A Cross-Sectional Study of Refusal Speech Act Used by Iraqi Undergraduate Students of English in Relation to the Academic Level

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ABSTRACT

This paper is conducted to investigate how Iraqi EFL learners refuse different speech acts across different proficiency levels. It aims to examine the most appropriate strategies used by 2nd year students of English as compared to those of 4th year when refusing their interlocutors' invitation, suggestion, and offer. WDCT questionnaire was used to collect data from 40 Iraqi undergraduate students of English: 20 2nd year and 20 4th year. Adopting Beebe et al.'s (1990) theory of refusal, data collected was analyzed quantitatively using statistical analysis. The findings revealed that the 2nd year students of English were more frequent in using direct refusals than their 4th year counterparts. This means the latter were more aware of using refusals politely than the former. On the other hand, the findings showed that 4th year students more frequent in their use of indirect refusal strategies that the 2nd year students. This indicates that the EFL learners of low proficiency level might not bridge the gap between the pragmalinguistic strategies and the grammatical form of the target language. This means that they were not pragmatically competent of the use of the appropriate pragmalinguistic strategies. This implies that the 2nd year students need to pay more attention to pragmatics and use their refusal strategies appropriately. Thus, the paper recommends conducting further research on the use of refusal speech act in Arabic and English.

KEY WORDS: Cross-Sectional, Invitation, Offer, Refusal, Suggestion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Refusal is a complex speech act, and its realization is a bit difficult as it requires a high level of pragmatic competence to be performed successfully. It usually involves extended negotiation and uses of indirect strategies to minimize the offense on the hearer (Beebe et al., 1990). Refusal speech act is also profound to other social variables as in the case with interlocutors having different social variables and interacting with each other (for example, refusing a request from a friend or a student vs. a supervisor at work). Furthermore, Beebe et al. (1990) explained that refusal speech act echoes "fundamental cultural values" and involves "delicate interpersonal negation" that requires the speaker to "build rapport and help the listener avoid embarrassment" (p. 68). In this respect, this speech act rationalizes investigation since the potential for offending the hearer and the possibility of communication breakdown is high. The previous research on refusal speech act used by Arabs, for example, has shown the potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication between Arabs and Americans (Al-Issa, 2003; Stevens, 1993).

In this sense, the realization of refusal speech act requires a complex pragmatic competence. Pragmatic

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competence involves a complex set of inter-related linguistic and sociocultural factors. In regards, language learners often fail to follow the sociocultural rules that govern language behavior in the target language. This has been referred to in literature as pragmatic failure. There are two reasons, Thomas (1983) explained, for this pragmatic failure: (a) Learner's lack of linguistic means to convey his or her pragmatic knowledge and (b) cross-cultural differences as to what constitutes appropriate cultural behavior. Thus, lacking this sociopragmatic knowledge of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior in L2; learners often draw on their knowledge of appropriate language behavior from L1. Accordingly, the present study aims to investigate the speech act of refusal as realized by Iraqi learners of English as a Foreign language at the intermediate and advanced proficiency levels. The goal here is to find out if there is a relationship between the learner's proficiency and their pragmatic competence.

As far as literature on refusal speech act is concerned, a great deal of studies has been conducted to investigate its use from different perspectives and across different cultures and language (Abed, 2011; Allami and Naeimi, 2011; Asmali, 2013; Çapar, 2014; Chang, 2009, Delen and Tavil, 2010; Gens and Tekyildiz, 2009, Lee, 2013; Sattar et al., 2012; Saad et al.). Thus, this section concerns the assessment of language learner's ability to use language forms in various environments to the extent of employing a variety of communicative acts. These acts achieve particular communicative goals by analyzing the relationship between the speaker and the cultural-related setting.

The relationship between learners' use of speech acts and the region of their residence (urban or rural) was investigated by Genc and Tekyildiz (2009), focusing on the use of refusal strategies by Turkish EFL students. A discover completion questionnaire was used to detect possible differences between the preferred refusal strategies of Turkish EFL students and those of native English speakers in relation to the participants' rural or urban areas of residence. Both 101 Turkish EFL students and 50 native English speakers were divided into two groups according to their geographical origins: Rural or urban. The result showed that the two groups produced similar refusal strategies in general. Most of the participants generally used indirect strategies to show more polite behavior. However, Turkish EFL students frequently chose direct strategies while using the speech acts of refusal, unlike native English speakers who were mostly indirect while refusing (Genc and Tekyildiz, 2009). Another study was carried out by Delen and Tavil (2010) who examined EFL student's realizations of three speech acts: Refusals, requests, and complaints. A discourse completion tasks (DCTs) taken by 90 students from a Turkish Foundation University revealed that all students had the ability to realize the speech acts of refusals and requests. However, they were incapable of making complaints efficiently. The strategies that they applied in performing these three acts were limited in number (Delen and Tavil, 2010).

An important study done by Wijayanto, 2011, who investigated the similarities and differences between refusal strategies conducted by British native speaker of English and Japanese learners of English. The data were elicited using DCT. The study indicated that all groups employed broadly similar sequential orders, frequencies of occurrences, and contents of both semantic formulate and adjuncts. In the same vein, Tanck (2002) implemented a study to investigate the differences between native and non-native English speaker's production of refusal. The discovery of more general patterns of pragmatic failure as produced by a group of subjects from varying first language background could be helpful to American ESL educators who most address the need of classrooms comprised students from the world. The result revealed that English teachers can illuminate situations, in which students may fail pragmatically and, in turn, to develop curricula to address these problem areas.

Similar to other speech acts that presuppose the use of certain strategies, refusal strategies applied by speakers of any language vary depending on the social status, power, age, gender, and education level of the interlocutors (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). Thus, interlocutors should have sufficient knowledge of each other's background to use proper refusal forms, as to alleviate the adverse impacts of direct refusals (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). A significant study was conducted by Sattar et al. (2012) to investigate Malay university students' preferred refusal strategies. Data were collected through a DCT questionnaire from 40 students. The results showed that Malay university students mostly preferred to employ the strategy of making excuses to perform the act of refusing, which was regarded as an outcome of the Malaysian learners' cultural background (Sattar et al., 2012).

On the same line, Morkus (2014) made a study to investigate differences between Egyptian speakers and American speakers in the production of refusals. To determine certain discourse-level patterns peculiar to refusal acts more indigenously, the researcher obtained the data of the study through role-plays. The participants in the study were 10 American and 10 Egyptian native speakers. The findings of the research demonstrated that Egyptian speakers used more words than American speakers did in their realization of refusals. Another distinctive difference was that American speakers were more direct than Egyptian speech acts of refusal.

However, few studies analyzing speech acts of refusal have examined how the production of speech acts of refusal is related to different proficiency (low vs. high) level contexts. Thus, the present paper hopes to contribute to the existing literature by investigating the strategies of using refusal speech acts by Iraqi students of English across different levels of proficiency. To this aim, undergraduate second- and fourth-grade students of English differ from each other in refusing an invitation, suggestion, and offer. Based on the aim of the study and literature review presented so far, the following research question is raised:

1. To what extent are the strategies used by Iraqi 2nd year students of English different from those used by Iraqi 4th year students of English to refuse an invitation, suggestion, and offer?

2. REFUSAL SPEECH ACT

Refusals, requiring extensive planning, commonly come as the second pair of conversation turns as responses to previous initiating acts such as a request, invitation, offer, or suggestion. As planning in the second pair part, it is usually limited and the possible responses are varied. Thus, refusals are more challenging than other acts which initiate interactional structure (Beebe et al., 1990). In this respect, Barron (2007) mentioned that a refusal threatens negative face wants since it requests addressees to refrain from doing a future act and it also affects the positive face as it may be taken as a rejection. On the same line, Leech (1983, 2005) considers refusal as an "ungenerous" acts as it maximizes the benefit of self rather than others.

In this sense, Brown and Levinson (1987. p. 66) claimed that refusal is an act which disregards the positive face of addressees. In regards, some studies have found that refusal is sensitive to social variables (Chen, 1995; Nelson et al., 2002); therefore, it is often conducted indirectly and mitigated (Al-Eryani, 2007; Turnbull and Saxon, 1997). A refusal may be mitigated by means of adverbs or mental state predicates, a justification of refusal, an indefinite response, an alternative, a postponement, or by setting a condition for future acceptance (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008).

However, Beebe et al. (1990) categorize refusal strategies regarding the degree of directness of refusals based mainly on cross-cultural study of refusal strategies employed by native speakers of Japanese speakers of English and Americans as native speaker of English. The strategies involve two broad categories: "Direct" and "indirect" with refusal response. As producing the speech act of "refusal," a speaker expected to say "no" to a request or invitation directly or indirectly by creating a face-threatening act to the listener or the responder and limiting the listener's needs. Therefore, the speech act of refusal to be used properly in English necessitates that learners must be pragmatically competent (Chen, 1995).

These sorts of speech acts require pragmatic competence as a speaker might either say "no" or communicate refusal through facial expression. For example, there are three speech acts that a speaker is expected to perform when issuing a refusal: (a) An expression of regret (for example, "I'm very sorry"), (b) a direct refusal (for example, "I can't attend your birthday party"), and (c) an excuse (for example, "I have an important examination") (Chen, 1995). In this sense, for instance, when people from two distinct cultures communicate with each other, they generally reflect the norms that are peculiar to their own cultures (Al-Issa, 2003). Therefore, the cultural background of people may affect the way they interact, interpret, and apprehend (Al-Issa, 2003). These types of reflections are termed as a pragmatic transfer. In general, it refers to "deviation from the target norms due to cross-cultural differences" (Aksoyalp, 2009, p. 33). Moreover, when one applies his/her own cultural norms while interacting with others in the second/foreign language, sociocultural transfer takes place (Al-Issa, 2003).

3. METHODOLOGY

This section is concerned with the research method employed by this study. It exposes the participants who took part in the study, data collection, data coding, and data analysis. This study is a quantitative research involving a descriptive comparative design which analyses three kinds of written data of refusal strategies provided by two groups of participants: Iraqi undergraduate students of middle level and advanced level of proficiency.

The study was conducted in October 2018, involving 40 participants whose mother tongue was not English. They were two groups: The first group consists of 20 students whose level of proficiency was middle, whereas the second group consists of 20 students whose level of proficiency was advanced. Both groups were 2nd and 4th year undergraduate students of English, respectively. They were chosen randomly from public university/College of Education for Humanities/ Department of English. As the variables of gender and age were excluded in this study, 5 females and 15 males 2nd year undergraduate students ranged between 20 and 21 and 9 females and 11 males 4th year undergraduate students ranged between 22 and 25 participated in this study.

The data of the study from the two groups comprised a series of written responses that were collected by means of a series of written discourse completion tasks (WDCTs) (Appendix A), which is based on Beebe et al.'s (1990). WDCTs are short written descriptions of scenarios, followed by a short dialogue between one

participant and another in the scenarios, whose utterances are typically provided verbatim or in summary, and the research informant, whose utterances are left entirely or partly blank. The informant is asked to write in the gaps what he or she would say, based on the provided situations (Kasper and Dahl, 1991).

WDCTs have been found to provide appropriate pragmalinguistic responses in the form of speech acts and they can obtain much large quantities of data compared with those occurring in natural data in similar contexts (Nelson et al., 2002).

Statistical analysis using SPSS (version 22) was used to analyze data quantitatively, especially to measure similarities and differences in frequency of strategies used in refusals. Chi-square test was used to compare the strategies of refusals used by Iraqi undergraduate students of middle and advanced levels of proficiency.

4. CODING SCHEME OF REFUSAL SPEECH ACT

The coding scheme adopted in the present study was based mainly on Beebe et al. (1990) pioneering work on refusal. In addition, some other categories adopted from some other refusal studies, especially those that used the role-play method for data collection (García, 1996, Houck and Gass, 2011; Von Canon, 2006). However, refusal speech act comprises two main strategies which are, in turn, classified into substrategies. These strategies are as follows:

A. Direct Refusal Strategies

These are divided into two types "performative" and "non-performative." The performative direct refusal refers to the use of actual refusal expression (for example, I refuse). The non-performatives are divided into two types: Flat "no" and negative willingness or ability (for example, I can't, I won't) (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008).

i. Flat no

a. No, no, no
b. Negating proposition
c. I cannot
d. It will not work
e. Impossible
f. Not today
g. I do not think so

ii. Performative

"I refuse" I decline a. I am pretty insistent on rejecting.

B. Indirect Refusals

Indirect refusals refer to strategies speaker use to soften the illocutionary force of their refusals to minimize the offense to the interlocutor's positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In fact, these indirect strategies have been found to be used more frequently than direct ones (Al-Issa, 1998, Nelson et al., 2002; Stevens, 1993). These strategies are explained below with examples.

i. Statement of Regret

In this strategy, the speaker expresses regret for his or her inability to grant the interlocutor's request or accept his or her offer (Al-Issa, 2003; Al-Shalawi, 1997). For example, Sorry, I am sorry, and unfortunately.

ii. Statement of Alternative

This seems to be one of the most commonly used strategies in realizing the speech act of refusal. This strategy represents the speaker's attempt at negotiating the request or offer to minimize the threat to the interlocutor's positive face. Beebe et al. (1990) proposed two types of this strategy: (1) *I* can *do X instead of Y* and (2) *Why do not do X instead of Y*? For example,

a. *Is not there someone else that you can take the notes from?*
b. *Can you talk with [interview] other people?*
c. *After the Friday prayers we can meet*

iii. Promise of Future Acceptance

In this strategy, the speaker makes a promise to accept a similar request or offer at some point in the future. This is another strategy to soften the illocutionary force of refusal and minimize the impact on the interlocutor's positive face (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008; Von Canon, 2006). For example:

d. *Maybe next time*
e. *Maybe next time, though*
f. *Maybe in the future*

iv. Joke

This strategy was also reported by Beebe et al. and it is considered as a verbal avoidance strategy that is used to distract the interlocutor from pursuing the request or offer any further. For instance,

a. *Not Um Ali nor Abu Ali*
b. *We will not [be able to] eat for two days.*

v. Appeal to a Third party

This was a new strategy that is used by the speaker to mitigate the illocutionary force of the refusal. In this strategy, the speaker expresses willingness to accept the offer or comply with the request but cannot do that due to some other person, usually a family member, who would not let him or her do that. This can be indicated in the following examples,

a. *But my wife said no, it will not work*
b. *She does not want to go because she works here in the same city*

c. *But I know she does not like this idea*

vi. Invoking the name of God

In a study investigating the speech act of swearing in Arabic, Abdel-Jawad (2000) found that swearing is used in Arabic to preface almost all types of speech acts. He also found that it is a common strategy used in Arabic to mitigate the illocutionary force of the speech act of refusal, as indicated in the examples below:

a. *I swear to God, I am busy*
b. *No, I swear to God, I do not have time*
c. *I am full, I swear to God*

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To address the research question raised in this paper, data collected through WDCT questionnaire were analyzed statistically using SPSS. The main strategies and substrategies discussed in the previous section of the coding scheme were examined in this chapter. Chi-square test was used to examine the use of these strategies by the 2nd year students of English in comparison to those used by the 4th year students of English. Thus, Tables I-III show the use of refusal direct strategies to invitation, suggestion, and offer.

TABLE I
Drefusal Direct Strategies of Invitation

Direct strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year students–4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	$\chi 2$
Flat no	17 (36.18)	5 (25.00)	1.94
Negation proposition	22 (46.80)	11 (55.00)	3.73
Performatives	8 (17.02)	4 (20.00)	9.67*
Total	47 (100)	20 (100)	

TABLE II
Refusal Direct Strategies of Suggestion

Direct strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year students–4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	χ_2
Flat no	18 (40.90)	6 (37.50)	13.95*
Negation proposition	20 (45.46)	6 (37.50)	11.94
Performatives	6 (13.64)	4 (25.00)	18.66
Total	44 (100)	16 (100)	

TABLE III
Refusal Direct Strategies of Offer

Direct strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year students–4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	χ_2
Flat no	15 (33.34)	6 (31.58)	6.78
Negation proposition	25 (55.55)	10 (52.64)	12.55
Performatives	5 (11.11)	3 (15.78)	10.51
Total	45 (100)	19 (100)	

As shown in Tables I-III, the Chi-square analysis revealed significant differences between the 2nd and 4th year students' use of all direct strategies of refusals of invitation, suggestion, and offer (78.33%; 73.33%; and 73.33% and 33.33%; 26.66%; and 31.66%, respectively). This indicates that the 2nd year students of English were more frequent in using direct refusals than their 4th year counterparts. In this sense, the latter were more aware of using refusals politely than the former. This finding is in tandem with those of most previous studies (Sattar et al., 2012; Félix-Brasdefer, 2003) which indicated that the students of low and middle level of proficiency used more direct refusal strategies than those of advanced level of proficiency. This may be attributed to the nature of the Arabic language, which is different from that of English in the strategies used to express direct refusals.

As for the substrategies in Table I, whereas the 2nd year students were more frequent in the use of "flat no" (for example, no) than those of the 4th year (36.17% and 25.00%, respectively), the latter (55.00%) were more frequent in the use of "negation proposition" (I cannot) than the former (46.80%). On the other hand, Table II indicates that the 2nd year students were more frequent in using "negation proposition" than those of the 4th year (45.45% and 37.50%), the latter were more frequent in using performatives than the former (13.63% and 25.00%). These findings reflect the 4th year students' high pragmatic competence of using the most appropriate strategies of refusal speech act according to the context. These findings are in line with those of Beebe et al. (1990) who stated that American native speakers of English tended to be more specific and clear in their direct refusal than Japanese learners of English who prefer to use the direct "no" to decline an invitation, suggestion, and offer as they tended to ambiguous.

As for the refusal indirect strategies, the following tables illustrate their use by the Iraqi 2nd year students of English and 4th year students of English.

TABLE IV
Refusal Indirect Strategies of Invitation

Indirect strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year student –4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	χ_2
Statement of regret	2 (15.39)	10 (25.00)	12.30
Statement of alternative	1 (7.69)	5 (12.50)	20.21
Promise of future acceptance	3 (23.08)	9 (22.50)	14.50
Joke	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Appeal to a third party	7 (53.84)	13 (32.50)	15.32
Invoking the name of god	0 (0)	3 (7.50)	1.23
Total	13 (100)	40 (100)	

TABLE V

Refusal Indirect Strategies of Suggestion

Indirect strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year students –4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	χ^2
Statement of regret	4 (25.00)	11 (23.40)	12.99
Statement of alternative	3 (18.75)	16 (34.04)	14.50
Promise of future acceptance	3 (18.75)	5 (10.64)	13.73
Joke	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Appeal to a third party	6 (37.5)	15 (31.92)	17.65
Invoking the name of god	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Total	16 (100)	47 (100)	

TABLE VI
Refusal Indirect Strategies of Offer

Indirect strategies	2nd year students	4th year students	2nd year students –4th year students
	n (%)	*n* (%)	χ^2
Statement of regret	4 (28.57)	8 (19.52)	11.23
Statement of alternative	2 (14.29)	15 (36.58)	7.45
Promise of future acceptance	2 (14.29)	2 (4.88)	1.22
Joke	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Appeal to a third party	6 (42.85)	16 (39.02)	13.50
Invoking the name of god	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Total	14 (100)	41 (100)	

As shown in Tables IV-VI, the Chi-square analysis revealed significant differences between the 2nd and 4th year students' use of all indirect strategies of refusals of invitation, suggestion, and offer. This indicates that the 4th year students of English were more frequent in using direct refusals than their 2nd year counterparts (66.66%; 78.33%; and 68.33% and 21.66%; 21.66%; and 23.33%, respectively). In this sense, the former was more pragmatically competent of using the appropriate strategies to the context of situation. This finding is in line with those of most previous studies (Morkus, 2014; Tanck, 2002) which indicated that the students of low and middle level of proficiency used less indirect refusal strategies than those of advanced level of proficiency. This may be attributed to the 2nd year students' limited pragmalinguistic knowledge.

As for the sub strategies, the above tables showed significant differences between the 2nd and 4th in the use of some sub strategies. As shown in Table IV, whereas the 2nd year students were less frequent in the use of "statement of regret" (for example, I am sorry) than those of the 4th year (15.38% and 25.00%, respectively), the latter (32.50%) were less frequent in the use of "appeal to 3rd party" than the former (53.84%). This indicates the 4th year students' great pragmatic awareness of the social variables engaging interlocutors with others. These findings lend support to this of Hainess (2007) who reported that the statement of regret and appear was the most frequent strategies used by Javanese to reduce the force of refusal.

On the other hand, Table V indicates that the 2nd year students were less frequent in using "statement of alternatives" than those of the 4th year (18.75% and 34.04%, respectively), the latter were less frequent in using "promise of future acceptance" than the former (10.63% and 18.75%, respectively). Moreover, Table VI reveals that the 2nd year students were more frequent than the 4th year students in using "statement of regret" (28.27% and 19.51%, respectively) and "promise of future acceptance" (14.28% and 4.78%, respectively), the latter were more frequent

in the use of "statement of alternatives" than those of the 4th year (36.58% and 14.28%, respectively). This illustrates that the 2nd year students may focus on the use of grammar when using any speech act rather than the pragmalinguistic strategies with which it is expressed. This is in tandem with the studies conducted by Kasper (2001) and Kasper and Rose (2002), in which they clarified that priority is given by EFL learners to grammar rather than to pragmatic competence as they consider them independent variables. This may be attributed to students' proficiency levels in English.

All in all, declining invitation, suggestion, and offer can be expressed differently according to interlocutors' social variables and proficiency level. In regards, for EFL learners of a target language to be more polite, they must produce their refusals indirectly using appropriate strategies reflecting their awareness of the pragmalinguistic forms of refusal.

6. CONCLUSION

This section summarizes the main results and the conclusions reached in this study. The different frequencies of pragmalinguistic strategies were used as indicators to analyze whether the learners transferred L1 pragmatic strategies into the target language. The findings revealed that the 2nd year students of English tended to be more direct in their refusals to invitation, suggestion, and offer than their counterpart of the 4th year. The study indicated that the 2nd year students were less competent of the most appropriate strategies to the context of situation. Furthermore, the findings of EFL learners of low proficiency level might not bridge the gap between the pragmalinguistic strategies and the grammatical form of the target language. This means that they were not pragmatically competent of the use of the appropriate pragmalinguistic strategies. In this regard, it can be said that mastering the grammar of a target language does not mean that learners of that language can use their refusals appropriately. This is due to their limited pragmalinguistic knowledge of the target language.

However, refusal has been studied in a number of different cultures, but little has so far been revealed about how this speech act is used by Iraqi learners of

English. Hence, the findings of this study provide additional perspective and insights which can be used as a baseline for further pragmatic studies in the Iraqi contexts. All in all, the refusal strategies used by the learners in this study should not be simply generalized to all English learners in Iraq, still less to the whole of Iraq, as the participants of the present study were not necessarily representative of the whole English learning population.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: WDCT used in this study

1. You are about to leave your office. On the way to parking lot, your boss stops you and invites you to go to his house warming party. As you cannot go, you decline his invitation. Your boss: "Oh incidentally, we are going to have a house warming party next Saturday. My wife and I would be very pleased if you could come" You say…
2. You have worked too hard at your study. Your close friend knows this and he suggests you do something to make your mind relax a bit. However, you refuse his suggestion. Your friend: "Hey, why don't you at least do something else to make your mind relax?" You say…
3. It is Friday afternoon; you are leaving your office. You are in the parking lot. You are starting your motorbike many times, but it does not work. Your boss is in the parking lot too. He suggests you to leave your motorbike in the parking lot and take a taxi home. However, you decline his suggestion. Your boss: "Why don't you leave your motorbike here and take a taxi home?" You say…
4. You have a close friend. He is the most kind and generous person you have ever known. One day he drops by your flat, whereas you are doing your assignment. He knows that you do not have a printer. Your friend offers you his printer to use. However, you do not want to use his printer and you decline his offer. Your friend: "If you need a printer for printing your assignment you can always use mine" You say…
5. It is Friday afternoon. You are leaving your office. You are in the parking lot. You have tried to start your motorbike many times, but it does not work. Your boss is in the parking lot too. He is parking his car opposite your motorbike. He approaches you and offers to help. However, you decline his help. Your boss: "Anything I can do to help?" You say…
6. It is Friday afternoon. You meet your close friend in the front of the library. He says that he is going to the beach next Sunday and invites to join, but you cannot go. Your friend: "Hey, I am going to the beach next Sunday, do you want to come along?" You say…
7. You are a senior lecturer at school of arts and literature. In your break time, you happen to have a small chat with a graduate student representative at a café of the campus. He is organizing some programs for fresher week orientation. He says that at the end of the fresher orientation days, there will be a party. He invites to go to the party, but you cannot go. Student: "We are going to have a party next Saturday night. We would be very pleased if you could come" You say…
8. You are a lecturer in the School of Linguistics. You and an administrative staff member are in the language centre office busy packing books and folders that will be moved to your office. One of your students whom you know well shows up to ask you about his assignment. Noticing that you still have a lot of books to be removed from the shelves, he offers you help, but you decline his offer. Student: "Is there anything I could do to help?" You say…
9. You are a manager of an online advertising business. Recently, your laptop has been infected by computer viruses. You have tried some new anti-viruses, but they are not quite effective. One of your staff suggests you apply a different operating system to avoid the virus. However, you decline his suggestion. Staff: "I heard LINUX is the safest operating system. Perhaps, you could give it a try." You say…