How to say "no" without saying "no": A study of the refusal strategies of Americans and Germans

Astrid Maria Beckers
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HOW TO SAY "NO"

WITHOUT SAYING "NO"

A Study of the Refusal Strategies
of Americans and Germans

A Dissertation Presented for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
School of Education.
The University of Mississippi

Astrid M. Beckers
May 1999
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Astrid M. Beckers entitled "How to say 'no' without saying 'no' - A Study of the Refusal Strategies of Americans and Germans". I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in TESOL.

Dr. Donald L. Dyer, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council

Dean of the Graduate School
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and father.

To both of them, I express my deepest appreciation.
Acknowledgements

Every research project owes a great deal to others, mine is no exception. I wish to express appreciation to the following persons without whom this dissertation would have not become reality:

To my parents Franziska and Josef Beckers. I am deeply indebted to my loving mother who has always encouraged me to continue my education. I would have never reached this stage without her relentness support and encouragement. No words can describe my indebtedness to my father. His continuous and unconditional love, care, and attention will never be forgotten.

To Dr. Arlene Schrade without whom I would never have started this Ph.D. program and who supported me at all times, personally as well as academically.

To Dr. Don Dyer for being willing to take on the extra load of chairing yet another dissertation and for always reading my lengthy manuscripts in no time at all.

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To Dr. Barrios for his helpful suggestions and generous devotion of time to always improve the existing and for his support, personal as well as academic.

To Dr. Esim Erdim for being adventurous enough to join the dissertation committee at the last minute.
To Nancy Rogers for always being there when I needed a friend to keep me going. Thank you so much.

To Jona for always being there with encouraging "miaus" throughout the writing process of the final draft of this dissertation.

And last but not least, I would like to thank the 618 individuals who agreed to participate in this study. Without their cooperation, this research could not have been completed.
Abstract

Speech acts have been claimed by some to operate by universal pragmatic principles and by others to vary in conceptualization and verbalization across languages and cultures. Their modes of performance carry heavy social implications and seem to be ruled by universal principles of cooperation and politeness. But nonetheless, cultures have been shown to vary drastically in their interactional styles, leading to different preferences for modes of speech act behavior. Culturally colored interactional styles create culturally determined expectations and interpretative strategies, and can lead to breakdowns in intercultural and interethnic communication.

In crosscultural communication, it is necessary to understand the different norms of speaking as well as the rules of grammar specific to that language. The study of the speech act of rejection is important because rejections are culture-specific and they reflect fundamental values of a given society.

This dissertation investigated the differences between Germans and Americans in the speech act of rejection which can be explained by the general cultural differences. The native speaker subjects in this study were graduate students enrolled at four American Universities and at four Universities in the Federal Republic of Germany. The
elicitation method used for this data collection was a discourse completion test, originally developed by Blum-Kulka that has been widely used for the collection of data on speech act realization both within and across language groups.

The 18 situations included four stimuli for eliciting refusals: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Each situation consisted of three different variables: social status (low, equal, high), social distance (stranger, acquaintance, intimate), and gender (same, opposite). The results indicated that Germans and Americans can be distinguished on the basis of their refusal strategies, since the choices of refusal strategies reflected the different characteristics of each culture:

- Americans varied their refusal strategies according to status rather than social distance while Germans varied their refusal strategies according to social distance rather than status;
- Germans employed fewer semantic formulas than did Americans in all 18 situations;
- Germans employed more gratitude as well as more politeness strategies, positive and negative, than did Americans;
- Germans employed an Avoidance strategy more often than Americans while Americans used the word 'no' more often than Germans;
- German refusals were less direct and resorted to
explanations other than their own inclinations in refusing, also German excuses were more vague than those given by Americans;
American refusals tended to be more direct and often gave their own inclinations as reasons for the refusal;
Germans used a third party for their explanations while Americans relied on their own decisions for their explanations.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Although the existence of the speech act of rejection is universal across languages, its frequency, the situational contexts in which it is found, and the types of linguistic forms available and used are culture-specific. Because rejections, like other speech acts, reflect fundamental values of the society, the study of rejections can provide important insights into the social norms and values that are embedded in cultures. It is also important to study how the realizations of rejections vary crossculturally, since rejections are major crosscultural problems for many nonnative speakers.

Rejections, by nature, tend to be very subtle, so it is sometimes difficult to recognize rejections even in one's native language. Thus it is very important to have knowledge of specific sociolinguistic patterns of the culture in order to interpret the meanings conveyed in the speech act correctly. Moreover, since rejections are intrinsically face threatening (Brown and Levinson 1978), the speech acts of rejection employ many face saving strategies that are interesting aspects of language usage from a sociolinguistic point of view.

The importance of crosscultural communication is
increasing constantly due to global migration and the increasingly crosscultural nature of economic, political, and personal relationships worldwide. However, crosscultural communication without an understanding of different sociolinguistic rules among languages often leads to crosscultural misunderstanding. One example of the way in which crosscultural communication can lead to serious consequences is reported by Takahashi and Beebe (1987): In the summit meeting between President Nixon and the late Prime Minister Sato of Japan in 1969, Nixon asked Sato whether he would agree to curtail Japan's fabric exports to the United States in exchange for the return of Okinawa. Sato answered, 'Zensho shimasu', which was literally translated into English as "I'll take a proper step" but usually is a means of rejection. Upon this response, Nixon thought he had received a commitment and became furious when Sato failed to take any effective action. But in fact, Sato did not feel he had made any commitment, since this kind of statement in the Japanese culture is a polite way of refusing. This incident severely damaged U.S. - Japanese relations. The Japanese reluctance to give a clear and definitive 'no' has confused countless other foreigners and snarled international interactions, from casual chats to trade talks. The ambiguity of the Japanese 'no' is so famous that President Clinton, at a dinner party in Vancouver/British Columbia five years ago with Russian President Boris
Yeltsin, scribbled this advice to him: "When the Japanese say yes, they mean no" (The Commercial Appeal March 13, 1994; p.A4). Cohen (1987) claimed, after analyzing several autobiographical accounts obtained largely from Egyptian and North American statesmen, that different communicational styles of those two cultures have resulted in serious political conflict that could have been avoided if both parties had had a better understanding of each other's interactional patterns. Differences between the values of collectivism, which puts emphasis on harmony and conformity in human relationships, and individualism, which considers accuracy the highest virtue, produced cultural dissonance. Americans brought up with the 'truth ethic' see Arabs, who are brought up to dislike giving disappointing information, as dishonest and insincere. Moreover, the Arab propensity for exaggeration has not only offended the United States but has led to a serious loss of credibility.

The need for scientific study of crosscultural communication has been recognized in the field of applied linguistics not only for the purpose of language teaching, but for enhancing crosscultural understanding. In defining sociolinguistic relativity, Wolfson (1989a) explained that this notion is important in communication across cultures by suggesting that "each culture has its own unique set of conventions, rules, and patterns for the conduct of communication and that these must be understood in the
context of a general system that reflects the values and the structure of the society. No two societies are quite alike in this respect, and no group has a monopoly on ‘correct’ sociolinguistic behavior” (Wolfson 1989a, p.2). Some cultures put certain relative values ahead of others. “All cultures exhibit patternings, a tendency to organize large areas of their content with reference to certain dominant attitudes or values” (Linton 1938, p.426).

Wolfson (1989a), contending that the lack of knowledge about diversity in value systems is a reason for intercultural misunderstanding, provided the examples of crosscultural diversity. Japanese are apt to feel uncomfortable with, or even offended by the ways in which Americans extend invitations. A common problem occurs when Americans typically say "Come if you want to" after an invitation. This transpires because a Japanese invitee expects an inviter to persistently ask her/him to accept an invitation. Otherwise Japanese are likely to feel hurt and uncertain of the sincerity of the invitation. In the patterns of host/ess and guest behavior, Arabs and Germans on one side and Americans on the other side are likely to have negative feelings toward each other due to different norms regarding the offering of refreshments and/or food. Arabs and Germans, who are brought up to refuse refreshments and/or food repeatedly, expect the host/ess to offer again and again and would feel confused when a host/ess does not
make an offer of refreshments and/or food more than once or twice. This is the same with East Asian Indians. If the host/ess does not offer again after the first refusal, an Indian guest would think that the first offer was just a formality (Rubin 1983). In Thailand, a host/ess usually insists on offering a guest something to drink several times and the guest will repeat the same answer "It doesn't matter" (mai pen rai). It is known among Thais that the host/ess has to make a decision whether or not a drink should actually be served.

Cultures also differ with respect to what is considered to be appropriate to talk about, and what is regarded as an appropriate question. In Malay culture, a host is supposed to serve refreshments regardless of whether a guest wants them or not; thus, it is not appropriate to ask questions like "Would you like to have something to drink?". Any society influenced by the Islamic religion, will consider any question regarding sex highly inappropriate.

Even though the subject and the content of the conversation might be appropriate, there is still a possibility of misunderstanding between different cultures. Gumperz (1977, 1978) pointed out that the different prosodic and paralinguistic clues used by different ethnic groups can lead to misunderstandings, since interlocutors tend to interpret the linguistic cues in terms of their own cultural experiences. Indian and Pakistani women, serving food at a
cafeteria were perceived as rude and uncooperative by their English customers, due to different contextualization cues in Indian English. The Indian women said "Gravy?" with falling intonation when they asked if customers wanted gravy, while a British speaker would ask by saying "Gravy?" with rising intonation. Saying 'gravy' with falling intonation is not interpreted as an offer but rather an announcement in British English. However, the Indian women's falling intonation was the normal way of asking a question in Indian English, without expressing any rudeness.

Different patterns of nonverbal as well as verbal behavior may result in the misinterpretation of intended meaning. For example, in Turkish, 'no' is signaled by moving one's head backward while rolling one's eyes upward and making a 'click' sound with the tip of the tongue, in Eskimo head nodding means 'no', both of which Americans would probably take as 'yes' (Rubin 1983, Brown 1993). Even the perceptions of measured physical distance are different in different cultures. What is close to an American might be distant to an Arab. An interesting scene was observed in an interaction of an Arab and an American. While talking at a new faculty reception at the University of California at Davis, an American kept stepping back, while an Arab kept getting closer to his interlocutor. Thus these two people were moving around the room unconsciously. Hall (1963) found this difference in his study of proxemic behavior. Arab
students studying in the United States experience a feeling of 'sensory deprivation' at the lack of contact and physical intimacy in their interactions with Americans. "When approached too closely, Americans removed themselves to a position which turned out to be outside the olfactory zone (to be inside was too intimate for Americans). Arabs also experienced alienation traceable to a 'suspiciously' low level of the voice, the direction of the breath away from the face, and a much reduced visual contact. On the other hand, Americans found that the intensity and the intimacy of the encounter with Arabs was likely to be anxiety provoking. The Arab look, touch, voice level, the warm moisture of the breath, the penetrating stare of the eyes, proved to be disturbing" (Hall 1963, p. 1005).

Considering the diversity of norms in each culture, the potential for crosscultural misunderstanding is enormous, especially because we are immensely unaware of the diversity of interactional styles unless they are brought to our attention through a breach of the norm. In emphasizing the importance of sociolinguistic rules of speaking, Wolfson (1989a) contended that "Tolerance of sociolinguistic violations is uncommon precisely because the rules are so much a part of unconscious expectations concerning proper behavior. People do not normally take offense or make negative character judgments when a nonnative speaker mispronounces a word or when grammatical errors are made;
indeed, such differences as those that result in a foreign accent are often found very charming. Errors in rules of speaking are a very different matter. An inappropriate question or the failure to utter the customary apology, compliment, or congratulation will not be judged as an error natural to the process of language learning or indeed, of crosscultural differences, but as personal affront” (Wolfson 1989a, p.25-26). Thomas (1983, 1984) also pointed out the seriousness of the violation of sociolinguistic rules. She indicated that pragmatic failure is more serious than linguistic error in the sense that pragmatic failure may reflect badly on the speaker as a person, while linguistic error indicates only that the speaker is less than proficient in the language. Linguistic errors are apparent in the surface structure, that is, the hearer is aware that the speaker is a less than adequate user of the language. Pragmatic failure, however, results in the hearer attributing normative violations on the part of the speaker not to linguistic deficiency but to rudeness, disrespect, and so on. Thus those who want to interact effectively with speakers from other cultures must learn the norms of speaking as well as the rules of grammar specific to that language. Fluency in another language involves mastery of linguistic competence as well as what Hymes (1971) called communicative competence. In other words, “a speaker acquires competence as to when to speak and when not to
speak, and what to talk about with whom, when, where, and in what manner" (Hymes 1971, p.277). In short, it is important to speak appropriately socially as well as linguistically.
Problem Statement and Hypotheses

This study investigated how culture influences the realization of the speech act of rejection in German and in American English.

The general hypotheses were that (1) there are differences in the conceptualization and the actual use of the speech act of rejection concerning the directness level of the chosen rejection strategy between Germans and Americans, and (2) that those differences are reflections of general cultural differences between Germans and Americans. More specifically, the hypotheses are:

H1: American rejections will vary with the status / power of the hearer.
H2: German rejections will vary with the social distance between speaker and hearer.
H3: American as well as German rejections will vary with gender.
H4: American rejections will vary from German rejections by the directness level of the speech act.
H5: German rejections will vary from American rejections by the frequency of the use of the word “no”.
H6: American rejections will vary from German rejections
by the frequency of the use of unspecific answers or answers that use acceptance to reject the requester.

H7: The frequency of the use of semantic formulas will vary between Germans and Americans.

H8: The content of semantic formulas will vary between Germans and Americans.

The aim of this paper was to investigate the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of speech acts across the two languages, relative to the same social constraints. This study focused on the speech act of rejection because it is particularly rich in its linguistic repertoires and the social meanings attached to its uses. Germans and Americans were selected as subjects because all previous studies focused on Asians and Americans, leaving the assumption that there is no significant difference worth examining in the speech act behavior of Americans and Germans. However this study shows that there are considerable cultural differences between Germans and Americans, differences that might not be as obvious as the ones between Asians and Americans, but differences that are still significant enough to cause communication problems between the two people. Such differences are therefore worth studying and will prove meaningful results, especially since global migration is increasing among Germans as well as among Americans which increases the crosscultural nature of economic, political, and personal relationships worldwide.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This study belongs to what Leech (1983) has called sociopragmatics; it is about how pragmatic principles operate in different cultures, language communities, and social situations; about how one culture operates rhetorical principles and maxims differently from another culture, for instance by preferring politeness to other principles in certain situations.

A good example of sociopragmatic error can be found in Wolfson’s (1989b) account of how second language learners typically respond to compliments. Wolfson argues that compliments are used by native speakers of American English as a means of establishing and maintaining solidarity. It is for this reason that they are most common among status-equal acquaintances and co-workers rather than among intimates; the former involve more uncertain relationships that have to be negotiated. Compliments serve as one of the ways in which Americans, especially women, undertake this negotiation. Wolfson (1989b) points out that many negotiating sequences involving native speakers are long and elaborate. In comparison, those involving non-native speakers are typically short, because learners often fail to pick up a compliment, preferring instead to give no response at all.
Wolfson (1989b) argues that by failing to conform to native-speaker complimenting norms, learners deprive themselves of the opportunities to establish relationships with native speakers and, thereby, of the input that they need to develop their linguistic as well as their sociolinguistic competence. Not all learners manifested sociopragmatic failure by failing to respond to a compliment. Many displayed pragmalinguistic failure by responding to a native-speaker compliment in linguistically inappropriate ways. Middle-class, white Americans are likely to respond by giving unfavorable comments about the object that is the target of a compliment, e.g. “I really love your sweater.” “It’s so old. My wife bought it for me from New York a long time ago.” In contrast, non-native speakers often tried to refuse the compliment or to downgrade themselves. They also tended to respond with a simple “Thank you”. Such responses dampened the conversation.

Pragmalinguistic failure by non-native speakers is widely reported in the literature. Another good example comes from Eisenstein and Bodman’s (1986) study of expressions of gratitude. This study used a discourse completion questionnaire administered to 67 learners of English with various native language backgrounds. Baseline data were collected from native speakers of English. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) reported that the learners performed quite differently from the native speakers. Non-
native speakers experienced differences in identifying the formulas and conventionalized routines that characterized the native speakers’ thanking.

Refusals

The most salient factors that distinguish speakers of different languages are refusal strategies, that is specific verbal responses people use when they want to decline a request, invitation, offer, or suggestion.

Among recent studies that have been conducted in the speech act of refusals, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) and Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) found considerable differences between Japanese and Americans in the order, frequency, and content of semantic formulas in refusals. Semantic formulas were described as "the means by which a particular speech act is accomplished, in terms of the primary content of an utterance, such as a reason, an explanation, or an alternative" (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1991, p.48). The following are the semantic formulas listed by Beebe and Cummings:
Table 1: Classification of Refusals
(Beebe and Cummings 1985)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification of Refusals (Beebe and Cummings 1985)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIRECT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Performative statement: e.g. &quot;I refuse&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Nonperformative statement:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. &quot;no&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Negative willingness/ability:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. &quot;I can't&quot;, &quot;I won't&quot;, &quot;I don't think so&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIRECT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Statement of regret: e.g. &quot;I'm sorry&quot;, &quot;I feel terrible&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Wish: e.g. &quot;I wish I could help you&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Excuse, reason, explanation: e.g. &quot;I have a headache&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Statement of alternative: a. I can do X instead of Y: e.g. &quot;I'd rather&quot;, &quot;I'd prefer&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Why don't you do X instead of Y: e.g. &quot;Why don't you ask someone else?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Set condition for future or past acceptance: e.g. &quot;I'll do it next time&quot;, &quot;I promise I'll do it next time&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Statement of principle: e.g. &quot;I never do business with friends&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Statement of philosophy: e.g. &quot;One can't be too careful&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester, e.g. &quot;I won't be any fun tonight&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Guilt trip, e.g. &quot;I can't make a living off people who just order coffee&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Criticize/insult/attack the request[er]/ statement of negative feeling/opinion: e.g. &quot;Who do you think you are?&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Request for help/empathy/assistance by dropping or holding the request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Let interlocutor off the hook, e.g. &quot;Don't worry about it&quot;, &quot;That's okay&quot;, &quot;You don't have to&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Self-defense, e.g. &quot;I am trying my best&quot;, &quot;I am doing all I can do&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Acceptance that functions as a refusal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Unspecific or indefinite reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Lack of enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Avoidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Nonverbal: Silence, Hesitation, Do nothing, Physical departure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Verbal: Topic switch; Joke; Repetition of part of request, e.g. &quot;Monday?&quot;; Postponement, e.g. &quot;I'll think about it&quot;; Hedging, e.g. &quot;Gee, I don't know&quot;, &quot;I'm not sure&quot;</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJUNCTS TO REFUSALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling/agreement, e.g. &quot;That's a good idea&quot;, &quot;I'd love to&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Statement of empathy, e.g. &quot;I realize you are in a difficult situation&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pause fillers, e.g. &quot;uh&quot;, &quot;well&quot;, &quot;oh&quot;, &quot;uhm&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gratitude/appreciation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a study of the developmental pragmatic competence of Japanese learners of English as compared to Native Speakers of American English in speech acts of refusals, Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) found that Japanese refuse differently according to the status of interlocutors, while Americans are more affected by the degree of familiarity or the social distance between the interlocutors. Japanese...
display a different frequency of semantic formulas between higher and lower-status requesters, while Americans do not. For example, Japanese do not apologize when they refuse those lower in status, whereas Americans make a distinction according to social distance. Americans in these situations give brief and unelaborated refusals to both higher and lower status unequals and much longer and more detailed responses to peers.

Japanese are also different from Americans in the content of semantic formulas. Japanese tend to give vague excuses, whereas Americans tend to be a little more specific. A typical Japanese excuse is not specific as to place, time, or parties and these kind of excuses are too vague to be acceptable by American norms. A distinctive difference in the content of refusals between Japanese and Americans is in the statement of a principle or philosophy; the tone of Japanese responses is thus more formal than that of Americans. There are certain stereotypes concerning the Japanese: they are supposed to apologize a lot, to be less direct and less explicit than Americans, to avoid making critical remarks to someone’s face, to avoid disagreement, and to avoid telling people things that they do not want to hear. The results of Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz’s (1990) research indicate that these stereotypes are not warranted. Frequently, the Japanese were more direct than the native speakers and in certain situations they showed no
reluctance to impart unpleasant information.

Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) found that although proficient Japanese speakers of English employed the same range of semantic formulas as Americans, they differed in the order that they were typically used. Japanese, e.g. omitted expressions of apology or regret in refusing invitations made by people lower in status than themselves. They reacted differently according to whether the invitation originated from a higher- or lower-status person, whereas the native speakers responded according to how familiar they were with the interlocutors. The same difference was evident in the frequency with which semantic formulas were used. Japanese increased the number of formulas they used when refusing a higher-status interlocutor, while Americans did so when addressing familiar equals. In other words, where Americans adopted strategies consonant with solidarity, the Japanese preferred power-oriented strategies. A similar difference is evident in the content of semantic formulas, the Japanese excuses tend to be less specific than American excuses (except when refusing food) and sounding more formal in tone. This was particularly evident in the frequent use of lofty-sounding appeals to principle and philosophy. For example, refusing the offer of a new diet, one Japanese responded “I make it a rule to be temperate in eating”. The study concluded that the development of pragmatic competence depends on whether
the learners experience any sociolinguistic need to vary their performance of specific acts.

Beebe and Cummings (1985) found similar tendencies to what Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) noticed among American patterns of refusal. Their data supported Wolfson's Bulge Theory (1988) that speech patterns used with intimates are similar to those used with status unequals and strangers, and differ from those used with acquaintances.

In the study of native (Americans) and nonnative (Koreans, Malay, Chinese, Arabic, Thai, Japanese, Bengali, Spanish, Chichewa, Yoruba) rejections collected from academic advising sessions, Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1991, 1992) and Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992b) found that Explanation was used most commonly for rejections by both native and nonnative students. However, native and nonnative speakers differed in the employment of the second most common semantic formulas. Nonnative speakers employed far fewer Alternatives than did native speakers. Instead, nonnative speakers used an Avoidance strategy. "Verbal avoidance is essentially a strategy which diverts attention from the actual force of the student's contribution as a rejection... (T)ypes of verbal avoidance... were questions in form: postponement, question asking for the repetition of information, and the request for additional information" (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1991, p.50). On the basis of their corpus, which included strategies only found in their
In this study, they developed a slightly different taxonomy of refusals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification of Rejections (Bardovi-Harlig &amp; Hartford 1991)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIRECT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hm. Not actually, I'm avoiding it. (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well, I've decided not to take them. (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIRECT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Excuse, reason, explanation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's the one that conflicts with what I have to take. (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeah but in Spain they don't offer courses in the structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of language outside the European family. (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q It doesn't matter if I have already taken that course? (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Statement of alternative:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But anyway, I could look into the possibility of having</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that requirement waived... (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I decided to take these three cou...courses. OK. (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q What would I take in the summer if I didn't do that? (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Acceptance that functions as a refusal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecific or indefinite reply; lack of enthusiasm:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That might be a solution. (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't care about taking it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Avoidance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Hedging: I don't know. (NS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Request information: That one's required? (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Question requesting repetition of suggestion: Which one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is that one? (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Postponement, Q: Can I think about it? (NNS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Um... can I decide it next week? (NNS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, the native speakers were English-speaking American students, and the nonnative speakers were from several countries with the following native languages: Korean, Malay, Chinese, Arabic, Thai, Japanese, Bengali, Spanish, Chichewa, and Yoruba.
Questioning as an avoidance strategy was employed almost exclusively by nonnative speakers. Nonnative speakers frequently delayed their rejection, and some of them even chose to remain silent as a method of rejection. This of course, caused problems in the advising session. Furthermore, in order to reject the adviser's suggestions, nonnative speakers generally employed a greater number of semantic formulas than did native speakers.

In the content of rejections, nonnative speakers used 'illegal' excuses, such as "too difficult" and "I don't like the instructor", while native speakers did not use these reasons. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1992) described legal explanations as "those used by native (and nonnative) speakers which the advisers readily accept. They include time conflicts, repetition of course content in the same course, and scheduling of rare or unusual courses as alternatives. Advisers are also sympathetic to explanations concerning deadlines and financial burdens. Illegal explanations are those which the advisers rarely accept, explanations such as a course is too difficult or too easy or a student is not interested in courses in her/his field (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1992, pp. 3)." Nonnative speakers also employed refusal strategies that challenged the authority of advisers e.g. by resorting to the student's friend as an example.

In the field of communication, studies of refusal are
classified as "compliance-resisting" and those of request are classified as "compliance-gaining". Until now, virtually no studies have been done in compliance-resisting communication, whereas quite a lot of research has been done in compliance-gaining communication. Even though there is no study that tests compliance-resisting strategies, one study has been done in building a taxonomy of compliance-resisting strategies.

Hazleton, Holdridge, and Liska (1982) developed the taxonomy of compliance-resisting tactics based on the subjects' responses. Samples of compliance-resisting messages were collected through the administration of a questionnaire which elicited responses to compliance-gaining messages for four different situations. The second phase of the study was conducted on the basis of subject-generated messages. In the second phase, subjects were asked to sort messages into similar strategies. It was developed on the basis of subject responses and factor analysis. The following is a taxonomy of compliance resisting strategies:
**Table 3: Taxonomy of Compliance Resisting Tactics**
**(Hazelton, Holdridge, and Liska 1982)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxonomy of Compliance Resisting Tactics (Hazelton, Holdridge, and Liska 1982)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Compromise: The resister suggests to her/him acceptable alternatives to compliance, e.g. &quot;Why don't I do this instead?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Simple Rejection: The resister indicates an intention not to comply using neutral language. No rationale for noncompliance is given, e.g. &quot;I won't do it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Violation of the Interpersonal Contract: The resister claims that it is unfair for the persuader to seek compliance because of the existence of the interpersonal relationship, e.g. &quot;It is not fair to treat me this way.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Questioning Motives: The resister asks for an ethical justification for compliance implying that the persuader is unjustified in seeking compliance, e.g. &quot;Why do you want me to do this?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Implied Threat: The resister indirectly indicates the possibility of a punishing reaction to compliance, e.g. &quot;I am the type of person who would make life difficult for you if you insist I do it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Explicit Rejection: The resister directly rejects compliance using intense and sometimes obscene language, e.g. &quot;Fuck you, I will do what I want and you can't make me do it!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Interpersonal cost: The resister indicates that compliance will result in damage to the interpersonal relationship. A cost comparison is implied, e.g. &quot;What do you value more, our relationship or my doing what you want?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Equivocation: The resister indicates an unwillingness to comply by rejecting the possibility of joint decision making, e.g. &quot;You decide what you want to do and I'll decide what I want to do.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Social Cost: The resister suggests that compliance will negatively affect relationships with others, e.g. &quot;Think about what you are doing, this will affect your friends.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Altruism: The resister uses the relationship as a basis for seeking an end to compliance seeking, e.g. &quot;Please, I am asking you to stop seeking my agreement.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. External Control: The resister wants to comply but compliance will inevitably result in negative consequences beyond control of either party, e.g. &quot;My agreeing to do this will hurt both of us.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Expertise: The resister rejects compliance on the basis of her/his own knowledge of the effects of compliance, e.g. &quot;I am knowledgeable and I am sure that my agreeing with you or doing what you ask is not justified.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Violation of the Social Contract: The resister indicates that it is generally unfair/unethical to seek compliance because of normative role expectations, e.g. &quot;It is unfair for you to treat anyone this way, people just don't ask others to do this.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Rejection with alternatives: The resister directly rejects compliance and seeks to redirect the persuader, e.g. &quot;I won't do it, why don't you do something else to attain your goals?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Character Appeal: The resister uses her/his character as a basis for noncompliance, e.g. &quot;Trust me, I know it is right not to do this.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The taxonomy developed by Hazleton, Holdridge, and Liska (1982) was based on different types of strategies, while that of Beebe and Cummings (1985) was based on different types of semantic formulas. "Strategy" can be defined as a sequence of verbal behaviors designed to accomplish a goal. One strategy may consist of more than one semantic formula. Therefore, even though these two taxonomies seem to be similar, exactly the same response can be analyzed a little differently. For example, a refusal like "No, I can't do it" is analyzed as [No] [Negative Ability] according to Beebe and Cummings (1985), while it is analyzed as [Simple Rejection] according to Hazleton, Holdridge, and Liska (1982).
Bulge Theory

In examining the speech behavior of speakers of different languages, Wolfson's Bulge theory (1988) is relevant. The Bulge theory claims that speech patterns that a speaker uses with intimates are similar to those used with status unequals and strangers, and differs from those used with acquaintances.

The described speech pattern is the following:
"Strangers are brief. If they want to say "no", they do so. Real intimates are also brief. It is friends and other acquaintances who are most likely to get involved in long negotiations with multiple repetitions, extensive elaborations, and a wide variety of semantic formulas" (Wolfson 1989a, p.6).
Cooperative Principle

Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), the norms of general conversation, was formulated on the assumption that the principles underlying face-to-face interaction are universal. However, this assumption is not necessarily applicable to all societies.

The philosopher H.P. Grice (1975) formulated the basic cooperative principle as an embodiment of conversational expectations and he described what participants expect to observe in a conversation: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged (Grice 1975, p.45)". This general principle is divided into more specific maxims and sub-maxims as follows:

1. Maxim of Quantity:
   a. Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange.
   b. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2. Maxim of Quality:
   Try to make your contribution one that is true.
   a. Do not say what you believe to be false.
   b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

3. Maxim of Relation:
Be relevant.

4. Maxim of Manner:
   a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
   b. Avoid ambiguity.
   c. Be brief.
   d. Be orderly.

In addition to these four maxims, Grice (1975) also suggests that there are other maxims (aesthetic, social, or moral in character), such as "Be polite", that are also normally observed by participants in conversations (Grice 1975, p.45). This stems from the fact that there are a number of behaviors that are non-cooperative. Apparently, certain maxims are violated, such as in the case of telling "white lies" to avoid hurting someone's feelings in which politeness prevents the participants from observing the Maxim of Quality. A maxim such as "Be polite" plays a very important part in answering the question why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean. Grice does not elaborate on this maxim even though he points out that it can enrich the Cooperative Principle. It has also been argued that the maxims of the Cooperative Principle are not universal, and that there are linguistic communities in which not all of them apply (Keenan 1976). For example, the maxim of Quantity "Be informative" is not operative in Malagasy society. Interlocutors in Malagasy society, where new information is rare, regularly provide less information
than is required, because possession of information that others do not have gives prestige to its owner. Revealing less information than necessary is also due to the fact that individuals avoid making explicit statements about beliefs and activities. A similar tendency was found among Athabaskans in Alaska and the Canadian North. In comparing the Athabaskan and North American English discourse styles, Scollon and Scollon (1981) indicated that interethnic communication between these two cultures is bound to go wrong without the recognition of different discourse styles. In the presentation of the self, the North American English idea of "showing your best side only" conflicts directly with the Athabaskan taboo: Speaking of one's plans and expectations is equivalent to asking for bad luck. Thus Athabaskans do not speak much about their achievements in the past and their plans for the future even in job interviews and other situations in which it is expected in Western societies that one is informative about oneself. As a result, "the Athabaskan thinks of the English speaker as boastful or careless with luck and the future, while the English speaker thinks of the Athabaskan as unsure of her-/herself, withdrawn, and aimless" (Scollon and Scollon 1981, p.20-21).

The maxim of Relation, which requires interlocutors to respond relevantly, and the findings of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) on conversation that utterances come in
'pair parts', such as question and answer, are not applicable in some societies. Philips (1976) found among Native Americans at the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon that answers do not necessarily follow questions, since answers to questions are not obligatory.

The maxim of Quality, which is considered to be very important in most interactions, does not operate in certain societies because other values take precedence over truth. Applegate (1975) pointed out that in Vietnam one prefers to give a wrong answer rather than lose face or cause another to lose face by saying "no". For example, if someone who is higher in status asks for information from someone lower in status, such as "Is this the way to the station?" the usual response is "do phai", "that must be", even though that is not true. This response may frustrate Americans who think getting accurate information is important, but Vietnamese feel comfortable because they provide a socially responsible answer. The same happens in Thailand. When an American asked directions, "a gentleman kindly gave detailed directions, and even suggested a bus he could take, but it all turned out to be wrong" (Kohls 1981).

The Maxims of Manner do not necessarily hold true for all societies either. In a discussion of indirectness in the Japanese communication style, Okabe (1987) pointed out that even though the Cooperative Principle and Speech Act Theory can help answer the question of the indirect speech act to
some extent, they are not sufficient for explaining the indirectness of Japanese communication. The discrepancy between the meaning of the surface sentence uttered and the real meaning that the speaker intends are so great that the communicator can not interpret the real meaning of the sentence without an understanding of traditional rules of Japanese communication. In Japanese society, "to express the speaker's demand, rejection, assertion, or criticism to the hearer directly is often regarded as impoliteness (Okabe 1987, p.135)". Thus "not to demand, reject, assert yourself, or criticize the listener directly" is much more dominant in Japanese communication than the maxim of "not to speak ambiguously". Not knowing these norms of speech, that contradict the Maxims of Manner, an American may feel annoyed. An experience from Beebe and Takahashi (1989) illustrates this conflict: When an American professor made a suggestion with which the student disagreed, a Japanese student indicated this by an extended series of questions about the reasoning behind the suggestion. Finally the professor realized the flaws in his own reasoning. The Japanese student's approach was intended to keep the professor from losing face while pointing out the problems with the professor's reasoning. However, the result was quite different and resulted in the professor feeling quite foolish.

Hence, it is probable that the Cooperative Principle
would have to be stated differently for different communicative styles and contexts in different linguistic communities. This has led to the cross-linguistic study of conversational practices and the investigation of the Politeness Principle by various authors.
**Politeness Theory**

Politeness is one of the guiding principles for human interactions, whose purpose is to consider the feelings of others, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport (Hill, Ide, Ikuta, Kawasaki, and Ogino 1986, p.349). In general, politeness is one of the forces working to cause flouting of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle in all languages. Brown and Levinson (1987) state: "In the case of linguistic pragmatics a great deal of the mismatch between what is 'said' and what is 'implicated' can be attributed to politeness, so that concern with the 'representational functions' of language should be supplemented with attention to 'social functions' of language, which seem to motivate much linguistic detail..." (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.2-3). The politeness theories developed under the influence of the Speech Act Theory are done by Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1978) and Leech (1983).

Lakoff (1973) suggests that languages have many different concepts, including politeness, that involve extralinguistic contextual factors, e.g. respective status of speaker and addressee, the type of social situation, the real world knowledge or beliefs a speaker brings to a discourse, etc. She posits “Rules of Pragmatic Competence” (Lakoff 1973, p.296):

1. Be clear.
2. Be polite.

Apparently, these two rules can coincide in their effects, reinforce each other, or more frequently be in conflict depending on the circumstances. The last characteristic of these two rules seems to be most obvious when the social relationship takes precedence over the actual communication of important ideas. She agrees with Brown and Levinson (1978) that politeness causes a breach of the rules of conversation as postulated by Grice (1975). Unlike those of Brown and Levinson (1978) and of Leech (1983), Lakoff's (1973) notion of politeness is not very detailed or formalized. She provides three rules of politeness (Lakoff 1973, p.88):

1. Formality: Don't impose./ Remain aloof.
2. Hesitancy: Allow the addressee his options.
3. Equality or camaraderie: Act as though you and addressee were equal./ Make him/her feel good.

It is obvious that specific details in executing politeness strategies will vary from culture to culture, or even from individual to individual within a culture. “Speakers apply the various politeness strategies and tactics in different ways according to their desire to change the social distance, their belief about what kind of situation a certain behavior is appropriate for, that is, the degree to which they evaluate a contemplated act as face threatening, and finally, according to their personal styles” (Green
In contrast to the American culture, in the Lebanese culture, asking personal questions is considered appropriate to show intimacy, politeness, and interest in the addressee's welfare. It seems that given any of the aforementioned theories, asking personal questions creates a conflict between two principles:

1. Do not invade the privacy of H./ Do not threaten the negative face of H.
2. Show interest in the affairs of H./ Appeal to the positive face of H.

The conflict between 1 and 2 is not explained by any of the theories, yet Lebanese culture allows 2 to override 1, while American culture allows 1 to override 2. The explanation of this is that even though the Politeness Principles universally hold true for human interactions, the specific details of politeness strategies vary from culture to culture. This stems from traditions and beliefs of people in a particular society. The conversational devices for politeness strategies depend both on culture and context, which has been exemplified by Bruch's (1989) treatment of politeness in Japanese.

Julie Joy Bruch (1989) undertook a crosscultural study, a pragmalinguistic characterization of Japanese and English, to show the extent to which the Maxims of the Cooperative Principle, the notion of "face", and the rules of politeness are universally applicable. She found that politeness is the
most salient factor in many exchanges in Japanese to avoid "face-threatening acts". Politeness strategies in Japanese are accomplished by the use of implicatural devices, often consisting of violations of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle. There are three particular aspects of Japanese culture that affect the rationale behind the use of politeness tactics:

1. The Japanese value the feeling of group membership and the social requisite of maintaining harmony. Group membership is valued more than individualism. Polite behavior for the Japanese is to show regard for the feelings and opinions of others, and to admit the feeling of interdependence and social interrelatedness (Bruch 1989, p.168). This maintains the important value of social harmony that is reflected by being vague and indirect in conversations to avoid confrontations.

2. The Japanese recognize a vertical hierarchy within the group, which means that juniors have to show respect to seniors by acknowledging their dependence; seniors, on the other hand, feel the responsibility to take care of juniors. In Japanese society, it is an honor to be asked to take care of somebody because the person asked is considered to hold a higher position in society. Bruch (1989) summarizes this in the Interdependency Maxim:

"Interdependency Maxim: Reinforce the interdependence and interrelatedness of group members in appropriate social
settings by showing recognition of your dependence on people of higher status and by attributing someone of higher status with the power and willingness to help you (Bruch 1989, p.176).

3. The third characteristic of Japanese culture is "debt-sensitivity" which means that the Japanese explicitly put themselves in debt to the hearer for causing her/him difficulty. The linguistic manifestations of politeness in Japanese include:

1. Honorifics, final particles, and (fe)male speech, realized as morphological and semantic encoding of social factors in communication. The adjustment of semantic choice depends on contextual factors including the relative status of participants in conversations and speaker attitude (Bruch 1989, pp.162).

2. Rhetorical questions or a kind of repetition is used in responding to questions to show sympathy for the person asking the question and also to soften the answer. This can also substitute for an answer (Bruch 1989, pp.165).

3. Softeners like understatements or the addition of semantic items employed to suggest tentativeness in assertion to show modesty of the speaker and to lessen the possibility of conflict if the hearer has a different opinion (Bruch 1989, p.165).

Bruch's (1989) examples in Japanese show that sometimes the maxims of the Cooperative Principle are violated in
order to maintain harmony and to reinforce feelings of group membership. Bruch (1989) posits another Politeness Maxim that leads to the breach of the Cooperative Principle: "Empathy Maxim: Consider and adopt the point of view of the addressee" (Bruch 1989, p.176).

She associates face-wants with the maxims of the Politeness Principle in a hierarchical order for Japanese. Major principles and subprinciples are ordered to predict overriding of maxims to achieve particular face-wants.

A. Desire for Harmony and Group Membership
   1. Interdependency Maxim (Bruch 1989)
   2. Agreement Maxim (Leech 1983)
   3. Modesty Maxim (Leech 1983)

B. Desire to be approved of
   1. Approbation Maxim (Leech 1983)

C. Desire to be unimpeded
   1. Tact Maxim (Leech 1983)

Bruch (1989) omits one of Leech's Maxims of Politeness (1983), the Generosity Maxim because there isn't any example from Japanese that involves generosity. Furthermore, it was suggested that in at least one situation, Modesty disallows Generosity (Leech's (1983) example of offering a guest only one piece of food). Thus she concludes that there is reason to think that it may be impolite to go on-record as being generous in Japan (Bruch 1989, p.177).
Brown and Levinson (1978) renamed Lakoff's (1973) "Don't impose" as "negative face" and "Be friendly" as "positive face". Their notion of "face" was based on Goffman's (1967) concepts of face and face-saving, assuming that every competent speaker of a language, a Model Person, has "face", a public self-image that s/he wants to preserve. Goffman (1967) defines social relationships as: "The combined effect of the rule of self-respect and the rule of considerateness is that the person tends to conduct himself during an encounter so as to maintain both his own face and the face of the other participants" (Goffman 1967, p.11).

Face is culturally defined as consisting of two specific kinds of desires, called face-wants, attributed by interactants to one another: negative face is the desire of the individual not to be imposed on, positive face is the desire of the individual to be approved of (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.13). The incentive for formulating politeness strategies is the desire to avoid anyone's losing face in normal interaction. Actions that threaten these desires are called face-threatening acts. When engaged in social interactions, people are expected to save both the positive and negative face of other people. However, some speech acts are intrinsically face-threatening since those acts by nature run contrary to the face-wants of either the hearer or speaker. For example, orders and requests threaten the hearer's negative face, by indicating that the speaker
does not intend to avoid impeding the hearer's freedom of action. Complaints and disagreements threaten positive face, by indicating that the speaker does not care about the hearer's feelings or wants (Brown and Levinson 1978, p.70-1).

In performing face threatening acts, participants have to calculate the potential face risks, e.g. how much they are risking in performing those acts. In order to mitigate face threats, politeness strategies are employed. The strategies used for saving negative face are negative politeness strategies, and the strategies used for saving positive face are positive politeness strategies.
Table 4: Politeness Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Politeness Strategies</th>
<th>Positive Politeness Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. be conventionally indirect</td>
<td>1. attend to hearers interests, wants, needs, goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. question, hedge</td>
<td>2. exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy with the hearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. be pessimistic;</td>
<td>3. intensify interest to the hearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. minimize the imposition</td>
<td>4. use in-group identity markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. give deference</td>
<td>5. seek agreement and avoid disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. apologize</td>
<td>6. presuppose common ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. impersonalize speaker/hearer by avoiding pronouns (I, you)</td>
<td>7. give goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation to the hearer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. go on record as incurring a debt or as not indebting the hearer</td>
<td>8. presuppose the speaker's knowledge of and concern for the hearer's wants</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. nominalize</td>
<td>9. offer, promise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. state the face-threatening act as a general rule</td>
<td>10. include both speaker and hearer in activity</td>
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<td>11. be optimistic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. give reasons</td>
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<td>13. assume reciprocity</td>
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<td>14. joke</td>
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</table>
Positive politeness is redress to the addressee's positive face; the addressee's want to be approved or thought of as desirable; that is, the speaker has to communicate that her/his own wants are in some respects similar to the addressee's wants with an implication of cooperative wanting of the same wants; that (s)he is not in deadly competition with the hearer over some mutual wants. Positive politeness consists of conveying mutual interest, agreement, approval, ingroup solidarity, and common ground (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.290). Negative politeness is redress to the addressee's negative face to prevent imposition, while asserting a desire to avoid interfering with addressee's freedom of action. This is done by apologizing, giving deference, or not presuming too much (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.129). The last strategy to be employed is indirect politeness or off-record face threatening acts by inviting conversational implicature or by being vague or ambiguous. This way the speaker can not be held responsible for a particular interpretation of her/his act. The comprehension of the intended meaning of an utterance by the hearer largely depends on appropriate contextual cues (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.211).
FIGURE 1. Chart of Strategies: Positive Politeness
(From: Brown and Levinson 1987, p.102)
FIGURE 2. Chart of Strategies: Negative Politeness

(From: Brown and Levinson 1987, p.131)
FIGURE 3. Chart of Strategies: Off-Record

(From: Brown and Levinson 1987, p.214)
Brown and Levinson (1978) claimed that speakers select a more redressive strategy as the relative face-threat increases. "Redressive" are those strategies used to give face to the hearer because the speaker recognizes the hearer's face-wants and seeks to counteract the potential damage of the face-threatening act by indicating clearly that s/he intends no threat. The amount of face threatened by a face-threatening act is relative to the relationship between social factors, e.g. social distance between speaker and hearer, power of the hearer over the speaker, and relative status of a particular type of act within a given culture. Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed five strategies of politeness, from least to most redressive:

1. do without redressive action, baldly on-record;  
2. use positive politeness;  
3. use negative politeness;  
4. do it off-record;  
5. don't do the face-threatening act.

As the relative face-threat increases, speakers will select a more redressive strategy. Since negative politeness strategies are more redressive than positive politeness strategies, a speaker is likely to select negative politeness strategies (e.g. indirectness) over positive politeness when the relative face-threat is fairly high, and positive politeness strategies (e.g. interest) over negative when the relative face-threat is low.
Brown and Levinson (1978) claimed that their politeness theory can offer a framework for comparing crosscultural differences in politeness. They proposed that the amount of face-threat carried by a particular speech act in a particular situation \((Wx)\) is determined by the sum of the power the hearer has over the speaker \((P)\), the social distance between the speaker and the hearer \((D)\), and the absolute imposition inherent to the speech act \((R)\). Since different cultures have different values attached to \(P\), \(D\), and \(R\), each culture has a different assessment of the seriousness of the face-threatening act, even in the same speech act. These weightings allow a more specific identification of "the affective quality of interaction characteristic of members of a society" (Brown and Levinson 1978, p.248). Members of different societies tend to employ certain kinds of politeness strategies according to the cultural values attached to \(P\), \(D\), and \(R\). In cultures with a high level of weight attached to face-threatening acts, members of the society tend to employ more redressive politeness strategies (negative rather than positive politeness strategies). Brown and Levinson (1978) made predictions about the typical distribution of politeness strategies in the culture by identifying the relative weights of \(P\) and \(D\) operating in the predominant social dyad of a culture: "Thus cultures can be distinguished between positive ... and negative politeness cultures. In negative
politeness cultures, the general level of Wx tends to be high, impositions are considered to be large, and the values for social distance and relative power are high. Negative politeness cultures are 'those lands of standoffish creatures like the British (in the eyes of the Americans), and the Japanese (in the eyes of the British)'

(S) (Brown and Levinson 1978, p.250).

Societies like Germany also belong to the negative politeness category (so people are more likely to use negative politeness or off-record strategies), whereas societies like the US belong to the positive politeness category, so the general levels of Wx tend to remain low, impositions are considered to be small, and values for relative power and social distance are relatively small, so speakers are more likely to use positive politeness or bald on-record strategies.

Scollon and Scollon (1981) introduced different terms in characterizing politeness systems: "solidarity politeness" was used instead of "positive politeness" and "deference politeness" instead of "negative politeness". A solidarity politeness system in their framework would also be likely to employ low numbered strategies (baldly on record and positive politeness), while a deference politeness system is likely to employ higher numbered strategies (negative politeness, off-record, or avoidance of the face-threatening act).
Unlike Brown and Levinson (1978), who claimed that face may only be given by speakers to hearers, not asserted by speakers in regard to themselves, Scollon and Scollon (1981) suggested that solidarity politeness attends not only to the positive face of the hearer, it also strengthens the positive face of the speaker, because using solidarity politeness by stating sameness or commonality involves both a hearer and a speaker. Negative face, on the contrary can only be saved by the hearer at the speaker's loss.

Table 5: Face and Politeness System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>speaker's negative face</th>
<th>speaker's positive face</th>
<th>hearer's negative face</th>
<th>hearer's positive face</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deference</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>politeness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solidarity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From: Scollon and Scollon 1981, p. 176)

Leech (1983) introduced the Politeness Principle to complement Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975). He claimed that the Cooperative Principle alone can not explain why people fail to observe the Maxims of Conversation. Thus the Politeness Principle should be added to the Cooperative Principle to help interpret what the Cooperative Principle alone can not. He formulates the Politeness Principle in a
general way: "Minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs, maximize (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (Leech 1983, p. 81).

The Politeness Principle has several maxims expressed in positive and negative aspects:

Table 6: Maxims of the Politeness Principle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TACT MAXIM</th>
<th>Minimize cost to other</th>
<th>Maximize benefit to other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENEROSITY MAXIM</td>
<td>Minimize benefit to self</td>
<td>Maximize cost to self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROBATION MAXIM</td>
<td>Minimize dispraise of other</td>
<td>Maximize praise of other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODESTY MAXIM</td>
<td>Minimize praise to self</td>
<td>Maximize dispraise of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGREEMENT MAXIM</td>
<td>Minimize disagreement between self &amp; other</td>
<td>Maximize agreement between self &amp; other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYMPATHY MAXIM</td>
<td>Minimize antipathy between self &amp; other</td>
<td>Maximize sympathy between self &amp; other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these maxims operates on a scale of cost/benefit value whereby politeness goes higher if the cost goes higher to the speaker and the benefit goes higher to the hearer. The first four maxims work in pairs, number one with two, and three with four, respectively. In Leech's (1983) framework, politeness is focused more strongly on
"other" than on "self", and negative politeness is a more weighty consideration than positive politeness (Leech 1983, p.133).

In treating the Tact Maxim, Leech (1983) proposes five scales that he claims are highly relevant to politeness and have "a bearing on the degree of tact appropriate to a given speech situation" (Leech 1983, pp.123). The five scales are:

1. Social Distance in which the overall degree of respectfulness, for a given speech situation, depends largely on relatively permanent factors of status, age, degree of intimacy and temporary role of the person relative to another. An example of Social Distance is the choice between formal and informal pronouns of address in German as in "Sie" (formal) and "du" (informal).

2. Authority which means relative power of one participant over another, e.g. the student - teacher relationship in which the teacher has more power than the student.

3. Cost-benefit according to which is estimated the cost or benefit of the proposed action A to S or to H, e.g. "Go get the mail" has more cost to H than "Have another drink". The more cost to H, the less polite and the more benefit to H, the more polite.

4. Optionality according to which illocutions are ordered regarding the amount of choice that S allows to H, that is, in proposing some action beneficial to H, S should bias the illocution toward a positive outcome by restricting H's
opportunity of saying "No", e.g. "Have another drink" is a positively polite way to make an offer.

5. Indirectness according to which, from S's point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path (in terms of means-end analysis) connecting the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal. The more indirect an illocution is, the more polite. E.g., "Could you possibly get the mail?" is more indirect and more polite than "Go get the mail".

Leech's (1983) scales of Social Distance and Authority are equivalent, respectively, to the D and P variables of Brown and Levinson (1978). Cost-benefit and Optionality are equal to the ranking of the imposition (R). Finally, what appears in Brown and Levinson's model as a ranking of politeness strategies from most to least indirect (Brown and Levinson 1978, p.65) is treated in Leech as a measurement on a scale of indirectness (Leech 1983, pp.107).

Leech (1983) viewed negative politeness as minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions, and positive politeness as maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions. He pointed out that each society has different norms of "being polite", so different societies operate maxims in different ways by privileging one maxim over another.

Since Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed the framework for politeness, various communication studies have been
conducted based on Brown and Levinson's theory. Overall, they found that the model of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978) cannot adequately explain people's face-work in communicative interaction.

Lim (1988) claimed that the one-face-at-a-time approach of Brown and Levinson (1978), that is based on the assumption that one communicative act threatens only one kind of face, either positive or negative face, is not adequate to explain the face-threat actually carried by communicative acts, since many speech acts threaten both types of face-want at the same time. The utterance "Could you repeat that, please?" threatens both negative and positive face, even though Brown and Levinson (1978) would say that this expression threatens only the negative face of the hearer, since this speech act is a request that contradicts the hearer's desire not to be imposed on. However, Lim (1988) pointed out that this act also threatens the positive face of the hearer, because this request violates the hearer's desire to be approved by implying that the work done is not satisfactory. Similarly "Don't do it that way!" threatens not only the hearer's positive face but also the negative face, even though Brown and Levinson (1978) might say that this utterance threatens only the hearer's positive face. However, according to Lim (1988), this speech act in addition to disapproving what the hearer said, imposes on the hearer the idea that s/he'd better
adopt what the speaker is about to say (Lim 1988, p.8-9).

Baxter (1984) and Craig, Tracy, and Spisak (1986) also contended that Brown and Levinson's model (1978), that assumed that positive and negative politeness strategies are mutually exclusive categories, does not accurately account for communicative interactions. They found 'multifunctionality' of an expression to be present, different superstrategies were realized simultaneously in the same language. In the expressions containing formulations such as "You could do me a favor", which casts the request as a kind of opportunity that is being offered to the hearer, two main superstrategies, positive and negative politeness concurred (Craig, Tracy, and Spisak 1986, p.453). In other words, a speaker tries to save both positive and negative face in a single message.

Shimanoff (1985, 1987) reconceptualized Brown and Levinson's (1978) framework to account for the face-needs of conversants in a disclosure of emotions. She identified four categories of emotional disclosures in terms of the degree they honor or threaten the face-needs of communicators: face-honoring, face-compensating, face-neutral, and face-threatening. "Disclosures that express pleasant emotions regarding the hearer (e.g. "I love you") are face-honoring; they communicate that the hearer is the source of pleasure and thus is approved. Expressions of regret for transgressions against the hearer (e.g. "I am sorry") are
face-compensating; acknowledgments of one's regret and apologies for transgressions against the hearer are compensations for infringements. Disclosures of pleasant emotions regarding an absent other (e.g. "I am glad Pat will be handling that project") and hostile emotions directed toward an absent other (e.g. "I am so angry at my husband") are face-neutral; they neither honor nor threaten the conversants' need for approval, nor do they provide compensation to the conversants. Several types of emotional disclosures are face-threatening. Emotional expressions of vulnerabilities (e.g. "You hurt my feelings") or hostilities (e.g. "I am mad at you") vis-a-vis the hearer are face-threatening as they imply disapproval of the hearer. Disclosing regrets for transgressions against absent others (e.g. "I regret what I did to my wife") is also face-threatening; such disclosures threaten the speaker's face by implying an error on the speaker's part, and thus they represent potential reasons for diminished approval. Furthermore, in contrast to such disclosures regarding the hearer, regrets for transgressions against absent others are not face-compensating because the person to whom such compensation is due is not present" (Shimanoff 1985, p.149).

In her study of emotional disclosure between spouses, Shimanoff (1985, 1987) pointed out that speakers tend to use face-honoring, face-compensating, and face-neutral strategies more often than face-threatening ones, and that
speakers believe they should be used more often. Similarly face-threatening strategies were found to be more likely in distant relationships than in close relationships (Baxter 1984). These results also support Wolfson's Bulge Theory (1988).

Discourse strategies were found to vary in the attention they give to not only the hearer's face but also the speaker's own positive-face needs (Tracy, Craig, Smith, and Spisak 1984). Thus a politeness theory needs to account for self face and other face as well as negative and positive face.

Ting-Toomey (1988) developed a theory that encompasses the two dimensions of concern, self-face concern and other-face concern, and negative and positive face. Her framework is based on the assumption that people negotiate over two implicit principles: the face-concern principle (self-face, other-face, or mutual face) and the face-need principle (negative face - concern for autonomy, and positive face - concern for inclusion)
Ting-Toomey (1988) explains the above figure as consisting of two conceptual dimensions: the self-concern and other-concern dimension and the positive-face and negative-face need dimension. The self-concern and other-concern dimension refers to the individual's orientation toward attention for self versus other. The positive-face and negative-face dimension refers to the individual's perceived need for association or dissociation. Self positive-face maintenance means the use of certain communication strategies to defend and protect one's need for inclusion and association. Other positive-face maintenance means the use of certain communication strategies to defend and support the other person's need for inclusion and association. Self negative-face maintenance means the use of certain interaction strategies to give oneself freedom and space, and to protect self from other's infringement on one's autonomy. Finally, other negative-face
maintenance means the use of certain interaction strategies to signal respect for the other person's need for freedom, space, and dissociation (Ting-Toomey 1988, p. 88-9).

In conceptualizing the theory of the facework negotiation process, Ting-Toomey (1988) assumed that cultural values and norms influence people's management of facework in a culture. The dimensions of self/other and positive/negative face would be influenced by the cultural interpretation and the cultural expectation levels of the context. Also, certain sets of suprastrategies are more likely to be used by members of any given culture than others. Therefore, it is important to explore the role of culture in the facework negotiation process.

It is generally agreed that one of the most important motives lying behind the indirect use of language is "politeness" (Searle 1975, p.76; Brown and Levinson 1987, p.132; Grimshaw 1989, p.293). Therefore, Grimshaw concludes that indirectness is employed to avoid conflict (Grimshaw 1989, p.293). According to Brown and Levinson (1987) the definition of indirectness is as follows: "Any indirectness - that is any communicative behavior, verbal or non-verbal, that conveys something more than or different from what it literally means - which in context could not be defended as ambiguous between literal and conveyed meaning(s), and therefore provides no line of escape to the speaker or the hearer would serve the same purpose as the more idiomatic
expressions" (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.134). This definition of indirectness leads to the notion of conventional indirectness: the use of phrases and sentences that have contextually unambiguous meanings by virtue of conventionalization that are different from their literal meanings, and indirect speech acts are the most important form of conventional indirectness. The degree of indirectness in formulating utterances in a language depends on social and cultural factors of particular societies, whether the cultural backgrounds emphasize hierarchy (more indirect) as opposed to equality (less indirect), or social harmony (more indirect) as opposed to individualism (less indirect) and also the nature of the social person, e.g. public (more indirect) as opposed to private (less indirect) (Brown and Levinson 1987, p.35).
Conventionalization of Politeness Expressions

Three kinds of politeness are used in speech acts of rejection: positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) that constitute politeness conveyed by means of indirect use of language. One particular feature are conventionalized formulas to express politeness. What makes such formulas conventional? Many scholars (Munro 1970; Searle 1975; Cole 1975; Clark and Lucy 1975; Morgan 1978; Clark 1979; Gibbs 1979, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986) have examined formulaic expressions such as “Can you pass the salt?” concerning how people comprehend and distinguish between the direct and the indirect meaning. Searle (1975, 1979) has developed a set of principles by which a hearer is able to infer what a speaker means when using metaphors, irony, idioms, and indirect speech acts. Briefly stated, they are that
1. the hearer first computes the literal meaning of the sentence;
2. the hearer decides if the literal meaning is inappropriate, given the context;
3. if the literal meaning is inappropriate, the hearer is led to seek an alternative meaning that, depending on the principles of conversation and her/his knowledge of speech acts, should lead her/him to the speaker’s conveyed meaning.
For the expression “Can you pass the salt?”, the hearer first determines the literal meaning of the sentence, given
her/his background assumptions, to come up with an interpretation like “Are you able to pass the salt?” This interpretation about the hearer’s ability lacks any useful communicative function, since the answer is obvious and so the hearer is led to seek another meaning. Since the hearer knows the rules of the conversation, s/he knows that the ability to pass the salt is a preparatory condition of the speech act requesting her/him to do so. Consequently, the hearer is able to infer that the question about her/his ability is likely to be a polite request to actually pass the salt. Searle (1975, 1979) also mentions that politeness is the most prominent motivation for indirectness in requests and certain forms naturally tend to become the conventionally polite way to making indirect requests.

Convention therefore comes to play an important role in understanding indirect meaning. There may be a number of alternative ways of expressing something, but people tacitly agree to use only those particular forms as a matter of convention (Lewis 1969). For interlocutors, the recurrence of many communicative situations has led to the evolution of a variety of conventional linguistic routines to facilitate understanding (Gibbs 1985, p.99).

There are three different aspects in dealing with how people comprehend conveyed meaning of an expression. Most philosophical and linguistic explanations propose that hearers first analyze the literal meaning of an expression
before deriving its nonliteral meaning either via conversational postulates (Gordon and Lakoff 1975); conversational maxims (Grice 1975); or the rules of speech acts (Searle 1975, 1979; Clark and Lucy 1975). Later, Clark (1979), and Clark and Schunk (1980) have suggested that understanding indirect expressions involves simultaneous computation of its both literal and indirect meanings.

Lastly, psychologists (Gibbs 1979, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986; Rumelhart 1979) state that processing the literal meaning of a sentence is not an automatic process. People can comprehend the speaker’s intended meaning in many conventional and metaphoric utterances via established conventions of language use, real world and social knowledge. In spite of the differences in the process of comprehending the conveyed meaning of indirect expressions in their models, linguists and psychologists agree on the importance of linguistic and social contexts in determining the conventionality of a given utterance (Clark 1979; Clark and Schunk 1980; Morgan 1978; Munro 1970; Searle 1975, 1979; Gibbs 1979, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986; Rumelhart 1979).

Searle (1975) has provided the answer to why certain forms will tend to become conventionally established while others are not: "The first part of the answer is this: the theory of speech acts and the principles of conversational cooperation do, indeed, provide a framework within which indirect illocutionary acts can be meant and understood.
However, within this framework certain forms will tend to become conventionally established as the standard idiomatic forms for indirect speech acts. While keeping their literal meanings, they will acquire conventional uses, e.g. polite forms of requests" (Searle 1975, pp.76).
This chapter reviewed politeness theory as explored both in linguistics and communication and observed differences regarding facework and culture. This chapter also reviewed previous studies of refusals and presented some taxonomies of refusals. This chapter also examined the findings of these previous works of refusals. Most of these studies (Takahashi and Beebe (1987); Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990); Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990, 1991, 1992); Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992a, 1992b) compared the speech patterns of native and nonnative speakers. The nonnative speakers of Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) studies were Japanese, and the nonnative speakers of Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990, 1991, 1992) were mostly from Asia and Africa.

This study uses a variation of the taxonomy of Beebe and Cummings (1985) in explaining the speech act of refusals by Germans and Americans. This taxonomy was chosen because it is the most detailed of the reviewed taxonomies, and because it is closest to the data collected in support of this study’s findings.
Chapter 3

Methodology

In order to investigate refusal strategies among Germans and Americans, the primary investigator developed two separate questionnaires that were then administered in two native language settings. The 18 situations are all possible combinations of the three variables comprising this study. These situations were developed based on the daily occurrences in the life of a graduate student. Some situations occurred more than once with a change in variables, while other situations were developed for a one time occurrence only. Written questionnaires, containing role descriptions of these informal everyday situations were used in investigating the linguistic strategies available to speakers to perform rejections. The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A and also on the Internet at http://www.olemiss.edu/~abeckers/thesis.html. This method allowed a rather easy elicitation of data from a large sample of subjects, and effectively controlled the contextual variables important to the study.
Subjects

The native speaker subjects in the study were graduate students enrolled at four American Universities and at four Universities in the Federal Republic of Germany. Choosing students is an attempt to ensure as much homogeneity as possible in social class, level of income, educational background, occupation, and age range. Also, university students are expected to have acquired the appropriate sociolinguistic rules that represent "norms" in a given society, and practically speaking, students are the most accessible population to me. Participation was entirely voluntary and subjects could withdraw at any time. The study was carried out during the spring and summer semester of 1998.
Questionnaire

A number of researchers have used questionnaires to elicit how to perform specific speech acts appropriately in different situations. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985), e.g. investigated learners’ intuitions of politeness in Hebrew by means of a questionnaire consisting of descriptions of situations followed by a list of possible strategies for performing the speech acts in each situation which asked the subjects to rate each strategy for politeness on a three-point scale.

Observational performance data have also been used to investigate the comprehension of illocutionary acts. Carrell (1981), e.g. had learners listen and react to requests, while Kasper (1984) gauged learners’ comprehension on the basis of the kind of responses that they provided to their interlocutor’s previous turn.

The study of illocutionary acts has made use of discourse completion tasks, role plays, and naturally occurring speech. Discourse completion tasks have been extensively used. In the Crosscultural Speech Act Realization Project (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989) a series of studies involving subjects from a variety of language backgrounds (American English, British English, Australian English, Canadian French, Hebrew, German, Danish) made use of a questionnaire consisting of 16 situations. Each situation was briefly described and was then followed
Role plays also provide the subjects with a description of a context calling for the performance of a particular illocutionary act. But in this case the subjects are asked to respond orally. The role plays may be performed with the help of puppets (Walters 1980), or by the subjects interacting with other subjects (Kasper 1981), or with the researcher. The data collected from role plays provide information about learners' ability to construct a discourse context for the specific act under investigation.

The use of naturally occurring speech as a basis for studying interlanguage pragmatics has been less common, partly because of the difficulty of assembling a sufficient corpus of data. Wolfson (1989b) used this approach to investigate non-native speakers' complimenting behavior. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1990) used data collected from academic advising sessions to investigate differences between native and non-native speakers.

Each of these methods has its advantages and disadvantages. Controlled methods such as the discourse completion questionnaire allow for large amounts of data to be collected fast, provide information about the kinds of semantic formulas that learners use to realize different illocutionary acts, and reveal the social factors that
learners think are important for speech act performance. However, a number of studies that compared data obtained from discourse completion questionnaires with that from observational studies (Beebe and Cummings 1985; Rintell and Mitchell 1989; Wolfson, Marmor, and Jones 1989) have found differences with regard to the actual wording used, the semantic formulas employed, the length of learners’ responses, and the size of the discourse context created. These differences raise questions about the extent to which the elicited data can serve as evidence of learners’ pragmatic competence, as they may not actually reflect actual language use. Also, as Bonikowska (1988) has pointed out, in naturally occurring contexts speakers always have the option of “opting out”, whereas discourse completion questionnaires oblige learners to perform linguistically even when they would normally keep quiet. Wolfson (1989b) has also argued that learners’ intuitions about what they would say in a particular situation are not reliable, as the sociolinguistic knowledge they draw on in performing illocutionary acts lies beneath the threshold of consciousness. On the other hand, it is difficult to obtain a sufficient corpus of data from ethnographic observation. There is also a danger of the data being unrepresentative of the population under investigation. Work by Wolfson (1983) and Holmes (1986) on the compliments produced by native speakers of English in the United States and New Zealand was
based on data collected from predominantly female, graduate students. Also, if a pen-and-paper approach is used, as in some of Wolfson’s early work (1981), it is difficult to obtain reliable information about the full discourse context of specific illocutionary acts. Kasper and Dahl (1991) conclude that researchers are “caught between a rock and a hard place”.

The elicitation method used for this data collection was a discourse completion test. This test was originally developed by Blum-Kulka (1982) and has been widely used for the collection of data on speech act realization both within and across language groups as mentioned before.

The 18 situations include four stimuli for eliciting refusals: requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Each situation consists of three different variables: social status (low, equal, high), social distance (stranger, acquaintance, intimate), and gender (same, opposite). These three variables have been found to be important factors that have resulted in linguistic variation in previous studies.

Brown and Levinson (1978) contend that the assessment of the seriousness of a face-threatening act involves the social distance and the relative power of a speaker and a hearer in most cultures. Blum-Kulka and House (1989) found that the perception of social dominance was correlated with the request’s level of indirectness. Indirectness and politeness are positively correlated even though not necessarily in a
linear fashion (Blum-Kulka 1987). The more the situational factors call for politeness, the more indirect the statement is likely to be. Searle (1975) argued that politeness is the most prominent motivation for employing indirect speech acts. Scollon and Scollon (1983) expected indirectness to increase with social distance, and to decrease with social power. Olshtain (1989) found a negative correlation between social status and the level of internal intensification, the lower the status of the apologizer in comparison to the apologizee, the more likely the Hebrew speaker is to intensify the expression of apology. Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) found that the status of interlocutors is a much stronger conditioning factor in the speech of Japanese, whereas the degree of familiarity or the social distance factor is more important to Americans. Wolfson (1989b) also contended that social distance is the most important factor in conditioning the speech variation of Americans.

Wolfson, Marmor, and Jones (1989) argued that research on language and gender done over the past 20 years has shown that the gender of interlocutors affects their linguistic behavior: in the case of the US data, there is a gender bias in the roles of the participants in the situations used to elicit apologies. It is always a male who is to offer the apology in the distant relationship. However, Blum-Kulka, Danet, and Gherson (1985) found that gender was not
significantly associated with the choice of request strategies.

The variables of social distance and social power were chosen because these two factors seem to be the most important in conditioning linguistic variation, as demonstrated in many studies. Gender was chosen in order to find out how this variable can affect speech variation, since its influence is not yet clear.

The questionnaire consists of texts that represent socially different situations. Each text is a short description of the situation, specifying the setting, the role relationship of the participants, and the necessary context for the realization of the speech act. At the end of the text, subjects are asked to react verbally to the described situation, thereby providing the speech act aimed at. The questionnaire contains eighteen such situations. Besides filling in responses to these situations, subjects were only asked for age and for ‘living abroad’ experiences (where, when, how long). In addition to this, American subjects were asked for their racial background. Subjects were not asked to identify themselves in any way. All questionnaires were color-coded for gender. Since the questionnaire was used in different cultures and languages, it was adapted to the respective linguistic norms. Besides changes of names and locations, the suitability of both the setting and the function of the speech act in the given
culture was different for the two language groups.
Administration of the Questionnaire

A Pilot Questionnaire was given to three intact classes in the School of Education at the University of Mississippi to eliminate potential problems from the questionnaire before it was given to the target population.

Later the questionnaire was given to intact classes at four American and four German universities by local instructors. Participation was entirely voluntary and subjects could withdraw at any time. Extra credit was given to American participants by their local instructors. If interested, participants were offered the possibility to receive a copy of the analyzed data at a later time.
Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed by the writer of this dissertation and additionally three native speakers of German and three native speakers of American English evaluated the same data to ensure validity and reliability of the obtained results. All three native speakers and the writer of this dissertation had to agree on the classification of each rejection for it to enter the data corpus.

The analyzed data were tabulated and summarized by frequencies and percentages to examine the influence of culture on the speech act of rejection. The findings are presented in Chapter Four.
Limitations

There are some drawbacks to this method of data collection for this type of study. Most important, it is hard to tell how representative the written answers are of what subjects actually say in spontaneous conversations. Even subjects may choose specific linguistic forms based on familiarity with the spelling of one word rather than another. Further, subjects may perceive writing as a more formal activity than speaking, and therefore choose a more formal language on the questionnaire. But, nevertheless, the questionnaire presents controlled contexts for collecting linguistic data representing a range of strategies elicited from many subjects in two languages. Since this study investigates the differences in rejection strategies in two different cultures, it compares the different norms in the speech act of rejection in different cultures. Thus this crosscultural comparability calls for stereotyped responses, and they can be obtained effectively by written elicitation techniques. A large amount of data is collected for comparing specific speech behaviors in different groups, and this is virtually impossible to do with spontaneous speech. Furthermore, gathering naturalistic data is very difficult, since the occurrence of certain speech acts is random and unpredictable. It would be almost impossible and highly inefficient to collect data to analyze the speech behavior
for the variables of interest. Thus, considering the necessity for experimental control and practical effectiveness, the discourse completion test was the most appropriate methodological instrument for this study.
Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Instrument

The elicitation method used for this data collection was a discourse completion test. This test was originally developed by Blum-Kulka (1982) and has been widely used for the collection of data on speech act realization both within and across language groups as mentioned before in Chapter 3. For this study, the primary investigator developed four separate questionnaires (American Female, American Male, German Female, and German Male) (Appendix A or http://www.olemiss.edu/~abeckers/thesis.html) that were then administered in two native language settings. The 18 situations were all possible combinations of the three variables comprising this study: social status (low, equal, high), social distance (stranger, acquaintance, intimate), and gender (same, opposite). The situations were developed based on the daily occurrences in the life of a graduate student. Some situations occurred more than once with a change in variables, while other situations were developed for a one time occurrence only.

Each text contained a short description of the situation, specifying the setting, the role relationship of
the participants, and the necessary context for the realization of the speech act. At the end of the text, subjects were asked to react verbally to the described situation, thereby providing the speech act aimed at. Besides filling in responses to these situations, subjects were only asked for age and for "living abroad" experiences (where, when, how long). In addition to this, American subjects were asked for their racial background. Subjects were not asked to identify themselves in any way. All questionnaires were color-coded for gender. Since the questionnaire was used in different cultures and languages, it was adapted to the respective linguistic norms. Besides changes of names and locations, the suitability of both the setting and the function of the speech act in the given culture was different for the two language groups.

Given as much time as they needed to complete the questionnaire, the participants had time to plan and write down their best possible answer. The questionnaire was also open-ended so that the informants could respond in any way they wished. The final questionnaire was administered to four groups of 50 native speakers in the Southeastern, Western, Northern, and Southwestern United States, and four groups of 50 native speakers in Southern, Northern, Western, and Eastern Germany.

The results were a measure of what native speakers consider to be normal linguistic behavior.
This approach allowed to gather a great deal more data in comparable situations for many more subjects than would have been possible through random observations of naturally occurring discourse.
Scoring of the Instrument

The collected data was analyzed by the writer of this dissertation and additionally three native speakers of German and three native speakers of American English evaluated the same data to ensure validity and reliability of the obtained results. The criteria for selecting judges was that they had to be educated native speakers. Two of the three native speakers of American English were male and one was female. The female judge has a Master's degree in Psychology and works as a Children Counselor in Memphis / TN. One of the two males judges has a PhD degree in TESOL, the second male judge is an undergraduate student in computer science at the University of Mississippi right now. Two of the three native speakers of German were female and one was male. The male judge was a student of German language and literature and is presently working as a TV script writer in Essen / Germany. One of the two female judges has a PhD degree in TESOL, while the second female judge has a Master's degree in Modern Languages (German) and is presently teaching German at a college in Memphis / TN. The six judges were between 33 and 45 years old. All three native speakers and the writer of this dissertation had to agree on the classification of each rejection for it to enter the data corpus. After going over all 7200 rejections, 56 rejections (2%) were excluded from the American data and 31 rejections (0.8%) were excluded from the German data.
These 87 rejections were excluded either because the three native speakers and the writer of this dissertation could not agree on a classification or because they agreed to exclude it since it was not considered a serious answer.

The task of the judges was to characterize the responses according to a descriptive rating scale for the effect of the three variables and their respective interactions. New categories were added to the table on the basis of the data, while unused categories were deleted. The complete list of semantic formulas can be seen in Table 7.
Results of the Pilot Study

Pretesting the instrument is an essential phase of survey research. Pretesting is the "trouble-shooting phase in which to look for the questionnaire's weaknesses" (Backstrom and Hush 1963, p.129). The objectives of the pretest are to identify any ambiguity that exists regarding the survey questions, and determine how well the instrument works (Green and Tull 1978). Hunt, Sparkman and Wilcox (1982) classify the aspects of the questionnaire to be pretested into three major categories. The first category involves pretesting the length and layout of the questionnaire, as well as the format and sequence of the questions used. The second category involves pretesting some individual questions which the researcher feels may be confusing or may contain circumstances unfamiliar to the respondents. The third category requires pretesting the data analysis procedures such as the coding and tabulating procedures.

Pretesting procedures are often based on small samples and limited analytical tools (Hunt, Sparkman and Wilcox 1982). Due to these limitations, researchers should not try to look for support of their hypotheses or to generalize the respondents' responses based on the pretest results. In pretesting the current research questionnaire, the above steps and considerations were followed.

Prior to conducting the actual survey, a pilot study
was conducted in three intact undergraduate classes in the School of Education at the University of Mississippi, using 185 subjects who completed the questionnaire in the presence of the investigator during the fall semester of 1997. The principal researcher insured the respondents that their participation was entirely voluntary and that their responses would be kept strictly confidential. The questionnaires were completed on sight to allow the investigator to observe any uneasiness, confusion, or resistance experienced by the respondents. The primary objective of the pilot study was to see whether the different scenarios created the desired impressions. The researcher wanted to examine the way respondents reacted to the profiles given.

With respect to the length, respondents spent an average of 10 minutes filling out the questionnaire. Since this response time is not deemed by the subjects to be excessive, the length of the instrument appears to be satisfactory.

The results of the pilot study suggested that respondents could distinguish between the different scenarios. Thus the different treatments produced divergent impressions of the hypothetical situations.

Based on the respondents' feedback, the format and sequencing of items on the questionnaire was refined. As a result the following changes were made to the questionnaire:
* every character in the 18 role play situations was given a name;
* some names of characters were changed because of associations subjects made with certain names;
* the order of the role play situations was changed to place similar situations (situations that only varied in one variable) more apart from each other.
**Procedure**

In this experiment, subjects were required to respond in writing to 18 role-play situations, which were presented to them in writing (see Appendix A or http://www.olemiss.edu/~abeckers/thesis.html). The role-play situations were in four versions: American Female, American Male, German Female, and German Male. The situations themselves consisted of general kinds of the speech act of rejection. The rejections that subjects were required to make in this experiment varied in the degree to which the speaker might feel (s)he had the right to make the rejection.

Numerous variables present in natural contexts would make the analysis of such data difficult. In order to limit those variables, the investigator developed a questionnaire which described 18 situations in which interlocutors would express rejection. These situations were presented in written form to a variety of informants and asked them to write what they would say if they found themselves in a similar situation. This approach however places constraints on the data. We would have to assume, as Austin (1962) did, that people would be sincere in their responses - that they would write what they thought they would say. We would have to hope that participants would write down all that they would say orally, and not be tempted by writing fatigue to respond more tersely. Participants would have to be asked
not to edit their oral responses by writing them down in a style they felt would be more appropriate in the written mode, and trust that they had not made significant changes. And by using this approach, we would lose the ability to examine prosodic features and non-verbal elements in the message. However, this approach did have definite advantages. Given as much time as they needed to complete the questionnaire, the participants had time to plan and write down their best possible answer. The results were a measure of what native speakers consider to be normal linguistic behavior. Finally, this approach allowed to gather a great deal more data in comparable situations for many more subjects than would have been possible through random observations of naturally occurring discourse. The situations described the roles and the relationships of the interlocutors, along with the setting and the events. The questionnaire was open-ended so that the informants could respond in any way they wished.

The final questionnaire was administered to four groups of 50 native speakers at universities in the Southeastern, Western, Northern, and Southwestern United States, and four groups of 50 native speakers at universities in Southern, Northern, Western, and Eastern Germany. All subjects were students at nationally accredited Universities, ranging in age from eighteen to forty-two, and they represented a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. Questionnaires were
distributed to the subjects and they were told that their answers would be kept strictly confidential and that there was no need for them to record their names. Most subjects took between 10 and 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
Results

Altogether 400 subjects (200 Native Speakers of German and 200 Native Speakers of English) produced a total of 7200 rejections. Judgments of the responses were made by the writer of this dissertation and additionally by three native speakers of German and by three native speakers of English. The task of the judges was to characterize the responses according to a descriptive rating scale roughly based on the taxonomy of Beebe and Cummings (1985) for the effect of the three variables and their respective interactions.

The principal experimental variables of this study were:

(1) the sex of the subject in relation to the addressee in the role play, with two levels, opposite (o) and same (s);
(2) the relative status / power of the subject in relation to the addressee in the role play, with three levels, low (l), equal (e), and high (h); and (3) the relative distance of the subject in relation to the addressee in the role play, again with three levels, intimate (i), acquaintance (a), and stranger (s).

The refusal strategies of this study were analyzed as a sequence of semantic formulas (Beebe and Cummings 1985). Semantic formulas represent the means by which a particular speech act is accomplished in terms of the primary content of an utterance, such as a reason, an explanation, or an alternative (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1991). For
example, if a respondent refused an invitation to go out to dinner by saying "I'm terribly sorry, but I already have plans. But I'm sure John would love to come." This was analyzed as [regret]+ [excuse]+ [alternative]. New categories were added on the basis of the data, while unused categories were deleted. The complete list of semantic formulas can be seen in Table 7.

The frequency of each formula for each situation was calculated in order to compare the differences in refusal strategies in the two cultures. In this study a response was any utterance or utterances that subjects produced in order to carry out a refusal. Sometimes the utterances were sentences and sometimes they were not.

In order to examine the data in terms of the Bulge theory e.g., whether one employs more elaborated verbal responses to a certain requester than to another, the average number of semantic formulas in each situation was also calculated. That is, the total number of semantic formulas used was divided by the total number of responses. For example, German subjects used an average of 1.71, while American subjects employed 2.25 semantic formulas on average to reject in situation 1. The average number of semantic formulas in each situation is given in Table 8.
Table 7: Categories of Refusal Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0. - Insult / Attack / Critique [+ no]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. - No: No [+ thanking]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. - No: No + Sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. - Negative Willingness: I won’t + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. - Negative Ability: I can’t + no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can’t + sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can’t + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I can’t + excuse / thanking / sorry/ softener / no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I can’t + sorry + excuse [+ thanking]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. - Regret: Sorry [+ thanking]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Regret + thanking +softener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. - Wish: I’d love to but + excuse [+ thanking / softener]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I would but + excuse + sorry / apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. - Explanation: Excuse + no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Excuse + no + thanking [+ I wish I could / future commitment]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Excuse + no + [sorry / softener / alternative / I can’t / future commitment]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Excuse [+ thanking / softener]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Excuse + sorry + [ thanking / softener]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. - Future Acceptance: Future Commitment + I can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Future Commitment + excuse + I can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Future Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Future Commitment + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Future Commitment + excuse + [ I’d love to but / sorry / thanking ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. - Alternative + I can’t [+ sorry]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Alternative + Excuse + I can’t [+ sorry]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Alternative + sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Alternative + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Alternative + excuse + sorry [+ I would but]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Alternative + excuse [+ I’d like to but / apology + alternative]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Alternative + no [+ sorry]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Alternative + no + excuse [+ thanking]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Alternative + no + sorry + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. - Blaming it on Higher Authority + no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Blaming it on Higher Authority + I can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Blaming it on Higher Authority + sorry + [ I would but ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Blaming it on Higher Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Blaming it on Higher Authority + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Blaming it on Higher Authority + excuse + sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Blaming it on Higher Authority + excuse + sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Referring it on Higher Authority [+ acceptance but]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Referring it on Higher Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Referring it on Higher Authority + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Referring it on Higher Authority + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Referring it on Higher Authority + excuse + sorry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Referring it on Higher Authority + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Referring it on Higher Authority + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Referring it on Higher Authority + sorry + excuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. - I don’t think so + no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. I don’t think so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. I don’t think so [+ thanking / softener / excuse + future commitment ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. - Guilt Trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. - Empathy ( make requester drop request)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. - Thanking [ + softener]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. - Acceptance that Functions as Refusal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironic yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set conditions for acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite : leave it open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unenthusiastic : I’ll try [+ thanking]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. - Avoidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hesitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postponement of the Decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H1: American rejections will vary with the status / power of the hearer.

Figure 5: Status - American Subjects

- High
- Equal
- Low

Figure 6: Status - German Subjects

- High
- Equal
- Low
Inspection of Figure 5 indicates that Americans used the most semantic formulas when rejecting a person of higher status (situation 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14), less semantic formulas when rejecting a person of equal status (situation 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10), and the least semantic formulas when rejecting a person of lower status (situation 1, 2, 15, 16, 17, 18). American subjects averaged 2.34 semantic formulas for higher status, 1.95 for equal status, and 1.78 for lower status - a pattern of responses in line with the hypothesis. Inspection of Figure 6 reveals that the German subjects used the highest amount of semantic formulas with equals and an equally lower amount of semantic formulas with higher and lower status persons. Mean semantic formulas used was 1.72 for higher status, 1.85 for equal status, and 1.68 for lower status.
H2: German rejections will vary with the social distance between speaker and hearer.

From inspection of the graph, it appears that Germans used more semantic formulas when rejecting intimates than rejecting acquaintances or strangers (Figure 7). The least social distance for rejecting intimates was (1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6), and the most social distance for rejecting acquaintances was (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4). The least social distance for rejecting intimates was (1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6) in Figure 8, where the Germans used more semantic formulas with intimates (2.46) than with acquaintances (1.38). The graph reveals a somewhat different trend for intimates, with a slightly higher social distance for semantic formulas (2.46) when rejecting acquaintances than when rejecting intimates (1.38) or strangers (1.34).
Figures 7 and 8 depict the scores for German and American subjects with respect to social distance. From inspection of the graph, it appears that Germans used more semantic formulas when rejecting intimates (situation 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16), less semantic formulas when rejecting acquaintances (situation 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9), and the least semantic formulas when rejecting strangers (situation 5, 6, 13, 14, 17, 18). This is reflected in the mean scores, where the Germans used the highest amount of semantic formulas with intimates (1.89), followed by acquaintances (1.80), then strangers (1.57). Inspection of the graph reveals a somewhat different pattern for the Americans, with a slightly higher amount of semantic formulas (2.09) when rejecting acquaintances than when rejecting intimates (2.03) or strangers (1.94).
H3: American as well as German rejections will vary with gender.

Figure 9: Gender - American Subjects

Figure 10: Gender - German Subjects
Figures 9 and 10 report the responses of American and German subjects according to the gender of the figure in the situation. Visual analysis of the graph indicates that the variable of gender made little difference to both American and German subjects in terms of the quantity of semantic formulas. American subjects used an average of 2.06 semantic formulas with requesters of the same sex compared to 1.98 with requesters of the opposite sex, while German subjects used 1.77 with requesters of the same sex and 1.74 with requesters of the opposite sex. For both, American and German subjects, the difference between opposite and same gender made little difference, however it is a consistent difference throughout all 18 situations.
H4: American rejections will vary from German rejections by the directness level of the speech act.

Table 8: Mean Strategy chosen by American and German Subjects (0 = most direct, 56 = most indirect)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>American Subjects</th>
<th>German Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation 1</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>28.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 2</td>
<td>15.96</td>
<td>27.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 3</td>
<td>18.05</td>
<td>27.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 4</td>
<td>16.76</td>
<td>28.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 5</td>
<td>15.87</td>
<td>21.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 6</td>
<td>16.80</td>
<td>20.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 7</td>
<td>26.29</td>
<td>26.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 8</td>
<td>15.53</td>
<td>22.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 9</td>
<td>15.75</td>
<td>19.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 10</td>
<td>17.23</td>
<td>24.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 11</td>
<td>18.44</td>
<td>23.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 12</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>22.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 13</td>
<td>15.14</td>
<td>17.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 14</td>
<td>15.65</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 15</td>
<td>15.73</td>
<td>24.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 16</td>
<td>14.86</td>
<td>18.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 17</td>
<td>18.14</td>
<td>22.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 18</td>
<td>18.21</td>
<td>23.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Situation 1-18</td>
<td>17.05</td>
<td>23.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As suggested by Table 8, Germans used more indirect rejection strategies than did Americans in 17 of the 18 situations. The biggest difference in the directness level can be found in situation 1, where a student asks a teaching assistant to come to her/his party. The situation where the directness level was most comparable for Americans and Germans is situation 7, where a roommate asks another roommate to clean up after her-/himsel.
H5: German rejections will vary from American rejections by the frequency of the use of the word 'no' as a strategy to avoid or delay direct refusals that use 'acceptance' to reject the offer.

Figure 11 reports the percentage of responses for each situation in which the word 'no' was used. As can be seen from the graph, Germans rarely used the word 'no' in their responses, while Americans used 'no' as a response in all 18 situations. For these American subjects, higher percentages of 'no' responses were found with interlocutors of equal or lower status than with interlocutors of higher status.

Figure 11: Percentage of Responses that contain 'no'

![Bar chart showing the percentage of responses that contain 'no'

Americans

Germans

98
H6: American rejections will vary from German rejections by the frequency of the use of 'unspecific' answers or answers that use 'acceptance' to reject the hearer.

Figure 12 depicts the frequency of 'acceptance' and 'unspecific' responses to the situations. From the graph it is evident that Germans used the Avoidance strategy more often than did American subjects. Repetition of part of a request was a common German ploy (e.g. "A party on Saturday? Let me think about it"). Similarly, Germans employed the Question as a strategy to avoid or delay direct refusals more often than Americans did. Germans asked questions to obtain additional information in order to delay the refusal, while Americans did not employ this strategy at all. Also Germans used postponement as an avoidance strategy considerably more often than Americans did.
The frequency of the use of semantic formulas will vary between Germans and Americans.

Figure 12: Responses that contain 'unspecific' answers or use 'acceptance'

Table 5 reports the mean number of semantic formulas for eight situations. The tendency of semantic formulas to be used in one situation was derived by taking the mean number of semantic formulas in one situation divided by the number of responses in that situation. The situation was derived by taking the number of responses in that situation. The tendency for the number of semantic formulas to be used in one situation was derived by taking the mean number of semantic formulas in one situation divided by the number of responses in that situation. There was the tendency for there to be slightly fewer semantic formulas than the average number of semantic formulas in one situation. The difference in the average number of semantic formulas per situation was 0.50. For the scene as a whole, the Germans averaged 1.50 semantic formulas, whereas the Americans averaged 2.00.
H7: The frequency of the use of semantic formulas will vary between Germans and Americans.

Table 9 reports the mean number of semantic formulas for each of the 18 situations. The frequency of semantic formulas for each situation was derived by taking the total number of types of semantic formula in one situation divided by the total number of responses to that situation.

Across the 18 situations, there was the tendency for the Germans to use slightly fewer semantic formulas than the Americans. The average number of semantic formulas used by each group is shown in Table 9. The average number of semantic formulas contained in German responses was consistently fewer than in the American responses across the eighteen situations.

For the individual situations, this difference in average number of semantic formulas used ranged from 1.17 to 2.53. For the scenes as a whole, the Germans averaged 1.75 semantic formulas, whereas the Americans averaged 2.02.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>American Subjects</th>
<th>German Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation 1 - LAS</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 2 - LAO</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 3 - HAS</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 4 - EAS</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 5 - ESO</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 6 - ESS</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 7 - EIS</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 8 - HAO</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 9 - EAO</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 10 - EIO</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 11 - HIO</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 12 - HIS</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 13 - HSS</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 14 - HSO</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 15 - LIO</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 16 - LIS</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 17 - LSO</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 18 - LSS</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Situation 1-18</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coding for situations:

1<sup>st</sup> letter: status: low (l), equal (e), or high (h);

2<sup>nd</sup> letter: social distance: intimate (i), acquaintance (a), or stranger (s);

3<sup>rd</sup> letter: gender: same (s) or opposite (o).
H8: The content of semantic formulas will vary between Germans and Americans.

Figure 13: American Excuses

- Going home
- Out of Town
- Other Plans
- Have to work
- No time
- Not going back there
- Have a job/comfortable
- Boyfriend/husband won't let me
- Family Commitment
- Don't go to parties
- No space in car
- Have to Study
- Injury
- Not authorized to use machine
- Not feeling well
- Out with other people
- No money
- Don't give notes
- No time to prepare another test
- Can't make exceptions
- No other date available
- Task not ready
- Not fair
- Don't go to pub
- Not knowledgeable on how to use machine
- Not authorized to use machine
- Do not have notes
- Injury
- Don't feel like it
- Other Plans

Figure 14: German Excuses

- Going home
- Out of Town
- Other Plans
- Have to work
- No time
- Not going back there
- Have a job/comfortable
- Boyfriend/husband won't let me
- Family Commitment
- Don't go to parties
- No space in car
- Have to Study
- Injury
- Not authorized to use machine
- Not feeling well
- Out with other people
- No money
- Don't give notes
- No time to prepare another test
- Can't make exceptions
- No other date available
- Task not ready
- Not fair
- Don't go to pub
- Not knowledgeable on how to use machine
- Not authorized to use machine
- Do not have notes
- Injury
- Don't feel like it
- Other Plans
Excuses were used often by both American and German subjects, with Americans using more excuses than Germans in most of the situations. Certain situations did elicit fewer excuses than others. In providing excuses, Germans gave more vague reasons than Americans did. That is, Germans tended to give rather general statements such as, "I don't have time" and "I already have plans". Americans tended to give more specific details in their excuses in similar situations such as, "I can't make it because I have a child, and I can't get a babysitter on such short notice", and "My wife and I celebrate our 14th anniversary tonight and we are planning to go out for dinner".

Another apparent difference in the content of excuses was for Germans to be less direct and to resort to excuses other than their own inclinations in rejecting and for Americans to be more direct and to give their own inclinations as reasons for the rejection. For example, Germans never used "I have to study" as an excuse, while it was very common among the excuses Americans used. Another major difference in the content of the excuse was exemplified in the responses to situation fifteen. The most common American response in refusing the invitation to dinner was based on dieting, e.g. "I am on a diet right now" or "I have to watch my weight". Almost 40% referred to body shape as grounds for refusal, while none of the German subjects did so. Instead Germans used excuses like "I don't
feel well" or "I already have other plans".

Both American and German subjects showed high degrees of regret in all situations except situation 9 (e.g. a student asks another student for her/his notes, because s/he overslept again). The tendency was for both German and American subjects to express regret when refusing requests (situations 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 18). Invitations showed a considerably lower percentage of regrets.

Germans tended to use performative verbs, such as "I am sorry to have to refuse/decline your invitation/request", thus giving a formal tone to their responses; whereas Americans stated a philosophy or principle in refusing (e.g. "The position I am in would not make it appropriate for me to attend your party" or "I have an obligation to the department to uphold a reputation of integrity" in situation 1 where a student invites a teaching assistant to a party). Stating principles and philosophies in these situations is the American way of showing that the situation is beyond the speakers control and therefore avoids a direct rejection.

The only situation where both Germans and Americans stated a principle was situation 9, where a classmate asks another classmate for the notes of the last class meeting. Though both speakers stated principle as the grounds for refusal in this situation, the content of the principle was quite different. The principle stated by Americans was "I do
not share notes", while the principle stated by Germans was "I do not take notes in class". The difference in the content of the principles may be due to different characteristics of each culture. Saying "I do not take notes in class" means that notes are not available, while "I do not share notes" means that the notes are available but the speaker does not want to share them. In the case of the Germans the situation is beyond their control, while in the case of the Americans it is within their power, one reflects collectivism, while the other reflects individualism.

Regarding positive and negative politeness, Brown and Levinson (1978) claimed that US culture is a positive politeness culture, whereas German culture is a negative politeness culture. They proposed two sets of strategies: positive politeness and negative politeness. In order to test their claims, several semantic formulas were categorized into these politeness strategies. Semantic formulas of Regret, Deference, Negative Consequences, and Hedge were classified as negative politeness strategies. Semantic formulas of Positive Feeling, Gratitude, Future Acceptance, and Empathy Building were classified as positive politeness strategies. The results show that Americans used considerably more positive politeness strategies than did Germans, just as Brown and Levinson predicted. However, the employment of negative politeness strategies did not provide as clear and consistent a picture as the positive politeness
strategies did.

Even though there was some variance among situations, it appears that Germans were more likely to employ a Positive Feeling, Future Acceptance, and Empathy Building than Americans were. Americans were more likely to employ Gratitude than Germans were. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether Brown and Levinson's claim was supported or Ting-Toomey's proposal was validated on the basis of the results of this study. It is not clear whether Germany is a negative politeness culture and the US a positive politeness culture or vice versa. It is simply that Germans tended to employ more politeness strategies, both negative and positive, than did Americans, although in some cases content may differ. Germans used more Alternatives than did Americans. However, Americans employed a greater number of Negative Consequences than did Germans (e.g. “The other students would think of me as unprofessional if I came to your party”, “The other students might think I am showing favoritism”, “I will lose the respect of the other students”, and “It would jeopardize our professional student-teacher relationship” in situation one). None of the German subjects gave this kind of explanation in refusing a request or an invitation.

The content of explanations also differed in that the most common American explanations were based on time conflicts, while only 2% of the German responses included
this explanation. The highest percentage of the employment of Alternatives, for both Americans and Germans, was found in situation 7, in which a student asks her/his roommate to clean up the mess left in the kitchen. Both groups employed about 70% of Alternatives in this situation.

The two groups also showed similar tendencies in the responses to situation 6, in which a student asks another student for a ride home after it starts raining. Both Americans and Germans employed higher percentages of Regrets compared to other situations. No major differences were found between Americans and Germans in the content of the explanations. The most common explanations given by both Americans and Germans were "I am not going directly back home right now".
Discussion of the Results

German refusal strategies tended to be less direct and resort to explanations other than their own inclinations in refusing, while American strategies tended to be more direct and to have individuals' own decisions as reasons for the refusal. Germans appeared to differ from Americans in refusing people of a different age or status. The most striking differences were found in the responses to situation 10, in which a student invites another student to a movie. Responses such as "What fun would you have with a person like me?" were found among the Germans but not the Americans.

Unlike the United States, where even an extremely low degree of solidarity or intimacy can override rank, all social behavior and actions are conducted in the order of ranking in German society (Condon and Yousef 1975). Since the German language itself has different levels of speech styles, it is almost impossible for Germans to carry on a conversation even for a few moments without taking rank into consideration. First there is the issue of the name of the person you are talking to, is it `Dr. Smith', `Mr. Smith', `John Smith', or `John'? And after this issue is solved, there is a choice in pronoun waiting to be made: informal `du' or formal `Sie'? With Germans one never knows until the wrong choice was made. And once one is on formal `Sie'
terms with somebody, it might take more than the average lifetime to move to the informal `du'.

Even in smaller towns in Germany, formality and social distance are notable. "When housewives gather for the "Kaffeeklatsch", which is really a gossip session, they usually refer to each other - and to those about whom they are speaking - as Frau or Fräulein so-and-so, not by first names. Thus, here, too, the formality of a proper social distance is maintained" (Condon and Yousef, 1975, p. 163).

In Germany, a `good' neighbor is likely to be one who is quiet, knows her/his place, doesn't object when children make noise, and keeps his own sidewalk clean. "Good Fences make good neighbors. There is relatively little place here for dropping by for a chat. Even leases are likely to enforce some of these qualities. A lease will often specify who may use the garden or the backyard of the house, if there is one and at what hours. It will probably require the tenant to sweep the stairwell outside of the apartment, and quite possibly the front steps and the sidewalk, too. Time periods for making noise may be prescribed: no running water after 10pm" (Condon and Yousef, 1975, p.163).

The physical plan of the typical German home also seems to reflect and help maintain basic cultural values that recur in communication patterns. "The ideal German home has foyer or entryway that leads visitors into the house without exposing them to specific rooms and a resultant loss of
privacy for the family members. The living room is the most formal room in the house. Whatever the family considers an heirloom is here: a wall scroll showing the family tree, an antique statue, a piano, a Bible, or a wall full of books. Here guests are entertained. If there are children in the family who are old enough to be quiet, they may be expected to appear immediately, greet the guests, and stay quietly for the length of the visit. They speak when spoken to; they are to be seen but not heard” (Condon and Yousef, 1975, p.165).

A balcony or a backyard may also be a center of social activity, each well hidden from public view and as overflowing with flowers as possible and fenced. Similar guarantees of privacy are provided by heavy drapes on the windows, or with the drapes opened but always lighter white sheer curtains drawn. Theodor Reik as well as Sigmund Freud noted that curtains were the first things a woman wanted in her house, and they interpreted this in terms of female sexuality and modesty. Another guess might be in terms of German values of privacy.

Public and private buildings in Germany often have double doors for soundproofing, as do many hotel rooms. Doors are taken very seriously by Germans. Germans that come to the United States often feel that doors are flimsy and light. Also, in offices, Americans keep doors open, Germans keep doors closed. In Germany, closed doors do not mean "do
not disturb', but rather closed doors preserve the integrity of the room and provide a protective boundary between people, otherwise they get too involved with each other. The open-door policy of American business culture and the closed-door policy of German business culture clash in the branches of American firms in Germany. Open doors make Germans feel exposed and give the whole operation an unusually relaxed and unbusinesslike air, closed doors give Americans the feeling that there is a conspiratorial air about the place and that they are being left out. The point is whether the door is open or closed, it is not going to mean the same in the two cultures. Edward Hall (1966) sees the double doors often used in offices and hotels as evidence of the German search for privacy via soundproofing as well as physical barriers. He also observed that the heavy German furniture seems to fill a need for stability and at the same time ensure that social relationships will remain at an acceptable distance.

There is order and hierarchy for absolutely everything in German culture. Germans know where they stand and object strenuously to people jumping lines or not obeying signs such as 'Keep out'. Many Americans feel that Germans are overly rigid in their behavior, unbending and formal. Some of this impression is created by differences in the handling of chairs while seated. Americans do not mind if people move there chairs up to adjust the distance to the situation.
However, in Germany, moving the chair destroys the order of things and intrudes on the privacy of the other person. In an instance reported by Edward T. Hall (1966) a German newspaper editor who had moved to the United States had his visitor's chair bolted to the floor "at the proper distance" because he could not tolerate the American habit of adjusting the chair to the situation.

Germans are far more sensitive to status difference than are Americans, they are eager to receive and give titles denoting status, rather than names with a general title like "Mr Smith". Very frequently, a German retains for life the highest professional title s/he has ever held.

Another difference between Germans and Americans was seen in explanations that mention their financial situations. Financially related explanations show high discriminating power. Germans seldom said that they did not have enough money, while Americans very commonly stated that they were poor. This result suggests that Germans are more private about their financial situations. As discussed earlier, in refusing, Germans are likely to give explanations other than those based on their own decisions. An impolite attitude towards people they are not acquainted with is not surprising at all in German society. As found in other cultures, Germans differentiate ingroup from outgroup and behave differently according to the distinctions. Germans tend to be impolite or rude when they interact with
outgroups like outsiders or strangers. Everyone outside the ingroup is likely to be treated with curiosity or caution or even a bit of suspicion. On the other hand, Germans are very polite and keep good etiquette toward those who are known and are within the same boundaries. Germans are apt to give bad impressions to those who are not in their social boundary. It is very difficult for an outsider to penetrate the wall of the ingroup in German society. German people are rather exclusive to those they do not know well. The facial expressions of German people are usually fixed and rigid when they meet with persons they do not know, but they suddenly melt into soft, warm smiling expressions when they meet their intimate friends. Germans are indeed affectionate and close to the persons they know well, but to the general public they are unexpectedly unfriendly and cold.

The differences found in this study can generally be explained by basic cultural differences; that is, German refusal strategies reflect the characteristics of a high-context, collectivistic culture, and American refusal strategies reflect those of a low-context, individualistic culture. In other words, Germans are more social-oriented, while Americans are more task-oriented. On the basis of the results of this study, it is not clear whether Germany is a negative politeness or a positive politeness culture. These results indicate that Germans simply used more politeness
strategies, whether positive or negative politeness strategies, than did Americans. Also, the results did not support the Bulge theory, i.e., social distance was not necessarily a stronger factor than social status for Americans in determining speech variation. This may be due to the design of the questionnaire. Since both the social distance variable and the situations of the questionnaire varied, the amount of imposition carried in situations was also different. Thus the speech patterns that subjects used were influenced by not only the social distance of the requester but also by the situations themselves. Therefore, different construction of a questionnaire is needed in order to test the Bulge theory more accurately.
Chapter 5

Conclusions

Summary of this Research

This study investigated the differences between Germans and Americans in the speech acts of refusal. The results revealed that Germans and Americans were somewhat different in refusing requests and invitations. Patterns of refusals of Germans and Americans varied according to the types of messages used to elicit responses in addition to relative status or relative social distance. The common tendency that emerged from the refusal patterns of both Germans and Americans was that the highest percentage of semantic formulas was employed when refusing requests followed by situations involving invitations. The results of this study offer little support to the Bulge theory (which claims that speech patterns that a speaker uses with intimates are similar to those used with status unequals and strangers, and differs from those used with acquaintances). This may be because the questionnaire was not designed to test this phenomenon specifically. Americans tended to vary their refusals according to the status rather than the social distance of the interlocutor while Germans did the opposite. Germans and Americans differed not only in the employment of
semantic formulas but also in the content of refusals. Germans employed fewer semantic formulas but greater gratitude than did Americans in all situations. In accord with what Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1991) observed among non-native speakers of English, Germans employed an Avoidance strategy more often than did American subjects. In general, Germans used more politeness strategies, either positive politeness strategies or negative politeness strategies, than did Americans. As for the content of refusals, Germans gave explanations that were more vague than those given by Americans, and German refusals tended to be less direct and resort to explanations other than their own inclinations in refusing, while American refusals tended to be more direct and often gave their own inclinations as reasons for the refusal. Thus Germans used a third party for their explanations, while Americans relied on their own decisions for their explanations.

The results also suggest that Germans and Americans can be distinguished on the basis of their refusal strategies, with the choices of refusal strategies reflective of the different characteristics of each culture. German refusals reflected the characteristics of collectivism, in which group interests take precedence over individual interests, whereas American refusals reflected the characteristics of individualism, in which autonomy of self is considered to be more important than group harmony (Table 9). The present
results also showed the Germans to be very sensitive to status in their choices. The differences between Germans and Americans in the choice of the refusal strategies can be explained by the general cultural differences discussed earlier and also by the specific environmental conditions presented in each culture.

In choosing refusal strategies, Germans were more oriented toward face-saving, which is characteristic of a collectivistic culture, while Americans were more task-oriented, which is characteristic of an individualistic culture.
Applications of this Research

This research can be seen as bridging two different approaches to investigation. The study of speech acts of refusal and the study of compliance resisting are basically the same, but they have used different taxonomies and theories. In linguistics, the taxonomy used by most researchers is primarily based on semantic formulas, while in communication, it is based on the different types of strategies.

Though a few studies have been done on the speech acts of refusal, the analysis and interpretation of the data have been limited to the general linguistic features. However, since refusals necessarily reflect cultural characteristics, knowledge of the cultures involved is indispensable to a better understanding of the behavior. The research on politeness done in the field of communication provided the relationship between communication styles and culture, and it can enrich the study of speech acts of refusal. By taking cultural characteristics into account, the reasons why a certain cultural group chooses certain strategies over others can be explained.

Furthermore, some differences that appeared to be unrelated can be explained by cultural characteristics. For example, why Germans, who are seen as one of the most polite groups by their associates, sometimes are perceived to be
rude by outsiders, can be explained if we have a better understanding of the ways of German culture.

This study showed that Germans rarely gave impolite excuses to people they knew and they were also very sensitive to the status of requesters. However, they can be indifferent and even rude to strangers. This latter characteristic of German people, general resentment toward outgroups, can contribute to this perception. The study contributes to research in crosscultural pragmatics since there is a scarcity of research on refusals, especially on the speech acts of refusal by Germans. The findings of this study can be compared with the previous work in this area and provide areas for future research. German refusals have similarities to those of the Japanese, and are also similar to what Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford found among non-native speakers of English. However, some differences in the employment of semantic formulas and the differences due to different elicitation methods must be taken up by further studies.

The present study also contributes to crosscultural understanding. The awareness of differences of refusals in speech acts between cultures can minimize potential misunderstandings. For example, if Germans keep asking questions or repeat the requester's statement, Americans should be aware that Germans are trying to refuse indirectly. Even if Germans give very vague explanations
that cannot be considered acceptable from the American point of view, it is not that Germans are insincere or untruthful, it is simply their communication style. And, even though Germans may appear very cold and rude in the initial stage of interactions, Americans should understand that they do not necessarily have any hostility toward them; they can be very good friends later when they get to know each other. Germans, on the other hand, should be aware that direct refusals on the basis of their own inclinations are acceptable among Americans and should not feel hurt when they face this situation. Without explicit knowledge about other cultures, communicators are prone to misinterpret the intentions of their interlocutors with different cultural backgrounds, since people are likely to interpret the behaviors of others within their own sets of values and norms. Awareness of diversity in sociolinguistic behaviors makes it possible to perceive the differences as differences, not as inferiority or abnormality. Without explicit knowledge about people from other backgrounds, people are prone to misunderstand. Learning about differences can reduce unnecessary hostility toward other groups due to the lack of understandings of other cultures. Such learning can foster tolerance toward the different patterns of behaviors and help prevent ethnocentric perceptions.

The present findings also contribute to language
teaching and learning, helping those whose profession involves the teaching of foreign languages. Fluency in a language involves more than a mastery of linguistic knowledge. Learners of the language should not only be exposed to the correct forms of speech, but also to appropriate speech. Studies in the field of interlanguage pragmatics reveal that even advanced language learners lack necessary pragmatic competence. Furthermore, existing textbooks often inaccurately describe language use (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan and Reynolds, 1991). Thus, teachers must be prepared to help students acquire pragmatic competence in the target language (Bardovi-Harlig, 1992). The results of this study can help teachers become aware of the differences in how to refuse appropriately in each culture. German students who want to study in the United States are well advised to refuse more directly and to give more explicit explanations. Some German responses might not be interpreted as refusals by Americans and can potentially cause misunderstandings. Americans can learn to take these responses as refusals when they come from Germans. For their part, Americans should not only accurately receive the messages conveyed but they should also try not to give refusals that are too direct. Germans are likely to take a plain refusal as tremendous loss of face. Also, Americans are well advised to use explanations that are not based on their own decisions in refusing. For
example, expressions like "I have to study" should not be used in response to Germans' requests. Upon hearing this excuse, Germans are likely to think that Americans are very cold, and this perception will hurt the relationship. In other words, language learners should be provided with important knowledge about the general patterns of refusals of target cultures in order to interact successfully with people from that culture. Gudykunst (1991) emphasized the importance of understanding culture in interactions by saying, "If we understand others' languages but not their cultures, we can make fluent fools of ourselves (p. 2)."
Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

Blum-Kulka and House (1989) found that context-internal factors such as the types of request goal, the degree of imposition involved for the speaker relative to the specific goal, and the prerequisites needed for compliance are important in determining levels of directness as well as context-external factors such as social distance and social power. Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed that cultures differ in the relative weight given to social factors in determining behavioral variations. Since it is possible that Germans' perceptions of social factors are different from those of Americans, the imposition carried in a situation can vary from culture to culture. The different perceptions of a situation would influence the strategic usage of refusal patterns. However, the analysis of the data from this study was carried out under the assumption that the interpretations of the contextual factors are the same in both German and American cultures. In order to understand the relation between social factors and speech patterns better, it would be helpful to find out how the two culture groups assess the situations described in the questionnaire. By asking the subjects from each culture to rate the degree of imposition carried in a certain
situation, we could compare the way each culture perceive the situations.

The results of the study showed that subjects gave almost the same response to those situations in which only the gender was varied. The two situations were exactly the same except that the requester in one situation was male and in the other female. These situations were listed at the end of the questionnaire. The subjects may indeed respond identically to both situations; however, it is also quite possible that they just gave the same responses because they were bored and that it was easy just to write "same as above" in those situations. A different construction of the questionnaire might bring different results. Thus administering the questionnaire to the two separate groups within one culture can draw more accurate outcomes in investigating the linguistic variation according to gender.

Since the purpose of this study was to examine the differences between Germans and Americans in realizations of refusals, not to specifically test the Bulge theory or Politeness theory, some shortcomings were found in the construction of the questionnaire in terms of testing these theories. The results of this study did not manifest any characteristic of the Bulge theory even among Americans. This may be due to the design of the questionnaire of this study. Since the design of the questionnaire was to specify only the variable being tested, only the closeness of the
two interlocutors was known when testing social distance. And it was very difficult to find really intimate interlocutors without specifying the genders of the requesters. Another problem concerning the design of the questionnaire in testing Bulge theory is that not only the social distance of the interlocutors but also the nature of the situations varied. The absolute weight of the impositions of the situation might also influence the speech variation as well as the social distance. The characteristics of the situation need to remain constant in order to test the Bulge theory. Therefore, to test the social distance variable, procedures similar to those suggested for testing the gender variable can be used. In addition, the average number of semantic formulas cannot accurately convey the richness of the subjects' speech patterns. In order to test the Bulge theory, a better method of data analysis may be called for.

There are some other drawbacks to the used method of data collection for this type of study as mentioned earlier in Chapter 3. Most important, it is hard to tell how representative the written answers are of what subjects actually say in spontaneous conversations. Even subjects may choose specific linguistic forms based on familiarity with the spelling of one word rather than another. Further, subjects may perceive writing as a more formal activity than speaking, and therefore choose a more formal language on the
questionnaire. But, nevertheless, the questionnaire presents controlled contexts for collecting linguistic data representing a range of strategies elicited from many subjects in two languages. Since this study investigates the differences in rejection strategies in two different cultures, it compares the different norms in the speech act of rejection in different cultures. Thus this crosscultural comparability calls for stereotyped responses, and they can be obtained effectively by written elicitation techniques. A large amount of data is collected for comparing specific speech behaviors in different groups, and this is virtually impossible to do with spontaneous speech. Furthermore, gathering naturalistic data is very difficult, since the occurrence of certain speech acts is random and unpredictable. It would be almost impossible and highly inefficient to collect data to analyze the speech behavior for the variables of interest. Thus, considering the necessity for experimental control and practical effectiveness, the discourse completion test was the most appropriate methodological instrument for this study.
Final Remarks

Thomas (1983) and Wolfson (1989) emphasized the seriousness of violating rules of speaking. Unlike grammatical errors, which are attributed to linguistic deficiency, pragmatic errors are judged to be a manifestation of a flawed character. The lack of understanding of sociolinguistic diversity of other cultures leads to serious cross-cultural misunderstandings. This study revealed a great difference between Germans and Americans in the speech acts of refusal. Without the knowledge of the refusal patterns of the other culture, Germans might perceive Americans as impolite or rude. On the other hand, Americans are likely to perceive Germans as insincere or evasive. Since the differences in refusal strategies in many cases resulted from cultural differences, it is very important to take into account the different characteristics of the other culture.

This study not only reported the differences between Germans and Americans in employing refusal strategies but also provided the different characteristics of each culture that were reflected in the employment of refusal strategies. And the recognition of different values and norms embedded in speech behavior can help minimize potential cross-cultural misunderstanding as well as facilitate developing tolerance towards those who are different.
Bibliography
Bibliography


Appendix
Appendix A

Questionnaires
Informed Consent Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate the crosscultural differences in speech act realizations for better understanding of crosscultural communication. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without penalty. If you agree to participate, you will fill out the questionnaire. It will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You will not be asked to identify yourself in any way. You will only be asked for your age and any living abroad experiences you might have had. The data will be used for research purposes only.

On the following pages, you will fill in several communicative situations in which an individual is requesting that you do something for or with her/him. Imagine that you do NOT want to comply with their request. Please respond as you would in a "real conversation".

Please complete all the situations presented on the following pages.

Thank you for your cooperation!

If you are interested in the results of this research, feel free to contact me after December 30, 1998.

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Situation One - LAS

You are a Teaching Assistant at the University of Mississippi. One of the female students in your class, Jennifer, is planning a big party. The week before the party she asks you if you would like to come to her party.

You refuse her invitation by saying:

Situation Two - LAO

You are a Teaching Assistant teaching English 101. One of the male students in your class, John, tells you about the party he will be having next Saturday night. John asks you if you could come to the party.

You refuse his invitation by saying:

Situation Three - HAS

One of your teachers, Professor Meyer, is giving her annual end of the year party. When you meet her in the hallway, she asks you if you would like to come to her party on Saturday night.

You refuse her invitation by saying:

Situation Four - EAS

A fellow female student, Sabrina, who you meet every now and then in the department invites you to her party.

You refuse her invitation by saying:
Situation Five - ESO

A student from your department, Jason, approaches you: "Excuse me. I am working on my dissertation, and I am looking for some people to take part in my survey. Would you be willing to fill out this questionnaire?".

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Six - ESS

You have just finished shopping and are on your way out of the supermarket. It starts raining just when you open your car door. A female student named Roberta runs toward you: "Excuse me. I am living in the same dorm than you, and I came walking here. But now it is raining. Could you give me a ride back to the dorm?".

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Seven - EIS

You are coming back home tired one evening. Your roommate Julie is waiting up for you and asks you to clean up the mess you left in the kitchen before you left right now.

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Eight - HAO

You are working part-time for McDonald's. One day the manager of your shift, John Smith, calls you into his office: "I am giving a little party this weekend. Would you like to come?"

You refuse his invitation by saying:
Situation Nine - EAO

You are sitting in your weekly Psychology class. One of your classmates, John, who frequently misses class, approaches you:
"I overslept again last week, could I possibly copy your notes from last time?"

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Ten - EIO

It's Saturday afternoon. You are sitting in the lobby of your dorm watching TV, when Robert, your best friend, who lives in the same dorm, asks you to go out tonight.
"I was going to see the new movie down at the mall tonight. Would you like to join me?"

You refuse his invitation by saying:

Situation Eleven - HIO

You are a Graduate Assistant to Professor Smith for your second year now. One evening, as you are about to leave, he asks you if you could stay another hour tonight to finish sorting his papers for tomorrow's class.

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Twelve - HIS

You are a third-year graduate assistant in the Psychology Department. Just when you are about to go home, Professor Walker asks you if you could stay a bit longer today to help her finish grading the quizzes for tomorrow's class.

You refuse her request by saying:
Situation Thirteen - HSS

You are attending your first class with Professor Johnson today. When she comes to class she notices that she forgot her syllabus in the Departmental Office. She asks you if you could go back there and get the syllabus for her.

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Fourteen - HSO

You are waiting in your Departmental Office for the secretary to return with your paper work, when Professor Mason comes in. You don't know each other, except from seeing each other around in the building. Since nobody else is there he asks you if you could run off twenty copies of his class papers on the departmental copy machine.

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Fifteen - LIO

You are a Teaching Assistant, teaching French 201. One of your students, Roger, has been taking your class for three semesters, so you got to know each other quite well. One day after class he asks you if you would like to join him and some of his friends for dinner later tonight.

You refuse his invitation by saying:

Situation Sixteen - LIS

You are a Teaching Assistant, teaching English 202. Sybrina has been taking your class for the last two years. One day after class, she asks you if you would like to go downtown with her and some of her friends for drinks after class.

You refuse her invitation by saying:
Situation Seventeen - LSO

You are a Teaching Assistant teaching Management 372 this semester. When finals week approaches, one of your students, Michael, asks you if he could take his final a week early, so he can go back home a week earlier than planned.

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Eighteen - LSS

You are a Teaching Assistant teaching Marketing 215 at the University of Mississippi. You scheduled a test for the day before Thanksgiving break. Linda, one of your students, asks you if she could take her test a week early so she can go home on Friday already for her Thanksgiving break.

You refuse her request by saying:
Please answer the following questions about yourself as detailed as possible:

1. How old are you?
   - Below 20 years old
   - 20-25 years old
   - 26-30 years old
   - 31-35 years old
   - 36-40 years old
   - over 40 years old

2. What is your racial background?
   - White
   - African American
   - Other

3. Did you spend any time abroad (outside the US)?
   - If yes: when, where, how long?
Informed Consent Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate the crosscultural differences in speech act realizations for better understanding of crosscultural communication. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without penalty. If you agree to participate, you will fill out the questionnaire. It will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You will not be asked to identify yourself in any way. You will only be asked for your age and any living abroad experiences you might have had. The data will be used for research purposes only.

On the following pages, you will fill in several communicative situations in which an individual is requesting that you do something for or with her/him. Imagine that you do NOT want to comply with their request. Please respond as you would in a "real conversation".

Please complete all the situations presented on the following pages.

Thank you for your cooperation!

If you are interested in the results of this research, feel free to contact me after December 30, 1998.

Astrid M. Beckers
School of Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
The University of Mississippi
University, MS 38677
Situation One - LAS
You are a Teaching Assistant at the University of Mississippi. One of the male students in your class, Roger, is planning a big party. The week before the party he asks you if you would like to come to his party.

You refuse his invitation by saying:

Situation Two - LAO
You are a Teaching Assistant teaching English 101. One of the female students in your class, Jennifer, tells you about the party she will be having next Saturday night. Jennifer asks you if you could come to the party.

You refuse her invitation by saying:

Situation Three - HAS
One of your teachers, Professor Smith, is giving her annual end of the year party. When you meet him in the hallway he asks you if you would like to come to his party on Saturday night.

You refuse his invitation by saying:

Situation Four - EAS
A fellow male student, Robert, who you meet every now and then in the department invites you to his party.

You refuse his invitation by saying:
Situation Five - ESO

A student from your department, Jennifer, approaches you: “Excuse me. I am working on my dissertation, and I am looking for some people to take part in my survey. Would you be willing to fill out this questionnaire?”. You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Six - ESS

You have just finished shopping and are on your way out of the supermarket. It starts raining just when you open your car door. A male student named Bob runs toward you: “Excuse me. I am living in the same dorm than you, and I came walking here. But now it is raining. Could you give me a ride back to the dorm?”. You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Seven - EIS

You are coming back home tired one evening. Your roommate John is waiting up for you and asks you to clean up the mess you left in the kitchen before you left right now. You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Eight - HAO

You are working part-time for McDonald's. One day the manager of your shift, Sandra Parker, calls you into her office: “I am giving a little party this weekend. Would you like to come?” You refuse her invitation by saying:
Situation Nine - EAO

You are sitting in your weekly Psychology class. One of your classmates, Julie, who frequently misses class, approaches you:
"I overslept again last week, could I possibly copy your notes from last time?"

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Ten - EIO

It's Saturday afternoon. You are sitting in the lobby of your dorm watching TV, when Mary, your best friend, who lives in the same dorm, asks you to go out tonight.
"I was going to see the new movie down at the mall tonight. Would you like to join me?"

You refuse her invitation by saying:

Situation Eleven - HIO

You are a Graduate Assistant to Professor Smith for your second year now. One evening, as you are about to leave, she asks you if you could stay another hour tonight to finish sorting her papers for tomorrow's class.

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Twelve - HIS

You are a third-year graduate assistant in the Psychology Department. Just when you are about to go home, Professor Walsh asks you if you could stay a bit longer today to help him finish grading the quizzes for tomorrow's class.

You refuse his request by saying:
Situation Thirteen - HSS

You are attending your first class with Professor Johnson today. When he comes to class he notices that he forgot his syllabus in the Departmental Office. He asks you if you could go back there and get the syllabus for him.

You refuse his request by saying:

Situation Fourteen - HSO

You are waiting in your Departmental Office for the secretary to return with your paper work, when Professor Mason comes in. You don't know each other, except from seeing each other around in the building. Since nobody else is there she asks you if you could run off twenty copies of her class papers on the departmental copy machine.

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Fifteen - LIO

You are a Teaching Assistant, teaching French 201. One of your students, Mary, has been taking your class for three semesters, so you got to know each other quite well. One day after class she asks you if you would like to join her and some of her friends for dinner later tonight.

You refuse her invitation by saying:

Situation Sixteen - LIS

You are a Teaching Assistant, teaching English 202. Roger has been taking your class for the last two years. One day after class, he asks you if you would like to go downtown with him and some of his friends for drinks after class.

You refuse his invitation by saying:
Situation Seventeen - LSO

You are a Teaching Assistant teaching Management 372 this semester. When finals week approaches, one of your students, Michelle, asks you if she could take her final a week early, so she can go back home a week earlier than planned.

You refuse her request by saying:

Situation Eighteen - LSS

You are a Teaching Assistant teaching Marketing 215 at the University of Mississippi. You scheduled a test for the day before Thanksgiving break. Lou, one of your students, asks you if he could take his test a week early so he can go home on Friday already for his Thanksgiving break.

You refuse his request by saying:
Please answer the following questions about yourself as detailed as possible:

1. How old are you?
   - Below 20 years old
   - 20-25 years old
   - 26-30 years old
   - 31-35 years old
   - 36-40 years old
   - over 40 years old

2. What is your racial background?
   - White
   - African American
   - Other

3. Did you spend any time abroad (outside the US)?
   - If yes: when, where, how long?
Weiblich

Einverständniserklärung


Bitte beantworten Sie alle Situationen.

Vielen Dank für die Teilnahme an dieser Studie.

Für eine Kopie der Ergebnisse dieser Studie:

Astrid M. Beckers
Nahestraße 24
45219 Essen-Kettwig
Situation Eins - LAS


Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zwei - LAO


Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Drei - HAS


Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Vier - EAS

Eine deiner Mitstudentinnen, Martina, lädt dich zu ihrer Party nächste Woche ein.

Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Fünf - ESO

Einer deiner Mitstudenten, Manfred, bittet dich um Hilfe: "Ich arbeite an meiner Magisterarbeit und ich suche einige Freiwillige, die bereit wären, meinen Fragebogen auszufüllen. Hast du einen Augenblick Zeit, um einen Fragebogen auszufüllen?"

Du lehnest seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Sechs - ESS


Du lehnest ihre Frage in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Sieben - EIS


Du verweigerst ihre Aufforderung in folgender Weise:

Situation Acht - HAO

Du bist eine Teilzeitkraft bei McDonald's. Eines Abends spricht dein Chef, Anton Dreher, dich an: "Ich gebe eine kleine Party dieses Wochenende. Ich würde mich freuen wenn du kämst."

Du lehnest seine Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Neun - EAO


Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zehn - EIO


Du lehnst seine Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Elf - HIO

Dies ist das zweite Jahr das du als Studentische Hilfskraft für Professor Schmidt arbeitest. Eines Abends, als du gerade nach Hause gehen willst, fragt Professor Schmidt dich ob du noch eine Stunde länger bleiben kannst, um ihm mit seiner Seminarvorbereitung für morgen zu helfen.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zwölf - HIS

Dies ist das dritte Jahr das du eine Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft im Lehrstuhl für Psychologie bist. Du hast deine Arbeit gerade beendet und bist auf dem Weg zum Auto, wenn Professor Meyer hinter dir her ruft und dich bittet ihm zu helfen seine Seminararbeiten heute noch zu korrigieren.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Dreizehn - HSS

Heute ist dein erstes Seminar mit Professor Wolf. Nachdem sie den Raum betreten hat, bemerkt sie, daß sie ihre Seminarnotizen im Sekretariat vergessen hat. Sie schaut sich um, kommt auf dich zu und fragt, ob du so nett sein könntest zum Sekretariat zu gehen um ihre Notizen zu holen.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Vierzehn - HSO

Du bist im Sekretariat und wartest auf die Rückkehr der Sekretärin mit deinen Unterlagen. Plötzlich kommt Professor Legenhausen herein. Du kennst ihn nur vom Sehen. Niemand anders ist im Raum, also fragt er dich, ob du ihm eben mal 20 Kopien von seinen Seminarnotizen an der Kopiermaschine im Sekretariat machen könntest.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Fünfzehn - LIO


Du lehnst seine Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Sechzehn - LIS


Du lehnst ihre Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Siebzehn - LSO

Dieses Semester unterrichtest du als Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft "Einführung in die Betriebswirtschaft". Heute fängt die vorletzte Woche des Semesters an und einer deiner Studenten, Michael, fragt dich ob er seinen Test eine Woche früher (diese Woche!) schreiben kann, damit er schon eine Woche früher in Urlaub fahren kann.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Achtzehn - LSS

Das Semester geht langsam dem Ende entgegen, wenn Martina eine deiner Studentinnen, fragt ob sie ihren letzten Test schon diese Woche schreiben kann, weil sie nach Hause fahren will, um etwas mehr Zeit mit ihren Eltern zu verbringen.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:
Bitte beantworte die folgenden Fragen so genau wie möglich:

1. Wie alt bist du?
   - Unter 20 Jahre alt
   - 20-25 Jahre alt
   - 26-30 Jahre alt
   - 31-35 Jahre alt
   - 36-40 Jahre alt
   - Over 40 Jahre alt

2. Auslandsaufenthalt (wann, wo für wie lange):..
Männlich

Einverständniserklärung


Vielen Dank für die Teilnahme an dieser Studie.

Für eine Kopie der Ergebnisse dieser Studie:

Astrid M. Beckers
Nahestraße 24
45219 Essen-Kettwig
Situation Eins - LAS


Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zwei - LAO


Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Drei - HAS

Einer deiner Professoren, Prof. Schmidt, veranstaltet seine jährliche Semesterabschlußparty. Eines Nachmittages, als du ihn in der Cafeteria triffst, lädt er dich dazu ein.

Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Vier - EAS

Eine deiner Mitstudenten, Martin, lädt dich zu seiner Party nächste Woche ein.

Du lehnst die Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Fünf - ESO

Einer deiner Mitstudentinnen, Martina, bittet dich um Hilfe: "Ich arbeite an meiner Magisterarbeit und ich suche einige Freiwillige, die bereit wären, meinen Fragebogen auszufüllen. Hast du einen Augenblick Zeit, um einen Fragebogen auszufüllen?"

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Sechs - ESS


Du lehnst seine Frage in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Sieben - EIS


Du verweigerst seine Aufforderung in folgender Weise:

Situation Acht - HAO

Du bist eine Teilzeitkraft bei McDonald's. Eines Abends spricht deine Chefin, Gaby Parker, dich an: "Ich gebe eine kleine Party dieses Wochenende. Ich würde mich freuen wenn du kämst."

Du lehnst ihre Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Neun - EAO


Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zehn - EIO

Es is Freitag Nachmittag und du sitzt Kaffee trinkend in der Uni Cafeteria. Plötzlich kommt Roberta deine beste Freundin, und fragt dich ob du heute abend mit ihr ins Kino gehen willst.

Du lehnst ihre Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Elf - HIO

Dies ist das zweite Jahr das du als Studentische Hilfskraft für Professor Schmidt arbeitest. Eines Abends, als du gerade nach Hause gehen willst, fragt Professor Schmidt dich ob du noch eine Stunde länger bleiben kannst, um ihr mit ihrer Seminarvorbereitung für morgen zu helfen.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Zwölf - HIS

Dies ist das dritte Jahr das du eine Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft im Lehrstuhl für Psychologie bist. Du hast deine Arbeit gerade beendet und bist auf dem Weg zum Auto, wenn Professor Meyer hinter dir her ruft und dich bittet ihr zu helfen ihre Seminararbeiten heute noch zu korrigieren.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Dreizehn - HSS

Heute ist dein erstes Seminar mit Professor Wolf. Nachdem er den Raum betreten hat, bemerkt er, daß er seine Seminarnotizen im Sekretariat vergessen hat. Er schaut sich um, kommt auf dich zu und fragt, ob du so nett sein könntest zum Sekretariat zu gehen um seine Notizen zu holen.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Vierzehn - HSO

Du bist im Sekretariat und wartest auf die Rückkehr der Sekretärin mit deinen Unterlagen. Plötzlich kommt Professor Legenhausen herein. Du kennst ihn nur vom Sehen. Niemand anders ist im Raum, also fragt sie dich, ob du ihr eben mal 20 Kopien von ihren Seminarnotizen an der Kopiermaschine im Sekretariat machen könntest.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Fünfzehn - LIO


Du lehnst ihre Einladung in folgender Weise ab:
Situation Sechzehn - LIS


Du lehnst seine Einladung in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Siebzehn - LSO

Dieses Semester unterrichtest du als Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft "Einführung in die Betriebswirtschaft". Heute fängt die vorletzte Woche des Semesters an und eine deiner Studentinnen, Michaela, fragt dich ob sie ihren Test eine Woche früher (diese Woche!) schreiben kann, damit sie schon eine Woche früher in Urlaub fahren kann.

Du lehnst ihre Bitte in folgender Weise ab:

Situation Achtzehn - LSS

Das Semester geht langsam dem Ende entgegen, wenn Martin einer deiner Studenten, fragt ob er seinen letzten Test schon diese Woche schreiben kann, weil er nach Hause fahren will um etwas mehr Zeit mit seinen Eltern zu verbringen.

Du lehnst seine Bitte in folgender Weise ab:
Bitte beantworte die folgenden Fragen so genau wie möglich:

1. Wie alt bist du?
   Unter 20 Jahre alt
   20-25 Jahre alt
   26-30 Jahre alt
   31-35 Jahre alt
   36-40 Jahre alt
   Over 40 Jahre alt

2. Auslandsaufenthalt (wann, wo für wie lange):
Appendix B

Excuses of American and German Subjects
Figure 15: American Excuses: Situation One

Figure 16: German Excuses: Situation One
Figure 17: American Excuses: Situation Two

- Other Plans
- Do not go to parties
- No Sitter
- Family Commitment
- Going Home
- Wouldn't feel comfortable
- No Time
- Husband won't let me
- Unprofessional

Figure 18: German Excuses: Situation Two

- Going to another party
- Other Plans
Figure 19: American Excuses: Situation Three

Figure 20: German Excuses: Situation Three
Figure 21: American Excuses: Situation Four

Figure 22: German Excuses: Situation Four
Figure 25: American Excuses: Situation Six

Figure 26: German Excuses: Situation Six
Figure 27: American Excuses: Situation Seven

Figure 28: German Excuses: Situation Seven
Figure 29: American Excuses: Situation Eight

Figure 30: German Excuses: Situation Eight
Figure 31: American Excuses: Situation Nine

Figure 32: German Excuses: Situation Nine
Figure 33: American Excuses: Situation Ten

Figure 34: German Excuses: Situation Ten
Figure 35: American Excuses: Situation Eleven

Figure 36: German Excuses: Situation Eleven
Figure 39: American Excuses: Situation Thirteen

Figure 40: German Excuses: Situation Thirteen
Figure 43: American Excuses: Situation Fifteen

Figure 44: German Excuses: Situation Fifteen
Figure 45: American Excuses: Situation Sixteen

- Goes against my morals
- Other plans
- Don't drink
- No time
- Work
- Unprofessional

Figure 46: German Excuses: Situation Sixteen

- Have to work
- I don't like going to pubs
- Don't feel like it
- Other plans
- Have a class
Figure 47: American Excuses: Situation Seventeen

- Rules are rules
- Don't give tests early
- Not fair
- Department/School won't let me
- Test is not ready

Figure 48: German Excuses: Situation Seventeen

- I can't make exceptions
- The date is set
- I don't have time to prepare a second test
Figure 49: American Excuses: Situation Eighteen

Figure 50: German Excuses: Situation Eighteen
Appendix C

Levels of Directness
Figure 51: Directness Level - Situation One

Figure 52: Directness Level - Situation One
Figure 55: Directness Level - Situation Three

Figure 56: Directness Level - Situation Three
Figure 57: Directness Level - Situation Four

Figure 58: Directness Level - Situation Four
Figure 59: Directness Level - Situation Five

Figure 60: Directness Level - Situation Five
Figure 61: Directness Level - Situation Six

Figure 62: Directness Level - Situation Six
Figure 63: Directness Level - Situation Seven

Figure 64: Directness Level - Situation Seven
Figure 71: Directness Level - Situation Eleven

Percentage

Level of Directness

American  German

Figure 72: Directness Level - Situation Eleven

Percentage

Level of Directness

American  German

200
Figure 75: Directness Level - Situation Thirteen

Level of Directness

- American
- German
Figure 78: Directness Level - Situation Fifteen

Figure 79: Directness Level - Situation Fifteen
Figure 84: Directness Level - Situation Eighteen

Figure 85: Directness Level - Situation Eighteen
Bibliographical Sketch of the Author

Astrid M. Beckers was born on a cold winter night on the 30th day of December 1964 in Duisburg / Federal Republic of Germany as the only daughter of Franziska and Josef Beckers. She graduated with honors from Gustav-Heinemann-Schule in Mülheim an der Ruhr majoring in English and Fine Arts with Abitur in June 1986. In 1990 she graduated with an MA in English and Intercultural Communication and another MA in German and Linguistics and also received an Outstanding Thesis Award in Linguistics from the University of Düsseldorf / Federal Republic of Germany. During her studies she taught classes in German as a Foreign Language and served as a Foreign Student Adviser in the German Department, worked as a research assistant in the Department of Old and Middle English, and worked as a translator for a private marketing company.

From August 1990 to May 1992 she studied English at the University of Mississippi for a MA degree which she received in May 1992. After taking time off to become a Peace Corps Volunteer and taking classes in Psychology, she returned to the University of Mississippi in 1995 to start a PhD program in TESOL. During the next four years, she taught EFL classes and worked as a Graduate Assistant in Educational Technology. In May 1999 she was granted the degree of Doctor.
of Philosophy in Education from the University of Mississippi.

Her main research interests are sociolinguistics, crosscultural communication, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and the relationship between language and culture.