cultural difficulty they perceive in producing the refusal, respectively?

The Mann Whitney U test was conducted to compare the two groups of students with different Chinese language levels (#years studying Chinese) in terms of their confidence level they felt about the production of the refusal, how they feel about language difficulty and cultural difficulty, respectively in the Chinese context.

**Table 3.** *Perceptions of Confidence Level, Language Difficulty and Cultural Difficulty*

	Situation 1: invitation to dinner (n <sub>1</sub> = 22, n <sub>2</sub> = 12)	Situation 2: coffee splits (n <sub>1</sub> = 22, n <sub>2</sub> = 12)	Situation 3: rent your new car (n <sub>1</sub> = 22, n <sub>2</sub> = 12)	Situation 4: professor's advice (n <sub>1</sub> = 22, n <sub>2</sub> = 12)
Confidence level	Z = -.135 p = .893	Z = -.846 p = .423	Z = -.772 p = .440	Z = -.360 p = .719
Language difficulty	Z = -3.3399* p = .001	Z = -2.903* p = .004	Z = -1.226 p = .220	Z = -1.766 p = .077
Cultural difficulty	Z = -.571 p = .588	Z = -1.386 p = .166	Z = -.442 p = .671	Z = -.771 p = .441

\* indicates statistical significance at  $\alpha = .05$

Note: n<sub>1</sub> = number of students who have been learning Chinese for two years or less, n<sub>2</sub> = number of students who have been learning Chinese for more than two years.

Surprisingly, the students were very confident with their production of refusals, and they did not feel many cultural difficulties at all. They did experience some language difficulties in situation 1, when they responded to an invitation to a family dinner from a friend's parents, and situation 2, when they responded to friend's offer of cleaning the carpet after this friend spilled a whole cup of coffee on the carpet.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The equivalent word of "No" in Chinese is "Bu". To refuse in Chinese, however, it is more than just saying a "Bu". It involves politeness strategies in realization of a speech act of refusal, and needs to address positive and negative face between interlocutors. In most cases, Chinese culture values "*wanju*" (subtle refusal). The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the perception and production of face-threatening speech act of refusal by CFL learners in both L1 English context and L2 Chinese context, and see how they perform a speech act of refusal in L2 context.

As found in this study, in certain situations, the refusals produced in L1 and L2 were pretty much identical. However, one might be correct and appropriate in one context, might not be so in another. For example: one student responded to a request of borrowing his new car, "我不舒服别人借我的新车。" (I am not comfortable letting people borrow my new car.) Here "舒服" is directly translated from English "comfortable" into Chinese. However, it was not only grammatically incorrect, but culturally inappropriate as well. When performing this speech act, the speaker might identify the words to use on locution level, nevertheless, on illocutionary level and perlocutionary level, the speaker failed to see the discrepancy in two different contexts.

Besides lack of language ability to express subtly and lack of cultural knowledge, pragmatic transfer may still play a fairly important role. Although pragmatic transfer sometimes can be a source of error, it can be a positive thing that a second language speaker can always fall back on for reference, when facing unfamiliar and difficult situations. The real issue here is how to cultivate and raise their pragmatic and even communicative awareness.

When the CFL learners produce refusals, do they consciously perceive L1 and L2 contexts differently, in terms of such factors as truthfulness, directness, clarity, effectiveness, face-preserving, and embarrassment avoiding? The mixed result of this study showed that, while most of these factors did not affect their decision to produce a refusal when they moved from L1 English context to L2 Chinese context, except situation 1, which is an invitation from a friend's parents to a family dinner, face-preserving and embarrassment avoiding became statistically significant between Chinese contexts and English context, and situation 3, a request from friend to borrow a new car, in which there were differences in terms of truthfulness, directness, and embarrassment-avoiding between Chinese context and English context. This indicated that the students' perception and production of refusals were situational, and were depended upon individual situation, rather than cultural.

However, the cultural awareness of different values, norms, customs and beliefs really matter in producing FTAs of refusal. It is important to acquire cultural insights and develop related cross-cultural communicative understanding and strategies, because it matters not only for how one can interpret the speaker's intended meaning in a particular utterance, but also how one can respond correctly and appropriately in that particular situation, use as many politeness strategies as possible. Due to the limited scope of this study, we didn't see a large variety of politeness strategies employed in the production of refusals in Chinese.

Did these CFL learners display collectivistic or individualistic orientation in producing refusals? Just in two aforementioned scenarios, collectivistic perceptions of face-preserving and embarrassing-avoiding did play a role sometimes. However, individualistic principle of truthfulness, directness, clarity, effectiveness still dominated their decision making process of producing a refusal.

The production of refusals measured by its culturally appropriateness and grammatically correctness didn't show any statistically significant differences between the group of lower language level students and their upper level counterparts. That means that, the students at different levels were all struggling with producing grammatically correct, sociocultural appropriate speech act of refusal. Linguistic competence didn't automatically translate into communicative competence. Pragmatic failure may still happen at any level, though for speakers at lower language level, the chances of pragmatic failure occurrence can be very high because they face both linguistic and cultural barriers at the same time.

It was a little surprising that students at different language levels didn't display statistically significant differences in their confidence for the refusals they produced. There was no statistical significant difference in their feeling of cultural difficulties in L1 and L2 contexts, though they did feel some language difficulties in some situations. In other words, they are more confident in cultural knowledge than in language.

Maybe they were over confident, a false-confidence that resulted from being just ignorant about the possible cultural differences between L1 and L2 to some extent, which can be a big problem. If they didn't realize the existence of cultural differences, or even they did realize it, failed to handle them very well, then cultural misunderstanding might most likely persist.

Cohen (1996) once argued that, "the fact that speech acts reflect somewhat routinized language behavior helps learning in the sense that much of what is said is predictable." However, the study raised several questions for language pedagogy: How do we help increase their pragmatic awareness and cultural sensitivity in our language class? How do we develop our students' pragmatic competence in a classroom? How can pragmatic competence be taught? Is there a possible pragmatic sequence that the learner can acquire step-by-step? Do we teach the students explicitly how to refuse and how to respond

appropriately in a target culture? To what extent should a Chinese instructor incorporate the Chinese concepts of face, such as “mianzi” and “lian”, as well as politeness strategies in Chinese classroom? How do we help the students to develop politeness strategies, and increase their inventory of politeness strategies in a target culture? Sadly, there is not a sequentially well-designed speech acts based textbook available for the students so far, that not only teaches them language, but also increases the learners’ pragmatic competence. In language teaching and learning, more pragmatic consciousness-raising activities are greatly needed to develop pragmatic awareness of the students, by discussing, analyzing, and performing speech acts in different situations, to understand the specificity of the cultural norms of both native and target languages, develop both emic and etic understandings of different cultures. As far as Chinese language is concerned, it is very important to expand a politeness strategy inventory based on understanding of the maxim of Chinese politeness and face concerns in Chinese culture, especially when issues of age, gender and social status are involved.

There are some limitations facing this study. First of all, due to the availability of the subjects, the sample size was relatively small, which limits its generalization ability. Secondly, since refusals usually result in a series of negotiation, and this study just focused on the first attempt of refusal, which, for sure, is the most important part, but not enough. Third, Likert scale were used in revised DCT, however, discriminative power of Likert scale was not that powerful. Even though their attitude differed, everyone gave the same or very similar responses to a statement. Fourth, the use of Discourse Completion Test (DCT) might, to some extent, lose its natural context. Refusals are not expressed exclusively in language. Language tones, expression, body languages, and even silence, can be part of refusal strategies. A natural data collected by audio/ video taping may be more desirable in the future research. Fifth, factor of gender was not included in this study. Finally, this study focused on substantive refusals; future research might also look at how CFL students accurately perceive and interpret more complex ritual refusals, which is very important part of Chinese culture, and how they appropriately respond to them.

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Appendix A: Revised Discourse Completion Test

*Directions: Please write your response in the blank area. Do not spend a lot of time thinking about what answer you think you should provide; instead, please respond as naturally as possible and try to write your response as you feel you would say it in the situation. Potential follow-up responses by the other person in each scenario have been left out intentionally.*

**The Following 4 situation are in China**

Situation 1. **You are in China.** Your Chinese friend's parents invite you to have a family dinner with them at their home this weekend. But you'd like to hang out with your other friends at a bar on this weekend.

You: **(please answer in Chinese, or pinyin, if you don't know how to write Chinese characters).**

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: **(1 for Least important, 7 for Most important)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

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2. **You are in China.** Your Chinese friend is at your apartment for coffee, s/he accidentally spills a whole cup of coffee on the carpet and makes a mess of it. S/he insists on cleaning it up for you. But you don't him/her to

You: (please answer in Chinese, or pinyin, if you don't know how to write Chinese characters)

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: (**1 for Least important, 7 for Most important**)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

3. **You are in China** and just bought a new car. Your Chinese friend asks to use your car to go to Shanghai. Knowing s/he is a careless/unskilled driver, you don't want to lend him/her your car

You: (please answer in Chinese, or pinyin, if you don't know how to write Chinese characters)

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: **(1 for Least important, 7 for Most important)**

- \_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

\*\*\*\*\*

**4. You are in China.** Your Chinese professor discusses your research plan with you and suggests that you should study classical Chinese next semester. But you are not interested at all:

You: **(please answer in Chinese, or pinyin, if you don't know how to write Chinese characters)**

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: **(1 for Least important, 7 for Most important)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

**The Following 4 situation is in the US**

Situation 1. **You are in The U.S.** Your friend's parents invite you to have a family dinner with them at their home this weekend. But you'd like to hang out with your other friends at a bar on this weekend.

You: (please answer in English).

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: (**1 for Least important, 7 for Most important**)

- \_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

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2. **You are in The U.S.** Your friend is at your apartment for coffee, s/he accidentally spills a whole cup of coffee on the carpet and makes a mess of it. S/he insists on cleaning it up for you. But you don't him/her to  
You: (please answer in English)

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7  
f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: (**1 for Least important, 7 for Most important**)

- \_\_\_ a. Truthfulness  
\_\_\_ b. Directness  
\_\_\_ c. Clarity  
\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness  
\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving  
\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?

Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ 7 very difficult

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3. **You are in the U.S.**, and just bought a new car. Your friend asks to use your car to go to Chicago. Knowing s/he is a careless/unskilled driver, you don't want to lend him/her your car

You: **(please answer in English)**

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_ **7Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: **(1 for Least important, 7 for Most important)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Truthfulness
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Directness
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Clarity
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?  
Not difficult at all 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

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**4. You are in The U.S.** Your professor discusses your research plan and suggests that you should study classical Latin next semester. But you are not interested at all:  
You: **(please answer in English)**

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Please **circle** the numbers to indicate the importance of the following factors when you produce the refusal above:

**Not important** 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 **Extremely important**

- a. Truthfulness : 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- b. Directness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- c. Clarity: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- d. Effectiveness: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- e. Face-preserving: 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 7

f. Embarrassment avoiding: 1\_\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_\_ 7

Please **use number from 1 to 7** to rate the following seven factors in order, according to the importance you feel when you produce the refusal above: **(1 for Least important, 7 for Most important)**

- \_\_\_\_ a. Truthfulness
- \_\_\_\_ b. Directness
- \_\_\_\_ c. Clarity
- \_\_\_\_ d. Effectiveness
- \_\_\_\_ e. Face-preserving
- \_\_\_\_ f. Embarrassment avoiding:

Please circle a number to indicate how confident you are about the appropriateness of your refusal you produced:

Not Confident at all 1\_\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_\_ 7 very confident

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **LANGUAGE**:  
Not difficult at all 1\_\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

When you produce this refusal, how difficult do you feel about the **CULTURE**?  
Not difficult at all 1\_\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_\_ 6\_\_\_\_ 7 very difficult

**Thank you for your time and effort!**

Appendix B: DCT Rater sheet

Rater:

Question/Situation: 1C 2C 3C 4C (Please circle one.)

		Grammatically	
		Correct	incorrect
Culturally	Appropriate	1	2
	Inappropriate	3	4

- 1 = culturally appropriate and grammatically correct
- 2 = culturally appropriate but grammatically incorrect
- 3 = culturally inappropriate but grammatically correct
- 4 = culturally inappropriate and grammatically incorrect

Please mark an X in the appropriate blank indicating the category of the students' responses to the circled question/situation above.

Student	1	2	3	4
1	—	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	—
3	—	—	—	—
4	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—
6	—	—	—	—
7	—	—	—	—
8	—	—	—	—
9	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—
11	—	—	—	—
12	—	—	—	—
13	—	—	—	—
14	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—
16	—	—	—	—
17	—	—	—	—
18	—	—	—	—
19	—	—	—	—
20	—	—	—	—

Appendix C: Rater's Sheet

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

Question/Situation: 1C 2C 3C 4C (Please circle one.)

		Grammatically	
		Correct	incorrect
Culturally	Appropriate	1	2
	Inappropriate	3	4

Student	1	2	3	4
21	—	—	—	—
22	—	—	—	—
23	—	—	—	—
24	—	—	—	—
25	—	—	—	—
26	—	—	—	—
27	—	—	—	—
28	—	—	—	—
29	—	—	—	—
30	—	—	—	—
31	—	—	—	—
32	—	—	—	—
33	—	—	—	—
34	—	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—
36	—	—	—	—
37	—	—	—	—
38	—	—	—	—
39	—	—	—	—
40	—	—	—	—
41	—	—	—	—
42	—	—	—	—
43	—	—	—	—
44	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—
46	—	—	—	—
47	—	—	—	—
48	—	—	—	—
49	—	—	—	—
50	—	—	—	—