



University of Bahrain

College of Arts

Department of English Language and Literature

**The Use of the Greeting, Command and Refusal Speech Acts by Omani
EFL Learners in Public and Private Schools**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master's
Degree in Applied English Language Studies

Prepared by:

Layla Ebrahim Haider

19982031

Supervised by:

Dr. Madani Osman

Associate Professor of English Language and Literature

University of Bahrain

Kingdom of Bahrain

April 2023



University of Bahrain

College of Arts

Department of English Language and Literature

M.A Program in English Language Applied Studies

Defense Committee's Approval

Student **Layla Ebrahim Nasralla Haider**, ID number **19982031** defended his/her thesis by which he/she fulfilled the requirements for the degree of M.A in English Language Applied Studies, entitled **(The Use of the Greeting, Command and Refusal Speech Acts by Omani EFL Learners in Private and Public Schools)** on this day of 20th June 2023

The committee recommends awarding of M.A Degree with the grades of: A.

(Defense Committee)

Name

Signature

Dr. Madani Osman

Supervisor

Dr. Nuri Ageli

Internal Examiner

Dr Mohammad Al-Dawoody

External Examiner

Abstract

The thesis focused on uncovering the difference between the speech act strategies utilized by male and female EFL language learners from both public and private school high school students in the Sultanate of Oman. The speech acts researched in this thesis were those of commands, refusals, and greetings. One hundred males and one hundred females from both public and private schools were selected for each speech act investigated in the research. The mode of data collection utilized was the use of Discourse Completion Tasks. The results of the command DCTs demonstrated that indirect command strategies were the most common type utilized by the majority of the EFL learners from both school systems. The results also demonstrated that public-school students were at times unfamiliar with the requirements elicited by social norms in specific situations. Refusals also demonstrated that most learners preferred to communicate indirect refusals across most of the scenarios depicted. Often, expressions of regret and negative willingness were communicated. DCT results demonstrated that most of the learners utilized phatic questions and interjections to convey greetings. It can be recommended that additional research be conducted across varying grade levels as well as at university level to better gauge how varying factors can affect speech act use amongst EFL learners.

Keywords: pragmatic competence, communication, EFL, speech act theory

Declaration

I declare that this work, which I submitted to the University of Bahrain, contains my own investigation. This research has not been previously accepted for any degree and is not currently considered for any other degree at any other university.

Name: Layla Ebrahim Haider

ID Number: 19982031

Date:

The thesis defence committee considered the thesis title:

The Use of the Greeting, Command and Refusal Speech Acts by Omani EFL Learners in Public and Private Schools

Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature for the degree of Master in Applied English Language Studies.

(Defense Committee)

Name

Signature

Dr. Madani Osman

Supervisor

Dr. Nuri Ageli

Internal Examiner

Dr Mohammad Al-Dawoody

External Examiner

Acknowledgments

In the name of Allah, most gracious, compassionate, beneficent, and merciful. Thank you to the divine grace of the Almighty for the determination to pursue my study, for the knowledge and guidance to comprehend knowledge, for the strength to overcome the complex challenges and trials, and for allowing this research to become possible.

Many people have made this journey eminently possible than it otherwise might have been. It took an immense amount of work, and it would not have come into existence without the invaluable contributions of several incredibly thoughtful and supportive people. I have the honour to express my greatest respect and gratitude to the Sultanate of Oman's representatives and Ambassadors to the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Excellency Mr. Abdullah bin Rashid Al-Medailwi, His Excellency Mr. Faisal bin Hareb bin Hamed Al-Busaidi, and especially Ms. Samia Al-Howsani and all those at the embassy in the Kingdom of Bahrain that assisted in the cooperation between the two countries relative to the approval and acceptance of conducting this research. I would also especially like to compliment and recognise all the people in the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman for the cordial working relationship and their unwavering support, without which this research would not have been possible. I would also like to thank all the participants from both public and private schools who contributed to the collection of data, for without them this thesis would never have come into existence.

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Associate Professor, Dr Madani Osman for his continuous support of my study and research, for his motivation, guidance, enthusiasm, and substantial knowledge. Besides my advisor, I would like to thank all those on the thesis **committee** and academics: Dr Mohammed Redha Qader, Dr Nuri Rahouma Ageli, and Dr Martin Parker.

On a more intimate level, and in the pursuit of this project, no one has been more important than the members of my family. My first debt is to my mother R.L, a woman with an inviolable and compassionate soul. With my mother equally comes my father Ebrahim Nasralla Haider, who, since juvenescence, would always say, “Never say it shall not occur, trust and believe and it shall be”. Thank you both for all your sacrifices and steadfast support.

I would like to acknowledge with appreciation the constant support and love of my sisters and family members Z. Haidery, R. Haidery, N. Haidery, M. Turki, A. Turki, F. Toorani and especially my niece, who was my companion and classmate during this period, Z. Meamary.

Also, it is a genuine pleasure to express my deep sense of appreciation to Salman Mohammad Turki, a father figure, a brother, and friend who has supported me through my journey in life from philosophical conversations about God, offering insight about the journey we as humans are set on, warnings of critical matters, encouragement to always grow and become a better person, and silence when necessary.

Professor Ra’ad Shakir, a Commander of the British Empire, past President of the World Federation of Neurology, a neurologist, and a unique engaging voice with an ability to penetrate to the real essence of matters.

Lastly, but not least, I am greatly indebted to a few that have left this world and transitioned to the next; Agha Fooladyan and Mr Mohammad Kooshish. Grief is inert and I say this with prayers that we shall meet again, for wherever a beautiful soul has been, there is a trail of memories and immortal love.

Table of Content

Topic	Page No.
Defence Committee's Approval Page	A
Abstract	B
Declaration	C
Acknowledgment	D
Table of Contents	F
List of Tables	H
List of Abbreviations	I

CHAPTER ONE		
Introduction		
1.0	Introduction	2
1.1	Research Problem	4
1.2	Aim and Objectives of the Study	5
1.3	Research Questions	6
1.4	Significance of the Research	6
1.5	Limitations of the Research	7
CHAPTER TWO		
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW		
2.0	Introduction	8
2.1	Theoretical Framework	10
2.1.1	Speech Acts	11
2.1.2	Speech Act of Refusals	18
2.1.3	Speech Act of Greetings	23
2.1.4	Speech Act of Commands	27
2.1.5	Pragmatic Competence	38
2.2	Literature Review	40
2.2.1	Studies on Refusal Strategies	40
2.2.2	Studies on Greeting Strategies	46
CHAPTER THREE		
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES		
3.0	Introduction	50
3.1	Research Design and Approach	50
3.2	Research Participants	50
3.3	Instruments and Procedures	51
3.4	Linguistic Variables	57
3.5	Relevant Social Factors	57
CHAPTER FOUR		
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION		
4.0	Introduction	59

4.1	Comparison of Speech Act Production	59
4.1.1	Public and Private School Speech Act Strategies	59
4.1.1.1	Commands	59
4.1.1.2	Refusals	66
4.1.1.3	Greetings	73
4.1.2	Gender Based Speech Act Strategy Comparison	79
4.1.2.1	Commands	80
4.1.2.1.1	Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Commands	80
4.1.2.2	Refusals	93
4.1.2.2.1	Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Refusals	93
4.1.2.3	Greetings	101
4.1.2.3.1	Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Greetings	101
CHAPTER FIVE		
CONCLUSION		
5.0	Introduction	110
5.1	Summary of Results	110
5.2	Recommendations	113
REFERENCES		
APPENDIX		

List of Tables and Figures

Figure (2.0): Types of Speech Acts	13
Table (2.1): Direct Refusal Strategies	21
Table (2.2): Indirect Refusal Strategies	21
Table (2.3): Command Strategies Scenario 1	59
Table (2.4): Command Strategies Scenario 2	61
Table (2.5): Command Strategies Scenario 3	62
Table (2.6): Command Strategies Scenario 4	64
Table (2.7): Command Strategies Scenario 5	65
Table (2.8): Refusal Strategies Scenario 1	66
Table (2.9): Refusal Strategies Scenario 2	68
Table (2.10): Refusal Strategies Scenario 3	69
Table (2.11): Refusal Strategies Scenario 4	70
Table (2.12): Refusal Strategies Scenario 5	72
Table (2.13): Greeting Strategies Scenario 1	73
Table (2.14): Greeting Strategies Scenario 2	75
Table (2.15): Greeting Strategies Scenario 3	76
Table (2.16): Greeting Strategies Scenario 4	77
Table (2.17): Greeting Strategies Scenario 5	78
Table (2.18): Males Public Versus Private School Commands (Multiple Choice)	80
Table (2.19): Males Public Versus Private School Commands (Written)	85
Table (2.20): Females Public Versus Private School Commands (Multiple Choice)	88
Table (2.21): Females Public Versus Private School (Written)	91
Table (2.22): Males Public Versus Private School Refusals (Multiple Choice)	93
Table (2.23): Males Public Versus Private School Refusals (Written)	96
Table (2.24): Females Public Versus Private School Refusals (Multiple Choice)	97
Table (2.25): Females Public Versus Private School Refusals (Written)	99
Table (2.26): Males Public Versus Private School Greetings (Multiple Choice)	101
Table (2.28): Females Public Versus Private School Greetings (Multiple Choice)	104
Table (2.29): Females Public Versus Private School Greetings (Written)	106

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

DCT: Discourse Completion Test

Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The introduction section provides a detailed overview of the various concepts that are relevant to the study. The information provided is primarily associated with English language education provided in the Sultanate of Oman, which is the main context in which the research was conducted. The research problem is introduced as the fact that social influences may greatly influence EFL learners' ability to communicate using the English language, with special emphasis on the way a speaker articulates specific speech acts across different contexts. This introductory chapter also reviews the objectives of the study, as well as the research questions, significance, and the limitations encountered.

The utilization of speech acts by individuals within a community may be influenced by a variety of social factors. Each member of a society exhibits common as well as unique strategies in using speech acts potentially reflecting the influence of a number of sociolinguistic factors such as race and ethnicity, profession, breeding, cultural environment, as well as academic exposure and context. According to Holmes (1972), a variety of linguistic choices are available to each interlocutor, and the linguistic choices made by an individual represent their own social identities, which is a direct outcome of their environment and experiences. When considering the case of the Arabian Gulf, education is identified as a fundamental factor that affects the English language production of learners.

Public and private school environments within this part of the globe exhibit profound diversity. When considering the collective population of EFL students within the contexts mentioned, it is observed that a significant population of learners are nationals of their respective Gulf countries, and thus, they are native speakers of the Arabic language. According to the Central Statistics Bureau (2019), national students are widely distributed amongst the two school sectors, with rapid growth occurring in the population of the students enrolled in private schools within the Gulf. Thus, members of shared communities within the Gulf can acquire their education in the English language across two diverse academic contexts.

The academic context of the students mentioned can profoundly impact the most rudimentary attributes of their English language use. The effectiveness of EFL education can differ significantly between public and private schools due to the distinction between the environments observed. This relates to the practices adopted in educating students, as well as the distinct qualities of each learning environment, which can influence students' performance and strategies adopted in language production. Prominent variations between public and private schools can establish specific patterns of communicative behaviors in students, which encompass their manner of using the English language itself.

As a fundamental unit of discourse, speech acts, including their nature, strategies of using them by community members, and the patterns in which they occur are subject to influence by several sociolinguistic variables including educational environment and the cultural background of these educational variables. Additionally, amongst students in either public or private school contexts, gender can also influence the strategies adopted in

the use of various speech acts. Therefore, the effect of these factors in the use of speech acts by EFL learners in two different educational backgrounds is worth investigating in order to empirically validate or invalidate the assumption that the education background with its presupposed concomitant cultural background affects language use in general and speech acts, in particular, to effectively assess the influence educational background reflects on speech act use within the English language. The focus of this investigation is the use of the greeting, command, and refusal speech acts by both public and private school Omani graduates within the capital city of Muscat.

1.1 Research Problem

English language production is influenced by numerous social factors within any EFL learner's environment. Exposure to varying educational systems can be a principle influential element that impacts student proficiency in the English language, as well as manner of utilization. This is especially notable within the environment observed in the Arabian Gulf, where significant differences exist in the education and atmosphere amongst both public and private school sectors. These diversities impact students' patterns of speech act use. Students may also make gender-specific linguistic choices, relating to the notion that the process of learning differs according to whether the EFL learners are male or female.

A comparative investigation is fundamental for exploring the utilization of various speech acts by learners across private- and public-school sectors to examine how the educational environment can impact EFL learners' selection of speech acts. Pragmatic competence is also measured in the target language through the mentioned approach. Failure to accurately utilize speech acts in accordance with various

contextual factors can result in miscommunication between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, which results in derogatory actions being committed inadvertently. Furthermore, miscommunication can also occur between learners with corresponding cultural backgrounds, but diverse educational experiences. To ensure adequate and successful education in the English language, the influence of the educational system on students' language production is requisite.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The primary purpose of this research is to conduct a comparative investigation on the use of the greeting, refusal, and command speech acts across both male and female Omani EFL learners of English in selected public and private schools. This research aims to explore whether the social factors of gender and educational background influence the utilization of the greeting, apology and refusal speech acts, as well as the strategies adopted by the learners in their speech act production.

The objectives of the study are as follow:

- a. To find the main variations between the use of the three speech acts between male and female learners.
- b. To find the main variations in the use of the three speech acts across public and private schools.
- c. To find the most common strategies used for each speech act between male and female learners.
- d. To find the most common strategies used for each speech act across public and private schools.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the similarities and differences observed between the use of the greeting, command and refusal speech acts by public and private school Omani graduates when speaking in English?
2. What are the strategies applied by the private- and public-school Omani graduates in their use of the greeting, command, and refusal speech acts in the English language?
3. How does the educational background of the students influence their speech act choices and utilization in the English language?
4. What are the variations noted between male and female students in the use of the greeting, command and refusal speech acts when utilizing the English language?

1.4 Significance of the Research

This investigation aims to assess how public and private school systems within the Arabian Gulf impact the speech act strategies employed by EFL learners. The comparative analysis utilized within the research study provides a notable perspective on the educational environment observed in each of the two school sectors mentioned. Prior studies have investigated matters relating strictly to language proficiency. However, focusing on speech act usage within this research permits the discernment of how pragmatic competence is influenced by distinct educational experiences and environments. Further focus has also been placed on the gender of the students involved, which can aid in the exploration of the correlation between academic environment and gender in speech act utilization by Omani EFL learners.

1.5 Limitations of Research

As a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, there were limitations in gaining access to students. Furthermore, only select schools could be incorporated into the investigation.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The theoretical background explores the speech act theory developed by Searle, as well as other researchers. However, the primary focus is placed on the theory conveyed by Searle (1969). Further matters introduced are the existence of both direct and indirect speech acts, followed by a general breakdown of each type of speech act classification, **leading to** an in-depth insight into the three main speech acts being addressed in this research study. The aforementioned speech acts are the greeting, command, and refusal speech acts. Each speech act is then broken down into the individual strategies and sequences adopted by language users when utilizing the specific act noted. The literature review section focuses on research conducted by various researchers to address the use of different speech acts across a variety of contexts and learning environments. The research studies addressed have been divided into sections based on the individual speech act dealt with in each research study conducted. The individual research studies have all been introduced with mention of the participants and contexts. The results were summarized and reported as well, demonstrating the conclusions at which the researchers arrived, thus, highlighting the areas required for additional research.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Language is an imperative characteristic of human daily life. It is a vital tool for communication and is utilized as a method for liaising with other people in multiple fields. Language, in both forms, spoken and written, is used by an individual in order to express ideas, reasoning, and even emotions through the use of articulation, eloquent speech, signals and gestures in various contexts.

Hartley (1982) states that language is a means of communication. Speaking is considered as a necessary and justifiable act, where it functions purposefully as an ordinate instrument for communication and not a gratuitous one. Communication is considered conventional and successful within its means if it can take place in a manner in which it is agreed upon by its users. Language within society has a subsistent role as it defines the essential characteristics of the human race, and also for exceeding the sophistication of all other creatures' existence. According to Verderber (1999), language is considered as the dissemination of communication through the utilization of a sound system or written words transmitted and perceived by the organs of speech and hearing, which is available to, and apprehended by members of a specific community. This is done while utilizing vocal symbols that obtain a despotically and arbitrary conventional meaning.

The provided definitions project the use of language in daily life with the intention of communicating. It is also accentuated to project the conventional meaning which administers to direct and evaluate an understanding in the domain of communication. This is imperative so that both, the speaker and the listener, are able to mutually apprehend and discern the denotation and connotation of a specific utterance, and also so

that the concerned communication proceeds cooperatively without misinterpretation.

Linguistic and contextual knowledge of a listener and a speaker are considered as compulsory aspects in order to construct a form of cooperative communication. These aspects are indispensable in order to understand the meaning of the speech that is being uttered. Jannedy (1994) stated that to fully understand the meaning of a sentence, we must understand the context in which it is uttered. A subfield of linguistics and semiotics is pragmatics. This is concerned with investigating and analyzing the manner in which meaning is defined through the analysis of the context in which people engage in speech and why language is utilized in a particular manner.

2.1.1 Speech Acts

Speech act theory is utilized in many fields, including linguistics, philosophy, psychology, legal and literary theories, and also, in recent years, in the development of artificial intelligence. Its main focus is on the idea that language is utilized essentially for the function of communication and as a result certain procedures must be examined and observed. Once the main aspects are identified, speech act theory further asserts that the functions, reasons, and the intentions in relation to a specific form of communication are qualified to be classified as a ‘speech act’.

A question central to the study of language is how speakers are able to articulate and generate an interminable quantity of sentences while adhering to a demarcated foundation of grammatical rules. Also, closely associated to the matter is the connection between the infinite number of correct sentences while being connected to a limited number of forms and

functions. One conclusion that was agreed upon by theorists is that occurrences and arrangements of the formation of sentences are limited and as a result functions are a necessity to be allocated to all forms of utterances.

2.1.1.1 Classification of Speech Acts

Over the years, there have been attempts to categorize utterance functions by well renowned and reputable theorists, such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Malinowski (1923) is another example of an anthropologist who ideologically classified the functions into two diverse areas. These areas were recognized as the pragmatic, which is the main focus of this project, and the second is the magical function. Malinowski's interests were the use of language in relation to pragmatics. He was also interested in another aspect related to the use of language in relation to magic and chanting, usually related to language utilized in cultural ceremonies and rituals.

Additionally, another form of classification of speech acts was advocated by Buhler (1934), who was an Austrian psychologist. He classified utterance functions into three divisions: expressive, conative, and representational. The expressive refers to the language that is communicated by the speaker himself, while the conative is the language that is directed towards the listener and responder to the speaker, and finally the representational function is the language that is directed towards those that are beyond the boundaries of both the speaker and listener, in other words directed to those that are present and observers but the speech is not directed towards them.

Furthermore, Allan (1994) classified the use of language into four categories according to the respondent's evaluation as a criterion. These

four are categorized as statements, invitationals, authoritatives and finally expressives. Attempts have been made by some philosophers of language, literary critics, psycholinguists and linguists such as Vendler (1972), Bach and Harnish (1979), Edmondson (1981), Levinson (1983), and Wierzbicka (1987), all of whom have defined speech acts as “the communicative intent associated with the utterance of a linguistic message”. These researchers’ concepts of speech acts tend to overlap in some classifications and are also intertwined in relation to others.

Figure 2.0 below presents a summary of the mentioned researchers’ concepts of speech acts.

Austin (1962)	Searle (1969)	Vendler (1972)	Bach & Harnish (1979)	Allan (1986)
Expositives	Assertives	Expositives	Assertives	Statements
Commissives	Commissives	Commissives	Commissives	Expressives
Behabitives	Expressives	Behabitives	Acknowledgment	Invitationals
Exercitives	Directives	Interrogatives	Directives	Authoritatives
Verdictives	Declaratives	Verdictives	Verdictives	
		Operatives	Effectives	

Figure 2.0: Types of Speech Acts

What may be noticed in the above table is that all the theorists endeavored to analyze and delineate ways in which language is used and to establish a form of conceptual framework in order to elucidate the differing and diverse functions of language in the utterances of people’s daily existence.

2.1.1.2 Direct Speech Acts

A direct speech act is acknowledged when an interconnection is established between the structure and the communicative function of an

utterance. A direct speech act is also interpreted through the literal definition of the of the grammatical structure and vocabulary of the uttered sentence. For example: “Give me the pen!” The example provided is a direct command as the interjection directly asks the receiver to complete a task.

2.1.1.3 Indirect Speech Acts

An indirect speech act is when a speaker utters a sentence yet is intentionally expressing another force in order to indicate a distinct and unrelated meaning. As a result, it establishes an indirect relationship between the form of the sentence uttered and the intended function. Searle stated that an indirect speech act is one that is “performed by means of another” (Searle quoted in Thomas, 1995). An example of an indirect command would be, “It is really hot in here.” The sentence provided is an indirect command because the interlocutor does not directly instruct the receiver to commit an action, but hints that something should be done to address the heat instead.

2.1.1.4 Speech Act Level

A speech act type is interpreted by first analyzing the type of act performed. Speech acts have been classified into three types by Austin (1962), namely locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. The interpretations of each are provided in the following clarifications below.

a) Locutionary Act

According to Yule (1996), the basic act of an utterance that constructs a consequential linguistic expression, is considered as a locutionary act. As for Austin (1962), he defined locutionary acts as the performance of an

utterance, and hence of a speech act. It also refers to the surface definition of the spoken words, as they refer to the verbal, syntactic, and semantic aspects of the utterance.

b) Illocutionary Act

Austin (1962) further investigated the performative forms of certain utterances and discerned them as maintaining a form of force. He further explicated them as locutionary acts in the sense of surface meaning. However, some utterances would further perpetuate a sense of force in the language, which would be further defined under some aspects such as informing, warning, or commanding. Yule (1996), further investigated the matter and claimed that an illocutionary act is effectuated via a form of communicative force of a speaker's utterance. This stipulates that an illocutionary act is a concealed meaning of the intended speech uttered by a speaker. According to Searle (1969), illocutionary acts are to be subdivided into five categorizations. These categories are assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives.

c) Perlocutionary Act

According to Yule (1996) a perlocutionary act is a speech act which has an emotional consequence as a result of a speaker's utterance. Also, the effect that the utterance has upon the listener tends to project the objective and aim of the utterance and its aspects depend on specific circumstances in order to be classified as a perlocutionary act. A further aspect of the perlocutionary act is that it tends to depend on both the speaker and mainly the hearer's reaction towards them while influencing and affecting their emotions. Perlocutionary acts tend to include effects upon the hearer such as irritating, embarrassing, enlightening, convincing, persuading and even

inspiring or otherwise manipulating someone to perform something, whether or not this is intention of the speaker in making the utterance.

2.1.1.5 Speech Act Classifications by Searle (1979)

It has been stated that there are various types of speech acts. However, those classified by Searle (1979) are considered the accepted model. He classified them into five types which retain the main functions of speech acts related to the illocutionary category. These five acts are identified as declaratives, representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives. Further in-depth explanations of the five categories are provided below:

a) Declarations: A speaker wants to change the world via his or her utterance. In order to execute the role of a declaration speech act correctly, the utterer would most likely control a dominant and authoritative position within a specific institutional context. Its main role is to focus on pertinent factors between the uttered words and the context it is utilized in so that its effect contributes to changes required. This speech act depends highly on extra linguistic institutions. Examples of such are declaring war, firing, marriage ceremony speech by a priest, and christenings.

b) Representatives (assertive): A representative speech act tends to bind the speaker of an utterance to the veracity of its proposition. They tend to distinguish between one of the two, truth or falsity. They tend to refer to statements, classifications, clarifications, explanations, and descriptions. They are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterance where the speaker states what they believe to be the case or not (Yule 1996). Mey (2001) says that representatives are assertions about a state of affairs in the world which Leech (1983) called assertive and which identify the

values of a matter being either true or false. This form of speech act projects stating facts, asserting, concluding, describing, and suggesting.

c) Expressive: As for expressives, they are primarily dedicated to revealing the speaker's emotions in response to a particular utterance. This form of speech act involves aspects such as apologizing, congratulating, thanking, and welcoming. The expected response is unclear as it depends on the matter proposed and its response is usually presupposed. According to Yule (1996) and Levinson (1983), these forms of speech act tend to project the psychological states that the speaker is feeling and it is mainly related to the speaker's experience. As a result, it may be defined as projecting a personal state and is not related to the surrounding environment, which makes the statement subjective. These speech acts have been recognized to be the result of an action performed by the speaker or a reaction towards an action committed by the listener. Some aspects of this form of speech act are paradigm aspects of pleasure and pain projecting cases of greeting, apologizing, complaining, and congratulating.

d) Directives: As for the directive speech act, they are forms of the speaker persuading the receiver to perform an action. This form of speech act usually has the intentions related to future discretionary actions. In the case of directives, they tend to accentuate upon factors of obeying and disobeying. Mey (2001) states that this form of speech act embodies an attempt on the part of the speaker to get the hearer or interlocutor to carry out a specific action; also, to direct the listener towards the objective set by the speaker. Directive speech acts comprise of aspects such as commands, orders, requests that refer to other notions such as pleading, imploring, praying, entreating, begging, and insisting.

e) Commissives: Commissives tend to commit a speaker to a discretionary action that is to be conducted in the future, and as a result express what the speaker intends to do. Their underlying intentions are to reveal the speaker's intention and conviction. Similar to directive speech acts, commissives tend to create a change in the environment and state of affairs within a specific context. According to Mey (2001), like directives, commissives operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation that is created by the speaker not the hearer. Commissives refer to aspects such as pledges, vows, guarantees, threats, promises, contracts, covenants, and oaths.

2.1.2 Speech Act of Refusals

Generally, the social interactions individuals engage in during the course of everyday life create the need for the conveyance of a variety of messages, which may include instances of offering apologies, the conveyance of requests, the communication of acceptance or refusals of various matters, and so forth. Eslami (2010) states that in order for an interlocutor to convey a refusal of an invitation, suggestion, request, command, etc., a contradiction is constructed with regard to the expectations of the receiver of the refusal. As a result, the act of refusing, which belongs to the classification of commissive, has been identified as one that is considered 'face-threatening' in nature. In terms of a specific definition assigned for the action, a refusal is identified as a speech act that enables a speaker to disengage from a given action directed towards them by another speaker (Chen, Lei, & Zhang, 1995).

Various strategies can be employed by an interlocutor in the conveyance of refusals, which is primarily based on their intentions as well as the context associated with the communication of this speech act. Kasper (1997) relates that the term strategy is specifically defined as a possible

solution that can be utilized by participants within an interaction that can aid them towards the resolution of conflicting goals between individual participants, as defined within the pragmatic discipline. The act of refusal itself can be articulated in two distinct manners, those of which are direct and indirect refusals. Chen (1996) conveys that the refusal itself is a contradiction to the desire and presumption of the receiver in response to a proposal, to which interlocutors tend to respond indirectly rather than directly.

Various methods are utilized for refusals, of which the strategic and non-strategic methods are possible to employ. Li and Sun (2018) state that a refusal that is strategic in nature will include factors relating to politeness strategies, as well as cater specifically to the needs of the communicators within the interaction. The adoption of this approach helps to ensure that the illocutionary force of the utterance is not overly intense. The alternative approach, that being the non-strategic conveyance of refusals, only caters to the requirements and intention of the individual communicating the refusal rather than the receiver. This can be problematic as conflicts can arise with this approach, which ultimately may result in exerting a negative influence on the relationship between the conversationalists (Li & Sun, 2018).

2.1.2.1 Taxonomy of Refusals

The production of a refusal can be identified as acting as a response to different forms of proposals, of which the primary types are invitations, requests, suggestions and offers. The interlocutor is at liberty to incorporate additional information within the content of the refusal itself to function as an explanation for the act. The inclusion of these details can be regarded a positive act as it renders the effect of the rejection less profound on the receiver. As a result, the relationship between the participants involved is

maintained and kept healthy. Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) provide a systematic and specific classification of refusal strategies and forms. The refusal taxonomy constructed consists of various semantic formulas of refusals, which also include reference to the inclusion of adjuncts and a variety of expressions within the conveyance of the act itself. It is imperative to define the term ‘adjunct’ in this regard as an item that cannot exist on its own, but rather, must be accompanied by the expression of the rejection as well.

The taxonomy developed by Beebe et al. (1990) includes the classification of direct and indirect refusal strategies. Within the former, the researchers have identified that speakers can select a performative verb in their utterance, such as with “I refuse”, or to articulate a non-performative statement. An example of such a statement is, “I cannot”. Through the direct approach of conveying the refusal, the alternate participant receives a clear perception of the interlocutor’s intent. The alternative manner presented, which is the use of indirect refusals, involves various different means of communicating refusals. Beebe et al. (1990) developed eleven semantic formulas that serve in the conveyance of indirect refusals. These methods include the avoidance of responding to the proposal, communicating promises of acceptance in future occurrences, engaging in the criticism of the request, relating excuses or explanations, the statement of an alternative approach, dissuasion of the requestor, etc. The table on the next page relates the taxonomy of refusals as developed by Beebe et al. (1990).

2.1.2.2 Refusal Strategies

Table (2.1): Direct Refusal Strategies

Category	Sub-Category
Non performative Statement	i. No ii. Negative Willingness

Table (2.2): Indirect Refusal Strategies

Category	Sub-Category
Statement of Regret	
Excuse, Reason, Explanation	
Wish	
Statement of Alternative	i. I can do X instead of Y ii. Why don't you do X instead of Y
Set condition for future or past acceptance	
Promise of future acceptance	
Statement of principle	
Statement of philosophy	
Attempt to dissuade interlocutor	i. Threat/statement of negative consequences to the request ii. Guilt trip iii. Criticize request/requester, etc. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request. Let interlocutor off the hook. iv. Self defence
Acceptance that functions as a refusal	i. Unspecific or indefinite reply ii. Lack of enthusiasm
Avoidance	i. Nonverbal –Silence – Hesitation –Do nothing –Physical departure ii. Verbal –Topic switch – Joke –Repetition of part of request – Postponement –Hedging

2.1.2.3 Refusal Sequence

A significant factor to relate is that refusals can also follow specific sequences. These sequences can be categorized into three different levels within the refusal process. The first is the ‘pre-refusal strategy’, followed by the ‘main refusal’, and finally, the ‘post-refusal strategy’ (Beebe et al., 1990). ‘Pre-refusal strategies’ can be utilized to project that a refusal will be communicated by the interlocutor. This can be conducted in numerous ways, one of which involves the commencement of the refusal through the expression of willingness. Statements such as, “That would be amazing...” or “Oh, I would really love to...”, can be utilized prior to the refusal itself in order to aid in the avoidance of negatively affecting the receiver of the rejection.

In the utilization of ‘pre-refusal strategies’, adjuncts can be incorporated. There are four significant elements involved in the adoption of adjuncts, as conveyed by Beebe et al. (1990). The first element is the expression of a positive opinion or agreement in relation to the proposition conveyed. Further means of including adjuncts involve the expression of empathy such as in the utterance, “I understand that this is a very difficult experience for you”, including pause fillers like, “Uh”, “Oh”, etc., and the conveyance of appreciation or gratitude towards the participant communicating the proposal.

Proceeding the application of the ‘pre-refusal strategy’, the ‘main refusal’ can be conveyed. This item is the primary element within the refusal sequence as it communicates the interlocutor’s intent. This item can be followed by the final element, that being the ‘post-refusal strategy’, which is a means of conveying an explanation or excuse for the rejection. The interlocutor can provide justifications, explanations, or reasons to relate why the proposal was rejected. Examples of ‘post-refusal strategies’

can be, “I have other plans today”, “I promised someone else”, “I have to go to the hospital”, etc.

2.1.3 Speech Act of Greetings

Malinowski (1923) identifies greetings as a specific type of speech act that executes a social function that exempts the conveyance of meaning, but rather, establishes “ties of union” (p. 315). Greetings are cyclical in human interaction as communication is ideally initiated with a greeting. Searle (1969) categorizes this speech act as an expressive, Bach & Harnish (1979) as an acknowledgement, while Austin (1962) categorizes it as a behabitive. Despite the disparity in its designation, a characteristic paralleled across classifications is the possibility of its conveyance with insincerity.

Searle (1969) attributes this characteristic to the absence of both denotational meaning and propositional content, which is a perspective shared by Austin (1962) in accordance with the behabitive category. Searle and Vanderveken (1985) further explicate that the absence of a propositional meaning in association to greetings permits it to be classified as an illocutionary act. This type of exchange primarily executes the function of establishing contact, which is a characteristic that renders it a unit of phatic communication. Primarily, a greeting relates that recognition has been realised when an interlocutor encounters another individual. Felecan (2015) defines the greeting as being a means by which an interlocutor relates to the audience that he is available for communication.

According to Goffman (1971), greetings are considered “access rituals”. This term can be defined as a means of proclaiming veneration for another entity that is valued through the conveyance of conventionalized acts. The primary social function of the greeting is the initial establishment and the continuous reestablishment of a given relationship in addition to

the acknowledgement of varying social statuses (Goffman, 1971). Firth (1972) states that greetings are communicated to acknowledge the social acceptability of an engagement with another individual. The conventionalized patterns and common routines established with these greetings are fundamental to social interaction as they aid in the neutralization of discomfort, the identification of the speakers, as well as the engagement of attention.

The greeting ritual can be categorized into two types on the basis of the pattern that they follow. The first is the “passing greeting” and the second is the “engaging greeting”. The patterns by which greetings are conveyed act as a means by which a given interlocutor can express their respect and consideration towards another individual, which resembles the concept of a “rite” (Goffman, 1971). When considering greetings, some related behaviours can be observed which are as follows:

- (1) “Salutation”/ verbal form.
- (2) Term of address.
- (3) Gestures and mimics.
- (4) Social context.

Furthermore, according to Firth (1972), greetings occur as both verbal and non-verbal types. There are three varying ways in which the verbal forms occur, which can be observed as follows:

- (1) As Questions

Examples: How are you? / What’s up? / How’s it going?

- (2) As Interjections

Examples: Hi! / Hello!

(3) As Affirmations

Examples: Good afternoon / Good day / Good evening

Furthermore, Krivonos and Knapp (1975) concluded in research that there are three primary manners of presenting verbal greetings, those of which are references made to the speaker, the initiation of a topic, and the verbal salute. On the other hand, non-verbal forms of greetings are primarily demonstrated through body language. Krivonos and Knapp (1975) state that greetings conducted in a non-verbal manner are presented in the form of mutual glances, exchange of smiles, as well as head gestures. Halliday (1973) further classified greetings to incorporate time-free greetings and time-bound greetings. Here, the time frame during which the greetings are articulated are primarily generalized to American culture. This dichotomy of greetings can be noted as follows:

1. Time-free greetings:

- A. How do you do?
- B. Hello. How are you?
- C. Hi. How are you?
- D. Glad to meet you!
- E. (It's) Good to see you (again)!
- F. (How/very) Nice to see you (again)
- G. Long time no see!
- H. (Ah) X [any first name or honorific], Just the person I wanted to see/was looking for/was after

2. Time-bound greetings:

A. Daily formal greetings:

- 1. Morning: Good Morning
- 2. Afternoon: Good afternoon.

3. Evening: Good evening
4. Day: Good day.
5. Night: Good night.

B. Seasonal (in)formal greetings:

1. Happy New Year!
2. Happy Anniversary!
3. Happy Easter!
4. Happy birthday (to you)!
5. Many happy returns (of the day)!
6. (A) Merry Christmas (to you)!
7. Many happy returns (of your birthday)!

The typology of greetings articulated directly correlate with the interlocutor's culture. Duranti (1997) states that characteristics relating to an individual's culture, history and personal affairs can mostly be assessed from the way they utilize their greetings rather than any alternative speech act. Greetings are highly reflective of the culture of the articulator as they disclose the most significant and imperative elements within the interlocutor's cultural context (Shabeeb & Jibreen, 2010). In cultural terms, each society applies a specific degree of formality, politeness, as well as particular strategies or mannerisms when communicating a greeting (Shabeeb & Jibreen, 2010). Evidence can be witnessed in American and British societies, where American culture observes countenance to informal greetings being utilized in the majority of situations. The British approach contrasts with the former as it demands the use of formal greetings. Further observation of greetings is that they diversify profoundly based on the audience being addressed (Jibreen, 2010). For instance, communication between an employee and their employer dictates an extensive formality, while communication amongst colleagues permits

informality. Nemani and Rasekh (2013) relate that human speech can contribute indications of identity, which include social status, disposition, and cultivation, amongst additional social factors. The manner in which we greet other individuals, as well as the degree of politeness exerted, reflect our convictions towards the addressee, as well as our values, breeding and paideia.

2.1.3.1 Classification of Greetings

Copious classifications exist in greeting production in the English language. The classification itself is determined by several factors which include the presence or absence of a time indicator, lexico-semantic content, as well as a diverse variety of contextual factors. Context itself is recognized as an inherent source of influence on the degree of formality observed in a greeting. These factors include age, setting, situation and social class, all of which are determining factors of degree of formality (Greere, 2005). According to Shleykina (2019), formal greetings are frequently presented with indications of timeframe, rendering them selective and restrictive. When a context mandates a degree of formality, as with encounters with acquaintances, or in eminently professional situations involving senior colleagues or employers, formal greetings are requisite. In other situations where informality is required and interlocutors are well acquainted or possess an intimate bond, informal greetings are prevalent. These types of greetings are flexible and not restricted or bound to the inclusion of an indication of timeframe (Shleykina, 2019).

Classification of greetings is substantially dependent on the context in which it is articulated. This includes a diversity of social encounters and situations such as interaction through telephone, service providence interactions, broadcast presented on the radio, as well as additional situations (Qian, 1996). The greetings utilized in each situation are

distinctive and specific to the context itself, which involves utilizing ‘opening phrases’ that can be added to the greeting or even presented prior to it. For instance, when a service encounter materializes, the interlocutor providing assistance may utilize the phrases, “Can I help you?” or “May I help you” or “How can I help you?” (Schegloff, 1986). The variation of greetings across contexts can be determined by distinct culturally oriented expectations and may be determined by specific formulas based on the situation considered. For instance, when a relationship is inceptively being established between interlocutors, conventionality dictates for specific phrases such as, “It is a pleasure to meet you”, “Nice to meet you”, “My name is....”, etc., to be utilized (Masi, 2008).

Further classification is established according to personalization, which is based on the extent of familiarity in the relationship. According to Martin (1983), personal greetings will permit inquiries about the health and well-being of interactants, about their friends and family, their life, as well as additional personal matters that reflect an interest in the individual who receives the greeting. Compliments can be conveyed, as well as phatic questions. The same is not observed with non-personal greetings, which can involve commentary on matters that are not personal such as the weather (Martin, 1983).

2.1.3.2 English Greeting Composition

English greetings are composed of three primary constituents, those of which are the greeting phrases, terms of address, and finally, components of phatic communication. According to Bonsignori, Bruti, and Masi, (2011), the greeting phrase, also referred to as “greetings proper”, can either be an interjection or an affirmation. The former refers to single worded interjections like “Hi” or “Hello”. The latter are phrases such as “Good evening”. The name or title of the person being addressed is the

address term, and instances of these include, “James”, “Mr. White”, and thus forth. Reference to phatic communication by Greere (2005) relates that this element can substitute a greeting and is comprised of information that surpasses that which constitutes a basic greeting. These expressions exist in numerous forms and as diverse classifications. Degree of formality corresponds to phatic expressions, can be observed as being informal, formal, and slang (Greere, 2005). Examples are as follows:

1. Formal: “How do you do?”

2. Informal: “How’s it going?”

3. Slang: “Wassup?”

(Shleykina, 2019)

Classification of phatic communication results in three distinct divisions, those of which are S-oriented, H-oriented, and neutral phrases. The first, namely S-oriented, are phrases concerning “S”, which can be presented as statements such as, “I love the weather.” When referring to H-oriented phrases, an inquiry or comment is conveyed about “H”. An example is, “How is your job going?” or “Nice outfit.” Finally, neutral phrases are directly related to a circumstance in the immediate time or to factors that are objective. Examples are, “Lovely evening” and “Amazing party.” In situations where the greeting substitute is presented, it is possible to omit the greeting proper. Furthermore, it also becomes possible for the respondent to answer questions or respond to comments presented with the greeting but to refrain from utilizing a greeting phrase. For instance, if the person initiating a greeting says, “Good morning, how are you today?”, the response can be, “I’m good thank you.” In the exchange presented, the inquiry into the person’s well-being is addressed while the greeting proper itself is not articulated.

2.1.4 Speech Act of Commands

The primary function of a command is to direct an individual to perform an action. Sinclair and Coulthard (1969) relate that often, a declarative or interrogative form does not necessarily perform its own specific function in all contexts, but rather, can be interpreted as a command if the action to which it refers is proscribed or forbidden when articulated by the interlocutor. Chaika (1994) interprets that identical preconditions are paralleled by both questions and commands, which are conveyed as follows:

1. The interlocutor conveying the command possesses the right to articulate the command itself.

2. The individual receiving the command is responsible for performing the command conveyed.

It can be comprehended thus, that the individual who articulates a given command holds a position of authority and is of a higher status in comparison to the person who receives the command (Chaika, 1994). This requires the receiver to adhere to their command. However, status is not the only constraint on command execution. Environmental and somatic contexts also govern whether a command is implemented.

It is important also to emphasize the significance of diversifying between requests and commands as they can both be considered directives. The primary variation between the two speech acts resides in the extent of politeness exerted in their articulation. Articulation of requests requires incorporating significant politeness into the speech act, whereas commands are profoundly less cordial (Green, 1997).

2.1.4.1 Command Types

There are primarily two different types of commands, direct and indirect commands.

2.1.4.1.1 Direct Commands

A direct command is one that emerges across profuse contexts and circumstances, specifically relating exigencies (Chaika, 1994). Direct commands are articulated where informal communication transpires, such as with family, or in specific industries of professional occupation such as military or medical contexts. Examples of direct commands are as follows:

a. Clean your room right this instant.

Example (a) addresses a situation which involves a family dynamic, in which a guardian interacts with their child. Here, a person of higher authority communicates with another in a position of inferior authority.

b. Fire!

Example (b) occurs in a military situation. The command is customarily presented by a higher-ranking officer to junior officers. However, this dynamic of rank may differ across varying contexts and some situations will involve officers of lower rank initiating commands to colleagues of shared rank, or even to superiors in very specific situations.

c. Get the hose!

Example (c) occurs in a dynamic with fire-fighters and a state of emergency. Similar to the military dynamic provided, this command can also be initiated from an individual of superior rank to a lower-ranking fire-fighter, or vice versa, depending on the circumstance.

d. Get me the epidural!

Example (d) occurs in a hospital setting, and once more, in a state of emergency. Here, the command can be articulated by individuals of senior rank (doctors) to one another or to subordinates (nurse). Depending on the context, it may also be possible for those of inferior seniority to articulate a command towards those superior to them.

2.1.4.1.2 Indirect Commands

According to Searle (1975), directives occur primarily in one form, that of which is identified as the indirect command. Interpretation of the declarative and interrogative forms as indirect commands can be conducted through a specific rule. This is related to the explicitness of the action commanded. Utterances are classified as indirect commands when the action commanded is not explicit (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1969). Examples of indirect commands are as follows:

a. Do you have to chew so loudly?

Example (a) is an instance of the interrogative form. Here, the interlocutor articulates an utterance that appears to be an interrogative but is interpreted as an indirect command. The receiver here is indirectly being commanded to stop chewing in a loud manner.

b. You're standing in my way.

Example (b) demonstrates a declarative form where a statement is made. However, indirectly, the interlocutor is informing the receiver that they are required to move away from in front of the television.

2.1.4.2 Command Forms

Holmes (1983) communicates that commands can be categorized based on the forms adopted. As mentioned previously in relation to indirect commands, it is observed that commands can be presented as imperatives as well as declaratives.

2.1.4.2.1 Imperatives

When imperatives are considered, six different structures can be implemented to express the directive speech act. Analysis and explanation of these imperatives have been related by Holmes (1983) as follows:

a) You + Imperatives

General articulation of commands denotes the imperative form. This specific dynamic involves expression of the imperative form alongside the second-person pronoun, “you”. Examples of this expression can be as follows:

- “You go home.”
- “You eat those vegetables.”

b) Verb Ellipsis

Verb ellipsis is the omission of a lexical item or a specific verb from an expression. Examples are noted below:

- “Hands up.”
- “Now this one.”

c) Let + First Person Pronoun

Pronouns are a part of speech responsible for the substitution of a noun or noun phrase. Amongst the pronoun group, first person pronouns include those such as “I, we, us, me, mine, our, etc.”. To produce this form of

command, the verb “let” is combined with a first-person pronoun, in addition to a lexical verb followed by another noun phrase. Examples include:

- “Let’s do this.”
- “Let’s find them.”

d) Verb as Present Participle

Another approach to command initiation would be the presentation of the speech act utilizing the present participle form of the associated verb. The present-participle form involves the verb concluding with the inflectional bound morpheme “-ing” to indicate the timeframe associated with the verb’s occurrence. Examples include:

- “Listening to them”.
- “Looking at me.”

e) Verb in the Base Form

One of the most common means of utilizing the command speech act is through the presentation of the verb in its base form. Examples are as follows:

- “Listen up.”
- “Put your hands up.”

f) Imperative with a Modifier

Commands can also be conveyed through the addition of a modifier with the imperative form. A modifier can be a phrase or a single word that

alters the utterance. Modifiers can include modal tags and address forms, and a prevalent example of a modifier associated with commands is the word, “please”. This renders the utterance highly courteous and minimizes the potency associated with the command without altering the nature of the speech act itself. Examples include:

- “Please, give me that.”
- “Everyone, stand in line, please.”

2.1.4.2.2 Declaratives

The command speech act can also be expressed in the form of a declarative, which basically involves the articulation of a statement that explains the factuality of a matter. According to Holmes (1983), there are two primary ways in which commands can be constructed in the declarative form.

a. Embedded Agent

The embedded agent refers to the existence of an embedded or subordinate clause that express both agent and the activity that the interlocutor requires to be performed. The introduction of the primary clause occurs with phrases such as, “I would like” or “I want”, which is then followed by the subordinate clause relating the desired action. Examples are as follows:

- “I want everybody to stand up.”
- “I would like your help.”

b. Hints

An additional manner through which commands can be articulated in the declarative form is through the articulation of hints by the interlocutor. The receiver must then infer the meaning or context associated with the utterance articulated by the speaker to comprehend what they are required to do. Examples can be found below:

- “I can’t pass.”
- “Your hand is up.”

2.1.5 Pragmatic Competence

Introduction to the terminology ‘pragmatic competence’ was provided by Chomsky (n.d), who communicated the significant knowledge possessed by language learners on verbal language directly relates to the individual circumstances in which the verbal language is actually utilized. Taguchi (2009) defines pragmatic competence as “the ability to perform and produce language functions and speech acts in a context which is socially and culturally appropriate” (p. 34), which corresponds with the definition provided by Chomsky himself. This basically relates that recognition of cultural norms is essential for language production to be considered effective. Only when an individual is well informed and knowledgeable of the social and cultural beliefs of a given society can he be considered pragmatically competent. The absence of pragmatic competence within an interaction can consequently lead to the outcome of breakdown in communication (Shi, 2014). When interlocutors fail to comprehend intended meanings, pragmatic failure is achieved, rendering the interaction unsuccessful (Thomas, 1983).

Context must be fundamentally comprehended in any interaction as only through adequate understanding of contextual factors can the meaning and intent be communicated effectively (Tulgar, 2016). Pragmatic knowledge cannot be omitted from any form of interaction as it aids in the maintenance of conversation and preserves the intended meaning, resulting in positive outcomes (Tulgar, 2016). When interactions occur, not only must a communicative goal be achieved, but interpersonal relationships must also be attended to. When pragmatics are considered, numerous factors must be accounted for. Garcia (2004) states that pragmatics is “the full complexity of social

and individual human factors, latent psychological competencies, and linguistic features, expressions, and grammatical structures, while maintaining language within the context in which it was used” (p.8).

According to Canale and Richards (1983), pragmatic competence can be considered as being equivalent to sociolinguistic competence, which relates that both meaning and form utilized in language must be pertinent to the context. This form of competence also encompasses the knowledge that a speaker possesses about pragmatic conventions, which means that a particular situation and intent is assessed correctly by the interlocutor. Kasher (1994) developed the term ‘Cognitive Pragmatics’ and established the division of pragmatic competence into linguistic pragmatic competence and non-linguistic pragmatic competence. The former makes reference to a number of modules that relate the function of particular forms of pragmatic phenomena. Linguistic pragmatic competence is the area that associates with basic speech act use in language and matters such as turn-taking, amongst additional phenomena.

The latter, however, is a generalized matter rather than modular. Here, cognitive systems are generally considered in their function towards pragmatic matters that reside in and depend upon information that is not verbalized. Non-linguistic pragmatic competence can consider the comprehension of indirect speech acts, politeness conditions and rules, irony and metaphors, amongst additional factors strictly based on comprehension of non-verbal information. Furthermore, communicative competence must also be referenced in the comprehension of pragmatic competence. The model developed by Canale and Swain (1980) is fundamental to consider. Four primary disciplines of knowledge and language capabilities are referred to,

which include sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, discourse competence and grammatical competence.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Studies on Refusal Strategies

A significant study was conducted on the use of **refusal strategies** within the Sultanate of Oman by Al-Mahrooqi and Al-Aghbari (2016) and it was directed at Omani EFL students within an institute in Oman specializing in higher education. A total of forty-one EFL learners, nineteen female and twenty-two male and all students from the English Department within the institute participated. The learners belonged to varying disciplines within the English major, namely Translation, English Arts and Education. The participants selected ranged between the second and fifth years of their educational program, and their proficiency in English was identified as ranging between low-intermediate to high-intermediate. The assessment was conducted with the use of a DCT which was comprised of twelve varying scenarios. The learners were required to provide written responses, all of which had to be refusals directed at three suggestions, requests, offers, and invitations. The status of the individuals receiving the refusals also varied, and the DCT itself was adopted from those developed by Beebe et al. (1990) and Umale (2011).

The analysis of the DCT aimed to investigate learners' pragmatic competence in English, as well as their linguistic accuracy. The test was also designed to assess the ability of learners to respond appropriately to individuals of varying social status in relation to themselves. The outcome of the research demonstrated that learners adopted both direct and indirect refusal strategies within their responses. It was also noted that indirect refusals were utilized at a higher frequency in comparison to direct refusals.

Amongst the direct refusals, the highest percentage was noted in response to suggestions and requests. Although these types of refusals were common in response to individuals of higher status, they were most observed in response to individuals of lower status.

Amongst the indirect refusals, some of the most common strategies employed were the expression of regret, the consideration of an interlocutor's feelings, and liberating the interlocutor from responsibility. In observing this factor, the researcher found that the learners transferred cultural norms from their own Omani heritage to the use of English through the expression of remorse and providing explanations for their refusals. This demonstrates the dominant influence of their culture on their articulation of English, resulting in pragmatic linguistic failure. The researchers also concluded that the responses provided by the learners were, to a profound extent, erroneous as they were directly translated from Omani Arabic rather than formulated purely in English.

Refusal strategies were also investigated by Sadler et.al (2002), who conducted a study to examine English refusals produced by native speakers of English, Turkish, and Lao to determine the effect of non-native speakers' first language on the formation of L2 refusals. The research investigated 30 participants from each of the three diverse native language backgrounds. Each group was formulated to consist of 10 subjects, with each group containing 5 males and 5 females. The participants were not formulated according to a specific means of sampling but, rather, were participants of convenience. Within the American group, the participants were from the graduate level. These participants were recognized to be educated at the University of Arizona in the fields of the English Language and Linguistics, or the Second Language Acquisition and Teaching programs. The Lao participants incorporated 6 immigrants and 4 Lao students studying at U.S.

universities. As for the Turkish participants, they were graduate students at the University of Arizona who had been educated in various programs. These programs included Electrical Engineering, Economics, Language Reading and Culture, and Mechanical Engineering.

The primary data collection tool for the study was the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) created by Beebe et al. (1990). The DCT overall consisted of twelve situations designed to elicit refusals for requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. The four categories mentioned each contained three situations, all of which aimed to investigate the difference between participant relationships, in terms of their status and whether it was equal, inferior or superior. First, the DCT was distributed to one participant in each language group as a pilot study. After the subjects completed the questionnaires, the researchers discussed the instrument with the pilot participants to determine whether there were any ambiguities or inconsistencies. Then, the results of the pilot were discussed among the researchers. The finalized DCTs were then mailed or handed directly to the subjects. Follow-up interviews were also conducted after the initial data was analyzed to investigate the reasons behind any incongruities within each language group.

The results of this study projected that pragmatic transfer from non-native speakers' native languages influenced, to a significant degree, their English in terms of the frequency, order, and content of semantic formulas utilized in their refusals. However, contrary to findings of previous studies, the results suggested that negative transfer did not necessarily play a significant role in the production of refusals. This result was explained by the fact that, unlike previous studies, the subjects in the study generally had acquired an extremely high level of English proficiency.

Furthermore, research by Iliadi et al. (2017) explored the **speech act of refusals** in British English and Russian. The research investigated British and Russian refusal strategies from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. The study aimed to find similarities and differences between the manners of refusing requests, offers and invitations in different social contexts in the two languages and cultures. It was conducted with the implementation of Speech Act Theory (Austin 1962, Searle 1969, Searle & Vandervken 1985), and Politeness Theory (Leech, 1983). Also, the modified version of the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) developed by Beebe et al. (1990) was used for data collection. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative differences in refusal strategies which existed due to cultural differences, culture-specific politeness strategies and Communicative Styles (Larina, Mustajoki, Protassova, 2017).

An analysis was conducted of the communicative strategies utilized by English and Russian native speakers to perform speech acts of refusal to offers, requests and invitations in different social contexts. The study projected that, in both languages, refusal was a complex form of acts (moves) which usually involved and adopted apology, regret and explanation. It involved indirect strategies as well as mitigating devices to avoid threatening the initiator's positive reactions and interactions. Nevertheless, the findings revealed significant differences concerning both quantitate and qualitative characteristics. Russians were projected to utter direct refusals by saying "No" followed by gratitude, apology or explanation. In all types of refusal (to offers, requests and invitations) they preferred to utilize a limited number of words and moves (most frequently 2 or 3 moves). In British culture an explicit 'No' is projected to be avoided. English speakers were conveyed to be more voluble than Russians; they utilized more than three moves, rising to five and even six. In their attempt

to mitigate refusals, they utilized a combination of positive and negative politeness strategies which was less typical of Russian speakers.

The above differences shaped features of communicative ethno-styles. The data confirmed the previous statement that Russian communicative style is more laconic and direct, less emotive and more message-oriented than form-oriented in comparison with the English one. English style was conveyed to be more indirect, emotive, form-oriented, person-oriented and voluble.

These communicative differences are an effect of the ideologies and are explained through cultural differences and values. Russian people, due to their culture, are more available and contactable (Iliadi & Larina, 2017), they prefer sincerity to tact and can afford to be more direct and straightforward. British culture, with its emphasis on distance, encourages people to be more vigilant in saving their own, and their interlocutors' dignity. As a result, they are more face-oriented rather than message-oriented. Based upon current research, it is apparent that the knowledge of communicative differences in refusal as well as in other speech acts is necessary for the acquisition and development of pragmatic competence of L2 English learners and successful intercultural communication. Also, it should be noted that what has been presented are only selected and preliminary results. Additional extensive testing and analysis is required for more detailed and conclusive results.

Additional research on the **speech act of refusals** was conducted by Ghazanfari et al. (2013). Its aim was to explore the speech act of *refusal* performed by native Persian and English speakers with respect to linguistic devices. The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, *refusal utterances* were analyzed with respect to semantic formulas - that is, words,

phrases or sentences meeting a particular semantic criterion to perform an act of eliciting. In the second phase, gender differences were examined as well. One hundred movies (50 in Persian, 50 in English) were used as instruments for the collection of data. The movies were examined carefully, and the utterances employed by the native-speakers in their refusals were transcribed and analyzed.

In this study, there were no participants involved, and the data was primarily gathered through the investigation of Persian and English movies. In order to compare the Persian and English speech act of refusal, a number of Iranian and English movies were carefully observed to gather refusal messages. Movies are claimed to have important values in speech act studies (Kasper & Dahl, 1991) because they provide researchers with authentic data, with the interlocutor's performing speech acts in real communication contexts. To facilitate the comparison and to ensure that the results were consistent, both Persian and English refusals were collected by analysing an equivalent number of movies (N=100, 50 in Persian and 50 in English). The primary goal of observing movies was to investigate the way native speakers in Persian and English languages produce refusals to specific proposals in real situations. The criterion for the selection of movies was primarily the inclusion of dialogues in which the refusal speech act is witnessed. The coding was provided for gender differences while transcribing the refusal utterances. The aim of coding gender differences was to investigate possible variations in the manner in which refusal strategies were adopted by male and female interlocutors.

The researchers also engaged in the projection of the classification of the data into semantic formulas. This study was conducted over three stages and procedures. The first phase focused on the frequency of refusal utterances, which were calculated from the gathering of speech acts of

refusal in Persian and English movies based on the classification designed by Beebe et al. (1990). Therefore, the first phase of this study included the investigation of refusal utterances among native Persian speakers (NPS) and native English speakers (NES). This phase of the research provided an answer for the first research question proposed. The second phase of the article addressed gender differences among NPS and NES. The frequency of refusal utterances was calculated to reveal the differences among male and female speakers. The second research question was answered in this section of the analysis.

2.2.2 Studies on Greeting Strategies

An investigation of greetings was conducted by Shawish (2019), who compared between the greeting speech act as utilized in Arabic and English. Data collection was directed at thirty students within the Al-Shuna Secondary School for Girls, which is located in the North Ghore Directorate of Education in Jordan. The methodology employed was a Discourse Completion Test which was comprised of ten varying situations that elicited greetings to be communicated. Written responses were requested by students, and they were also required to provide greetings in both English and Arabic.

Three primary greeting strategies were noted, those being body language, oral speech, and an additional category representing varying gestures. Amongst those mentioned, the oral speech category was most frequently communicated. Initiation words and interrogative sentences were most frequent in both Arabic and English, demonstrating primary correspondence between the two languages. Arabic greetings commonly reflected the use of politeness strategies, with gratitude, compliments, introduction of others, initiation of invitations, and offering assistance reflected within them. Contrasted with English, Arabic greetings highly

reflect politeness strategies, occasion phrases, and opening words, which were not observed in English greetings. Body language strategies demonstrated by both groups revealed that a shared gesture was the handshake, which was conducted differently by members within each group. Generally, the Arabic responses involved more intimate body language gestures in comparison to the English ones. This demonstrated that cultural norms, values and traditions reflect within the greetings utilized by the participants, supporting the notion that transfer of native languages influences target language articulation.

Almegren (2017) investigated the pragmatic shifts that occurred from native to target language related to both the use and interpretation of the **greeting speech act**. The participants within this research were EFL students of Saudi nationality, and both advanced and intermediate level students were involved within the research. It was imperative to assess pragmatic transfer in the learners' responses. The instrument utilized within the research was a Discourse Completion Test which was distributed to a total of two hundred students of the female gender. The students ranged between the ages of twenty and twenty-five and were divided amongst four groups. These groups were the American English Speakers (AES), Advanced English Learners (AEL), Intermediate English Learners (IEL), and Saudi Arabic Speakers (SAS). The DCT was adopted from Blum-Kulka (1982) and the students were required to provide written responses. Contextual factors were altered within the DCT to accommodate a wide variety of settings, formality of situations, individuals of varying social status, as well as the accommodation of different social distances. A total of nine situations were provided for which responses were required.

The results of the investigation demonstrated that all four groups of learners used greeting strategies differently across varying situations.

Pragmatic transfer was found commonly in the Advanced English Learners and Intermediate English Learners groups. The Advanced English Learners also produced a larger total number of words in comparison to the other learners who partook in the research, while the Saudi Arabic Speakers articulated the least number of words. The results also demonstrated the use of three different types of strategies, those being the Body Language Strategy, Oral Speech strategies, as well as four alternative forms of greeting strategies. Within each group of strategies, varying sub-strategies were also used. Amongst those noted, the Oral Speech strategy was utilized most frequently. The strategies employed most frequently amongst all the groups were the Terms of Address, Initiation Word, Interrogative Sentences, and Ignoring strategies. The most frequently utilized strategies amongst those noted for all our groups were the Initiation Word Strategies.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The methodology section places focus on the various tools and methods utilized to conduct the research. This chapter addresses the number of participants and their specific details such as gender and educational background, as well as the instruments utilized to collect data from the participants. In particular, the Discourse Completion Test was used in this research, with each speech act addressed being measured with a different DCT altogether. The section also mentions the social factors addressed in the thesis, which were primarily gender and academic environment, namely public or private schools.

3.1 Research Design and Approach

The research study involved a quantitative approach to data collection through adapted Discourse Completion Tests distributed to a total of one thousand two hundred participants from Omani private and public schools. This chapter provides an explanation of the participants involved in the study, the instruments and procedures followed, as well as an extensive explanation of the outline and content of each Discourse Completion Test utilized to collect data from the learners. Additional information provided also references the social factors and linguistic variables that were investigated during the course of the study.

3.2 Research Participants

A total of one thousand two hundred participants took part in this research study. All the participants were native speakers of the Arabic language and were high school students within a range of public and private schools within the Sultanate of Oman. Four hundred participants answered each of the three DCTs distributed. Amongst the social factors considered

for the research were sector of schooling and gender. Thus, an equal number of participants were involved for each of the social factors indicated. This means that, for each respective DCT, two hundred samples were collected from private schools, and two hundred were collected from public schools. Amongst those two hundred samples from each school sector, one hundred participants were females, while the remaining one hundred participants were males.

3.3 Instruments and Procedures

Three different Discourse Completion Tests were utilized to collect data from the participants. The tests were obtained and adapted from three researchers, Çiftçi (2016), Almegren (2017), and Shleykina (2019). The DCTs were created online through the Google Forms website and were distributed to private- and public-school students through a representative of the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman. The DCTs were presented with both multiple choice and written forms, and three different versions of the test were developed and adapted in accordance with the greeting, command, and refusal speech acts. Each DCT was divided into three consecutive sections. One was allocated to the collection of demographic information which included the ages, academic grade, and school sector of the students. The second section presented the participants with five multiple choice questions, while the final section was comprised of five open-ended questions to which students were permitted to give their own answers.

In each section indicated, the students were presented with scenarios, and they were required to indicate their responses to the scenarios utilizing the greeting, refusal, and command speech acts, based on the respective DCT type being addressed. It is imperative to note that the scenarios involved the participant being situated in varying contexts that involved

interaction with higher authority figures such as their educators and parents, individuals of equal status such as siblings and friends, as well as individuals they do not share a relationship with. This was done to examine possible variations in responses demonstrated by the participants on the basis of their social status, gender, and the relationship status they shared with the individual with whom they interacted.

3.3.1 Scenario Samples: The Command DCT

The scenarios below were presented in the multiple-choice section of the Command DCT. It is imperative to note that each scenario was presented with approximately five possible multiple-choice options, with a sixth option also presented to indicate ‘other’, in case the alternative possibilities did not resonate with the participant.

a. Multiple Choice Section

1. You have been ill for a week and can't get out of bed. Your mother comes into your dark room and opens the curtains to let some sunlight in. The light comes directly into your eyes and causes your discomfort. You are angry and want to tell her to close the curtains once more.

2. You really want to go to the supermarket to buy some snacks, but you don't have enough money. You want to take some from your older brother/sister.

3. You're going to take an exam in school and the teacher is distributing the papers but skips you. You want to ask for your paper.

4. You left class very late and are rushing to the bus before it leaves. The person walking in front of you is very slow and you would like them to move so you can pass.

5. You're sitting in the bus, and it is very warm. The person sitting next to you is your friend and they switched off the AC.

In terms of the open-ended questions, five scenarios were once again presented and can be noted as follows:

b. Written Section

1. You are sitting at the back of the class and your friend is sitting right in front of you. Your friend is very tall so you can't see the white board. You want him to move to the side for you to be able to see.

2. You're having dinner with a friend, and you'd like more salt for your food. The salt is on their side of the table.

3. You're doing homework with your little brother/sister, and they drop your pen. You would like them to pick it up.

4. Your friends are playing a video game and have taken up all the space on the couch. There is extra space, and you want them to make some room for you.

5. You're sitting with your little brother/sister in your room and are playing games on your phone. Your little brother/sister pulls your phone from your hands as a joke. You want to ask for your phone back.

3.3.2 Scenario Samples: The Greetings DCT

The Greetings DCT was also comprised of three sections, with the second and third presenting scenarios within various contexts, with individuals from a range of varying relationship status in association with the participant. The multiple-choice section presented approximately eight different types of greetings, including the option of 'other' to indicate alternative responses that could be utilized by the participant. The scenarios presented were as follows:

a. Multiple Choice Section

- 1. You run into a good friend in one of the streets in the city.*
- 2. You run into your teacher in one of the streets in the city.*
- 3. You run into your brother/sister at school during the lunch break.*
- 4. At a friend's gathering you see someone whom you don't know (of the same age) who smiles in a friendly manner and seems willing to chat.*
- 5. You return home from school and see your mother sitting in the living room.*

For each scenario presented, the options ranged between formal to casual greetings, with the inclusion and exclusion of questions that are generally associated with 'small-talk' presented during the greeting process. In terms of the open-ended questions, the following five scenarios were presented:

b. Written Section

- 1. You meet your teacher in the school hallway.*
- 2. You are sitting in the living room of your house when your father arrives home from work.*
- 3. Your older brother/sister has just arrived home and come to greet you.*
- 4. You run into your classmate in a coffee shop, but you are not very familiar with her. You see her having some milk and sugar from the service table. You want to greet her.*
- 5. You run into a good friend at a restaurant/ café.*

3.3.3 Scenario Samples: The Refusal DCT

The final DCT utilized in the research study was the Refusal DCT, which also consisted of a multiple choice and written section. Approximately seven options were presented to the participants, with the ‘other’ option also available should the participants desire to mention an alternative response to the scenarios presented. The multiple-choice questions were as follows:

a. Multiple Choice Section

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 friends at the same time. What do you say?*

4. *Your family has been invited to a very nice dinner by your next-door neighbour 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?*

5. *Your teacher wants you to represent the school 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?*

b. Written Section

The written section comprised of five open ended questions, which were noted as follows:

1. 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?

2. You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to you. Cleaning lady: "Oh God, I'm so sorry! I had a terrible accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your China vase fell and broke. I feel very bad about it. I'll pay for it." You know that the cleaning lady is supporting three children.

3. You teach English at a university. It is just about the middle of the semester now. One of your students asks to speak to you. Student: "Ah, excuse me; some of the students were talking after class yesterday. We kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar."

4. You are at a friend's house for lunch. Friend: "How about another piece of cake?" You:

5. A friend invites you to dinner, but you really don't like going to this friend's house. Friend: "How about coming to my house Friday night? We're having a small dinner party." You:

3.4 Linguistic Variables

Three primary linguistic variables were considered for the purpose of this research study. The command, greeting, and refusal speech acts of the participants were assessed in this research through the analysis of the results of DCTs distributed amongst them. Through the results obtained, the DCTs were initially categorized into direct and indirect perspectives, followed by extensive categorization on the basis of the taxonomies and strategies available for each speech act considered.

3.5 Relevant Social Factors

The social factors considered in this research were gender and schooling sector. In terms of the former, the effect of gender was ascertained on the strategies and directness of language adopted. This also involved an insight being provided into the level of formality and politeness of the language being adopted by the participants. The more significant social factor considered was the effect of private- and public-school environments and education on the language produced by learners when they utilize the English language in the written form. Based on the questions adopted in the DCTs, the results also provided an insight into how language is altered by participants on the basis of the age, social status, and familiarity of the individuals with whom they interact. This suggests that power dynamics, formality and cultural factors could impact the type of language produced by participants while communicating with other individuals.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is comprised of a report of the data collected during the course of the research, as well as the analysis of the results collected and obtained. The information has been explained and analyzed under the different research questions that were posed in section one. The values have been presented in the form of tables depicting all the responses relevant to the respective research question being addressed.

4.1 Comparison of Speech Act Production

4.1.1 Public and Private School Speech Act Strategies

This section aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences observed between the use of the greeting, command and refusal speech acts by public and private school Omani graduates when speaking in English?
2. What are the strategies applied by the private- and public-school Omani graduates in their use of the greeting, command, and refusal speech acts in the English language?

4.1.1.1 Commands

The results demonstrated in the table below reflect the use of command strategies in response to scenario one by Omani EFL learners in private and public schools.

Scenario 1

Table (4.3): Command Strategies – Scenario 1

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Close the curtain, mom.	21	10.5%

The light hurts my eye.	39	19.5%
Close the curtain please because I don't like the light.	40	20%
Close the curtain please.	48	24%
I'd like you to close the curtain please	33	16.5%
Other	19	9.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Close the curtain, mom.	17	8.5%
The light hurts my eye.	19	9.5%
Close the curtain please because I don't like the light.	43	21.5%
Close the curtain please.	53	26.5%
I'd like you to close the curtain please	41	20.5%
Other	27	13.5%

The values in the table demonstrate that profound differences do not exist in general between the majority of the approaches adopted in scenario one. However, some variations still exist, especially with approach number two. The use of hints differs significantly between private- and public-school students. Public-school students were more prone towards utilizing this strategy as an indirect means of commanding the receiver to close the curtains. Private-school students did not resort to utilizing this strategy as often, which was noted with a mere 9.5% of responses out of the total two hundred responses articulated. It is also imperative to note that both sets of respondents frequently resorted to the use of modifiers such as “please” to convey their commands. The use of embedded agents was also common as 20.5% of private-school students chose this response, while 16.5% of the public-school students chose it as well.

Amongst the collective responses, the most frequently utilized command strategy amongst both groups was the use of a direct command followed by a modifier as with strategy number four. The least frequent choice amongst the private-school students was the conveyance of a direct

command, while public-school students offered alternative responses. The results also demonstrate that indirect commands were prevalent amongst both groups, meaning politeness strategies were maintained to reduce the force of the statement being articulated. This could be attributed to the fact that an individual of higher authority was being addressed, and thus, more politeness was necessitated.

Scenario 2

Table (4.4): Command Strategies – Scenario 2

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Give me 10 Riyals please.	30	15%
Give me 10 Riyals.	16	8%
I'd like to go to the supermarket. Give me 10 Riyals.	30	15%
I'd like some money please.	43	21.5%
I'd like to go to the supermarket, but I don't have any money.	66	33%
Other	15	7.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	
Give me 10 Riyals please.	20	10%
Give me 10 Riyals.	16	8%
I'd like to go to the supermarket. Give me 10 Riyals.	18	9%
I'd like some money please.	39	19.5%
I'd like to go to the supermarket, but I don't have any money.	79	39.5%
Other	28	14%

The table provided illustrates the responses articulated by the respondents towards an individual of higher authority, that being an elder sibling. Despite the age difference, however, a possibility that a casual and informal relationship can prevail between some of the respondents and the

receiver. First and foremost, the most commonly utilized strategy amongst the public-school students and the private-school students is the use of an embedded agent as with strategy number five. Individuals from both groups most commonly chose to articulate an explanation followed by a hint to ask for money. It is imperative to observe that this strategy reflects a highly indirect manner of articulating a command. The least frequently utilized strategy amongst both groups was also similar, with only 8% of the total respondents from each group opting for the use of a direct command as noted with strategy number two. These initial responses demonstrate that a high degree of politeness is predicted by the majority of responses across both private and public school EFL learners.

The recognition of an authoritative figure also commands respect amongst the learners, making their comprehension of context and pragmatic factors evident. Differences between the responses can be noted, however, with strategy number three a case in point. The public-school students showed that they more commonly resorted to the use of an explanation followed by a direct command (15%). On the other hand, only 9% of private-school students used this strategy, reflecting that perhaps these learners were more aware of social norms and more reliant on the use of politeness strategies to articulate commands.

Scenario 3

Table (4.5): Command Strategies – Scenario 3

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Miss, give me my paper.	34	17%
I'd like my paper miss.	33	16.5%

I did not receive an exam paper.	96	48%
Give me my paper	37	18.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Miss, give me my paper.	11	5.5%
I'd like my paper miss.	25	12.5%
I did not receive an exam paper.	143	71.5%
Other	21	10.5%

The table above illustrates an interaction between the respondents and an individual of higher authority. The context is rendered more formal here due to the receiver being a teacher at a school, thus, a relationship such as that of family or friendship is removed. Based on the responses, it is notable that private-school students least engaged with the use of direct commands, such as demonstrated in strategy number one at 5.5%. The most frequently employed strategy, however, was the articulation of a hint, which was strategy number three at 71.5%. This shows a significant contrast with the public-school students, amongst with 17% opted to issue a direct command. Once more, this demonstrates that the pragmatic knowledge of private-school students differs from the public-school students, with the former being more attuned to contextual factors and superiority dynamics when speech act articulation is considered. When hints are considered, only 48% of the public-school students opted towards using this strategy, yet it was the most frequently selected option amongst the public-school students. Another observation was that 18.5% of public-school students also articulated a direct command such as with scenario four, “Give me my paper.”, while this strategy was not selected by any of the private-school students. This specific strategy did not include the title of the individual being addressed, “Miss”, meaning that formality was removed from the context.

Had the title been kept, the force of the command would have been reduced to a degree. As a result, it can be stated that the majority of the public-school student responses were direct in terms of commands towards a teacher or educator. This contrasts somewhat with previous scenarios, which generally showed that public-school students did opt towards using indirect commands when communicating with individuals of greater authority. This could indicate, however, that politeness strategies are more prevalent amongst family members rather than contexts external to the home. Nonetheless, private-school students were able to recognize the expected norms in the context provided, indicating that perhaps the schooling sector and environment influences the use of speech act strategies.

Scenario 4

Table (4.6): Command Strategies – Scenario 4

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Get out of my way.	11	5.5%
Move please.	31	15.5%
I'd like to pass because I'm late for the bus.	51	25.5%
Let me pass please.	86	43%
I'm late for the bus.	12	6%
Other	9	4.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Get out of my way.	5	2.5%
Move please.	45	22.5%
I'd like to pass because I'm late for the bus.	54	27%
Let me pass please.	66	33%
I'm late for the bus.	4	2%
Other	26	13%

The table above demonstrates the responses provided by the Omani EFL learners towards their peers at school. Amongst both private- and public-school learners, the least used strategy was the direct command as seen in strategy one, that being, “Get out of my way”. Only 5.5% of public-school students used this strategy, with an even lower percentage (2.5%) being utilized by private-school students. This showed that politeness was greatly maintained in this scenario, even towards individuals of an identical status. The conveyance of hints was also least frequent, with only 2% of private-school students using this strategy, while 6% of public-school students utilized it. The most commonly articulated strategy amongst both groups was, “Let me pass please”, which makes use of a modifier. The next most frequented strategy was the articulation of an explanation and an embedded agent. Thus, the majority of the responses articulated showed that a high degree of respect and politeness was maintained amongst individuals from both groups.

Scenario 5

Table (4.7): Command Strategies – Scenario 5

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Switch the AC on again please.	46	23%
It's very hot in here.	48	24%
Turn the AC back on.	37	18.5%
I'd like you to switch the AC on please.	58	29%
Other	11	5.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Switch the AC on again please.	47	23.5%

It's very hot in here.	49	24.5%
Turn the AC back on.	27	13.5%
I'd like you to switch the AC on please.	56	28%
Other	21	10.5%

The responses provided in the table above show the strategies adopted by private- and public-school students towards individuals of the same status as themselves. The most common strategy noted amongst these learners was the use of an embedded agent and a modifier as with strategy number four. This creates a speech act that resembles a request more than a command, creating a high degree of respect in this scenario. The least common approach adopted was the articulation of a direct command. Once more, the respondents from both groups demonstrate almost identical responses within the context provided. It is imperative, however, to note that the private-school students were more aware of social norms, and thus, maintained more politeness dynamics when required in comparison to public-school students.

4.1.1.2 Refusals

The tables below depict the refusal strategies adopted by Omani EFL learners in response to a request conveyed by varying individuals.

Scenarios 1

Table (4.8): Refusal Strategies – Scenario 1

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How about I go shopping with you?	67	33.5%
I can't give you my clothes.	17	8.5%
I'm sorry, but no.	22	11%
I would really love to, but my parents don't allow me to give my clothes away.	41	20.5%
I'm really sorry but I can't right now, maybe next time.	33	16.5%

Walk away / Avoid answering	1	0.5%
Other	19	9.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How about I go shopping with you?	80	40%
I can't give you my clothes.	11	5.5%
I'm sorry, but no.	8	4%
I would really love to, but my parents don't allow me to give my clothes away.	41	20.5%
I'm really sorry but I can't right now, maybe next time.	31	15.5%
Other	29	14.5%

The majority of the respondents used indirect strategies to convey their refusals towards a friend in this context, with the most commonly utilized one being the suggestion of an alternative approach. This was common amongst 40% of private-school students, and 33.5% of public-school students. Another common strategy was the conveyance of an explanation and the expression of a wish to accept. The least frequently utilized strategies were direct refusals with the expression of regret or remorse, as well as negative willingness. Amongst private-school students, 5.5% articulated negative willingness, while 4% conveyed the statement, "I'm sorry, but no". Amongst public-school students, 11% conveyed the latter strategy, while 8.5% utilized negative willingness. However, it was observed that private-school students still avoided the use of indirect refusal strategies more than public-school students. This demonstrates that politeness strategies were more common amongst private-school students, signifying their slightly more attuned pragmatic competence.

Scenario 2

Table (9.9): Refusal Strategies – Scenario 2

Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm sorry but I can't help you right now, I'm really busy with my own homework.	38	19%
I'm a bit busy right now, but I could check if for you when I'm done.	81	40.5%
I'm sorry but that could be seen as cheating, and I don't want to get into trouble.	18	9%
I wish I could, maybe next time?	24	12%
Don't be lazy and do your own work.	16	8%
Walk away / Avoid answering	6	3%
Other	17	8.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm sorry but I can't help you right now, I'm really busy with my own homework.	34	17%
I'm a bit busy right now, but I could check if for you when I'm done.	111	55.5%
I'm sorry but that could be seen as cheating, and I don't want to get into trouble.	12	6%
I wish I could, maybe next time?	10	5%
Don't be lazy and do your own work.	14	7%
Walk away / Avoid answering	2	1%
Other	17	8.5%

The responses in the table above depict the use of refusal strategies by the respondents towards a peer requesting help. Both groups utilized the same strategy most frequently, which was the conveyance of an excuse with an alternative offer. This was through strategy number two, which was utilized by more than half of the private-school students, and 40.5% of the public-school students. The least common strategies were avoidance, conveyance of a wish and promise of future acceptance. Another more common strategy was the expression of remorse, negative willingness, as well as reason. It is apparent that indirect refusals are most commonly adopted by members of both private and public schools in response to their

peers, followed by negative willingness given that a reason and apology is also communicated.

Scenario 3

Table (4.10): Refusal Strategies – Scenario 3

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I can't today. I'm busy.	22	11%
I'm sorry but I can't this afternoon, but I promise I'll take you tomorrow.	88	44%
You could ask mom or dad to take you.	30	15%
You could do something at home, it would be a lot more fun.	11	5.5%
I would love to, but I can't today.	34	17%
Walk away / Avoid answering	10	5%
Other	5	2.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I can't today. I'm busy.	25	12.5%
I'm sorry but I can't this afternoon, but I promise I'll take you tomorrow.	93	46.5%
You could ask mom or dad to take you.	27	13.5%
You could do something at home, it would be a lot more fun.	15	7.5%
I would love to, but I can't today.	22	11%
Other	16	8%

The responses recorded in the table above show the refusals articulated by the participants towards a younger sibling. In this scenario, a shift in authority is noted, meaning the receiver in the conversation is an individual of less authority and power in comparison to the interlocutor. Amongst both groups, the most commonly noted refusal was through the conveyance of remorse, negative willingness, and the promise of future acceptance. Private-school students utilized this strategy slightly more frequently than the public-school students 46.5%, whereas the public-school students were 44%. Another frequent approach was through the

conveyance of a wish to comply, followed by negative willingness, as well as an alternative solution being presented as noted with strategy number three. It is also imperative to note that only the public-school students utilized avoidance as a refusal strategy. Around 5% of the respondents utilized this strategy, while private-school students did not opt for using this approach.

Scenario 4

Table (4.11): Refusal Strategies – Scenario 4

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm not going, I'm sorry.	17	8.5%
I really don't want to go dad.	27	13.5%
I wish I could dad, but I could spend the time doing my homework.	60	30%
How about I call to congratulate them instead?	31	15.5%
The event will only be for adults dad, and I'll get very bored. Could I stay at home please?	55	27.5%
Walk away / Avoid answering	3	1.5%
Other	7	3.5%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm not going, I'm sorry.	11	5.5%
I really don't want to go dad.	25	12.5%
I wish I could dad, but I could time the time doing my homework.	49	24.5%
How about I call to congratulate them instead?	37	18.5%
The event will only be for adults dad, and I'll get very bored. Could I stay at home please?	59	29.5%
Walk away / Avoid answering	1	0.5%
Other	18	9%

The responses articulated show that public- and private-school students had different preferences in terms of the response articulated

towards their parental figure in the scenario depicted. Based on the responses, public-school students most utilized the expression of a wish and reasoning with a better option. This was noted with the response, “I wish I could dad, but I could spend the time doing my homework”. The response provided showed that an attempt was made to appease the authoritative figure through a reason that may be considered a responsible use of time by the parent.

The next most utilized strategy amongst the public-school students was the use of an explanation, reasoning, and request to remain at home (27.5%). Only 1.5% of the respondents refused through avoidance of giving an answer, while only 8.5% utilized negative willingness followed by the expression of an apology. Once more, it can be noted that the private-school students opted towards using more politeness approaches in comparison to the public-school students. The former utilized the use of an explanation, reasoning, and request to remain at home (29.5%). The next most frequently used strategy was to express the wish to comply, followed by reasoning with a better option. These responses were very similar to that of public-school students. It is notable that both groups predominantly conveyed their refusals with indirect strategies towards the authoritative figure, demonstrating their need to maintain an unaggressive environment and reduce the force of their refusal.

Scenario 5

Table (4.12): Refusal Strategies – Scenario 5

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm sorry, but I have already made other engagements for the weekend.	40	20%
That would be great, but I'm afraid I can't on that weekend.	43	21.5%
No, I can't go.	13	6.5%
I apologize but I won't be able to. I'll definitely make it next time.	59	29.5%
I'm sorry but it is very short notice, I can't go on that weekend.	35	17.5%
Walk away / Avoid answering.	2	1%
Other	8	4%
Private School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
I'm sorry, but I have already made other engagements for the weekend.	37	18.5%
That would be great, but I'm afraid I can't on that weekend.	40	20%
No, I can't go.	15	7.5%
I apologize but I won't be able to. I'll definitely make it next time.	54	27%
I'm sorry but it is very short notice, I can't go on that weekend.	44	22%
Walk away / Avoid answering.	3	1.5%
Other	7	3.5%

The responses noted in the table above show the responses communicated by students towards an employer, which is once more an individual of higher status. Based on the outcome, the public-school students communicated the majority (29.5%) of their refusals with the conveyance of an apology, negative willingness, and promise of future acceptance. The next most common response (21.5%) was the expression of enthusiasm followed by negative willingness. The least common expressions were direct refusals such as “no” and the avoidance of a response.

Amongst private-school students, it was observed that the most commonly utilized strategy was the conveyance of an apology, negative willingness, and the promise of future acceptance, which was noted amongst 27% of the respondents. With these students as well, the least common response was the avoidance of a response, as well as direct refusals with the word “no” and negative willingness. Based on the responses, indirect refusals were the most commonly utilized strategy. In most cases, formality and politeness were practised; however, explanations were not detailed and were rather restricted, showing that distance was being created between the respondent and the receiver. This indicates that the formality of the relationship is recognized, and responses are less personalized.

4.1.1.3 Greetings

Scenario 1

Table (4.13): Greeting Strategies – Scenario 1

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How's it going?	16	8%
Hello, how are you?	58	29%
Good morning.	15	7.5%
Hey/Hi	27	13.5%
What's up?	22	11%
Hi. Great outfit / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	21	10.5%
Good morning. How's the family? How's school going?	33	16.5%
Other	8	4%
Private-school students		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How's it going?	20	10%
Hello, how are you?	73	36.5%
Good morning.	6	3%
Hey/Hi	23	11.5%

What's up?	24	12%
Hi. Great outfit / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	9	4.5%
Good morning. How's the family? How's school going?	37	18.5%
Other	8	4%

The results in the table above demonstrate the responses of the students towards a friend they meet at a given point in time. Common greetings amongst both groups are the use of an interjection, followed by an H-oriented phrase in phatic communication. With public-school students, this was the most frequented strategy with 29% opting towards it, while 36.5% of private-school students used it as well. Other common responses were the use of time-bound greetings, with personal commentary. Both groups almost equally also made use of colloquial greetings such as “what’s up?” Private-school students, however, did not generally opt for an interjection followed by small talk such as compliments and commentary on the weather. They utilized personal commentary more often by asking the receiver about their daily lives and personal matters. Public-school students, however, demonstrate 10.5% articulating general small talk.

Neither group generally preferred articulating time-bound phrases without any other supporting statement. All in all, similar approaches were adopted by the two groups towards an individual of similar status and informal relationship dynamic. However, the private-school students expressed or reflected the closer relationship by shifting away from more formal and less emotive questions following their interjections. Public-school students did not show the same tendency in this regard.

Scenario 2

Table (4.14): Greeting Strategies – Scenario 2

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello sir/miss. How are you?	101	50.5%
Good morning.	27	13.5%
Hey sir/miss Hi sir/miss	29	14.5%
What's up?	3	1.5%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	3	1.5%
Good morning, sir/miss. How is your family? / How is your day going?	29	14.5%
How's it going?	1	0.5%
Other	7	3.5%
Private-school students		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello sir/miss. How are you?	125	62.5%
Good morning.	9	4.5%
Hey sir/miss Hi sir/miss	28	14%
Good morning, sir/miss. How is your family? / How is your day going?	31	15.5%
Other	7	3.5%

The table above depicts the use of the greeting speech act in response to a formal figure of higher authority, that being a teacher. Based on the responses observed, more than fifty percent of both public- and private-school students chose to articulate the greeting with an interjection, and a phatic question which inquires into the well-being of the receiver. Amongst private-school students, only 4.5% chose to articulate a time-bound greeting, while 13.5%, a higher percentage, chose to use time-bound greetings. The least common strategy which was used amongst public-school students at 1.5% was the use of a colloquial greeting. This was not noted amongst the private-school students, indicating that the recognition of context was slightly less common amongst the public-school students.

This could indicate that the pragmatic competence of the private-school students was higher in comparison to the public-school ones, indicating that schooling environment could make a difference in reference to the speech act strategies utilized.

Scenario 3

Table (4.15): Greeting Strategies – Scenario 3

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello, how are you?	15	7.5%
How's it going?	35	17.5%
Good morning	12	6%
Hey/Hi	37	18.5%
What's up?	58	29%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	5	2.5%
Good morning. How is your day going? / How's school going?	28	14%
Other	10	5%
Private-school students		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello, how are you?	6	3%
How's it going?	35	17.5%
Good morning	4	2%
Hey/Hi	53	26.5%
What's up?	58	29%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	2	1%
Good morning. How is your day going? / How's school going?	16	8%
Other	26	13%

The figure above reflected the responses noted amongst respondents when communicating with their sibling, reflecting a situation where the social rank is mutual. The most common approaches used are the use of the phrase, “How's it going?”, which can reflect a degree of informality. This

was common amongst 17.5% of both public- and private-school students. Another common and even more frequently utilized strategy is the use of interjection. The least frequent approaches include interjections followed by comments on the weather, compliments, as well as time-bound greetings. The responses indicate that less formality is established between the interlocutors and both public- and private-school students towards their siblings, which reflects their comprehension of the social norms permitted in the situation provided. The results demonstrate that pragmatic competence is sufficient amongst members of both groups in informal communication.

Scenario 4

Table (4.16): Greeting Strategies – Scenario 4

Public School		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello, how are you?	48	24%
Hi, my name is (x)	38	19%
How's it going?	13	6.5%
Good afternoon. What's your name?	34	17%
Hey/ Hi	22	11%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	15	7.5%
Good afternoon. How's your day going? Are you enjoying the event?	19	9.5%
Other	11	5.5%
Private-school students		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Hello, how are you?	38	19%
Hi, my name is (x)	51	25.5%
How's it going?	5	2.5%
Good afternoon. What's your name?	15	7.5%
Hey. Hi	27	13.5%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	26	13%
Good afternoon. How's your day going? Are you enjoying the event?	23	11.5%

Other	15	7.5%
-------	----	------

The responses in the table demonstrate the greetings articulated by the respondents towards an individual of equal status in an event. The most common greeting utilized by public-school students was the use of interjection and phatic questions, and this was prevalent amongst 24% of the respondents. The next most common strategy was an interjection followed by a self-introductory statement. The interjection and self-introduction strategy was actually the most common amongst the private-school students, indicating that the majority recognized the need for an introductory statement in the context noted. The next most common strategy was the use of an interjection followed by a phatic question such as in strategy one. Less common approaches were the use of time-bound greetings, stand-alone interjections, and H-oriented phrases.

Scenario 5

Table (4.17): Greeting Strategies – Scenario 5

Public School		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How's it going?	33	16.5%
Hello, how are you?	36	18%
Good afternoon	60	30%
Hey/Hi	12	6%
What's up?	2	1%
Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	6	3%
Good morning. How's the family? / How's school going?	51	25.5%
Private-school students		
Multiple Choice Responses		
Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
How's it going?	4	2%
Hello, how are you?	35	17.5%
Good afternoon	58	29%
Hey/Hi	14	7%
What's up?	4	2%

Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.	7	3.5%
Good morning. How's the family? / How's school going?	33	16.5%
Good morning. How's your day going? / What did you do today?	24	12%
Other	21	10.5%

Based on the responses noted in the table above, it can be observed that common approaches adopted by public- and private-school students when greeting a parental figure is the use of time-bound greetings (30%). The use of an informal phatic question, “How’s it going?” was also used at a percentage of 16.5% and interjection followed by phatic question at 18%. When private-school students are considered, a significant difference is observed as the informal phatic question was not utilized. This indicates that a higher degree of formality was maintained by these students, which could mean that the public-school students did not recognize the need for a more formal approach when communicating with a figure of higher authority. However, an important observation is that a minority of the respondents from both groups used the colloquial greeting, “What’s up?”, showing that a number of the respondents did not recognize the variation in the status and power dynamics between themselves and their parent. Amongst both groups, time-bound greetings were commonly noted, increasing the level of formality maintained between the individuals in the interaction.

4.1.2 Gender Based Speech Act Strategy Comparison

The current section aims to answer the following research question:

What are the variations noted between male and female students in the use of the greeting, command and refusal speech acts when utilizing the English language?

The results obtained through the research demonstrated numerous similarities and differences as observed between males and females within each group analyzed. Based on the results obtained, the most and least frequently utilized strategies have been identified and analyzed in accordance with each individual speech act. The comparative analysis can be noted in the sub-sections given.

4.1.2.1 Commands

4.1.2.1.1 Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Commands

The section below shows the responses articulated in terms of commands by male and female students across public and private schools.

a. Multiple Choice [Males]

Table (4.18): Males Public Versus Private School Commands (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Direct Command + Please (25%)	Hint (35%)	Hint (64%)	Request + Please (31%)	Statement of Wish + Please (27%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Direct Command (7%)	Direct Command (4%)	Direct Command (5%)	Direct Command (5%)	Direct Command (19%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Direct Command + Please (24%)	Hint (27%)	Hint (56%)	Request + Please (42%)	Direct Command + Please (30%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Statement of Wish + Please (13%)	Direct Command (8%)	Direct Command (4%)	Hint (5%)	Direct Command (19%)

Based on the most frequently utilized commands across the multiple-choice scenarios, it can be observed that male students in private schools mostly utilized indirect strategies to convey their commands, as per the responses provided in scenarios two, three, four, and five. It is also imperative to note that the indirect responses were articulated in response to different categories of audiences in terms of formality and power dynamics. These strategies were conveyed towards elder siblings, as with scenario two, a teacher, as with scenario three, peers, in scenario four, and finally, a friend, as noted in scenario five. This demonstrates that a profound degree of liberty was not noted amongst the respondents when communicating with the individuals mentioned.

In terms of scenario two, the respondents were required to request money from their elder siblings, which resulted in hints being most frequently utilized by the majority of the respondents. This can indicate that it is challenging for the respondents to ask for money through direct commands, even if the context does not involve as much formality. It could, however, also mean that the respondents adopted more polite mannerisms to communicate with their elder siblings, who could possess more authority in comparison to the respondents themselves. These responses are reflective of the degree of respect adopted in speech amongst the students, which could be an indication of the normalized speech tendencies within the Omani culture.

As per the results noted, an even higher percentage resorted to communicating by utilizing hints amongst the responses in scenario three. This was observed at sixty-four percent as the strategy was directed towards a teacher within an academic context. More respect and formality are associated with this context, meaning that the respondents were required to adopt a more polite strategy than the conveyance of direct

commands. It is also imperative to note that the respondents also adopted indirect strategies towards their friends and peers. When communicating with peers in an urgent or time demanding context, 31% all resorted to convey a request in addition to a modifier. Furthermore, when communicating with a friend, as per scenario five, the respondents stated their wish and used a modifier word, as was noted in the highest frequency (27%) compared to other strategies.

Only scenario one shows that the participant used direct commands, and even in this situation, utilized the modifier, “please”. This was common amongst twenty-five percent, and it is also imperative to note that this strategy was utilized in response to another authority figure, that being their mother. It is interesting to observe that the respondents felt an additional degree of familiarity and did not attempt to use more polite or indirect command strategies in this context. This could be because they felt more capable of being informal towards a female parental figure. The context also did not involve financial requirements or otherwise sensitive matters, meaning that the participants could experience a greater degree of comfort in these contexts to articulate their intent more freely. This, however, does not mean that the strategies utilized permitted refraining from utilizing politeness strategies as the respondents paired their commands with the word, “please”. This decreases the force and impact of the statement, rendering it more socially acceptable. This also demonstrated that the respondents recognized the significance of respectful communication towards a parental or authoritative individual, thus, recognizing politeness norms and demonstrated their importance within Omani culture.

When observing the most adopted strategies amongst the public-school students, it can also be noted that scenario one permitted them more freedom to directly communicate their intent, with the maintenance of

societal norms. Twenty four percent communicated with direct commands and polite words, which only shows a one percent difference between the strategy commonly adopted by public- and private-school students in this context. A similar dynamic is noted with scenario two, with both groups of respondents adopting indirect strategies (hints) to convey their intent. However, only twenty-seven percent utilized hints amongst public-school students, which is eight percent less than the value noted amongst private-school males. This demonstrates that public-school students utilized other strategies even though the majority adopted hints. Similarly, scenario three also shows that only eight percent fewer participants used hints in this context. In terms of scenario four, however, more individuals used requests with polite words in this category.

Thus far, it can be noted that four of the five scenarios all elicited similar responses from both private-school and public-school students, with minimum variation in the frequency of use. The only difference observed was with scenario five, in which public-school students opted to utilize direct commands with polite words rather than the statement of wish and polite words. This indicates that public-school students were more inclined to utilize more direct approaches, especially when communicating with their friends. Thus, public-school students could find it less necessary linguistically to communicate in direct means with individuals in their own power dynamic and status. The contrast drawn here, as well as the slight variation in the values noted across the first four scenarios, indicate that private-school students utilized the English language with more politeness strategies and words in comparison to public-school students. This could indicate that the exposure to the English language in private school environments permits a greater degree of acquisition of politeness strategies.

Moreover, in reference to the least commonly articulated responses, it can be noted that all scenarios were addressed least frequently with direct commands, ranging from a minimum usage of four percent, up to a maximum of nineteen percent. However, amongst the public-school students, it can be noted that some alternative strategies were utilized in the least frequency rather than the avoidance of direct commands. For instance, public-school students did utilize hints less frequently (5%) in scenario four in comparison to the private-school students. It was also observed that, in scenario one, the least common strategy was the statement of a wish in addition to a polite word (13%). Thus, direct commands were more frequently noted amongst members of this group.

Once more, it can be noted that public-school students were more inclined to directly communicate their desire, while private-school males opted to approach the scenarios with more polite strategies in communication. This was especially imperative when communicating with a familiar yet authoritative figure, such as with their mother, as well as with their friends. In both cases, a greater degree of familiarity and informality is common, meaning that the situation required less attention to be placed on politeness strategies. Thus, it can be inferred that private school dynamics and curriculums could aid in learning the English language with more focus placed on politeness in communication patterns. As both sets of students were selected from the same culture and gender, schooling sector could play a fundamental role in influencing some aspects of their speech act use.

b. Written Responses [Males]

Table (4.19): Males Public Versus Private School Commands (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Request (75%)	Request (76%)	Request (43%)	Request (59%)	Direct Command (37%)
	Most Common Strategies				
Public School	Request (82%)	Request (70%)	Request (36%)	Request (54%)	Direct Command (28%)

When presented with the opportunity to provide their own answers, it can be observed that both public- and private-school students utilized the exact same strategies across all five scenarios. This is true for both the most utilized strategies across the two groups. Amongst these responses from scenarios one to four, all the respondents chose to convey their intent using requests. This demonstrates that the participants did not even divert to the use of common direct and indirect command strategies, but rather, altered their approach to include a different speech act entirely, that being the request speech act. This also relates that the respondents all found it challenging or unacceptable socially to relate commands directly when speaking to others. The contexts provided amongst the scenarios in the written section involve the participants communicating with the following individuals:

- A. Peer
- B. Father
- C. Younger sibling
- D. Friend
- E. Older sibling

As per the responses, both public and private-school males communicated most frequently with requests towards most of the individuals noted. However, it is also imperative to observe that scenario five elicited a different response from the participants. In both groups, the participants communicated their intent most frequently using direct commands, amongst which the higher value was observed amongst private-school students.

It is also imperative to note that amongst the requests made by both groups, the highest frequency of use was noted in both scenarios one and two. It is significant to mention that amongst these scenarios, the individuals involved were both peers and a paternal figure. In the first scenario, the participant communicates with a peer, and thus, it can be observed that a high frequency of commands was made in the form of requests. This could be attributed to the fact that peers are not considered individuals of familiarity, and thus, social cues require additional formality to ensure that social expectations are met. When communicating with a paternal figure, it is also noted that the participants utilized requests most frequently. However, in this case, it is imperative to comprehend that the dynamic does not provoke a more formal context, but rather, the audience is of higher authority and power dynamic in comparison to the respondents.

Thus, the majority of interlocutors amongst both groups found it more appropriate to utilize the request speech act rather than a command towards their fathers. This reflects a cultural comprehension by both groups towards maintaining politeness and respect towards their fathers especially. This is reflective of Arabic culture, and is a factor comprehended amongst both private- and public-school male students. When communicating with younger siblings and friends, the majority of interlocutors also chose to utilize requests, however, at a lower percentage. It was noted that the

audience that received the least number of requests were the younger siblings, which demonstrated that alternative strategies were also adopted by the participants towards their younger brothers or sisters, who are noted as individuals with less power and authority in comparison to themselves. The fact, however, that requests were still noted as the most adopted strategies towards this group of recipients as well. This reflects that politeness dynamics were maintained by numerous interlocutors, as per the norms of Omani culture.

Furthermore, the maintenance of politeness dynamics and communication was also common when the interlocutors addressed their friends. It is imperative to note that the percentages amongst the private-school and public-school males increased in this instance in comparison to the utterances articulated towards younger siblings as friends could be considered as belonging to a similar power dynamic. Additionally, more formality can be noted in the relationship between the interlocutor and friends, in comparison to that between interlocutors and younger siblings. As a result, both groups demonstrated that less politeness was required when articulating commands towards their younger siblings as they could be considered inferior to the interlocutors themselves. Finally, when addressing scenario five, both groups utilized direct commands rather than alternative strategies. It is imperative to note that the scenario created required an authoritative response to be articulated by the participants to defend themselves against their elder siblings. The responses showed that in such dynamics, the respondents were more inclined towards articulating direct commands and did not attempt to utilize politeness strategies to decrease the force or impact of their utterances. This was common amongst both private-school and public-school males, demonstrating that no variations were noted in responses.

a. Multiple Choice [Females]

Table (4.20): Females Public Versus Private School Commands (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Direct Command + Please (28%)	Hint (44%)	Hint (79%)	Request + Please (35%)	Statement of Wish + Please (29%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Direct Command (11%) Hint (11%)	Direct Command + Please (8%)	Direct Command (6%)	Hint (3%)	Direct Command (8%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Direct Command + Please (24%)	Hint (39%)	Hint (50%)	Request + Please (44%)	Statement of Wish + Please (37%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Direct Command (7%)	Direct Command (8%)	Direct Command (3%)	Direct Command (5%)	Direct Command + Please (16%)

The responses noted in the table above were articulated by both private- and public-school females. It is imperative to note that the same commonly used strategies are paralleled by both groups across all scenarios. It is also imperative to note that the females and males from both school sectors all demonstrated the use of identical strategies across the contexts provided. Thus, identical strategies were common amongst both groups, suggesting that gender is not an indicative factor of variation in command articulation. When female private- and public-school students are compared, it is imperative to note that the general distribution of values do not vary significantly. However, when scenario three is considered, it

can be noted that public-school students were less inclined towards the use of hints (50%) as a response to their teachers at school and instead opted for the use of other strategies as well.

As per this response, it can be comprehended that private-school students were more inclined towards hinting at their intent rather than directly asking for their requirement. This pattern was also observed amongst male private-school students, who were also observed to generally relate their commands with significant use of polite words and strategies. This pattern demonstrates that private-school students across both genders were inclined towards decreasing the force of commands and maintaining politeness in conversation. Although both groups were focused on communicating in a polite manner, as is necessitated by Omani cultural norms, the differences in frequency could indicate that private-school students are influenced by their education towards adopting more indirect means of communication. This approach renders communication more socially acceptable and less forceful, meaning that more attention is placed on maintaining politeness norms in communication.

Furthermore, when considering the least commonly utilized strategies, several variations are noted. For instance, female private-school students utilized both hints and direct commands less frequently when communicating their intent, and not only direct commands in scenario one. Based on scenario two, it was noted that private-school students least frequently used direct commands with polite words, while public-school students were least likely to use direct commands themselves. Here, a shift in pattern has been noted as private-school students least frequently used strategies that required polite words to be included with the direct command. The opposite is noted amongst the public-school students, who were least likely to adopt forceful speech acts to communicate their intent,

and thus, the least number of participants chose to use direct commands in conversation with their siblings. Similarly, this pattern is also noted for scenario four, where the private-school students were least inclined to communicate using hints (3%), while the public-school students were least inclined towards articulating direct commands (5%).

In the prior instance noted, the respondents were required to communicate with their peers in a time-limited situation. It is imperative to note that the use of hints in this specific situation would not provoke an appropriate response to accomplish the articulator's goal. This situation necessitates the direct articulation of intent for the receivers to comprehend the response needed, which would be to create space for the participant to pass. Private-school students demonstrated recognition of this requirement in speech, and thus, utilized their speech acts appropriately to receive responses that correlated with the context. However, public-school students least utilized direct commands in this instance, which would have been more appropriate to the context. This could indicate that the private-school females were more familiar with appropriate speech act choices that correlate with different situations.

The final scenario demonstrated that most private-school students once more opted to avoid utilizing direct commands in the absence of polite words, as was noted by the mere eight percent who chose this speech act in the context provided. On the other hand, the least adopted strategy by public-school females was the direct commands and polite words (16%). This was indicative of the fact that private-school students once more showed a preference towards avoiding direct commands, as was noted with most of the alternative contexts as well. The public-school students in this scenario least frequently adopted direct commands with polite words (16%) and instead opted for other strategies in this context. Amongst the collective

responses covered, however, most interlocutors across all contexts did prefer to communicate with reduced force in their strategies to adhere to acceptable social norms.

b. Written Responses [Females]

Table (4.21): Females Public Versus Private School Commands (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Request (91%)	Request (82%)	Request (43%)	Request (58%)	Direct Commands (45%)
	Most Common Strategies				
Public School	Request (75%)	Request (76%)	Request (41%)	Request (59%)	Direct Commands (37%)

As demonstrated by the table provided, it can be noted that written responses were comprised primarily of requests, which were the most frequently utilized strategies by the majority of the students for scenarios one to four. However, for scenario five, direct commands were most frequently utilized, but with less frequency in comparison to the requests across the first four contexts. Both scenarios one and two observed the highest percentages of requests amongst both private- and public-school students. These responses were articulated towards a classmate and a paternal figure, showing that the majority of the respondents found it necessary to ensure that these specific individuals were addressed with the least forceful discourse. It can also be noted that, once more, private-school students communicated with requests at a higher frequency in scenarios

one and two, demonstrating that most found it more necessary to refrain from utilizing direct commands towards the individuals noted. Based on these responses, it can be comprehended that additional respect is attributed towards paternal figures and peers, while other audiences such as siblings and friends are less likely to be addressed with requests rather than indirect or direct forms of commands.

When the differences between males and females were analysed, the variations were noted to be rather minor. When articulating commands in scenario 5 of the multiple-choice section, females were generally more inclined to express the statement of a wish rather than issue a direct command. However, males most commonly conveyed a direct command in this situation, creating a difference between the responses of the two genders in this specific context. The situation required the respondents to convey their commands towards a friend on a bus. The females demonstrated a tendency to be more polite in this situation compared to the males and showed that adherence to acceptable social behaviour even amongst their friends. This can show there was a tendency among females for maintaining formality, even amongst individuals of the same status and power dynamics.

Amongst the least selected strategies, females were, in some situations, less inclined towards using direct commands, while males were sometime least inclined towards using hints. Thus, the male tendency was slightly more accepting of direct commands, meaning that males could communicate more directly than females in some situations. It can be generally comprehended that males are less prone to being indirect in their discourse in comparison to females. However, across the majority of contexts and situations, both males and females used the same approaches to convey the command speech act, of which the majority were indirect.

A conclusion can be drawn, thus, of the participants of this study specifically, showing that Omani culture does mandate a degree of politeness and indirectness to be utilized in speech to conform to social norms of discourse. This indicates that, in general, the pragmatic competence of the students could reflect their native culture in communication, thus, decreasing the force of statements when communicated.

4.1.2.2 Refusals

4.1.2.2.1 Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Refusals

The tables provided demonstrate the refusal strategies used by males and females in Omani EFL contexts across public and private schools.

a. Multiple Choice [Males]

Table (2.22): Males Public Versus Private School Refusals (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Alternative (40%)	Reason + Alternative (47%)	Regret + Negative Willingness + Promise of Future Acceptance (41%)	Statement of Wish + Alternative (35%)	Regret + Promise of Future Acceptance (25%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Regret + No (4%)	Statement of Principle (8%)	Alternative (7%)	Avoidance (1%)	Avoidance (3%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Alternative (32%)	Reason + Alternative (30%)	Regret + Negative Willingness + Promise of Future Acceptance (47%)	Statement of Wish + Alternative (35%)	Regret + Promise of Future Acceptance (31%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Avoidance (1%)	Avoidance (2%)	Avoidance (2%)	Avoidance (2%)	No + Negative Willingness (9%)

The results noted in the table provided demonstrate that both public- and private-school students utilized similar strategies to communicate their refusals across all scenarios. It is also imperative to mention that the responses were paralleled across the most common strategies. In terms of the least repeated strategies, it can be noted that the respondents from both groups were least inclined towards the avoidance strategy, which was only utilized by a maximum of six percent of the respondents. Furthermore, direct refusals through the use of “no” and negative willingness were also least common and were only articulated in scenario five by a maximum of nine percent of the respondents.

Amongst the least commonly repeated strategies, it is imperative to note that variations exist between the responses observed in each group. For example, in scenario one, the private-school students were least inclined towards the use of regret and “no” (4%), while the public-school students practised avoidance the least. In terms of the most frequented refusals, it is imperative to note that almost all the responses, except for those in scenario three, were mostly indirect. These were repeated most frequently within these scenarios which reveals that the respondents preferred reducing the force of their refusals by communicating in an indirect manner. Amongst the responses noted for scenario two, the participants from private schools least communicated their refusals with the statement of a principle against aiding their peers. However, the public-school students were least likely to use avoidance as a refusal strategy. The final context demonstrates that public-school students least utilized “no” and negative willingness rather than avoidance as with private-school students.

Based on the overall responses noted, it is imperative to comprehend that both groups were inclined towards maintaining politeness principles

and strategies when communicating refusals. Only a single context amongst the most repeated strategies permitted the use of negative willingness, a direct strategy but with the addition of indirect strategies in the same response. Should the responses be analyzed based on each scenario, it can be noted that the alternative option provided for scenario one demonstrated that many respondents found it necessary to provide aid to their friend to compensate for their conveyance of refusals. This shows that relationships with a degree of formality encourage respondents to communicate less forceful and inoffensive refusals.

As per scenario two, the same pattern is observed in the responses but with the inclusion of a reason amongst numerous respondents. In this case, the reason provided could indicate that numerous respondents found it necessary to explain their inability to directly aid their peers as per the requests made. The only scenario that provoked a direct refusal was number three, where the respondents communicated with their younger siblings. In this instance, it is important to understand that the level of authority has shifted, with the refusal being directed towards a more inferior individual, thus, permitting more direct refusal strategies to be included.

As per scenario four, numerous respondents chose to communicate with their paternal figure through the expression of a wish to comply, followed by an alternative option to attempt to appease the audience. The response shows that the participants attempted to demonstrate interest in the fulfilment of the request, and in their inability to comply, offered a means of compensating. This degree of politeness and appeasement was only common towards a paternal figure, showing the importance of maintaining respect in communication. The final scenario also shows an attempt at appeasement with the promise of future acceptance communicated towards an authoritative figure, that being a teacher. Regret

is also expressed prior to the refusal, showing an added element of politeness being maintained.

b. Written Responses [Males]

Table (2.23): Males Public Versus Private School Refusals (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Private School	Most Common Strategies			
	Regret + Reason (16%)	Acceptance as Refusal (51%)	Acceptance as Refusal (26%)	Regret + Reason (19%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies			
	Reason (18%)	Acceptance as Refusal (35%)	Acceptance as Refusal (36%)	Regret + Reason (29%)

The responses provided demonstrate that scenario one, which was directed towards the participants' younger sibling, elicited different common responses from the two groups. It can be noted that both groups articulated the reason for their refusal, but private-school students included an expression of regret with their response. The most frequent response reveals that the private-school students demonstrated more inclination towards articulating respect even towards recipients of lower authority in comparison to themselves.

The remainder of the most frequent responses did not differ, however, across all the remainder of the strategies. The expression of regret and reason was also repeated in scenario five by the private-school students, and first noted here amongst the public-school participants. It is also imperative to note that, although both groups articulated the same responses, the percentage of utilization was less frequent in public-school participants in comparison to the public-school ones. This indicates that a wider variety of responses were adopted by the public-school students.

In terms of the types of strategies used in each scenario, it is interesting to observe that most adopted the use of acceptance as refusals, which has first been noted in this context. The instance mentioned here placed the respondents in a position of higher authority, such as that of an educator, and refusals were directed towards requests made by students. The responses revealed that it was challenging for the participants to directly reject the requests of those inferior to them in a professional context. The responses could be indicative of the participants' ability to relate to the request.

a. Multiple Choice [Females]

Table (2.24): Females Public Versus Private School Refusals (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Alternative (40%)	Reason + Alternative (64%)	Regret + Negative Willingness + Promise of Future Acceptance (52%)	Reason + Request (31%)	Regret + Negative Willingness + Promise of Future Acceptance (29%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Negative Willingness (2%)	Avoidance (2%)	Avoidance (2%)	Regret + Statement of Refusal (8%)	No + Negative Willingness (7%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Alternative (35%)	Reason + Alternative (58%)	Regret + Negative Willingness + Promise of Future Acceptance (41%)	Reason + Request (36%)	Regret + Promise of Future Acceptance (28%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Negative Willingness (8%)	Avoidance (4%)	Alternative (5%)	Avoidance (1%)	Avoidance (1%)

Based on the responses collected, it can be noted that female private- and public-school students once more utilized many identical strategies

when communicating their refusals across various contexts. However, it has been observed that private-school students generally utilized these strategies most commonly at a slightly higher percentage in comparison to the public-school students, indicating that alternative approaches were also adopted by the public-school students. It is also imperative to mention that the respondents opted for the less direct form of the refusal to maintain politeness and avoid exceeding force in their speech. The only situations where more direct refusals could be articulated by the participants were with their younger siblings, which showed that a greater degree of familiarity, and age difference, could both affect the choice of refusals made by the participants.

Furthermore, the least commonly articulated refusals were also avoidance and direct refusals (negative willingness, no) amongst the respondents. This once again demonstrates that the respondents were inclined towards maintaining politeness norms and formalities by refraining from bluntly articulating a rejection. Avoidance was also not utilized as cultural factors do not permit the avoidance of communication in response to requests. This is considered significantly impolite and could immediately cause offense, which was refrained from by both public and private school female students.

b. Written Responses [Females]

Table (2.25): Females Public Versus Private School Refusals (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Private School	Most Common Strategies			
	Alternative (18%)	Acceptance as Refusal (43%)	Acceptance as Apology (49%)	Reason (22%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies			
	Alternative (13%)	Promise of Future Acceptance (56%)	No + Gratitude + Reason (23%)	Reason (23%)

Based on the written responses collected, female public- and private-school students demonstrated some variations in their most articulated refusal strategies in response to different situations. In situation one, both groups opted to offer their younger sibling, an individual with less power and authority than themselves, alternative options in response to their requests. However, when the second scenario is considered, which placed the participants in a position of authority, the most utilized strategies changed. The private-school students articulated direct acceptance regardless of their possible intent of refusal. The public-school students were more inclined towards promising acceptance in the future, which indicated that they were refusing the request for the time being. This demonstrates that public-school students were still less bound to and less inclined towards pleasing their audience when articulating refusals. Thus, private-school students were more commonly noted to adopt polite strategies and avoid conflict in their speech.

When the female responses were considered, minor differences were observed between the two genders. Females were observed, in some cases, to use reasons followed by a request to articulate their refusals, while males used the statement of wishes and suggestion of alternatives. This specific pattern was noted in scenario 4 where the respondents needed to articulate with a paternal figure. Based on the response, it was noted that most females used a rather submissive form conveying a refusal, with the request asking permission to perform an alternative approach. This was imperative as it showed the difference between male and female forms of communication. When observing the males, it was noted that the most frequent approach involved the suggestion of an alternative approach. This showed that males were more inclined towards suggesting an alternative rather than asking permission to do so.

Further analysis of the responses showed that female respondents were very reluctant to use negative willingness, which is considered a direct refusal approach. Females also used gratitude more frequently and would communicate alternative options as well. However, the majority of the refusals across most situations showed that males and females generally communicate in the same way and used similar strategies.

4.1.2.3 Greetings

4.1.2.3.1 Males and Females: Public Versus Private School Greetings

The section below shows the greeting strategies utilized by Omani EFL learners in public and private schools.

a. Multiple Choice [Males]

Table (2.26): Males Public Versus Private School Greetings (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Interjection + Phatic Questions (29%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (64%)	Colloquial Phatic Question (28%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (24%)	Time- bound Greetings (28%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Interjection (9%)	Time- bound Greetings (4%)	Interjection + H-Oriented Phrases (2%)	Interjection + H-Oriented Phrases (4%)	Phatic Question (1%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Time- bound Greetings + H-Oriented Phrases (23%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (57%)	Colloquial Phatic Question (29%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (28%)	Time- bound + S- Oriented Phatic Questions (33%%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Interjection (8%)	-Phatic Question (1%) -Colloquial Phatic Question (1%) - Interjection + H- Oriented Phrases	Interjection + H-Oriented Phrases (33%)	Phatic Question (5%)	Colloquial Phatic Question (1%)

When considering the greeting strategies utilized by male public- and private-school students, some differences can be noted amongst the scenarios provided. Scenario one, which depicts an encounter with a friend, and thus, an informal setting, elicited private-school students to communicate their greetings with an interjection and phatic question. This greeting demonstrates a recognition of the need for an informal greeting within a context of giving information, which was also followed by a phatic question to add an additional degree of politeness. The public-school students, however, did opt for time-bound greetings in this context, adding a degree of formality, followed by H-Oriented phrases. This demonstrates a possible lack of awareness of greeting norms in reference to context formality. The second scenario demonstrates that both groups chose to greet their teacher in an informal manner, which could violate politeness norms as teachers could be considered more formal figures. However, both groups chose interjections, which are mostly reserved for friends or family, or less formal relationship dynamics.

Furthermore, both groups mostly selected colloquial phatic questions to greet their siblings. It is imperative to observe that this specific greeting was not noted in any other situation or scenario, meaning that the degree of informality between siblings rendered this greeting strategy permissible and socially acceptable. In the next situation provided, it has been noted that both groups most opted to greet an unfamiliar individual with an interjection and phatic question. Finally, when a figure of higher authority, namely, a maternal figure, was included, the respondents both chose to convey their greeting with an interjection. Public-school students, however, added additional phrases for their greetings which were H-oriented phrases, presenting further interest in their audience through the initiation of **small talk**.

b. Written Responses [Males]

Table (2.25): Males Public Versus Private School Greetings (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Time-bound Greetings (41%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (20%)	Interjection (27%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (33%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (40%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Interjection (41%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (24%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (29%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (29%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (45%)

The table above demonstrates the written responses created by the respondents to communicate their greetings across five contexts. The respondents referred to are male public- and private-school students. The results show that the most commonly utilized strategies include interjections with phatic questions, interjections, and time-bound greetings. Based on the responses, both sets of respondents chose to articulate their greetings with interjections with phatic questions across scenarios two, four, and five. These scenarios involved a parental figure, a friend, and a peer. The scenarios depict situations with individuals of authority, as well as shared social status, all eliciting an identical choice of greeting strategies from the respondents.

However, the primary differences were with scenarios one and three. In scenario one, the respondents from private schools conveyed their greetings through time-bound greeting strategies, realizing the socially accepted norm of formal authority figures being greeted with time-bound greetings rather than more informal approaches. With scenario three,

however, the degree of causality was also emphasized with the majority of respondents choosing to articulate interjections to communicate with their elder siblings. The strategies adopted all demonstrate that private-school students were more aware of certain social norms and required strategies across contexts. This can be attributed to the environment and curriculum they are exposed to within the private school context.

a. Multiple Choice [Females]

Table (2.28): Females Public Versus Private School Greetings (Multiple Choice)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Interjection + Phatic Question (39%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (61%)	Interjection (37%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (22%)	Time-bound Greeting + Phatic Question (33%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Time-bound Greeting (1%)	Time-bound Greeting (5%)	Time-bound Greeting + Phatic Question (7%)	Time-bound Greeting + Request for Introduction (4%)	Interjection + S-Oriented Phrases (3%)
Public School	Most Common Strategies				
	Interjection + Phatic Question (38%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (44%)	Colloquial Phatic Question (29%)	Interjection + Self Introduction (22%)	Time-bound Greeting + Phatic Question (33%)
	Least Common Strategies				
	Phatic Question (3%)	Colloquial Phatic Question (2%) Interjection + H-Oriented Phrases (2%)	Interjection + H-Oriented Phrases (2%)	Time-bound Greetings + Neutral Phrases (8%) Phatic Question (8%)	Colloquial Phatic Questions (1%)

Based on the table observed, it can be noted that some strategies are most commonly utilized by both public- and private-school females across different contexts. In scenarios one, two, and five, identical greeting strategies were most utilized, with the audience being teachers, friends, and parental figures. The strategies adopted were informal with interjections and phatic questions being used commonly. However, in scenario three, the respondents from private schools conveyed their greetings through the use of interjections, while the public-school students utilized colloquial phatic questions most frequently. This demonstrated that the public-school students were more inclined towards the articulation of very informal phrases in comparison to private-school students. When scenario four was considered, it was noted that public-school students also chose to most frequently repeat interjections with self-introductions in scenario four. This varied from the responses of the private-school students, who adhered to utilizing interjections and phatic questions. It is also imperative to note that, when addressing a maternal figure, both sets of females chose to convey a time-bound greeting followed by a phatic question. This maintains a sense of formality to the context, which could be a strategy adopted by the students to demonstrate respect towards an authoritative figure.

b. Written Responses [Females]

Table (2.29): Females Public Versus Private School Greetings (Written)

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Private School	Most Common Strategies				
	Time-bound Greetings (37%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (32%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (36%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (51%)	Interjection + Phatic Question (51%)
	Most Common Strategies				
Public School	Islamic Greeting (40%)	Islamic Greeting (49%)	Islamic Greeting (37%)	Islamic Greeting (38%)	Islamic Greeting (37%)

Based on the table provided, it can be noted that the strategies adopted most commonly by the two groups varied significantly. The most prominent factor to observe amongst the responses is that public-school students utilized Islamic greetings most frequently across all the contexts provided. This suggests that the public-school students maintain aspects of their Arabic cultural norms by choosing to greet different individuals across varying contexts with the greetings, “Al Salam Alaikom”. Private-school students, however, mostly chose to utilize interjections with phatic questions, and in one case, time-bound greetings. Thus, a significant difference can be noted between the choices made by either group which further relates that their schooling has a clear influence on their adherence to cultural norms.

When the comparison between males and females is made, it is noted that males more frequently used colloquial phatic questions, while females were more inclined towards interjections. Females would also more frequently use phatic questions in their conversation to engage in

small talk, showing that females were more inclined towards engaging in conversational norms in comparison to males.

The remainder of the analysis section also addresses the following research question, *“How does the educational background of the students influence their speech act choices and utilization in the English language?”* Based on the outcome of the research, some observations have been made about the pragmatic competence observed in the use of speech acts between public- and private-school students. An imperative factor noted, especially in terms of the refusal and command speech acts, was that private-school students demonstrated a greater awareness of social norms and expectations in discourse.

When power dynamics and social status were considered, private-school students demonstrated a great ability to adhere to social expectations. They did so by appropriately utilizing acceptable utterances towards individuals of higher social status, while public-school students would use less suitable speech act strategies in the same given situation. For instance, public-school students would use colloquial greetings such as “What’s up?” when communicating with their teachers, while private-school students refrained from this choice. When commands are considered, it was observed that public-school students also communicated with their educators in a more direct manner through the use of direct commands, while private-school students refrained from using this strategy and instead focused on using indirect approaches by using modifiers and embedded agents in articulating their command.

Nonetheless, in general, the approaches used across the speech acts were generally indirect strategies, reducing the force of the statement being made. The results corresponded with that of Iliadi et al. (2017), who also found the participants of their research to use indirect refusal strategies in

their discourse. Al Mahrooqi and Al Aghbari (2016) also conducted a study on the refusal strategies utilized by Omani nationals, and it was noted that participants most commonly used indirect strategies when conveying a refusal. These results also correspond with those of the current research study. Most respondents were less inclined towards using direct refusals, and mostly focused on indirect approaches, with females being even more focused on indirect strategies in refusal conveyance.

Almegren (2017) also analyzed the use of greeting strategies with participants consisting of Saudi nationals. One of the most common strategies used was the use of interrogative sentences, which were common amongst the Omani EFL learners as well. The majority of the respondents used phatic questions to inquire into various factors related to the receiver in order to maintain social norms and render the conversation more interactive and polite.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on providing an overview of the research and summarizing the findings noted across the entire thesis. Each speech act and the findings associated with their individual DCT results have been discussed and the most common observations noted. The chapter also provides an insight into further research recommendations and the results that could be achieved through addressing the topic in more depth.

5.1 Summary of Results

The research study focused on the analysis of the different ways in which three varying speech acts were utilized amongst EFL learners across two academic contexts. The speech acts investigated were commands, greetings, and refusals. The academic contexts investigated were private and public schools within the Sultanate of Oman. Both male and female participants were selected, with one hundred of each gender being selected across each speech act, and across private schools and public schools. Thus, a total of one thousand two hundred participants took part in this research. The primary means of data collection utilized was the Discourse Completion Test (DCT), with a separate DCT prepared and utilized for each speech act. The DCTS were created on Google Forms and were distributed online for learners to complete. The results gathered were then compared and contrasted according to each speech act.

When commands were considered, the majority of private-school males preferred using indirect command strategies, which were in the main directed towards elder individuals with more authority such as teachers and

elder siblings. The outcome also shows that more formal and polite strategies were implemented by the private school EFL learners when directing commands. Common strategies used by these learners were direct commands with polite words, hints, and the conveyance of requests. Additionally, when public-school males were considered, the multiple-choice results showed that indirect strategies were also common amongst them, with hints, direct commands with polite words, and requests were also common strategies noted across the scenarios presented. The least common strategy amongst both groups of males for commands were direct commands. The results clearly demonstrated that politeness strategies were mainly used amongst males from both groups when communicating commands. When the written responses were analyzed, it was noted that requests rather than commands were most commonly utilized by both groups across the five contexts provided. These strategies once more show that indirect commands were most frequently used.

The female participants also demonstrated similar responses to the males in many of the scenarios provided. Hints were extremely common amongst the female participants. In specific situations, there existed specific responses that would have been culturally appropriate, however, it was noted that public-school students did not always comprehend this factor and opted for the utilization of speech act strategies that were not entirely appropriate to the situations. Thus, it can be understood that awareness of cultural norms and tendencies were more recognized amongst private-school students than public-school students. When written responses were considered, the majority of the females once again opted towards the use of requests across the variety of scenarios demonstrated.

In terms of responses obtained for the refusal speech act, the results demonstrated that public and private-school males both opted for the use

of identical strategies across the multiple contexts presented. Amongst these strategies were the offering of alternative responses, expression of regret, as well as negative willingness. The results demonstrate that, once again, indirect approaches were utilized, meaning that both groups recognized the need to apply politeness strategies with individuals of varying status and types of relationship. When utilizing written responses, a slight variation was observed. When an individual of lower status was presented in a scenario, the public-school males opted towards providing reasons for their refusals, while the private-school males expressed regret and reason more frequently. The response indicated that more politeness strategies were demonstrated by most private-school students. However, both groups still preferred to utilize indirect refusals.

When greetings are considered, males from either school type communicated this speech act in varying manners. Private-school students were able to analyze the need for informal greetings during encounters with their peers, friends, or individuals of equal to lower status. However, public-school students primarily utilized greetings classified as formal based on greeting act categorization. Aside from the situations noted, the choice of alternative greetings was primarily identical between the two groups, demonstrating that their comprehension of the norms of the speech act were identical. The most frequently utilized greeting strategy was the use of interjections, which were in some cases followed by phatic questions.

The responses of females were also considered, and it was observed that interjections and phatic questions were once again more frequent amongst the respondents. Just as with the males, the females from public schools were also less inclined towards adjusting their greetings to the formality of their contexts, and instead, would utilize the same types of

greetings to address their superiors as with their inferiors or individuals of the same power status as them. When written responses were collected, a significant matter was also observed. Public-school females most frequently opted for utilizing Islamic greetings to convey their salutations. The choice made clearly demonstrates that public-school students demonstrated an inclination towards maintaining cultural aspects of their Arab heritage by communicating with the term, “Al Salam Alaikom”. The inclination was less common amongst the private-school students, demonstrating that school environment indeed exerts an influence on the speech act choices.

5.2 Recommendations

Further research would be required and recommended to analyze additional speech acts and their strategies to ascertain further influence of public and private schooling in the Sultanate of Oman, as well as in areas of the Arabian Gulf. The extension of the research across alternative contexts in the Gulf would enable researchers to determine whether the influence is primarily focused on Oman, or if it extends to other nationalities as well. Through additional research, the influence of education on pragmatic competence can also be determined, which will then aid in creating an environment that better accommodates EFL learner needs and permits language education to be made more effective for future learners.

Chapter 6

References

6.0 References

- A. (2005). Variational pragmatics in the foreign language classroom. *System*, 33(3), 519-536.
- Al Mahrooqi, R., & Al-Aghbari, K. (n.d.). Refusal Strategies Among Omani EFL Students. *SAGE Open*, 6(4). doi:10.1177/2158244016672907
- Allan, K. (1994). Speech act classification and definition. In R. Asher, *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (pp. 4124-4127). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Al-Mahrooqi, R., & Al-Aghbari, K. (2016). Refusal Strategies Among Omani EFL Students. *SAGE Journals*, 1(10). doi:10.1177/2158244016672907
- Almegren, R. (2017). Speech Act of Greeting for American Native Speakers of English and Saudi Native Speakers of Arabic: A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 6(7).
- Ansar, F. (2015). INDIRECT REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN THE FILM "The Blind Side" [Ebook]. Retrieved from <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/60318-ENindirect-refusal-strategies-in-the-film.pdf>
- Armegren, R. (2017). Speech Act of Greeting for American Native Speakers of English and Saudi Native Speakers of Arabic: A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 6(7).
- Austin, J. (1962). *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
- Austin, J. (1962). *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford. Oxford University Press. Barron,
- Bach, K., & Harnish, R. (1979). *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Bach, K., & Harnish, R. (1979). *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts*. MIT Press.
- Beebe, L., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusal. In E. Scarcella, Anderson & S. Krashen, *On the development of communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). Cambridge.
- Beebe, L., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusal. In 2553449186 1720334176 E. Scarcella, 2553449187 1720334176 Anderson, & 2553449188 1720334176 S. Krashen (Authors), *On the development of communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). Cambridge.

- Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning how to say what you mean in a second language: A study of speech act performance. *Applied Linguistics*, 3(1).
- Britton, J. (1989). Functions of Language. In M. Halliday & R. Hasan, *Language, context and text: aspects of language in social-semiotic perspective* (pp. 13-14). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Buhler, K. (1934). Language Functions. In M. Halliday & R. Hasan, *Language, context and text: aspects of language in social-semiotic perspective* (pp. 13-14). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Buhler, K. (1934). Language Functions. In M. Halliday & R. Hasan, *Language, context and text: aspects of language in social-semiotic perspective* (pp. 13-14). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Canale, M., & Richards, J. C. (1983). Language and Communication. In 2505450738 1692167865 R. W. Schmidt (Author), *From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy* (pp. 2-27). New York: Longman.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical aspects of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1-47.
- Central Statistics Bureau. (2019). <https://cbs.aw/wp/index.php/tag/2019/>
- Chaika, E. (1994). *Language: The social mirror*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Chaika, E. (1994). *Language: The Social Mirror*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Chen, H. (1996). Cross-Cultural Comparison of English and Chinese Metapragmatics in Refusal. [Ebook]. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED408860.pdf>
- Chen, X., Lei, Y., & Zhang, Z. (1995). Refusing in Chinese. In G. Kasper, *In Pragmatics of Chinese as Native and Target Language* (pp. 119–163). Honolulu HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- Chomsky, N. (n.d.). *Rules and Representation*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Çiftçi, H. (2016). Refusal strategies in Turkish and English: A cross-cultural study. *ELT Research Journal*.
- Coulthard, M. (2004). Author identification, idiolect, and linguistic uniqueness. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(4), 431-447. doi:10.1093/applin/25.4.431
- Duranti, A. (n.d.). Universal and Culture-Specific Properties of Greetings. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 7(1), 63–97.

Edmondson, W. (1981). Illocutionary verbs, illocutionary acts, and conversational behaviour. In J. Eikmeyer & H. Rieser, *Words, Worlds and Contexts* (pp. 485-499). Berlin: de Gruyter.

Eslami, Z. (2010). Refusals: How to develop appropriate refusal strategies [Ebook]. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309352845_Pragmatic_Transfer_in_E_SL_Refusals Fraser, B. (1990). Perspectives on Politeness. *Journal Of Pragmatics*, 14(2), 219-236. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/037821669090081N>. 84

Felecan, D. (2015). Conventional vs unconventional linguistic means of address (Old and new greetings in Romanian). *Diacronia*, 1, 1–23.

Firth, J. R., & La Fontaine, J. S. (1972). Verbal and bodily rituals of greeting and parting. In *Interpretation of Ritual* (pp. 1–38). essay, Tavistock.

Garcia, P. (2004). Meaning in academic contexts: A corpus-based study of pragmatic utterances.

Ghazanfari, M., Bonyadi, M., & Malekzadeh, S. (2013). Investigating cross-linguistic differences in refusal speech act among native Persian and English speakers. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 2(4), 49-63.

Green. (1999). Illocutions, implicata, and what a conversation requires. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, 7, 65–92.

Greene, A. (2005). Politeness as communicative strategy. *Greetings Studio Universitatis Babes Bolyai Philologia*, 50(4), 11–22.

Hartley, A. (1982). *Linguistics for Language Learners*. Palgrave Macmillan. Jannedy, S., Poletto, R., & Weldon, T. (1994). *Language Files*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman Group Ltd. Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, & Schmidt, R. (1983). *Language and Communication* (1st ed.) (J. Richards, Author). London: Routledge.

Holmes, J. (1983). The structure of Teachers' Directives. In 2553469645 1720346088 J. Richards & 2553469646 1720346088 R. Schmidt (Authors), *Language and Communication*. Longman.

Holt, Rinehart, & Winston. (1999). *Speech for Effective Communication*.

Hymes, Oride, & Holmes. (1972). on communicative competence in sociolinguistics. In *Sociolinguistics* (p. 293). essay, Penguin.

- Iliadi, P., & Larina, T. (2017). REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN. *RUDN JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES, SEMIOTICS AND SEMANTICS*, 8(3), 531-542.
- Istifci, I. (2009). The Use of Apologies by EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 2(3).
- Kamesywari, A. (2017). Refusal used in The Originals Season 1 Television Series (Undergraduate). State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.
- Kasher, A. (1994). Modular speech act theory: Programme and results. In 2505457578 1692171977 S. L. Tsohatzidis (Ed.), *Foundations of Speech Act Theory* (pp. 312-322). London: Routledge.
- Kasper, G. (1997). *Can pragmatic competence be taught?* Honolulu.
- Kasper, G., & Dahl, M. (1991). Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13, 215-247.
- Krivosos, P. D., & Knapp, M. L. (2009). Initiating communication: What do you say when you say hello? *Central States Speech Journal*, 26(2), 115–125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10510977509367829>
- Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- LI, X., & SUN, J. (2018). A Pragmatic Study on Refusal Strategies by Chinese College Nursing Majors. *Cambridge Journal Of China Studies*. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d65a/c14417321aefba99b0b56d489cd1a233205e.pdf>
- Malinowski, B. (1923). The problem of meaning. In M. Halliday, *Language context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective* (pp. 3-5). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Malinowski, B. (1923). The problem of meaning. In M. Halliday, *Language context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective* (pp. 3-5). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, S. E. (1983). Language as a set of shared expectations. *Korean Studies*, 7, 1–8.
- Masi, S., Gotti, M., & Kermas, S. (2008). Verbal greetings and leave-taking formulae across time and situational settings . In *Socially Conditioned Language Change: Diachronic and Synchronic Insights* (pp. 115–136). essay.
- Mey, J. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Mulyani, U., & Latifah, D. (2018). THE ANALYSIS SPEECH ACTS OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN FREEDOM WRITERS MOVIE SCRIPT. *Professional Journal Of English Education*, 1(5). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337246696_THE_ANALYSIS_SPEECH_ACTS_

OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN FREEDOM WRITERS MOVIE SCRIPT
T Pei, M. (1965). *The Story of Language*. Philadelphia: Lippincott Company.

Nawamin, P. (2016). A Cross-Cultural Study of Apology Speech Act Realizations. *International Journal of Languages, Literature, and Linguistics*, 2(3), 2382-6282.

Nemani, F., & Rasekh, A. E. (2013). Investigating the Effect of Social Variables on Speech Variation: Social Class, Solidarity, and Power. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*, 3(3), 300–334.

Olshtain, E., Cohen, A., & Judd, E. (1983). Apology: A speech act set. In 2505396631 1692135421 N. Wolfson (Author), *Sociolinguistics and language acquisition* (pp. 18-36). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Permataningtyas, W., & Sembodo, T. (2018). Refusal Strategies in Two Harry Potter Movies. *LEXICON*, 5(2), 115-126.

Putri, Y. (2014). STRATEGIES OF REFUSING IN UGLY BETTY TV SERIES: A PRAGMATIC STUDY. *Al-Tsaqafa*, 11(2), 211-229.

Qian, H. (1996). *Greetings and partings in English and Chinese: A contrastive study of linguistic routines and politeness*. Shang wu yin shu guan.

Rescher, N. (1966). *The Logic of Commands*. New York: Dover Publications.

Rosdiana, Y. (2018). REFUSAL STRATEGIES USED BY CHARACTER IN DESPICABLE ME MOVIE (Undergraduate). UNIVERSITY OF MUHAMMADIYAH SUMATERA UTARA MEDAN.

Sadler, R. W., & Eröz, B. (2002). I Refuse You! An Examination of English Refusals by Native Speakers of English, Lao, and Turkish. *Arizona Working Papers in SLAT*, 9, 53-80.

Schegloff, E. A. (198AD). The Routine as Achievement. *Human Studies*, 9(2), 111–151. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00148124>

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Searle, J. (1979). A Classification of Illocutionary Acts. *Language And Society*, 5, 1-24.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Searle, J. (1979). A Classification of Illocutionary Acts. *Language And Society*, 5, 1-24.

Searle, J. (2005). *Speech Acts and Illocutionary Logic*. In D. Vanderveken (Ed.), *Logic, Thought and Action* (pp. 109–132). essay.

- Searle, J. R. (1975). Indirect Speech Acts. In 2553475744 1720349845 Cole & 2553475745 1720349845 Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax & Semantics* (Vol. 3). New York: New York Academic Press.
- Searle, J., Cole, & Morgan. (1977). Indirect Speech Acts.
- Shabeeb, M., & Jibreen, K. (2010). The Speech Act of Greeting: A Theoretical Reading. *Journal of Kerbala University*, 8(1).
- Shawish, L. (2019). A Pragmatic Contrastive Analysis of Greeting Strategies in Jordanian Arabic and English. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 7(8).
- Shi, X. (2014). On cross-cultural pragmatic failures in C/E interpretation. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4, 1033-1037.
- SHLEYKINA, G. (2016). *THE SPEECH ACT OF GREETING PERFORMED BY RUSSIAN EFL LEARNERS*. core.ac.uk.
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/215253416.pdf>
- Shleykina, G. (2019). *The Interlanguage Pragmatics of Greetings*. Retrieved from Researchgate.
- SInclair, J., & Coulthrd, R. M. (1969). Speech Acts. An Essay in the Philisophy of Language. In *Speech Acts* (p. 120). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, C. (1998). Can adults ‘Just Say No?’: how gender, status and social goals affect refusals (Ph.D). University of South Florida.
- ST Thomas, J. (1995). Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Suryanovika, C., & Negara, I. (2018). SPEECH ACTS OF THE BRONTE SISTERS’ CHARACTERS. *HUMANIKA*, 25(2). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329505441_SPEECH_ACTS_OF_THE_BRONTE_SISTERS' CHARACTERS 70
- Tabatabaei, S., Gencer, G., Eldem, E., & Bakhtiarvand, M. (2018). A comparative analysis of apology strategy between Turkish EFL learners and native speakers of English. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 2(3), 48-57. doi:10.14744/alrj.2018.33042
- Taguchi, N. (2009). Pragmatic competence in Japanese as a second language. In *Pragmatic Competence*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Tanjung, F. (2019). SPEECH ACTS CATEGORIES: AN ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS’ UTTERANCES IN “BEAUTY AND THE BEAST”. *TELL-US Journal*, 5(1). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332377904_SPEECH_ACTS_CATEGORIES_AN

_ANALYSIS_OF_CHARACTERS'_UTTERANCES_IN_BEAUTY_AND_TH
E_BE

Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 4, 91-112.

Tulgar, A. (2016). The Role of Pragmatic Competence in Foreign Language Education. *Turkish Online Journal of English Language Teaching*, 1(1), 10-19.

Tuncel, R. (1999). *Speech Act Realizations of Turkish EFL Learners: A Study on Apologizing and Thanking* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Anadolu Üniversitesi.

Ugla, R., & Abidin, M. (201). A Study of Apology Strategies Used by Iraqi EFL University Students. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 5(1), 32-38.

Umale J. (2011). Pragmatic failure in refusal strategies: British versus Omani interlocutors. *Arab World English Journal*, 2(1), 18-46.

Umale, J. (n.d.). Pragmatic failure in refusal strategies: British versus Omani interlocutors. *Arab World English Journal*, 2(1), 18-46.

Vendler, Z. (1972). *Res Cogitans: An Essay in Rational Psychology*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Wierzbicka, A. (1987). *English speech acts verbs: A semantic dictionary*. Sydney: Academic Press.

Yule, G. (1996). *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yuniati, A., Fadlilah, S., & Annury, M. (2018). Directive Speech Acts in The Movie “The Message” By Moustapha Akkad. *VISION: JOURNAL FOR LANGUAGE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING*, 7(2), 92-102.

Chapter 7

Appendix

7.0 Appendix

7.1 Command DCT

Discourse Completion Task of Commands by Omani Public and Private School Students

This test aims to investigate the speech act use of high school students in Omani public and private school students in English. Your identity will remain anonymous and the information collected will only be utilized for the purpose of this research.

This test is divided into two sections. The first is multiple-choice and the second is a written section. For the multiple-choice section, select one of the options provided. If you do not agree with any of the choices provided, select the “other” option, and write down the response you would prefer. For the written section, write the response that you would use.

Please make sure your responses on this paper are strictly commands.

Age *

☐ 16

☐ 17

☒ 18

☐ 19

Gender *

☐ Male

☐ Female

Academic Grade *

☐ 11th

☐ 12th

School *

☐ Public

☐ Private

Multiple Choice Section

Read each of the situations below and select the multiple choice option you would use as a response. If you do not agree with any of the choices provided, select the 'other' option and type your preferred response.

1. You have been ill for a week and can't get out of bed. Your mother comes into your dark room and opens the curtains to let some sunlight in. The light comes directly into your eyes and causes you discomfort. You are angry and want to tell her to close the curtains once more. *

- ☐ Close the curtain, mom.
- ☐ The light hurts my eye.
- ☐ Close the curtain please because I don't like the light.
- ☐ Close the curtain please.
- ☐ I'd like you to close the curtain please.
- ☐ Other: _____

2. You really want to go to the supermarket to buy some snacks, but you don't have enough money. You want to take some from your older brother/sister. *

- ☐ Give me 10 Riyals please.
- ☐ Give me 10 Riyals.
- ☐ I'd like to go to the supermarket. Give me 10 Riyals.
- ☐ I'd like some money please.
- ☐ I'd like to go to the supermarket but I don't have any money.
- ☐ Other: _____

3. You're going to take an exam in school and the teacher is distributing the papers but skips you. You want to ask for your paper. *

☐ Miss, give me my paper.

☐ I'd like my paper miss.

☐ I did not receive an exam paper.

☐ Give me my paper.

☐ Other: _____

4. You left class very late and are rushing to the bus before it leaves. The person walking in front of you is very slow and you would like them to move so you can pass. *

☐ Get out of my way.

☐ Move please.

☐ I'd like to pass because I'm late for the bus.

☐ Let me pass please.

☐ I'm late for the bus.

☐ Other: _____

5. You're sitting in the bus and it is very warm. The person sitting next to you is your friend and they switched off the AC. *

☐ Switch the AC on again please.

☐ It's very hot in here.

☐ Turn the AC back on.

☐ I'd like you to switch the AC on please.

☐ Other: _____

Written Section

Read each situation below and write a response for how you would communicate a command for each of the situations provided below.

1. You are sitting at the back of the class and your class mate is sitting right in front of you. Your class mate is very tall so you can't see the white board. You want him to move to the side for your to be able to see. *

Your answer _____

2. You're having dinner with your father and you'd like more salt for your food. The salt is on his side of the table. *

Your answer _____

3. You're doing homework with your little brother/sister and they drop your pen. You would like them to pick it up. *

Your answer _____

4. Your friends are playing a video game and have taken up all the space on the couch. There is extra space, and you want them to make some room for you. *

Your answer _____

5. You're sitting with your older brother/sister in your room and are playing games on your phone. Your older brother/sister pulls your phone from your hands as a joke. You want to ask for your phone back. *

Your answer _____

7.2 Refusal DCT

Discourse Completion Task of Refusals by Omani Public and Private School Students

This test aims to investigate the speech act use of high school students in Omani public and

private school students in English. Your identity will remain anonymous and the information

collected will only be utilized for the purpose of this research.

This test is divided into two sections. The first is multiple-choice and the second is a written

section. For the multiple-choice section, select one of the options provided. If you do not agree

with any of the choice provided, select the "other" option, and write down the response you would prefer. For the written section, write the response that you would use.

Please make sure your responses on this paper are strictly refusals.

[Sign in to Google](#) to save your progress. [Learn more](#)

* Indicates required question

Age *

☐ 16

☐ 17

☐ 18

☐ 19

Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Academic Grade *

- ☐ 11th
- ☐ 12th

School *

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Private

Multiple Choice Section

Read each of the situations below and select the multiple choice option you would use as a response. If you do not agree with any of the choices provided, select the 'other' option and type your preferred response.

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? *

- ☐ How about I go shopping with you?
- ☐ I can't give you my clothes.
- ☐ I'm but sorry but no.
- ☐ I would really love to, but my parents don't allow me to give me clothes away.
- ☐ I'm really sorry but I can't right now, maybe next time.
- ☐ Walk away / Avoid answering.
- ☐ Other: _____

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? *

- ☐ I'm sorry but I can't help you right now, I'm really busy with my own homework.
- ☐ I'm a bit busy right now, but I could check it for you when I'm done.
- ☐ I'm sorry but that could be seen as cheating and I don't want to get into trouble.
- ☐ I wish I could, maybe next time?
- ☐ Don't be lazy and do your own homework.
- ☐ Walk away / Avoid answering.
- ☐ Other: _____

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

- ☐ I can't today, I'm busy.
- ☐ I'm sorry but I can't this afternoon, but I promise I'll take you tomorrow.
- ☐ You could ask mom or dad to take you.
- ☐ You could do something at home, it would be a lot more fun.
- ☐ I would love to, but I can't today.
- ☐ Walk away / Avoid answering.
- ☐ Other: _____

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?

- ☐ I'm not going, I'm sorry.
- ☐ I really don't want to go dad.
- ☐ I wish I could dad, but I could spend the time doing my homework.
- ☐ How about I call to congratulate them instead?
- ☐ The event will only be for adults dad, and I'll get very bored. Could I stay at home please?
- ☐ Walk away / Avoid answering.
- ☐ Other: _____

5. Your teacher wants you to represent the school 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?

- ☐ I'm sorry but I have already made other engagements for the weekend.
- ☐ That would be great but I'm afraid I can't on that weekend.
- ☐ No, I can't go.
- ☐ I apologize but I won't be able to. I'll definitely make it next time.
- ☐ I'm sorry but it is very short notice, I can't go on that weekend.
- ☐ Walk away / Avoid answering.
- ☐ Other: _____

Written Section

Read each situation below and write a response for how you would communicate a refusal for each of the situations provided.

1. 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?

Your answer _____

2. You arrive home and notice that your cleaning lady is extremely upset. She * comes rushing up to you. Cleaning lady: "Oh God, I'm so sorry! I had a terrible accident. While I was cleaning, I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel very bad about it. I'll pay for it." You know that the cleaning lady is supporting three children.

Your answer _____

3. You teach English at a university. It is just about the middle of the semester now. One of your students asks to speak to you. Student: "Ah, excuse me; some of the students were talking after class yesterday. We kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar." *

Your answer _____

4. You are at a friend's house for lunch. Friend: How about another piece of cake? *
You:

Your answer _____

5. A friend invites you to dinner, but you really don't like going to this friend's house. Friend: How about coming to my house Friday night? We're having a small dinner party. You: *

Your answer _____

7.3 Greeting DCT

Discourse Completion Task of Greetings by Omani Public and Private School Students

This test aims to investigate the speech act use of high school students in Omani public and private school students in English. Your identity will remain anonymous and the information collected will only be utilized for the purpose of this research.

This test is divided into two sections. The first is multiple-choice and the second is a written section. For the multiple-choice section, select one of the options provided. If you do not agree with any of the choice provided, select the “other” option, and write down the response you would prefer. For the written section, write the response that you would use.

Please make sure your responses on this paper are strictly greetings.

Age *

- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19

Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Academic Grade *

- ☐ 11th
- ☐ 12th

School *

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Private

Multiple Choice Section

Read each of the situations below and select the multiple choice option you would use as a response. If you do not agree with any of the choices provided, select the 'other' option and type your preferred response.

1. You run into a good friend on one of the streets in the city. *

- ☐ How's it going?
- ☐ Hello, how are you?
- ☐ Good morning.
- ☐ Hey/Hi
- ☐ What's up?
- ☐ Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.
- ☐ Good morning. How's the family? / How's school going?
- ☐ Other: _____

2. You run into your teacher on one of the streets in the city. *

- ☐ Hello sir/miss, how are you?
- ☐ How's it going?
- ☐ Good morning.
- ☐ Hey/Hi sir/miss
- ☐ What's up?
- ☐ Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.
- ☐ Good morning sir/miss. How is your family? / How is your day going?
- ☐ Other: _____

3. You run into your brother/sister at school during the lunch break. *

- ☐ Hello, how are you?
- ☐ How's it going?
- ☐ Good morning.
- ☐ Hey/Hi
- ☐ What's up?
- ☐ Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.
- ☐ Good morning. How is your day going? / How's school going?
- ☐ Other: _____

4. At a friend's gathering you see someone whom you don't know (of the same age) who smiles in a friendly manner and seems willing to chat. *

- ☐ Hello, how are you?
- ☐ Hi, my name is (X)
- ☐ How's it going?
- ☐ Good afternoon. What's your name?
- ☐ Hey/Hi
- ☐ Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.
- ☐ Good afternoon. How's your day going? Are you enjoying the gathering?
- ☐ Other: _____

5. You return home from school and see your mother sitting in the living room. *

- ☐ Hello, how are you?
- ☐ How's it going?
- ☐ Good afternoon.
- ☐ What's up?
- ☐ Hey/Hi
- ☐ Hi. Great outfit. / You look great. / Amazing weather today.
- ☐ Good morning. How's your day going? / What did you do today?
- ☐ Other: _____

Written Section

Read each situation below and write a response for how you would communicate a greeting for each of the situations provided below.

1. You meet your teacher in the school hallway. *

Your answer _____

2. You are sitting in the living room of your house when your father arrives home from work. *

Your answer _____

3. Your older brother/sister just arrived home and comes to greet you. *

Your answer _____

4. You run into your classmate in a coffee shop, but you are not very familiar with her. You see her having some milk and sugar from the service table. You want to greet her. *

Your answer _____

5. You run into a good friend at a restaurant/ café. *

Your answer _____

المخلص

ركزت هذه الأطروحة على تحديد الفروقات بين استراتيجيات الأفعال اللغوية التي يستخدمها متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) من الجنسين من طلاب المدارس الثانوية الحكومية والخاصة في سلطنة عمان. الأفعال اللغوية التي تمت دراستها في هذه الأطروحة هي الطلب والرفض والتحية. تم اختيار مائة طالب من الذكور ومائة طالبة من الإناث من المدارس الحكومية والخاصة للمشاركة في البحث لتقصي الأفعال اللغوية محل الدراسة. كانت الطريقة المستخدمة لجمع البيانات هي مهام استكمال الخطاب (DCT). تم استخدام نموذج استكمال خطاب (DCT) منفصل لكل فعل لغوي، حيث يتألف كل نموذج من خمسة أسئلة اختيار من متعدد وخمسة أسئلة مفتوحة. أظهر البحث مجموعة متنوعة من النتائج، مع إبداء كل مجموعة من النتائج جانب مراعاتي في استخدام استراتيجيات الأدب للحفاظ على الأعراف الاجتماعية المناسبة أثناء الحديث. أظهرت نتائج مهام استكمال الخطاب (DCT) بالنسبة للطلب أن استراتيجية الطلب غير المباشر كانت النوع الأكثر شيوعاً الذي يستخدمه غالبية متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) من كلا النظامين المدرسيين. تم الرد على الأفراد الذين يتمتعون بصفة قيادية عليا بالخصوص بدرجة عالية من الأدب في الخطاب. كما لوحظ أن هذا السلوك شائع بين المتعلمين من كلا الجنسين. أظهرت النتائج أيضاً أن طلاب المدارس الحكومية لم يكونوا في بعض الأحيان على دراية بالمتطلبات التي تثيرها الأعراف الاجتماعية في حالات محددة، مما دل في الآن ذاته على أن الكفاءة الثقافية كانت أكثر شيوعاً بين طلاب المدارس الخاصة. أظهرت الحالات الدالة على استراتيجية الرفض أيضاً أن معظم المتعلمين يفضلون إبداء الرفض غير المباشر في معظم السيناريوهات التي تم تصويرها. كما لوحظ أن كثيراً ما أبدت عبارات التأسف وعدم الرغبة، بالإضافة إلى إبداء الأسباب والاقتراحات البديلة. أظهرت نتائج مهام استكمال الخطاب (DCT) بالنسبة للتحية أن معظم المتعلمين استخدموا الأسئلة والمداخلات العرفية للإعراب عن التحية. ومع ذلك، هناك نقطة مهمة يجب تناولها وهي أن طلاب المدارس الخاصة أظهروا قدرة أكبر على التعرف على المعايير والسياقات الثقافية، مما يعني أنه يمكنهم أقلمة تحياتهم مع الشخص الذي تواصلوا معه. على سبيل المثال، تم الحفاظ على السلوك الرسمي من خلال التحية المحكومة بالسياق الفعلي عندما تم التفاعل مع أفراد يتمتعون بصفة عليا. ومع ذلك، أظهر طلاب المدارس الحكومية قدرة أقل على تحديد هذه السياقات وبدلاً من ذلك، قاموا باستخدام استراتيجيات التحية غير الرسمية مع الأفراد ذوي الرتب والمكانة العليا. استناداً إلى النتائج، يمكن التوصية بإجراء بحث إضافي بين مستويات الصفوف المختلفة وكذلك المستوى الجامعي من أجل قياس أفضل لكيفية تأثير العوامل المختلفة على استخدام الأفعال اللغوية بين متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL).

الكلمات المفتاحية: المدارس الحكومية، المدارس الخاصة، متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مهام استكمال الخطاب (DCT)، الأفعال اللغوية



جامعة البحرين
كلية الآداب
قسم اللغة الانجليزية وآدابها

استخدام الأفعال اللغوية للتحية والطلب والرفض من قبل متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في
المدارس الحكومية والخاصة في سلطنة عمان

بحث تكميلي بمتطلبات درجة الماجستير في دراسات اللغة الإنجليزية التطبيقية

من إعداد:

ليلي ابراهيم حيدر

19982031

بإشراف:

د. مدني عثمان

أستاذ في اللغة الانجليزية وآدابها

جامعة البحرين

مملكة البحرين

أبريل 2023

