

**THE EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT  
INSTRUCTION ON APPROPRIACY OF ENGLISH  
REFUSAL BY CHINESE EFL STUDENTS**

**Lingli Duan**

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ผลของการสอนแบบชัดเจน และแบบเป็นนัยที่มีต่อการตอบปฏิเสธที่เหมาะสม  
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(THE EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION ON  
APPROPRIACY OF ENGLISH REFUSALS BY CHINESE EFL STUDENTS)

อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา : ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. อัญชลี วรรณรักษ์, 263 หน้า

วจนกรรมการปฏิเสธเป็นส่วนสำคัญอย่างหนึ่งของความสามารถในเชิงปฏิบัติการทางภาษาที่กระตุ้นความสนใจให้เกิดงานวิจัยในสาขาปฏิบัติศาสตร์ระหว่างภาษา งานวิจัยนี้ศึกษาเกี่ยวกับการสอนวิธีการใช้คำปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษอย่างเหมาะสม สำหรับนักศึกษาจีนชั้นปีที่หนึ่ง ที่เรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเป็นวิชาเอก จุดประสงค์ของการศึกษารั้งนี้เพื่อเปรียบเทียบผลสัมฤทธิ์ของนักศึกษาจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในส่วนที่เกี่ยวกับการใช้คำปฏิเสธภาษาอังกฤษที่เกิดขึ้นก่อนและหลังการสอน; เพื่อเปรียบเทียบผลกระทบที่เกิดจากการสอนที่แตกต่างกันระหว่างการสอนแบบเปิดนัยยะและการสอนแบบซ่อนนัยยะ ที่มีต่อนักศึกษาจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ; เพื่อตรวจสอบการจดจำของนักศึกษา ที่เรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับการใช้คำปฏิเสธภาษาอังกฤษที่เกิดขึ้นหลังการสอน; และเพื่อสืบค้นความคิดเห็นของนักศึกษาเกี่ยวกับการสอน

การศึกษารั้งนี้เป็นการศึกษากึ่งทดลอง โดยใช้วิธีการเชิงปริมาณและคุณภาพ มีนักศึกษาที่เข้าร่วมในการศึกษารั้งนี้จำนวน 58 คน จาก 2 กลุ่มหลัก 29 คนอยู่ในกลุ่มการสอนแบบเปิดนัยยะ ส่วนอีก 29 คนอยู่ในกลุ่มการสอนแบบซ่อนนัยยะตามลำดับ เป้าหมายการสอนแบ่งออกเป็น 4 ประเภทคือ: การปฏิเสธคำเชิญ, คำแนะนำ การเสนอให้ความช่วยเหลือ และการขอร้อง โดยสภาพภาพ 3 ประเภท (สูง เท่ากัน และต่ำ) ในความสัมพันธ์เชิงคู่กันเคย มีการใช้แบบทดสอบก่อนการเรียน หลังการเรียน และแบบชะลอ เพื่อหาคะแนน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการจัดทำแบบทดสอบ ได้แก่ DCT ที่เป็นลายลักษณ์อักษร ใช้ t - test แบบตัวอย่างคู่และตัวอย่างอิสระและขนาดของผลกระทบ เพื่อวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณ ส่วนข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพใช้การวิเคราะห์การตอบสนองต่อ DCT และการจัดกลุ่มข้อมูลจากแบบรายงานตัวเอง

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ผู้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยได้เรียนรู้วิธีการปฏิเสธอย่างเหมาะสมเป็นภาษาอังกฤษหลังการสอนแบบเปิดนัยยะและแบบซ่อนนัยยะ ผู้เรียนทำได้ดีในการปฏิเสธคำเชิญ การเสนอให้ความช่วยเหลือและการขอร้อง และแสดงออกได้ดีในด้านคุณภาพของสารสนเทศและระดับความเป็นทางการ การสอนแบบเปิดนัยยะดีกว่าการสอนแบบซ่อนนัยยะ สำหรับการสอนเกี่ยวกับการปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ การแสดงออกในการปฏิเสธคำเชิญและคำขอร้องและคุณภาพของสารสนเทศ, ระดับความเป็นทางการ และการเลือกยุทธศาสตร์ในกลุ่มการสอนแบบเปิดนัยยะ

ดีกว่ากลุ่มการสอนแบบช่อนัยยะ ผู้เข้าร่วมยังคงสามารถรักษาระดับการใช้รูปแบบการปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ หลังจาก 3 เดือน แต่ผลสัมฤทธิ์ลดลงในส่วนที่เกี่ยวกับการปฏิเสธคำเชิญชวนและการขอร้อง ในด้านความเหมาะสม 3 ด้าน คือ การใช้คำพูดที่ถูกต้อง, คุณภาพของสารสนเทศ และระดับความเป็นทางการในแบบทดสอบหลังการเรียนแบบชะลอ ประการสุดท้าย พบว่า ความคิดเห็นของนักศึกษาที่มีต่อการสอนออกมาในลักษณะยืนยันเชิงบวก

การศึกษานี้ได้ให้หลักฐานเพิ่มเติม เพื่อปรับปรุงผลกระทบบของการสอน ความสามารถเชิงปฏิบัติการทางภาษา จึงหวังว่าประเด็นเกี่ยวกับปฏิบัติการทางภาษาในการสอนภาษา จะยกระดับจิตสำนึกของผู้เรียนเกี่ยวกับความสามารถเชิงปฏิบัติการทางภาษา และมีส่วนพัฒนาการเรียนรู้เชิงปฏิบัติการทางภาษาสำหรับการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ

LINGLI DUAN : THE EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT  
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CHINESE EFL STUDENTS. THESIS ADVISOR : ASST. PROF.  
ANCHALEE WANNARUK, Ph.D., 263 PP.

EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION / IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION / APPROPRIACY OF  
ENGLISH REFUSALS

The speech act of refusal is an important part of pragmatic competence that has led to a great research interest in the field of interlanguage pragmatics. The present study was of teaching first-year students at English major level at a Chinese university how to use English refusals appropriately. The purposes of the study were to compare the results in achievements from before and after instruction of Chinese EFL students learning English refusals; to compare the different teaching effects between explicit and implicit instruction to Chinese EFL students; to examine the retention of Chinese EFL students learning English refusals after instruction; and to investigate the students' opinions about the instruction.

The present study was a quasi-experimental study with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Fifty-eight participants from two separate intact groups participated in the study. Twenty-nine students were in the explicit and the implicit groups respectively. The teaching targets were of four types, i.e. refusals to invitations, suggestions, offers and requests and three kinds of status (high, equal and low) in a familiar relationship. Pretest, posttest and delayed posttests were used to obtain the scores and the instrument for the tests was a written DCT. Pair-sample

and independent-sample t-tests and effect size were used for analyzing quantitative data. Analyzing the responses of the written DCT and categorizing the data from the written self-report were the methods used for the qualitative data.

The results revealed that the participants learned how to refuse appropriately in English after the explicit and the implicit instruction. The learners did well in learning refusals to invitations, offers and requests and performed better in the aspects of quality of information and level of formality. The explicit instruction was better than the implicit instruction for teaching English refusals. The performances in refusals to invitations and requests and in quality of information, level of formality and strategies choices in the explicit group were better than those in the implicit group. The participants could retain appropriate uses of English refusal patterns after three months, but the achievements decreased in refusals to invitations and requests and in three aspects of appropriacy: correct expressions, quality of information and level of formality in the delayed posttest. Lastly, students' opinions about the instruction they received were positive.

The present study provides more evidence to prove the effects of teaching pragmatic competence. It was hoped that addressing pragmatic issues in language teaching would raise learners' consciousness of pragmatic competence and thus, contribute to an improvement in EFL pragmatic learning.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	=	Analysis of Variance
CG	=	Control Group
DCT	=	Discourse Completion Task
E-E	=	An equal refuser to an equal interlocutor
EFL	=	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	=	English as a Second Language
EG	=	Explicit Group
H-L	=	A higher refuser to a lower interlocutor
ILP	=	Interlanguage Pragmatics
IG	=	Implicit Group
L-H	=	A lower refuser to a higher interlocutor
L2	=	Second Language
NS	=	Native Speaker
NMEE	=	National Matriculation English Examination
SLA	=	Second Language Acquisition
SD	=	Standard Deviation

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The present study aims at investigating the effects of instruction on the appropriacy of English refusals by Chinese EFL students. The purpose of the study is to test the effects of instruction using both explicit and implicit teaching methods under the noticing hypothesis as the theoretical framework. This chapter provides an introduction and the background to the entire study. The background information includes the current problem, the rationale of the study, the objectives of the study including the research questions and the hypotheses, the significance of the study and the terms used in the present study. In the following, the scope and limitations of the study will be presented. Finally, the outline of the thesis and a summary are briefly described.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Refusal is a speech act which is an important part of pragmatic competence that has aroused a great research interest in the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP). Previous studies have found that there is a difference between English refusals and the refusals of other cultures. The difference between English and Chinese refusals can be found as well. According to Wannaruk (2005, 2008), the three most frequent refusal strategies used by Americans are explanation, positive feeling and gratitude; whereas the results in Chen, Ye and Zhang's (1995) study show that Chinese three most frequent refusal strategies are reason (explanation), regret and

alternative. It seems that there is a difference between the two; therefore, there is a need for the teaching of English refusals to Chinese EFL students.

The present study is located in classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics, which is the interface of pragmatics, second language acquisition and educational research. To be more specific, the present study is an interventional study or the study of teaching pragmatic competence, i.e., teaching students how to refuse appropriately in English. Teaching in many second and foreign language teaching contexts, curricula and materials developed in recent years include strong pragmatics components or even adopt a pragmatic approach as their organizing principle. According to Kasper and Rose (2001), “there is now a large and fast-growing literature on learners’ use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic ability (p.3)”. Many studies have proved that pragmatic ability is teachable, e.g. Billmyer (1990a, b), Lyster (1994), Morrow (1995), Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) and Silver (2003) (see 2.2.2). Many recent studies have adopted Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis as their theoretical framework, for instance, Takahashi(2001), Yoshimi (2001), Silver (2003) and Alcon (2005) (see 2.4.2). These studies are good examples of teaching pragmatic competence.

However, teaching pragmatic competence is still a problem, especially as regards *how* and *what to* teach. Can potentially universal principles of instruction in pragmatics be found? Do the principles for teaching pragmatic competence share similarities with the principles of teaching grammar, vocabulary and other language skills? Can particular strategies of instruction prove differentially appropriate for different pragmatic learning targets, institutional and socio-cultural contexts? At the same time, what contents should a teacher teach for learning pragmatic competence?

On what norm should the learning targets be based? Also, can noticing hypothesis be supported fully in the field of ILP? These issues have become important topics in the field of ILP studies (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Some studies have dealt with the problems from different angles, for instance, Takahashi (2001), Yoshimi (2001), Koike and Pearson (2005), Martines-Flor and Fukuya (2005). However, studies concerning teaching methods and contents of instruction in interlanguage pragmatics are still needed. These are the issues that the present study will address.

From the perspective of Chinese EFL context, syllabi created for different levels of English students involve pragmatic competence as a key principle for teaching and learning, e.g. syllabus for middle school students, syllabus for college English students and syllabus for English majors. However, China is a test-driven country. To many students, the purpose of learning English is to pass different kinds of examinations. Surprisingly, very few items of testing pragmatic competence are covered in large scale tests of China such as National Matriculation English Examination (for high school students entering a university), College English Tests (Band 4 & 6) (for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of a university), Test for English Majors (TEM 4 & 8) (for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> year students of English major) and Public English Test System (1-5) (for any level of Chinese EFL learners). Thus, efforts to improve pragmatic competence in China are still at the theoretical stage.

In terms of teachers, because of the test-driven situation, it seems that few Chinese teachers realize the importance of teaching pragmatic ability (cf. Cook, 2001; Cohen, 2008). They think teaching vocabulary and grammar is more important than pragmatic competence. Even many Chinese English teachers doubt whether pragmatic competence can be taught. They believe that exposure can automatically

lead to the acquisition of pragmatic ability.

As to learners, many Chinese students are not aware of their lack of pragmatic knowledge (cf. Cook, 2001; Cohen, 2008). Chinese EFL learners, even if they are intermediate or advanced learners, do not know how to use appropriate English to express themselves. As Liu (2004) explains:

In China, it is not uncommon phenomena that an English learner can get over 600 points in Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and over 2000 in Graduate Record Examination (GRE) but does not know how to make a simple request in English in real communication situation or understand common indirect speech acts. (p.4)

## **1.2 Rationale of the Study**

One of the reasons for the above problems is the insufficiency of a large number of studies to convince teachers and learners that pragmatic ability can be taught. In a review of the academic literature on pragmatic refusals, the following gaps have been found:

First, among refusal strategies of cross-cultural comparison, many kinds of refusal strategies have been investigated in different cultures by many studies such as Beebe et al. (1990), He (1998), Nelson et al. (2002), Wannaruk (2005, 2008) (for details, see 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). However, there are very few studies on the instruction of appropriate refusals to EFL learners. Only four studies can be found, namely, King and Silver (1993), Morrow (1995), Kondo (2001), and Silva (2003). In these four studies, only three of the studies, i.e., Morrow (1995), Kondo (2001), Silva (2003), had an obvious effect, King and Silver's (1993) study had no teaching effect due to the short instructional time (for details, see 2.5.2).

Second, previous studies mainly adopted explicit teaching method to teach

pragmatic learning targets such as requests, compliments and suggestions (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Rose, 2005). Some researchers have tried to adopt explicit and implicit methods to compare the effects (Rose & Ng, 2001; Takahashi, 2001; Tateyama, 2001; Yoshimi, 2001; Martinez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Alcon, 2005; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Takahashi, 2005). Most previous studies draw the conclusion that explicit instruction is better than implicit instruction. But for teaching refusals, only one study, i.e., Kondo (2001), has so far involved the concept of explicit vs. implicit methods in the instruction of English refusals and the results show that both explicit and implicit methods are very effective in teaching English refusals.

Third, no studies to date utilize different stimulus types of refusals. Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz's (1990) study has classified four refusal stimulus types according to the status of a refuser in different situations. These types are refusals to invitations, suggestions, offers and requests; refuser status is classified as low, equal or high. These classifications have been a classic model for later researchers to follow. However, previous studies did not follow Beebe et al.'s (1990) patterns for teaching, the research just dealt with refusals as a general pattern, e.g. *I'd love to + regret + excuse* in Silver's (2003) study.

Fourth, in regard to the long-term effects of instruction, very few instructional ILP studies adopted the delayed posttest. For instance, Morrow (1995), House (1996), Liddicoat and Crozet (2001), Koike and Pearson (2005) conducted a delayed posttest one to twelve months after instruction. However, a delayed post-test should have been used by some studies in order to ascertain the long-term effect of explicit and implicit instruction. Alcon (2005) recommends that "although the institutional constraints may influence the research design, future research should make

use of a delayed post-test in order to determine whether the effects of explicit and implicit instruction are retained some time after instructional period” (p.429).

Fifth, very few studies can be found to teach pragmatic ability among Chinese EFL students, e.g. Yoshinori and Zhang (2002) teaching English requests to Chinese university students. However, no researchers have yet conducted a study of Chinese EFL students of learning and teaching appropriate English refusals. In China, many researchers were interested in an investigation of Chinese EFL students’ pragmatic ability (e.g. Wang, 2001). Furthermore, some studies concerning the importance of teaching requests and compliments (e.g. Jiang, 2005) can be found, yet very few studies deal with *how* and *what to* teach. Likewise, no research is available on teaching English refusals to Chinese EFL students.

The above reasons provide strong support to the rationale of the present study, that is, research to date on teaching pragmatic competence has been limited, nor does it include any studies relating to the teaching of English refusals. Furthermore, *what* and *how to* teach are major problems to be solved in ILP studies. These issues are the major task for the present study.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Research Questions**

The main purpose of the present study is to test the teaching effects of the explicit and implicit instruction. The teaching effects can be reflected by the comparison of the achievements before and after instruction, the comparison between explicit and implicit instruction, and the retention effect some time after instruction. The above effects can be supported from the data in written self-report. Specifically, the purposes of the present study are:

- 1) To compare the achievements of the Chinese EFL students learning English refusals which resulted from before and after instruction and to investigate its effect size;
- 2) To compare the different teaching effects between the explicit and implicit instruction to Chinese EFL students and to investigate its effect size;
- 3) To examine the retention of English refusals by Chinese EFL students after instruction and to investigate its effect size;
- 4) To investigate the students' opinions towards the instruction.

Based on the above objectives of the study, the following research questions are proposed:

- 1) Are there any differences for Chinese EFL students using English refusals in terms of appropriacy before and after instruction?
- 2) Are there any differences between explicit and implicit instruction to the teaching of English refusals in a Chinese EFL context?
- 3) Can Chinese EFL students retain the appropriate use of English refusals after instruction?
- 4) What are Chinese EFL students' opinions towards the explicit and implicit instruction for teaching English refusals?

Among the above four research questions, the first to the third research questions are the main task of the present study and they are related to the process of the experiment, hence, three research hypotheses are proposed.

For the first research question, as Kasper and Rose (2002) argued that there were mixed results on the teachability of pragmatic targets in the previous instructional ILP studies. Most previous instructional ILP studies proved that there

was an improvement after instruction, e.g. Morrow (1995), Liddicoat and Crozet (2001), and Silver (2003). Some studies achieved a no-effect result, for instance, Olshtain and Cohen (1990), King and Silver (1993), LoCastro (1997a), and Salazar (2003). Although the previous results were mixed, the results overall showed an improvement. The present study intends to explore further these effects of improvement. Therefore, the first hypothesis is as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** Chinese EFL students will learn to use more English refusals in terms of appropriacy after instruction.

For the second research question, most previous studies testified that explicit instruction was better than implicit instruction, e.g. House (1996), Rose and Ng. (2001), and Takahashi (2005). Some studies proved the opposite results, as Kobota (1995) found that implicit instruction was better than explicit instruction. Other studies showed inconclusive results, i.e. there were no differences between the two teaching methods, e.g. Fukuya et al. (1998), Fukuya and Clark (2001), and Alcon (2005). To further explore the results, the present study assumes the null hypothesis as follows:

**Hypothesis 2:** There are no differences between explicit and implicit instruction to the teaching of English refusals in a Chinese EFL context.

For the third research question, some ILP scholars argued that the retention in the delayed posttest could be found, but the decreasing in retention was correlated to the length of time. These results were reflected in Morrow (1995), House (1996), Liddicoat and Crozedt (2001) and Koike and Pearson (2005). The present study aims at examining if the retention continues after instruction; therefore, it is assumed that

**Hypothesis 3:** Chinese EFL students cannot retain all the appropriate uses of English refusals after instruction.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Since several reasons can be established for the rationale of the study, the significance of the study can be illustrated as follows.

In regard to research, the present study will add more evidence to prove the effects of teaching pragmatic competence, in the Chinese context in particular, because very few related studies could be found in a Chinese EFL learning situation. The study will test if explicit and implicit teaching methods can be used effectively in the instruction of pragmatic competence. Also, the contents of instruction, i.e. the four stimulus types, could be checked in order to find out if they are teachable or not. Furthermore, the retention effect will be checked so as to add support to the teaching effect of teachability in instructional ILP studies.

The present study takes the noticing hypothesis as a theoretical framework. Many previous instructional ILP studies have proved that different levels of noticing result in understanding and intake, e.g. Morrow (1995), Takahashi (2001), Silva (2003), Alcon (2005). Therefore, it is hoped that this study may support Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis in the field of ILP studies.

Concerning its application, the results will be helpful to curriculum and syllabus designers. The findings of the study will be of great help to syllabus designers in teaching materials, language teaching practice and principles and typical expressions or patterns of learning targets. As regards teaching, the bias towards teaching pragmatic competence may be reduced to some extent. Teachers may be

convinced by the study that instruction is better than exposure in an EFL context; thus, their confidence may be enhanced in teaching pragmatic ability, i.e., pragmatic competence is teachable. Therefore, progress in EFL pragmatic teaching can be made. In terms of learning, learners will be encouraged to practice native-like English more. It is hoped that addressing the pragmatic issues in language teaching will raise learners' consciousness of pragmatic competence and thus, contribute to an improvement in EFL pragmatic learning.

### **1.5 Definitions of Terms in the Study**

The present study focuses on teaching the first-year students in the English major programme at a Chinese university how to use English refusals appropriately. The teaching methods are explicit and implicit ones in order to compare the effects of the two teaching methods, for the two methods are commonly used in previous studies. The effects of instruction are measured by testing learners' appropriate use of English refusals or their choice of English refusal strategies before and after instruction. The key term is instruction, whereas teaching, training and even a general term, e.g. treatment or experiment are used interchangeably in the study. Other related terms are effects, English refusals, appropriacy and Chinese EFL students. They are defined as follows:

#### 1) Explicit instruction

This kind of instruction requires students to pay deliberate attention to the forms of English refusals with a view to understanding them. Students are provided with English refusals data that illustrate the form of English refusals and are asked to work out how the form works for themselves. (Ellis, 2005, p.717)

## 2) Implicit instruction

This kind of instruction requires learners to infer how a form works without awareness. Students are asked to memorize English refusals data that illustrate the form. The data is presented to the students without any special attempt to draw their attention to the targeted form. The targeted form is highlighted in some way (e.g., using italics) to induce noticing. (ibid.)

## 3) Effect

Effect refers to something produced by an action or a cause. In the present study, the effect of instruction is used with and is defined as the achievements of explicit and implicit instruction. The achievements can be represented by the scores of the tests including learning or teaching effects after a treatment and the retention of appropriate English refusals within several months (e.g. three months) after instruction.

## 4) English Refusals

A refusal is a speech act by which a speaker “denies to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor” (Chen, Ye & Zhang, 1995, p.121). Many expressions of English refusals have been found in previous studies, for example, *I'd love to, but I can't this weekend; That would be nice if I had time* (Wannaruk, 2005, 2008). Refusals may include four stimulus types: refusing invitations, refusing suggestions, refusing requests and refusing offers. Each type includes three different kinds of status, i.e. refusing a person of higher status, refusing a person of equal status, refusing a person of lower status. The social distance between the speakers and refusers is between acquaintances or familiar persons. The norm for English refusals is American English refusals in the present study, because most previous studies investigated the patterns of American English refusals rather than British English

refusals (for details, see 2.1.1 and 2.1.2).

#### 5) Appropriacy

Appropriacy refers to the appropriateness of using English refusals. Therefore, appropriacy and appropriateness are used interchangeably in the study. It contains four aspects, i.e. correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices and level of formality. The first aspect includes the typical use of expressions from the native speaker's perspective and an appropriate pattern without grammatical mistakes. The second aspect is the quality of information given according to the situation. The third aspect is the level of strategies choices. The fourth aspect refers to the level of formality expressed through the degree of formal or informal word choice and the degree of politeness suitable to the situation (for details, see 3.5.1.4 and Appendix D).

#### 6) Chinese EFL students

In a general sense, EFL refers to English as a foreign language. According to Richards, Platt and Platt (2000), EFL refers to English in countries where it is taught as a subject in schools but not used as a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication (e.g., in government, business, or industry) within the country (p.155). EFL students may refer to any students who learn English as their foreign language. In the present study, Chinese EFL students refer to those that have already studied English for 6 or 7 years in a middle school of China and have entered a Chinese university for the first year of an English major programme. Hence, the populations are the first-year English major students at universities in China.

## 1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study aims to examine the effects of teaching English refusals in a Chinese EFL context. Its scope is confined to the following areas.

The present study is limited to a comparison of the achievements after the explicit and implicit instruction of English refusals to Chinese EFL students. It is intended to evaluate the teachability of pragmatic competence. Different teaching methods can yield different learning effects. The present study is confined to a comparison of the differences between explicit and implicit instruction. It is expected that the results from explicit instruction will be better than from implicit instruction. Teaching effect will be reflected by the degree of retention of the learning targets by the students. The delayed posttest will test the retention effect so as to check the long-term effect of teaching.

The learning targets of English refusals are located in American English. Four stimulus types of American English refusals are the focus of learning targets, because refusals are usually initiated by another speech act, i.e. invitations, suggestions, offers or requests. The core part of the targets is the appropriacy or appropriateness of English refusals which is embodied in four aspects, that is, correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices and level of formality. Among the four aspects, the strategies choices are the patterns or strategies of American English refusals which are the focus of four aspects. It is hoped that the four stimulus types and the four aspects of appropriacy will be proper forms for the learning targets to be followed up in a further study.

However, due to the restrictions of the research situation, the present study has some limitations as well. The number of participants is relatively small which

means that full-scale results cannot be generalized from the study. Therefore, the present study can only represent a complete study on a small scale.

Extraneous effects cannot be avoided, because the study cannot guarantee that the effect of instruction is only from the treatment. Students may learn some of the learning targets through other channels during the experiment, e.g. through e-mail or chat on line, though those who acknowledged that they had learned English refusals were excluded from the study at the very beginning of the treatment.

The teaching targets are focused on American English refusals which may not be generalizable to other English varieties such as British English or Australian English. Due to the limitations of previous studies on the patterns of American English refusals, the present study has to be confined mainly to American English refusals. Furthermore, the norm for the refusals patterns is sensitive to the situation and is slightly biased. As a matter of fact, this limitation is always an issue in the studies of ILP.

The instructional time is comparatively short, because of the relatively large number of the instructional targets. The four stimulus types of English refusals are taught and it cannot be guaranteed that students can digest the targets in such a short time.

Written Discourse Completion Task (DCT) is a controversial method of data collection and is often challenged by other researchers due to its lack of authenticity. And the rating criteria for written DCT are subjective and not justifiable as for many other large-scale oral tests, e.g. TOEFL oral test.

## **1.7 Outline of the Dissertation**

Chapter one is the background to the present study. The statement of the problem, rationale of the study, significance of the study, and the terms used in the present study are presented. Then the objectives of the study and the research hypotheses are established. Finally, the scope and limitations of the study and a summary are briefly described.

Chapter two will review the related literature in five parts. The first part is refusal strategies in interlanguage. The second part is about the teachability of pragmatic competence. The third part deals with a comparison between explicit and implicit teaching in ILP. The theoretical framework for LIP is illustrated for the background of teaching pragmatics in the fourth part. The fifth part will be a summary of previous instructional ILP studies including the research design and specific studies of teaching English refusals.

Based on the second chapter, Chapter three will illustrate the design of the present study. Then according to the design, a pilot study will be conducted and the results will be presented. In line with the implications from the pilot study, a description of the participants and data collection in the main study will be given.

Chapter four presents the results of the present study in four parts, i.e. the results of written DCT for the pretest and the posttest; the results of written DCT from the explicit and the implicit groups in the posttest; the results of the posttest and the delayed posttest; and the data from written self-report are described in detail to confirm the results of written DCT.

Chapter five discusses the results of the present study with a comparison of previous studies in four aspects: factors for the teaching effect after instruction;

factors for the differences of explicit and implicit instruction; factors for the retention effect after instruction; and the interpretation of the results in terms of noticing hypothesis.

Chapter six is the last chapter of the whole dissertation. It will deal with the findings and the implications both in terms of teaching and research. And some suggestions for instruction in pragmatic competence and a further study will also be discussed.

## **1.8 Summary**

This chapter is the background to the present study. The problems relating to the awareness of teaching and learning pragmatic competence in and outside China indicate that studies of teaching English pragmatic competence are needed. Based on the existing problems, the research questions and research hypotheses are proposed so as to test whether there is a significant difference between explicit and implicit teaching methods in teaching English refusals before and after instruction. Then, six terms are defined: explicit instruction, implicit instruction, effect, English refusals, appropriacy, and Chinese EFL students. Due to limited time and few previous studies in the literature for reference, the present study deals with teaching the appropriateness of English refusals for the first-year English major students at a Chinese university.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter will review the related literature in relation to the research questions and the research hypotheses in five parts. The first part is interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) of English refusals which covers American, EFL learners and Chinese refusal strategies investigated in the previous literature. This part is related to the contents of the teaching targets. The second part is instructional ILP studies focusing on the teachability of pragmatic competence and the effects of teaching different kinds of speech acts. The third part reviews the comparison between explicit and implicit instruction in ILP. The fourth part deals with the theoretical background to ILP. The fifth part summarizes previous instructional ILP studies including the research design and previous studies of teaching English refusals.

#### **2.1 English Refusals in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

The purpose of reviewing English refusals is to offer the norm for the patterns or strategies of English refusals. A general review of comparative studies between English and other countries' refusal strategies is presented. Then, American English refusal patterns are compared to those of EFL learners to find out what transfer occurs among EFL learners. On this basis, a comparison of American and Chinese refusal strategies is made.

### **2.1.1 An Overview of Previous Comparative Studies of Refusal Strategies**

Previous comparative studies of refusal strategies were mainly confined to the field of speech acts. The study of speech acts provides researchers with a window on human interaction. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) claimed that the investigation of speech acts among other things allowed researchers to make claims of universality, revealed the social implications conveyed by modes of performance, and uncovered cultural differences in interactive strategies. In general, previous research has focused on the realization of a particular speech act within a given language and the realization of a particular speech act across languages, or the production (or, occasionally recognition) of a particular speech act in a language by non-native speakers of that language (Gass & Houck, 1999; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Kasper & Rose, 2002). Among those speech acts that have received a great deal of scrutiny are requests, apologies, compliments, and increasingly, refusals.

There are many kinds of definitions of refusal from different perspectives. In respect to face theory, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), a refusal is without doubt, then, a face-threatening and negatively affective speech act. Refusals are “highly face threatening speech acts because they involve the rejection of a request which the communicator felt was legitimate to make” (Daly, Holmes, Newton & Stubbe, 2004, p.948)”. Regarding the interaction of the interlocutor and the refuser, refusals are defined differently. A refusal is one kind of speech act which has functions as a unit of communication and is generally considered as a speech act by which a speaker “denies to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor” (Chen, Ye & Zhang, 1995, p.121). From the point of view of behaviour, Kline and Floyd (1992 as cited in Daly, Holmes, Newton & Stubbe, 2004, p.948) define a refusal as an

attempt to bring about behavioural change by encouraging the other to withdraw his/her request. And they identify the core component as clearly indicating opposition to granting a request.

A more comprehensive definition of refusal is offered by Gass and Houck (1999) as follows.

Refusals are one of a relatively small number of speech acts which can be characterized as a response to another's act (e.g., a request, invitation, offer, suggestion), rather than as an act initiated by the speaker. Because refusals normally function as second pair parts, they preclude extensive planning on the part of the refuser. And because extensive planning is limited, and the possibilities for response are broader than for an initiating act, refusals may reveal greater complexity than many other speech acts. (p.2)

Many comparative studies of refusals have been conducted. Rubin (1983 as cited in Gass & Houck, 1999) set out nine ways of saying *no*, which she claimed were similar across a number of cultures. Typical examples were offering an alternative, general acceptance with excuses, general acceptance of an offer but giving no details.

Perhaps the best-known and most frequently cited system for analyzing refusals was developed by Beebe and her colleagues. Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) broke down refusal responses into semantic formulas (those expressions which can be used to perform a refusal) and adjuncts (expressions which accompany a refusal, but which cannot by themselves be used to perform a refusal). Furthermore, in Beebe et al.'s (1990) study, they classified stimulus types according to the status of the refuser in different situations which provides a model in their study. These stimulus types were request, invitation, offer and suggestion; refuser status was classified as lower, equal or higher. These classifications have been a typical model for later researchers to follow.

Many studies of comparison of American refusal strategies and other countries' refusal strategies have been produced. As reviewed by Nelson, Al Batal, and El Bakary (2002), Stevens's (1993) study was the first study to compare Arabic and English refusals. Hussein (1995) maintained that indirect refusals were used with acquaintances of equal status and with close friends of unequal status. AL-Issa (1998) found that Jordanians were more likely to express regret (e.g., "I'm sorry") than Americans and that both groups employed explanations and reasons more than any other strategy.

Nelson, Crason, Al Batal and El Bakary (2002) investigated similarities and differences between Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals using a modified version of the discourse completion test developed by Beebe et al. (1990). Nelson et al.'s (2002) study analyzed data according to frequency types of strategies, the direct/indirect dimension of communication style, gender, and status.

Also, many studies have conducted comparisons of refusal strategies between American and oriental countries. The findings of Beebe et al. (1990) clearly demonstrated the importance of status in the refusal strategies selected by the American and Japanese respondents. Inook (1992 as cited in Wannaruk, 2004) compared the speech act of refusals between Koreans and Americans. It was found that Americans generally used fewer strategies than Koreans did. But when refusing a person of higher status, both groups used more strategies than elsewhere.

In Saeki and O'Keefe's (1994 as cited in Nelson et al., 2002) study, Americans and Japanese were similar in that both elaborated more when the candidate was unqualified and both employed more literal and direct strategies than the researchers had anticipated. Wannaruk (2004) investigated the similarities and

differences between Thais and Americans in the speech act of making refusals. The study revealed that both groups used similar strategies with different frequency. Both social status and types of eliciting acts influenced the use of refusal strategies.

In sum, American refusal strategies and other cultures' refusal strategies share some similarities with explanation (reason) as the most favoured strategy, but there are a lot of differences in other sides. Therefore, we have reasons to compare whether there is transfer for EFL learners.

### **2.1.2 American and EFL Refusal Strategies**

American and other countries refusal strategies vary in many aspects. Without exception, EFL refusal strategies are influenced by their mother tongue. The following studies have proved this conclusion.

Beebe et al. (1990) investigated pragmatic transfer by Japanese learners of English and examined if refusal strategies to requests, invitations, offers and suggestions varied according to the social status of the interlocutors. It was found that transfer from Japanese to English existed in the order, frequency and content of semantic formulae used in the refusals.

Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1991) studied rejections used by native speakers of English and proficient nonnative speakers of English during academic advising sessions. The non-native speakers of English included Arabs, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malay and Spanish. It was found that non-native speakers employed questioning as an avoidance strategy the most. They frequently delayed their rejection or remained silent as a method of rejection.

Robinson (1992 as cited in Wannaruk, 2005) studied rejections in English

used by twelve female Japanese ESL learners. It was found that both intermediate and advanced learners realized the differences between American and Japanese cultures in terms of appropriate refusal behaviors. Subjects with lower proficiency were likely to be influenced by their L1 refusal behaviors. On the contrary, those with higher proficiency adopted American English refusal strategies.

He (1998) compared patterns of refusal strategy by Chinese speakers to that of native speakers of American English and learners of Chinese whose native tongue was American English. The three groups were different in the frequency with which different strategies were employed. Among the thirteen strategies, there were six major refusal strategies including explanation, alternative, direct refusal, regret, dissuasion and avoidance strategies. The general patterns were that Chinese and Americans were at the two extremes, and differed in the use of most of the major strategies under varied circumstances. Learners were in the middle of the two native groups.

Al-Issa (2003) examined the phenomenon of sociocultural transfer and its motivating factors within the realization patterns of the speech act refusal by Jordanian EFL learners. EFL refusal responses were compared with similar data elicited from native speakers of English responding in English and native speakers of Arabic responding in Arabic. The results showed three areas in which sociocultural transfer was existed in EFL learners' speech: choice of selecting semantic formulas, length of responses, and content of semantic formulas.

Similar to Al-Issa's (2003) study, Wannaruk's (2005, 2008) study examined the occurrence of pragmatic transfer by Thai EFL learners in the speech act of refusal. EFL refusal data were compared with similar data elicited from native speakers of English responding in English and native speakers of Thai responding in Thai. The

findings revealed that pragmatic transfer existed in choice and content of semantic formulae. Among the choice of semantic formulae, 'explanation' was the most frequently used strategy by native speakers of Thai and American English and Thai EFL learners. Both native speakers of Thai and American English gave clear and acceptable explanations. Of the three most frequently used semantic formulae summarized by the study, after the first one---'explanation, 'negative ability', 'gratitude', 'positive feeling' and 'regret' were ranked secondly or thirdly. L1 culture and language proficiency were important factors in pragmatic transfer.

Kwon (2003) investigated the occurrences of pragmatic transfer in the refusals of Korean EFL learners with different levels of English proficiency. Findings showed that pragmatic transfer was observed in all groups of EFL learners. There was a positive correlation between pragmatic transfer and learners' proficiency.

In general, the use of EFL learners' refusal strategies is influenced by their native languages. Thus, it is believed that EFL learners need more practice to be native like.

### **2.1.3 American vs. Chinese Refusal Strategies**

Liao and Bresnahan's (1996) analysis revealed that Americans and Chinese used different formulaic expressions in refusals and applied different strategies. Overall, Americans used more strategies than Chinese in making refusals. Chinese people were more economical at making excuses. The Chinese tended to begin the refusal with an apology, an indirect strategy, followed by a reason. Americans tended to offer different reasons in refusals and did not hesitate to give a reason if they were right. The majority of both cultures provided vague reasons to refuse a person of high status. In general, Liao and Bresnahan (1996) found that 1) when the Chinese refused

a member outside the family, they tended to refuse by claiming exterior factors; 2) the expression of 'I'd love to' was not a formulaic expression in Chinese refusal as in the equivalent American expression; 4) one common mode of politeness in refusals in Chinese was: address form (if the refusee is of high status), plus one of the politeness markers of apology followed by a reason for refusal.

According to Liao and Bresnahan (1996), the Chinese culture is generally believed to be collectively oriented and the American individually oriented. The logic of a more collective society would conclude that people would be more reluctant to resist compliance. For example, in Liao and Bresnahan (1994) they found that more Chinese people, compared with Americans, felt their relationship with others was more important than their own accomplishments. By contrast, more Americans tended to feel comfortable being singled out for praise or rewards, and enjoyed being unique and different from others. The Chinese were more willing to give up their request after being refused once, unlike American counterparts, more of whom would persist in their request. In Liao and Bresnahan's (1996) study, 24 strategies in Mandarin Chinese refusal were offered as follows:

- 1) silence, hesitation, lack of enthusiasm; 2) offering an alternative; 3) postponement; 4) putting the blame on a third party or something over which you have no control; 5) avoidance; 6) general acceptance without giving details; 7) divert and distract the addressee; 8) general acceptance with excuse; 9) saying what is offered or requested is inappropriate; 10) external yes, internal no; 11) statement of philosophy; 12) direct no; 13) excuse or explanation; 14) complaining or appealing to feeling; 15) rationale; 16) joke; 17) criticism; 18) conditional yes; 19) questioning the justification of the request; 20) threat; 21) external no, internal yes; 22) statement of principle; 23) saying I'm sorry; 24) code-switching. (p.706)

Chen, Ye and Zhang (1995) summarized the most commonly used Chinese substantive refusal strategies were reason (explanation), alternative and direct refusal. In terms of four initiating act, the order varied. To request rank, the order was reason, alternative and regret, direct refusal and others; to suggestion rank, the order was reason, alternative and avoidance; to invitation rank, the order was reason, direction refusal and regret; to offer rank, the order was dissuade interlocutor, direct refusal, reason and other. As to refuser's social status, the order for the higher rank, the equal and the lower rank was different (see Table 2.2). The order for higher rank was reason, dissuade interlocutor and others; the order for equal rank was reason, regret and alternative; the order for lower rank was reason, alternative and direct refusal.

To sum up, American and Chinese refusal strategies vary in different degrees in terms of different stimulus types and different kinds of status. Differences between American and Chinese refusal strategies can be summarized as follows:

**Table 2.1 American Three Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies**

<b>Stimulus Type</b>	<b>Refuser's Status</b>	<b>Three Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies</b>		
Invitations	Higher	1. Explanation	2. Positive feeling	3. Negative ability
	Equal	1.Explanation	2.No, Gratitude	3.Future acceptance
	Lower	1. Explanation	2. Gratitude	3.Regret
Suggestions	Higher	1. Explanation	2. Alternative	3.Negative ability, Pause filler
	Equal	1. Explanation	2.Pause filler	3.Positive feeling
	Lower	1. Explanation	2. Alternative	3.Negative ability
Offers	Higher	1. Explanation	2. Gratitude	3.Negative ability, Positive feeling
	Equal	1. No	2. Gratitude	3. Explanation
	Lower	1. Give comfort	2. Letting the interlocutor off the hook	
Requests	Higher	1. Explanation	2. Alternative	3. Regret
	Equal	1. Explanation	2.Regret	3. Alternative
	Lower	1. Explanation	2. Regret	3. Positive feeling

(adapted from Wannaruk, 2005, 2008)

From Table 2.1, we can see that “explanation” is the most popular American refusal strategy; the other strategies are “gratitude”, “alternative” and “regret”. The “gratitude” and “alternative” strategies can be found in different stimulus types. But “regret strategy” is only located in refusals to requests. Chinese refusal strategies have different patterns. The following table shows the differences.

**Table 2.2 Chinese Three Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies**

<b>Stimulus Types</b>	<b>Refuser's Status</b>	<b>Three Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies</b>		
Invitations		1. Reason	2. Direct refusal	3. Regret
Suggestions		1. Reason	2. Alternative	3. Avoidance
Offers		1. Dissuade interlocutor	2. Direct refusal	
		3. Reason		
Requests		1. Reason	2. Alternative	3. Regret
	Higher	1. Reason	2. Dissuade interlocutor	
		3. Direct refusal		
	Equal	1. Reason	2. Regret	3. Alternative
	Lower	1. Reason	2. Alternative	3. Direct refusal

(adapted from Chen, Ye & Zhang, 1995)

The above table shows that Chinese refusal strategies are mainly “reason” which has the same meaning as “explanation”, “alternative”, “regret” and “direct refusal”, but no “gratitude” strategy is used among the three most frequent strategies. This is different from American refusal strategies, where these strategies can be found in different stimulus types and the different kinds of status of the refusers.

By comparison, it is found that “explanation” (reason) is the most popular strategy among both American and Chinese. The second and the third most popular strategies, however, vary. Therefore, it is believed that Americans and Chinese have different refusal patterns and, consequently, there is a need for teaching Chinese EFL

learners about American English refusal strategies. The American refusal strategies quoted above will be the standard norm for the instruction in the present study.

## **2.2 Teachability of Pragmatic Competence in Instructional**

### **Interlanguage Pragmatics Studies**

In terms of pragmatics and language teaching, instruction is a result of planned pedagogical action directed toward the acquisition of pragmatics (Kasper & Rose, 2002). It can also be referred to as pedagogical intervention, i.e. the effects of different instructional strategies for second language pragmatic learning (Rose, 2005). In general, the previous research findings indicated that, “for those for whom the classroom is the only opportunity for exposure to L2 input, ‘instruction’ is beneficial” (Doughty, 2003, p.259-261). Many studies (see 2.2.2) indicate that there is a good effect from instruction and therefore, the teachability of pragmatic competence is predictable. These studies can provide a rationale for establishing Hypothesis 1 and 3. In order to illustrate the concepts in a scientific way, the term of pragmatic competence should be defined. Then a review of the studies on teachability is given.

#### **2.2.1 Definitions of Pragmatic Competence**

Pragmatic competence, for learners wishing to acquire the pragmatics of a second language, is “how to do things with target language words and how to communicate actions and the “words” that implement them are both responsive to and shape situations, activities, and social relationships” (Kasper & Roever, 2005, p.317). Pragmatic ability and pragmatic competence are used interchangeably in this study.

Pragmatic competence is one of the important parts of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972) and a revised model by Bachman and Palmer (1996). The domains of pragmatic competence are referred to as sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983). According to Kasper and Roever (2005),

Sociopragmatic competence encompasses knowledge of the relationships between communicative action and power, social distance, and the imposition associated with a past or future event, knowledge of mutual rights and obligations, taboos, and conventional practices, or the social conditions and consequences of “what you do, when and to whom” Pragmalinguistic competence comprises the knowledge and ability for use of conventions of means (such as the strategies for realizing speech acts) and conventions of form (such as the linguistic forms implementing speech act strategies). (p.317).

In other words, we can say that in the present study, pragmatic competence is the ability of using language appropriately or of behaving like a native speaker. Studies that have addressed teachability strongly suggest that most aspects of L2 pragmatics are indeed amenable to instruction, that instructional intervention is more beneficial than no instruction targeted to pragmatic learning, and that for the most part, explicit instruction combined with ample practice opportunities results in great gains (Kasper & Roever, 2005).

The learning or acquisition of pragmatic competence is closely related to interlanguage pragmatics or second language pragmatic development which is an interdisciplinary field covering two areas: pragmatics and second language acquisition. Most researchers still argue that pragmatic competence can be acquired automatically

if learners have sufficient exposure to the target language. But in the EFL context, instruction is more explicit and salient and, as a result, more effective. Therefore, we should teach rather than wait until the result comes.

### **2.2.2 The Effects of Teachability**

Instruction for learning pragmatics is often compared with non-instruction in the early stage of study in the field of ILP. Previous studies showed that learners receiving instruction in learning pragmatics outperformed those who had not received any instruction. These studies have examined teaching effects of different kinds of speech acts such as requests, apologies and so on. Most studies proved that there was a good effect from instruction. But some studies reported the opposite results. The following are some studies concerning to this issue.

Billmyer (1990a, b) taught 18 intermediate Japanese learners of English how to compliment appropriately with comparison of one control group. The study adopted pretest-posttest design and data were obtained through elicited conversation. Several measures of learner performance of compliments were used, including: frequency of occurrence of norm-appropriate compliments; level of spontaneity; level of appropriateness; well-informedness of utterance; and adjectival repertoire. Replies to compliments were evaluated by reply type and its effect on the interaction and length of reply. On five of seven measures, subjects in the tutored group showed complimenting behavior more closely approximating native speaker norms than subjects in the untutored group, which supported the idea that formal classroom

instruction in social rules of language could assist learners in communicating appropriately and meaningfully with native speakers.

Bouton's (1994) study with 14 international students in an academic English course investigated whether classroom instruction on specific rules and patterns of implicature could speed acquisition of interpreting skills. Results suggested that formal instruction could be effective when focused on the more formulaic implicatures, while the less formulaic forms were as resistant to formal instruction as they appeared to be. In Bouton's (1994) study, the experimental group achieved results as high as those observed with previous immersion students who had spent four years living in the US, but there was no such improvement for the control group.

Lyster's (1994) experimental participants outperformed uninstructional learners on all tasks except informal oral production, which all learners used appropriately. In Lyster's (1994) study, a set of functional-analytical materials, entailing the study and practice of sociostylistic variation, was implemented in three eighth-grade French immersion (FI) classrooms by their respective teachers during French language arts classes over a five-week period. Pre- and posttests indicated that functional-analytical teaching improved FI students' sociolinguistic competence in at least three ways.

Wildner-Bassett (1994) investigated pragmatic declarative and procedural knowledge as realized by routine formulas and conversational strategies with 19 American college students learning German as a Second Language. The results

suggested that language instruction that had the goal of developing metapragmatic declarative and procedural knowledge resulted in real progress toward proficiency, even at an elementary level of language instruction.

Morrow's (1995) case study of intermediate-level, English-as-a-Second-Language students was conducted to investigate the capacity of formal speech-act instruction to promote pragmatic development in the production of two problematic speech acts: refusals and complaints. The refusal analyses of discourse features (viz., semantic formulae) revealed increases in the use of politeness strategies, especially of negative politeness strategies. Analyses of propositions and modifiers in the complaint data revealed gains in pragmatic competence which were indicated by such changes as increased indirectness, more complete explanations, and fewer explicit statements of dissatisfaction. These results suggested that speech-act instruction helped the subjects to perform complaints and refusals which were clearer, more polite and, to a limited extent, more native like.

Kubota (1995) investigated the teaching of conversational English implicature of 126 Japanese English-as-a-Foreign-Language learners. University student participants were divided into three groups and given a multiple choice test and a sentence-combining test. Results indicated that experimental groups generated significantly better responses. In addition, no subjects extracted the expected pragmatic generalizations from the treatment that they were applying to the new items. Also, the conscious-raising groups performed better in the post-test than in the pre-

test, and they had significantly higher scores in the guessing of items in the first post-test than in the pre-test. Results confirm that teaching conversational implicature through explicit explanations of rules and consciousness-raising tasks is effective.

Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) investigated the effects of instruction given to Australian university students of French as a foreign language on the acquisition of one target interactional practice, namely, responding to a question about the weekend. The study lasted thirteen weeks and included a pretest, posttest and delayed posttest (one year later) design. The data analysis used in depth qualitative approach with role play. The study has shown that interactional norms can be acquired even within the confines of a short-term program. The study also showed that consciousness-raising about conversational style and content could lead to change in learners' language and the conversational style was amenable to teaching in a language classroom.

Yoshimi (2001) examined whether an explicit instructional approach with expanded opportunities for communicative practice and feedback could facilitate learners' development of the target-like use of Japanese discourses markers in the production of an extended story-telling task. Yoshimi's (2001) instructional learners showed a dramatic increase in frequency of interactional markers, but no similar increase in their use by the control group was observed.

The applicability of recasting to the pragmalinguistic level was the mission of Fukuya and Zhang's (2002) study. This study investigated the effects of implicit feedback on Chinese learners of English in learning eight pragmalinguistic

conventions of request. Both pragmatic recast and control groups performed role-plays; the former received recasts on their request acts whereas the latter did not. The results of discourse completion tests yielded the higher effect sizes of the pragmatic recast group. Both groups also built up confidence in speaking to an interlocutor of higher status, perhaps due to the interaction with the instructor and their peers.

Silver's (2003) study was set up to further investigate whether relatively explicit instruction might be useful for L2 pragmatic development, and the most appropriate and effective ways to deliver the pragmatic information to L2 learners. Adopting a pre-test/post-test design with treatment and control groups, it incorporated metapragmatic awareness into task-based methodological principles in its instructional treatment in order to teach the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic components of the speech act of refusals. The findings illustrated that the instructional approach enhanced the L2 pragmatic ability of students performing the speech act in focus. This suggested that L2 pedagogy which aimed at providing learners with metapragmatic information associated with meaningful opportunities for language use might result in benefits in learners.

Safont (2003) investigated the effects of instruction on requests by focusing on the use of internal and external modification and obtained the data through role play. Safont (2003) found that her participants showed a marked increase in the use of request modification in the posttest.

However, Kasper and Rose (2002) and Rose (2005) argue that results provided by teachability studies have been mixed. The above studies proved to be teachable, but the following studies show the opposite results, but there is a room for improvement in their research design.

In Olshtain and Cohen's (1990) study pre- and post-training measurement of 18 adult English-as-a-Second-Language learners' apology speech act behavior found no clear-cut quantitative improvement after training, although there was an obvious qualitative approximation of native-like speech act behavior in terms of types of intensification and downgrading, choice of strategy, and awareness of situational factors. As Kasper and Rose (2002) commented they provided a mere one hour of instruction, which could hardly be considered sufficient for learners to master the more advanced aspects of apologizing in English.

King and Silver's (1993) study had the same problem as Olshtain and Cohen's (1990) study. They investigated the refusal strategies of intermediate-level second language learners and the potential for developing sociolinguistic competence in nonnative speakers through classroom instruction. The subjects were six college students of English as a Second Language and they were divided into treatment and control groups. Pre- and post-test questionnaires designed to elicit refusals in English were administered. Questionnaire results indicated that the instruction in refusals had little effect. Data from the telephone interview revealed no effect. Patterns of response found in certain questionnaire situations, and the large disparity between

written and spoken refusal strategies, were found to be of special interest and had implications for further research.

LoCastro (1997a ) investigated the extent to which pedagogical intervention could facilitate the development of pragmatic competence in English. The study found no change after nine weeks of instruction---participants continued to rely on bare head acts at the time of the posttest. In another study, LoCastro (1997b) reported on an analysis of the evidence of politeness in Japanese English-as-a-Second-Language high school textbooks. Analysis revealed that the textbooks were not exposing learners to important aspects of linguistic politeness in English. Ways in which the teaching of politeness might be facilitated were considered. Kasper and Rose (2002, p.252) and Rose (2005) commented on LoCastro's (1997 b) study as:

There is reason to believe that her pretest-posttest measure may have contributed to the lack of instructional effects, despite a relatively lengthy instructional period. She relied on transcripts of a single group discussion conducted in a reading class to determine whether individual learners had benefited from instruction on politeness strategies provided in a speaking class. If it was her goal to assess learners' ability to *use* these strategies in interaction, more than a single observation would have been advisable because it is possible that participants lacked ample opportunity to demonstrate what they might have learned in a single session. ( p.391)

Salazar (2003) dealt with the effects of instruction on requests. The participants showed very short-lived effects from the instruction during a treatment session-----by the time of the posttest, these effects had disappeared. Rose (2005) commented: "Salazar provided a mere 40 minutes of instruction or even less because

the first of her two 20 min sessions was used to administer the pretest. This can hardly be considered sufficient for mastering a range of request strategies” (p.391).

Teaching pragmatic competence in previous studies, in general, is very effective. But some studies show the opposite result, that is, there is no improvement in teaching and there is no difference between the pretest and posttest because of some problems in the research design. It seems that the result of teachability is still an issue that needs further research. Therefore, it is sensible to test Hypothesis 1 to explore the question as to whether there is a difference between the achievements before and after instruction. Furthermore, among the studies reviewed, very few studies adopted the delayed posttest to test the teaching effect, e.g. Lyster (1994), Morrow (1995), Liddicoat and Crozet (2001). Hence, it is important to use Hypothesis 3 to examine the retention effect.

## **2.3 Explicit and Implicit Instruction in Instructional Interlanguage**

### **Pragmatics Studies**

This section aims at summarizing the effect of the explicit and implicit instruction in instructional ILP studies. In order to make a clear difference, the definitions of the two instructions should be given. Then, the detailed procedures of the instructions are described so as to provide potential teaching steps for the present study. The previous studies may be a reasonable rationale for the establishment of Hypothesis 2 and 3.

### **2.3.1 Definitions of Explicit and Implicit Instruction**

Explicit and implicit teaching methods are not new in second language acquisition (SLA). Many definitions can be easily found. Early in the 1990s, Stern (1992) noted that “the explicit-implicit dimension is just whether the learner should be taught to approach the learning task consciously as an intellectual exercise, or whether he should be encouraged to avoid thinking about the language and absorb it intuitively” (p.327).

According to Stern (1992), an explicit teaching strategy assumes that second language learning is, for many people, a cognition process leading to an explicit knowledge of the language. The teaching techniques of the explicit teaching are observation, conceptualization, explanation, mnemonic devices, rule discovery, relational thinking, trial-and-error, explicit practice, and monitoring. The implicit strategy has manifested itself in three ways: one is through implicit practice; the other is through experiential approaches which focus the learner’s attention on interesting activities and content involving the use of the second language; the last one is through creating a receptive state of mind in the learner.

Norris and Ortega (2000) argued that explicit instruction was rule explanation (deductive/ metalinguistic), or had direction to attention to forms and arrives at rules; while implicit instruction was not rule explanation, and has no direction to attend to forms. Doughty (2003) held that “explicit instruction includes all types in which rules are explained to learners, or when learners are directed to find

rules by attending to forms. Conversely, implicit instruction makes no overt reference to rules or forms” (p.265).

### **2.3.2 Explicit and Implicit Teaching Methods in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

The instructional studies in SLA have been flourishing, yet the studies which have investigated instructional L2 pragmatic acquisition and interlanguage pragmatic development are still limited (Kasper, 2001a, 2001b; Yoshinori & Zhang, 2002; Silva, 2003). Among Norris and Ortega’s (2000) quantitative synthesis and meta-analysis of studies on the effects of instruction on various linguistic features conducted between the years of 1980 and 1998, only two studies, Bouton (1994) and Kubota (1995), out of the 49 studies included in their pool, investigated the effects of explicit instruction on L2 pragmatics. Furthermore, the majority of studies on the effects of instruction in ILP have yielded findings which favored explicit instruction in the teaching of L2 pragmatics. Studies of Wildner-Bassett (1984, 1986), House (1996), Tateyama et al. (1997), Rose and Ng (2001), Takahashi (2001) revealed that learners in the explicit group outperformed other groups in the use of the target forms. The following will present the activities used in explicit and implicit instruction among these studies.

#### **A. Explicit Teaching Method**

The explicit teaching method has been used systematically in the instructional ILP since 1990s, e.g. House (1996) describes the following procedures: explicit metapragmatic information concerning the use and function of routines

provided orally; provision of handouts containing explicit metapragmatic information; listening to tapes of their own language behavior; auto-feedback elicited linking observed performance of metapragmatic awareness.

However, more scientific procedures can be traced only in 2000s, e.g. Rose and Ng's (2001) deductive teaching: viewing a brief film segment to introduce the topic; receiving a handout and brief lecture on topic; completing a worksheet requiring them to identify the syntactic formulas of additional compliments. The other studies share similarities more or less the same as the above, e.g. Takahashi (2001); Tateyama (2001); Alcon (2005); Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005); Koike and Pearson (2005). The most typical is Yoshimi's (2001) study in which procedures have five systematic and complete steps:

- 1) the explanatory handout: information about the function and use of the target items.
- 2) the NS model: exposure to native models of nonformal, extended discourse and the use of target items in such discourse.
- 3) the planning session: opportunities for planning the production of nonformal, extended discourse.
- 4) communicative practice: opportunities for communicative practice of the target items in conjunction with extended discourse.
- 5) corrective feedback: feedback on the use of target items and the production of extended discourse (p.225-227).

## **B. Implicit Teaching Method**

The typical features of implicit teaching method are providing no information providing as House (1996) noted in his study: no information providing, more extensive conversational practice given instead; no information providing, handouts listing situationally appropriate utterance tokens provided instead; listening to tapes of their own language behavior; feedback is teacher-initiated, giving rules but withholding metapragmatic explanations.

Rose and Ng's (2001) inductive teaching tries to encourage learners to learn the targets through induction: viewing a brief film segment to introduce the topic and additional examples; providing students with questions to guide their own discovery of pragmatic patterns or generalizations; completing a worksheet on the form of English compliments without the benefit of explicit pragmalinguistic information; brief post-task summary discussions, but not providing the explicit pragmalinguistic information at this (or any other) time. While Takahashi (2001) classified implicit teaching in three different conditions:

- 1) in the form-comparison condition, comparing their own request strategies with those provided by native-English speaking requesters in the corresponding situations.
- 2) in the form-search condition, finding any "native (like) usage" in the input containing the target request strategies.
- 3) in the meaning-focused condition, listening and reading the input and answer

comprehension questions (p.174).

Tateyama (2001) and Alcon's (2005) studies shared some common features, for example, before watching the video clips, paying attention to any formulaic expressions they might hear; viewing short video extracts containing the target features twice; not engaging in any of the explicit metapragmatic activities.

Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) compared the concepts of input enhancement and recast for instruction. The former focused on watching some videotaped situations in which a native speaker of English made a suggestion, including captions in boldface on the screen when American NSs of English in the videotape made suggestions, the target forms appearing in bold type for the implicit group. The latter focused on recasting an inappropriate or inaccurate suggestion by using one of the selected target forms depending on the academic status. Whereas Fukuya and Zhang (2002) focused on recast and took the following steps:

- 1) When a learner makes an inappropriate request, the teacher recasts it by using one of the target request conventions.
- 2) When the learner makes an appropriate request but with an incorrect linguistic form, the teacher recasts the form.
- 3) The teacher ignores other cases if learners make the correct usage and form (p.5).

Koike and Pearson (2005) focused more on implicit feedback, learners were informed only whether their answer was correct by the teacher stating "Si" 'Yes' or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying

“What was that?” or “Mm-I didn’t understand”.

Silva’s (2003) study relied on the methodological principles of task-based language teaching which could be categorized as implicit teaching in line with Ellis (2005). Ten steps of the method are as follows: 1) using tasks, not texts, as unit of analysis; 2) promoting learning by doing: role-playing aspects of the tasks themselves; 3) elaborating input; 4) providing rich input; 5) encouraging inductive chunk learning; 6) focus on form; 7) providing negative feedback; 8) respecting developmental process and ‘learner syllabuses’; 9) promoting co-operative/collaborative learning; 10) individual instruction (p.60).

Reading through the explicit and implicit teaching methods used by previous researchers in ILP, the main features can be summarized as follows, which will be employed for the present design.

**Table 2.3 General Features of Explicit and Implicit Teaching**

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Explicit Teaching</b>	<b>Implicit Teaching</b>
1) Presentation of Learning Targets	Telling learners directly	Encouraging learners to find out the patterns
2) Awareness-raising Activities	Enhancing learning targets	Encouraging learners to compare
3) Planning Session	Learners preparing while teachers giving explicit direction	Learners preparing while teachers giving implied direction
4) Communication Session	Learner acting out while teachers re-enforcing learning targets	Learners acting out
5) Feedback	Directly correction	No correction

### **2.3.3 The Comparative Studies of Explicit and Implicit Instruction in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

Many previous studies prove that pragmatic competence can be taught through different teaching methods. Comparing the effectiveness of different teaching approaches, most studies selected two types of pedagogical intervention, i.e. explicit versus implicit teaching. As a consequence, the explicit teaching method may be used more in teaching pragmatic ability, compared to the implicit method. However, different results from comparisons of the two methods were found in previous studies.

Wildner-Bassett's (1984,1986) work on gambits to express (dis) agreement in a business context found the explicit group outperformed those who received instruction based on the principles of suggestopedia in terms of the quality of gambits.

House's (1996) explicit learners evidenced better integration of elements into discourse than was observed for the implicit group. House (1996) explored whether pragmatic fluency was best acquired by provision of input and opportunity for communicative practice alone, or whether learners profited more with additional explicit instruction in the use of conversational routines. His study hypothesized that such instruction raised learners' awareness of the functions and contextual distributions of routines.

Tateyama et al. (1997) found that beginning learners of Japanese as a foreign language role-play performance benefited more when they were provided with

metapragmatic information on the various functions of *sumimasen* than when they were not, although they were only given 50 min of instruction.

Rose and Ng's (2001) study found that learners in the explicit group outperformed their implicit counterparts in responding to compliments which underscores the utility of metapragmatic discussion. Rose and Ng (2001) reported the results of a study which compared the effects of inductive and deductive approaches (essentially the same as the explicit and implicit approaches) to the teaching of English compliments and compliment responses to university-level learners of English in Hong Kong. Results for compliment responses revealed a positive effect only for the deductive group, which indicated that although inductive and deductive instruction might both lead to gains in pragmalinguistic proficiency, only the latter might be effective for developing sociopragmatic proficiency.

Takahashi's (2001) study on biclausal request forms revealed that learners in the explicit group outperformed all other groups in the use of target forms. Takahashi (2001) examined the effects of input enhancement on the development of English request strategies by Japanese EFL learners at a Japanese university using four input conditions. The results indicated that the degrees of input enhancement influenced the acquisition of request forms, explicit teaching having the strongest impact, followed by form-comparison, form-search, and meaning focused.

Koike and Pearson (2005) examined the effectiveness of teaching pragmatics information through the use of explicit or implicit pre-instruction, and

explicit or implicit feedback, to English-speaking learners of third-semester Spanish. Results indicated that the groups that experienced explicit pre-instruction and explicit feedback during exercises performed significantly better than the other experimental group and the control group in multiple choice items. These findings are encouraging for the use of pragmatic instruction in the classroom to develop a greater pragmatic competence.

Takahashi (2005) provided an in-depth qualitative analysis of instructional effects in L2 pragmatics. The results indicated that during the treatment, the learners in the form-comparison condition noticed the target request forms to a greater extent than those in the form-search condition.

Despite the above studies which give support to the explicit instruction, some studies produced different results. Some showed the opposite results, and others showed no difference between the explicit and implicit methods, though both methods revealed a good effect. Kubota's (1995) replication of Bouton's (1994) study on implicature comprehension actually found learners in an implicit group outperformed those in an explicit group. As commented in Rose (2005), in this study, "the use of items on the pretest and posttest were part of the treatment. This raises a number of validity issues that militate against looking too hard for a theoretical (or other) explanation of her study" (p.395).

Fukuya et al.'s (1998) exploratory study examined the efficacy of Focus on Form at the pragmatic level. Specifically, comparing Focus on FormS (interactions

followed by explicit debriefing on pragmatic forms) and Focus on Form (interactions followed by debriefing on meaning), the researchers investigated to what extent these two paradigms of language instruction affected learners' ability to make requests. Although no significant differences were found among the three treatment groups, these inconclusive findings should not be seen as evidence of the failure of Focus on Form in the realm of second language pragmatics instruction. The brevity of the treatment, combined with the implicit nature of the treatment made statistically significant results unlikely.

Fukuya and Clark's (2001) studies showed an inconclusive result, because the posttest revealed no significant differences across treatment groups in the use of the target feature. "The reasons for this may be resulted of a complex relationship between length of instruction, learner proficiency level, and difficulty of learning targets that must be considered in assessing the effects of length of instruction on pragmatic learning" (Rose, 2005, p.395).

Tateyama (2001) presented the findings on the effects of explicit and implicit instruction in the use of attention getters, expressions of gratitude, and apologies to beginning students of Japanese as a foreign language. The results indicated that some aspects of interlanguage pragmatics were teachable with the two methods to beginners before they developed the ability to analyze second language knowledge.

Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) examined the effects of two types of

pragmatic instruction (explicit and implicit) on learning head acts and downgraders in suggestions. The results revealed that both explicit and implicit groups had post-instructional improvements in their production of pragmatically appropriate recasts could be implemented at the pragmatic level.

Alcon (2005) investigated to what extent two instructional paradigms—explicit versus implicit instruction ---affected learners' knowledge and ability to use request strategies. Results of the study illustrated that learners' awareness of requests benefited from both explicit and implicit instruction.

Still, some studies proved resistant to instruction. House (1996) found that even though learners in her explicit group had made a considerable progress in incorporating pragmatic routines and discourse strategies into role-play interaction, they continued to show negative transfer from German. Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) and Yoshimi (2001) also found learners had difficulty incorporating some target features into online interaction.

From the above review, both explicit and implicit methods can result in a positive effect. However, the results of the explicit method are generally better than the implicit method in the preceding literature in spite of opposite results in some studies. Since possibilities for different results exist, such as that implicit instruction is better than explicit instruction and that there may be no difference between the two methods, therefore, it is better to check if there is a difference between the two instructions in Hypothesis 2 in this study. Furthermore, as only two studies (House,

1996; Koike & Pearson, 2005) adopted the delayed posttest, it is recommended that the present study adopts a delayed posttest to test the retention effect. Hypothesis 3 is necessary in the present study to examine a long-term effect of instruction.

## **2.4 The Theoretical Framework of Interlanguage Pragmatics**

Noticing hypothesis has been an important theoretical framework in the fields of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and instructional ILP studies. The following review should provide an understanding of the theory on which this present study is based.

### **2.4.1 Noticing Hypothesis in Second Language Acquisition**

Since Schmidt (1990, 1993, 1994, 1995) advanced what has become known as the “noticing hypothesis”, the concept has been widely discussed in SLA. This hypothesis claims that for acquisition to take place, learners must consciously notice forms (and the meanings these forms realize) in the input. Noticing, however, is not seen as guaranteeing acquisition. It is only “the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning” (Schmidt, 1994, p. 17). That is, noticing enables learners to process forms in their short-term memory but does not guarantee they will be incorporated into their developing interlanguage.

The “noticing hypothesis” (Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995) has acknowledged the role of consciousness in language learning and argues that learners must first consciously “notice”, that is, demonstrate a conscious apprehension and

awareness of some particular form in the input before any subsequent processing of that form can take place. In other words, noticing is a necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning (Leow, 1997).

The noticing hypothesis is concerned with the initial phase of input processing and the attentional conditions required for input (the L2 data available in the learner's environment) to become intake (the subset of the input that the learner appropriates to build the interlanguage) (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Two key terms are defined by Kasper and Rose (2002) as follows:

Noticing is defined as the "conscious registration of the occurrence of some event". It refers to surface level phenomena and item learning; understanding is implied "the recognition of some general principle, rule, or pattern". It refers to deeper level(s) of abstraction related to (semantic, syntactic, or communicative) meaning, system learning. (p.21)

Robinson (1995) defined the concept of noticing to mean "detection plus rehearsal in short-term memory, prior to encoding in long-term memory" (p.296). He viewed awareness as the "function of the interpretation of the nature of the encoding and retrieval processes required by the task" (p.301) and "not only critical to noticing but also distinguishing noticing from simple detection" (p.298).

As Rosa and Leow (2004) noted, according to Schmidt (1993), the only material that can be taken in is that of which the individual is aware. To account for item learning versus system learning, Schmidt (1993) posited two levels of awareness: awareness at the levels of noticing and understanding. This view has been contradicted by Tomlin and Villa (1994), whose fine-grained model of attention made

detection (that is, attention without any crucial role for awareness) the first step toward language development. In their view, awareness may enhance input processing, but its presence is not required. Robinson (1995) incorporated both Schmidt's and Tomlin and Villa's attentional postulations into his model by positing that noticing included detection and rehearsal in short-term memory. By placing noticing further along the acquisitional process than detection, Robinson (1995) concurred with Schmidt (1993) that lack of awareness precluded learning.

Empirical support for the facilitative effects of awareness on foreign language behavior and, consequently, for Schmidt's (1990 and elsewhere) noticing hypothesis, has been found in a few published classroom-based studies, e.g., Alanen, 1995; Leow, 1997; Robinson, 1997a, 1997b; Rosa, 1999; Rosa and O'Neil, 1999 (as cited in Leow, 2000).

Leow's (1997) study quantitatively and qualitatively addressed the role of awareness in relation to Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis in SLA. It analyzed both think-aloud protocols produced by 28 beginning adult L2 learners of Spanish completing problem-solving task and their immediate performances on 2 post-exposure assessment tasks, a recognition and written production task. The study suggested that different levels of awareness led to differences in processing; more awareness contributed more recognition and accurate written production of noticed forms; the findings provided the empirical support for the facilitate effects of awareness on foreign language behaviour.

In another study of Leow (2000), quantitative and qualitative study of the effects of awareness on 32 adult second language (L2) or foreign learners' subsequent intake and written production of target Spanish morphological forms were examined, the study indicated that learners who demonstrated awareness of the targeted morphological forms during the experimental exposure took in and produced in writing significantly more of these forms when compared with the group that demonstrated a lack of such awareness. Also, aware learners significantly increased their ability to recognize and produce the targeted morphological forms in writing after exposure, whereas the unaware group did not. From a theoretical perspective, no dissociation between awareness and learning was found in this study, the results of which were compatible with the claim that awareness played a crucial role in subsequent processing of L2 data.

#### **2.4.2 Noticing Hypothesis in Interlanguage Pragmatics**

Schmidt (1993) extended his discussion about consciousness and learning to the field of ILP. He focused on the ways consciousness may be involved in learning the principles of discourse and pragmatics in a second language. He added that what he had been defending so far, regarding the role of awareness in L2 learning, was also relevant for the learning of pragmatics. He raised the following points as summarized:

1) learners need to *notice* the specific relevant pragmalinguistic and contextual features of an event in order to trigger encoding, and that attention to input is a

necessary condition for any learning at all, and that what must be attended to is not input in general, but whatever features of the input play a role in the system to be learned; 2) consciously paying attention to linguistic features of the input and attempting to analyze their significance in terms of deeper generalizations are both highly facilitative; 3) simple exposure to sociolinguistically appropriate input is unlikely to be sufficient.

Schmidt (1993) concluded that “for the learning of pragmatics in a second language, attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and the relevant contextual features is required” (p.35). He claimed that learners experienced their learning, that attention was subjectively experienced as noticing and that the attentional threshold for noticing was the same as the threshold for learning.

Schmidt (1995) applied his distinction between noticing and understanding to pragmatics as follows:

In pragmatics, awareness that on a particular occasion someone says to their interlocutor something like, “I’m terribly sorry to bother you, but if you have time could you look at this problem?” is a matter of noticing. Relating the various forms used to their strategic development in the service of politeness and recognizing their co-occurrence with elements of context such as social distance, power, level of imposition and so on, are all matters of understanding. (as cited in Kasper & Rose, 2002, p.27)

Schmidt (2001) stated that “the objects of attention and noticing are elements of the surface structure of utterances in the input---instance of language, rather than any abstract rules or principles of which such instances may be

exemplars”(p. 5). In addition, Schmidt (2001) claimed that “most discussions concerning the role of attention in L2 development focus exclusively on morphology and syntax, although a few have dealt with lexical learning and pragmatic development”(p.6-7). Koike and Pearson (2005) also argued that “since the majority of focus-on-form studies address grammatical development, more research is needed on the effect of focus-on-form and pragmatic development” (p.483).

The results obtained by many researchers (e.g. Fukuya & Clark, 2001; Silva,2003; Takshashi, 2005) in the field of ILP studies support Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis, since they illustrated how making learners notice the specific target language features as a result of instruction promotes learning. As Kasper and Rose (2002) noted that “considering its demonstrated potential as a major theoretical foundation of second language learning, it is our prediction that cognitive theory will remain a key approach to explain interlanguage pragmatic development” (p.61).

In fact, most ILP studies in the instruction of pragmatic ability included the view of noticing hypothesis as their theoretical framework. Rose and Ng (2001) took induction-deduction opposition to represent a continuum as a representation of certain elements of Schmidt’s (1990, 1992, 1993, 1994) noticing hypothesis. In their study, learners in the explicit group outperformed their implicit counterparts in responding to compliments. Therefore, their study supported the noticing hypothesis.

Takahashi (2001) held that “lots of previous studies provided evidence that high levels of attention-drawing activities, as represented by presenting metalinguistic

information and corrective feedback, were more helpful for learners in gaining the mastery of target-language structures than simple exposure to positive evidence” (p.171). The study examined the effects of differential degrees of input enhancement to determine whether such findings were replicated in the context of Japanese EFL learners learning English request strategies. The study demonstrated that the target pragmatic features were found to be most effectively learned under the condition of a high degree of input enhancement with explicit metapragmatic information. At the same time the performance of those participants in the implicit enhancement conditions without providing the target pragmatic features in the input did not lead to learning. Thus, the degree of input decides the degree of noticing the learning targets.

Yoshimi (2001) noted that communicative practice and corrective feedback might enhance the “noticing” afforded by explicit instruction. The experimental instruction approach had an overall beneficial effect on the learners’ use of the interactional markers. The instructional approach seemed to increase learners’ attention to the interactional demands of the task even in areas where no explicit instruction was provided. Yoshimi (2001) believed Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis that linguistic development derived from comparing one’s own output with native production and recognizing the differences, rather than simply being exposed to instruction that highlighted these differences. Therefore, her study suggested that receiving feedback on one’s own production would be expected to have a beneficial effect on the learner, whereas over-hearing feedback to another learner would not

necessarily be expected to have this effect.

Silva's (2003) study was set up to further investigate whether relatively explicit instruction might facilitate for L2 pragmatic development and the most appropriate and effective ways to deliver the pragmatic information to L2 learners. It has yielded findings which illustrate the effectiveness of teaching the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic components of the speech act of refusals in American English. In line with Schmidt's (1993, 1995) suggestions regarding the L2 pragmatic features that instruction directed at assisting learners with their ILP development should incorporate, it is hoped that this study will be able to cater to the specificities of interlanguage pragmatic development.

Alcon's (2005) study seemed to provide evidence supporting Schmidt (1993). According to Schmidt (1993, 2001), learning requires awareness at the level of noticing and what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning. The author also considers that there is no learning without attention, since whatever learning might result from unattended processing is irrelevant compared to the results of attended processing. Regarding Alcon's (2005) study, learners in the instructional treatment groups, in contrast to the control group, needed to pay attention to relevant forms, to their pragmalinguistic functions, and to the sociopragmatic constraints these particular forms involved in requests. From this perspective, and during the instructional period, the different macroprocesses might have been triggered and learners might have been involved in various stages from noticing to storing new knowledge in working memory. This could explain why the results of the production

post-tests indicated an improvement in performance.

Takahashi's (2005) findings supported Schmidt's (1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2001) noticing hypothesis, which claimed that for further second language (L2) development, learners had to notice the L2 features in the input. He held that higher levels of awareness were associated with more explicit conditions and learners with greater awareness had an increased ability to recognize and produce target forms than those with lesser awareness. The above indicated that the level of awareness was a crucial determinant for the level of intake of L2 forms. This, in turn, implied that if higher levels of awareness were assured by manipulating input, then learner's intake of target forms could be greatly enhanced, even in implicit input conditions.

Previous instructional ILP studies have supported the noticing hypothesis from the level of noticing, understanding and intake. It is hoped that the present study will also be able to support this hypothesis. Furthermore, the noticing hypothesis can also be employed to interpret the results of the present study.

## **2.5 A Summary of Instructional Interlanguage Pragmatics Studies**

The previous sections have already reviewed instructional interlanguage pragmatics studies in detail; however, a summary is needed to gain an overall picture which will be of great help to the present study in relation to the research design and the study of specific English refusals.

### **2.5.1 Research Design of Previous Instructional Interlanguage Pragmatics**

#### **Studies**

Most research designs of previous instructional ILP studies are quantitative studies; few of them are qualitative studies; very few, however, are of mixed design covering both quantitative and qualitative research. The research designs of previous studies have the following features.

Firstly, the number of participants in both quantitative and qualitative designs is comparatively small. Most of the previous studies have no more than 20 in number. For example, Olshtain and Cohen's (1990) study selected 18 adult English-as-a-Second-Language learners to learn apologies; Billmyer (1990a, b) taught 18 intermediate Japanese learners of English how to compliment appropriately. In King and Silver's (1993) study, only six college students of English as a Second Language were divided into treatment and control groups. Bouton's (1994) study which had 14 international students in an academic English course, investigated whether classroom instruction on specific rules and patterns of implicature could speed acquisition of interpreting skills. Wildner-Bassett (1994) investigated pragmatic declarative and procedural knowledge as realized by routine formulas and conversational strategies with 19 American college students learning German as a Second Language. In Morrow's (1995) study, 20 subjects consisted of 9 females and 11 males enrolled in two spoken English classes in an intensive English language program in the U.S.

Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) taught French interactional norms to 10 second-year university-level English students for learning French. Yoshimi (2001) had an even smaller sized group because he was conducting a case study, with only 5 in the explicit group and 12 in the control group who were native speakers of English and who were being taught to learn Japanese at university level. Fukuya and Zhang's (2002) study employed 11 in the experimental group and 9 in the control group. In Silver's (2003) study, fourteen low-intermediate learners from various L1s were randomly assigned to both control (7) and treatment (7) groups.

However, there are two exceptions to the studies with low numbers which have a total number of more than 100. They are Bouton's (1994) and Kubota's (1995) studies. Among Bouton's first two studies in 1986-91, the number is 436 NNSs and in 1990-93 the number is 304 NNSs. Kubota's (1995) study investigated the teaching of conversational English implicature of 126 Japanese English-as-a-Foreign-Language learners. These studies prove that instruction can also be effective even if the groups contain a relatively large number of students.

In terms of the comparison between explicit and implicit instruction, the number of participants is very crucial as well. A typical feature in the previous study is the adoption of intact class with numbers of between 20-60 for each. For example, House (1996) selected 32 very advanced German university students of English with 15 in the explicit group and 17 in the implicit group. Rose and Ng (2001) had a total number of 44, 3 intact classes of undergraduate students in Hong Kong with 16 in the

deductive and the inductive group respectively and 12 in the control group. Takahashi (2001) employed 107 Japanese college students, 4 intact groups with 27 for the explicit group, 25 for the form-comparison group, 24 for the form-search group and 31 for the meaning-focused group. Tateyama (2001) taught 27 beginning students of Japanese as a foreign language with 13 in the explicit group and 14 in the implicit group. Alcon (2005) had 132 high school students with 44 in the explicit group, in the implicit group and in the control group. Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) had 81 Spanish learners of English, 3 intact classes with 24 in the explicit group, 25 in the implicit group and 32 in the control group. Koike and Pearson (2005) selected 99 adult native speakers of English learning Spanish with 67 in the treatment group and 32 in the control group. Takahashi (2005) selected 49 Japanese college students, 2 separate intact groups with 25 in the form-comparison group and 24 in the form-search group.

Secondly, from the above examples, we can see that target languages vary including English which is the most popular, French, German and Japanese. For instance, there are six cases of teaching English, Billmyer (1990 a, b), Bouton (1994), Morrow (1995), Kubota (1995), Fukuya and Zhang (2002) and Silver (2003); two cases of French, Lyster (1994) and Liddicoat and Crozet (2001); one case of German in Wildner-Bassett (1994) and one case of Japanese in Yoshimi (2001). As to the language level of the participants, all the participants in the above studies are at university level with some previous experience of language learning. These studies mean that it is better to teach pragmatics at a comparatively high level because of the issues of cultural

understanding. Concerning the participants' native language, participants have the same native language in most studies, but three studies are with speakers of different native languages, e.g. Morrow (1995) with 7 Japanese, 4 Korea, 4 Columbia and 5 other; Yoshimi (2001) with 4 English and 1 Chinese, and Silver (2003) with learners from various L1s (Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese, Serbian, and Portuguese). The examples show that teaching pragmatics can be conducted with the students who have the same language background which can be much easier, but it can also be carried out with students who have different backgrounds and cultures. In addition, only one study, i.e., Fukuya and Zhang (2002) have Chinese students learning English. Their subjects are freshmen and sophomores at English major level and they have learned English for about eight years and none of them had lived in an English-speaking country.

Thirdly, in the previous instructional ILP studies the amount of instructional time is comparatively short. The usual time in the previous studies is around 4-8 weeks. For instance, Rose and Ng (2001) had 6 lessons lasting 30 minutes for each and lasting 6 weeks for the whole course; Takahashi (2001) had 90 minutes per week lasting 4 weeks. Tateyama (2001) had 20 minutes for each lesson in a course lasting 8 weeks. Takahashi (2005) taught 90 minutes per week over 4 weeks. Koike and Pearson (2005) used 3 sessions lasting 20 min each. The longest teaching time in the previous studies lasted for a whole term (e.g. 13-14 weeks) with 2 hours a week. For instance, Lyster (1994) taught 12 hours of weeks; House (1996) taught 14 weeks; Alcon (2005) taught 2 hours a week for 15 weeks; Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005)

adopted 6 two-hour sessions throughout a 16-week semester.

Fourthly, as regards the number of groups, it is mainly one to four treatment groups and one control group. For example, most of the previous studies had control groups (Kubota,1995; Fukuya & Clark, 2001; Rose & Ng, 2001; Alcon,2005; Martinez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Koike & Pearson, 2005). But the following studies did not have any control groups, House (1996), Tateyama et al. (1997), Takahashi (2001), Tateyama (2001) and Takahashi (2005). The pretest-posttest design was commonly used in many previous studies in 1990s, for instance, Billmyer (1990 a, b), Lyster (1994), Kubota (1995) and Tateyama et al. (1997). In 2000s, many studies also adopted such a design, e.g. Fukuya and Clark (2001), Rose and Ng (2001), Fukuya and Zhang (2002), Silver (2003), Alcon (2005) and Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005).

As to the long-term effects of instruction, very few studies among the previous studies adopted the delayed posttest. For instance, Morrow (1995) had the delayed posttest after six months. House (1996) conducted three tests entitled in pretest, interim-test and final test which was similar to a delayed posttest design. Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) carried out a delayed posttest after one year. Koike and Pearson (2005) conducted a delayed posttest four weeks after instruction. However, some studies also suggest that in order to ascertain the long-term effect of explicit and implicit instruction a delayed post-test should have been implemented. Alcon (2005) recommends that “although the institutional constraints may influence the research design, future research should make use of a delayed post-test in order to determine whether the effects of explicit and implicit

instruction are retained some time after instructional period” (p.429).

Fifthly, in terms the instruments for assessment, Discourse Completion Task (DCT), multiple choice and role play occupy a dominant place, though these methods are usually controversial among scholars. DCT was employed widely in many previous studies, e.g. Olshtain and Cohen (1990), King and Silver (1993), Rose and Ng (2001), Takahashi (2001), Pearson (2001), Alcon (2005), Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005). Many ILP studies also employed role play as an instrument for data collection. The rich potential of role plays is evident from their use in L2 developmental pragmatics research on communicative acts such as requests (Hassall, 1997; Scarcella, 1979; Trosborg, 1995), complaints (Trosborg, 1995), apologies (Trosborg, 1995), greetings (Omar, 1991), gambits (Wildner-Bassett, 1984, 1986), routine formulae (Tateyama, 2001; Tateyama, Kasper, Mui, Tay & Thananart, 1997), pragmatic fluency (House, 1996), and interactionally appropriate responses to questions (as cited in Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001). In some studies written DCT and role play are common instruments within a study. However, DCT needs further improvement from the perspective of validity and reliability. Furthermore, new methods are needed to test pragmatic ability.

Sixthly, the methods of data analysis are usually either quantitative or qualitative. ANOVA and t-test were mainly used for quantitative data analysis, for example, Billmyer (1990), King and Silver (1993) and Yoshimi (2001) used frequency and percentage to count the data. Most of them used t-test to compare the mean

scores such as Bouton (1994) and Alcon (2005); repeated measured ANOVA for pre-post-delayed test design, e.g. Lyster (1994) and Rose and Ng. (2001); one-way ANOVA for three independent samples of experiment groups and control group such as Alcon (2005), Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) and Koike and Pearson (2005). Very few of them used an effect size to calculate the effects of instruction, for example, Fukuya and Zhang (2002) and Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005).

As to the qualitative data, role play, elicited conversation and observation were used in the previous studies, for example, Billmyer's (1990a, b) studies adopted pretest-posttest design and data were gained through elicited conversation. Interaction in conversation with native English-speakers studying Japanese was observed. Morrow's (1995) oral data were collected prior to, following, and six months after the intervention by means of seven semi-structured role-play tasks which prompted subjects to perform three direct complaints and four refusals with peer interlocutors. The data were analyzed using holistic ratings of clarity and politeness, and comparisons of the pretest and posttest distributions of discourse features with those of native-English-speaking controls. Kubota (1995) gave a multiple choice test and a sentence-combining test to three groups. Liddicoat and Crozet's (2001) data analysis is in depth qualitative with role play. Silver's (2003) data were collected by means of role-play and were transcribed, and a qualitative discourse analytic approach was used to examine the learning outcomes in the treatment group. Yoshimi's (2001) data were the performances on the pre- and posttest storytelling task. The analysis

focused on the learners' use of Japanese discourse markers.

On the whole, the previous studies from the year 2000 are well-designed and more systematic, although the first studies date from 1990. The above analyses will be a useful reference for the research design of the present study.

### 2.5.2 Previous Instructional Studies of English Refusals

Teaching English refusals is one of the teaching targets included in many kinds of speech acts. Very few studies deal with teaching English refusals. Until now, there have only been four studies of teaching English refusals, i.e. King and Silver (1993), Morrow (1995), Kondo (2001) and Silva (2003) as summarized in Table 2.4. Making a comparison among the four studies, the following features can be obtained.

**Table 2.4 Previous Instructional Studies of English Refusals**

Author	Participant	Time	Group	Instructional Targets	Data Collection	Assessment
King & Silver, 1993	6 intermediate university students	70 min	1 EG 1 CG	refusal to requests & invitations (equal & unequal status)	pretest, posttest, percentage	written DCT telephone talk
Morrow, 1995	20 students, intact class,	3 hours and 30 min	1 EG 1 CG	general pattern (I'd love to + regret + excuse)	pretest, posttest, delayed posttest t-test	judgment test self-report role-play
Kondo, 2001	35 Japanese learners of English	--	1 EG 1 IG	general pattern	pretest, posttest	oral DCT
Silva, 2003	11 low intermediate learners	55 min	1 EG 1 CG	general pattern (I'd love to + regret + excuse)	pretest, posttest, qualitative approach	retrospective recall questionnaire role-play

EG= Explicit Group, CG=Control Group, IG=Implicit Group

Firstly, the participants in the previous studies are less. The highest total number of the studies was 35 Japanese learners of English in Kondo's (2001) study. Morrow (1995) had 30 students in one intact group, 14 in control group; Silver (2003) had 11 low intermediate learners. The smallest number of participants was King and Silver's (1993) study with 6 intermediate university students. In terms of a representative of population, it is recommended that the number of participants in the present study should be large.

Secondly, the teaching time of the previous studies is comparatively shorter. The longest time was Morrow's (1995) study with 3 hours and 30 minutes. The shortest one was Silva's (2003) study with 55 minutes. However, King and Silver (1993) and Silva (2003) have almost the same length, but the teaching result was different, King and Silver's (1993) study had no teaching effect, but Silva (2003) did. This result indicates that the longer the time the more obvious and stable the effect.

Thirdly, the teaching method used in the four studies is mainly the explicit method. In the four studies, only Kondo's (2001) study adopted a comparison of explicit and implicit methods. The other three studies used only the explicit method to examine the teachability which was a major task in the early study in the field of ILP. Recently, the trend has been to focus more on what method is more effective.

Fourthly, the teaching targets in these studies do not consider four different stimulus types and three different kinds of refusing status. Only King and Silver's (1993) study

considered a refusing situation, but it only taught refusals to requests and invitations between speakers of equal to unequal status which were not complete. The other three studies only dealt with a general pattern by saying *I'd love to + regret + excuse* which seems to be easy to teach and easy to learn for the learners. The more complicated the pattern is, the more difficult it is to teach, and therefore, the harder it is to achieve a good effect.

Fifthly, only one study, Morrow (1995) adopted pre-post-delayed test which seems to be a more well-rounded research design. Kondo (2001) used explicit and implicit groups and it had no control group. But the other three studies all had an explicit and a control group. It is better to have a control group to make a contrast between instruction and non-instruction.

Sixthly, the method for data collection in the four studies is single dimension, that is, written DCT, role play, written-report and questionnaire were used separately in each study. The reliability and validity of one single type of data cannot guarantee the results in a better way. Therefore, a mixed design including a quantitative and a qualitative design is highly recommended.

Seventhly, the theoretical framework is not clearly indicated in these studies. In the four studies, only Silva's (2003) study stated to test the hypothesis but with task-based principles. The other three, however, did not state the theoretical framework.

Lastly, in the four studies, King and Silver's (1993) study had no teaching effect due to the shortness of time; while the other three studies had an obvious effect and this may be due to the fact that the teaching target was very easy to learn, though

the teaching time was very short.

### 2.5.3 An Overview of Instructional Interlanguage Pragmatics Studies

Previous sections have already reviewed instructional ILP studies from different perspectives. The following table summarizes the previous interventional ILP studies in a broad way including five aspects: authors, theory, instructional targets, instruction methods and research design.

**Table 2.5 Interventional Interlanguage Pragmatics Studies**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Instructional Targets</b>	<b>Instructional Methods</b>	<b>Research Design</b>
House & Kasper, 1981	grammar teaching	discourse markers, strategies	explicit implicit	pretest-posttest, L2 baseline
Wildner-Bassett 1984, 1986	pedagogy	pragmatic routines	eclectic suggestopedia	pretest-posttest, control
Billmyer, 1990a, 1990b	--	compliments	+/-instruction	pretest-posttest, control, L2 baseline
Olshtain & Cohen, 1990	--	apologies	teachability	pretest-posttest, L2 baseline
King & Silver, 1993	--	refusals	explicit	pretest-posttest
Lyster, 1994	cognitive theory	sociostylistic variation	+/- instruction	pre-post-delayed-test, control, classroom observation
Wildner-Bassett 1994	--	pragmatic routines strategies	teachability	one group, pretest-posttest,
Bouton, 1994	consciousness-raising	implicature	+/- instruction	pretest-posttest, control,
Kubota, 1995	consciousness-raising	implicature	rule explanation	pretest-posttest, delayed posttest, control
House, 1996	metapragmatic instruction	pragmatic fluency	explicit implicit	pre-interim posttest, classroom observation, interviews

Morrow, 1995	--	complaints, refusals	teachability/ explicit	pretest-posttest, delayed posttest, L2 baseline
Tateyama et al., 1997	matapragmatic instruction	pragmatic routines	explicit implicit	posttest
Fukuya, 1998	--	downgraders (requests)	consciousness raising	one group, pretest-posttest
Fukuya et al., 1998	--	requests	focus on form focus on forms	pretest-posttest, control,
Pearson, 1998	matapragmatic instruction	thanks, apologies, commands, requests	metapragmatic discussion vs. additional input	pretest-posttest, delayed posttest,
Fukuya & Clark, 2001	noticing hypothesis	mitigators (requests)	input enhancement, explicit	posttest, control
Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001	noticing hypothesis	interactional norm	four-phase instructional treatment	pretest-posttest, delayed posttest
Rose & Ng, 2001	noticing hypothesis	English compliments & compliment responses	inductive deductive	pretest-posttest, control
Takahashi, 2001	noticing hypothesis	English request	degree of input enhancement	pretest-posttest
Tateyama, 2001	noticing hypothesis	gratitude, apologies	explicit implicit	posttest
Yoshimi, 2001	noticing hypothesis	discourse markers	explicit	pretest-posttest, control
Kondo, 2001	noticing hypothesis	refusal	explicit implicit	pretest-posttest
Fukuyu & Zhang, 2002	recast	request	implicit	recast group, control group, pretest-posttest
Silva, 2003	task-based noticing hypothesis	refusal	explicit	implicit group, control group, pretest-posttest
Alcon, 2005	noticing hypothesis	requests	explicit implicit	pretest-posttest, control
Martinez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005	focus-on-form	suggestions downgraders	explicit implicit	pretest-posttest, control
Koike & Pearson, 2005	noticing hypothesis focus-on-form	suggestion & suggestion response	explicit implicit	pretest-posttest, delayed posttest
Takshashi, 2005	noticing hypothesis	requests	two instructional conditions	pretest-posttest

(adapted from Kasper, 2001, p.48-49)

Based on Table 2.5, the features and limitations of previous ILP studies are illustrated:

The research on interlanguage pragmatics mainly from the 1990s shows that the research is relatively older, but moves towards the systematic stage from the year 2000.

The theory researchers rely on is primarily cognitive theory, especially from the late 1990s until now. This finding further gives evidence to the conclusion drawn by Kasper and Rose (2002) that cognitive theory is very popular in the field of interlanguage pragmatics. However, more studies are still needed to verify the theory in different aspects.

As to the instructional targets or goals, the most popular one is speech acts which involve apologies, complaints, requests and suggestions. The others may include discourse strategies and pragmatic comprehension. Although the studies cannot cover all speech acts, they are powerful and predictable in terms of theory and application. However, only four studies are related to English refusals and their research design has some weaknesses.

Instruction methods are comparatively single dimension. Previous instructional ILP studies prove that teaching pragmatic competence is applicable and teachable. The methods of explicit and implicit instruction are the focus of the studies as in other areas of second language acquisition. However, the procedures for the two

instructional methods vary in different studies and more studies are recommended to confirm the procedures and the effects of instruction.

The research design is principally quantitative, in which pretest and posttest, some with a control group are widely used. Some of them are designed to refer to qualitative research in terms of the methods of oral or written self-report. However, few studies employ mixed methods to triangulate the research source and analysis. Therefore, more studies of the mixed design are needed. Furthermore, few studies use a delayed posttest, thus, a further study needs to consider this issue.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter offers a very broad review of the literature mainly from two aspects: refusal strategies and instructional ILP studies. In line with the preceding literature, the frequently used American English refusal strategies are generated by means of comparing with Chinese refusal strategies. The noticing hypothesis for the theoretical framework of explicit and implicit methods is reviewed. The procedures for the two teaching approaches are presented. The data collection methods are DCT, role play and multiple choices. Principally t-test and ANOVA are used for data analysis. The research design of previous instructional ILP studies is mainly a quantitative with small number of participants, intact groups, treatment groups and control groups, and a pretest-posttest design. These features will provide a good rationale for the research design of the present study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will discuss the principles of the present research methodology including the research design, method of data collection and data analysis. In general, the research design will be firstly demonstrated. To illustrate the research design, features of the participants, instructional targets, instructional methods, procedures, materials, and time are discussed in detail. Next, the instruments of data collection, scoring procedures, test paper design and administration will be presented. Then the statistical methods for analyzing the quantitative data and procedures for analyzing qualitative data will be clarified. Based on the research design, a pilot study is conducted and the processes and the results of the pilot study will be presented. Lastly, the research process of the main study will be explained.

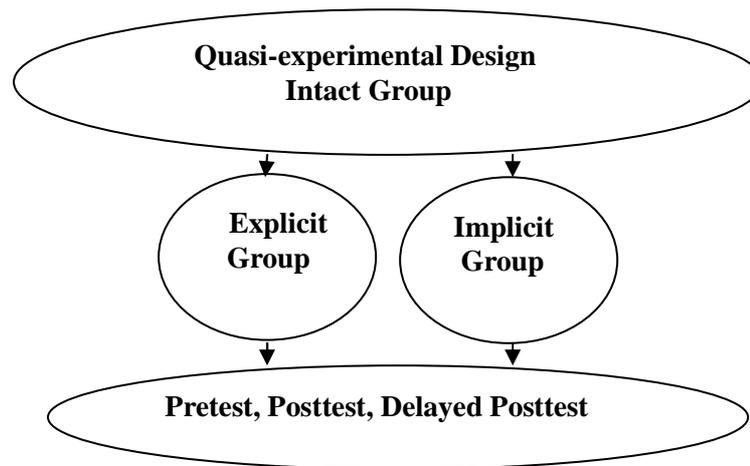
#### **3.1 Research Design**

When conducting research, the method is critical. As Robson (1993) notes, “the general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and the methods or techniques employed must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer” (p. 38). The title of the present study indicates that the purpose of the study is to test the instructional effect of teaching English refusal strategies. Thus, the present study belongs to interventional classroom research with an experiment which measures the effect of a treatment by identifying causal relationships among variables. Several

different types of experiments are commonly distinguished, depending on whether they have an experimental group and a control group, whether participants are randomly assigned to each group, and whether the effect of the treatment is measured by a pre- and a posttest (Bernard, 2000; Creswell, 2003). Interventional classroom research is usually quasi-experimental because the necessity of working with intact groups makes random assignment impossible.

The present study adopted experimental groups, explicit and implicit, but without a control group. Some interventional interlanguage pragmatics studies did not make use of control groups, for instance, Wildner-Bassett (1994), Tateyama et al. (1997), Tateyama (2001), Koike and Pearson (2005) generally due to ethical or practical constraints. The present study took the same approach.

According to Table 2.4 and 2.5 in Chapter 2, most interventional ILP studies employed mainly pretest and posttest. Only a handful of studies (Morrow, 1995; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001; Koike & Pearson, 2005) reported the use of delayed posttests. Some studies (Rose & Ng, 2001; Takahashi, 2001) indicated that a delayed posttest was planned, but not possible because of institutional constraints or the unavailability of participants. Ideally, delayed posttests should be a standard design feature in interventional research because without their use it is not possible to determine whether the gains that students made through instruction are durable (Kasper & Rose, 2002). The present study, therefore, used a delayed posttest as another assessment of outcomes. The format is listed as follows:



**Figure 3.1 The Research Design of the Study**

In line with the above design, the variables in the study are described as follows. The independent variable was a method represented by explicit and implicit instruction involving two treatment groups, i.e. explicit group (EG, henceforth) and implicit group (IG, henceforth). The dependent variable was the scores of the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest for three different groups.

**Table 3.1 The Format of Independent and Dependent Variables**

Independent variable	Dependent Variable	
Method	Test	Scores
Explicit & Implicit Instruction (EG & IG)	Pretest	
	Posttest	
	Delayed Posttest	

EG=Explicit Group, IG= Implicit Group

According to Robson (1993), “experimental studies are appropriate for explanatory studies. They may be qualitative and/or quantitative” (p.42). Creswell (2003) suggests three alternative strategies of inquiry which make a very clear distinction between quantitative and qualitative, but proposes to combine the two methods as mixed methods. The quantitative research method tries to answer



by the frequency, mean scores and standard deviation of written DCT. Then the analysis of the responses of the written DCT which reflected the qualitative data was followed; other qualitative data were the classifications of written self-report. Finally, the interpretation of the entire analysis was reflected by involving both quantitative and qualitative data.

### **3.2 Participants**

As noted in 3.1, the present study was a quasi-experimental design; therefore, the participants were selected without random assignment. There were 58 students in total and 29 students in each class. They were the intact groups of the regular class. The name of the course was “Speaking English”.

The participants were the first-year English major students from the English Department of the College of International Studies at Guizhou University, China. Before they entered the university they had studied English for six to seven years. They were typical samples of Chinese EFL students. Their purpose in learning English was to pass a national exam for entering a university. The focus of their learning was reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Spoken English was a by-product of their English studies. To help students acquire spoken language, speaking was included. One of the goals and objectives for the “Speaking English” course was how to use speech acts (e.g. suggestions, apologies, refusals, requests, etc.) appropriately in different social settings. The instructional targets matched the requirements of the present study. The experiment was conducted in their first term of the first academic year before they really began their “Speaking English” course.

Before the experiment, the background information about the participants

was investigated. The scores of the National Matriculation English Examination (NMEE) were required so as to check whether the participants were at the same level of English proficiency. Those who had studied in America or other English speaking countries and had learned how to refuse in English through native speakers or other means were excluded for the study. Gender was not considered as a variable in the study, thus, the same number of males and females was selected if they could match the above requirements. The questionnaire was administered at the same time for the pretest. The background information survey was written in Chinese so as to make it comprehensible to the respondents and their answers were in Chinese as well. The detailed format is presented in Appendix C.

### **3.3 Instructional Targets**

Several principles are set for the selection of instructional targets:

Firstly, at least three most frequently used American English refusal strategies should be taught. As noted in 2.1, previous studies had provided many English refusal strategies, but four previous studies focused on only one or two strategies, King and Silver (1993) utilizing the *regret and excuse* pattern, Silva (2003) taking *positive opinion + regret + excuse* as a general pattern for instruction. As shown in 2.1, the most frequently used refusal semantic formulae or refusal strategies are “explanation”, whereas “positive feeling/negative feeling”, “gratitude”, “regret”, “alternative” etc. are put in the second or the third depending on different situations or status of refusers (see Table 2.1). However, it is regrettable that no previous studies of instruction of refusal strategies had taken different strategies into consideration. Thus, the present study considered the three most frequently used semantic formulae so as

to make the study complete and systematic.

Secondly, four well-organized or well-recognized stimulus types are considered for refusing situations: 1) refusals to invitations; 2) refusals to suggestions; 3) refusals to offers; and 4) refusals to requests. Among the four studies, only King and Silver (1993) considered the situations, but they used only two stimulus types, i.e. refusals to invitations and requests. The other studies used the stimulus types as a general pattern.

Thirdly, different kinds of refusers and interlocutors' status were taken into consideration. The refuser's status and interlocutor's status were a lower refuser to a higher interlocutor (L-H henceforth), an equal refuser to an equal interlocutor (E-E henceforth), and a higher refuser to a lower interlocutor (H-L henceforth). Among the previous studies, only King and Silver's (1993) study considered two kinds of status: equal and unequal status, which was not sufficient for the learning targets.

Fourthly, the standard for native-speaker norms was American English. The prevailing practice of native-speaker baseline was American English in many comparative studies of English and non-English speech act (Nelson et al.; 2002; He, 1998; Wannaruk, 2004, 2005, 2008). Therefore, studies of American English as a native speaker norm would be systematic and consistent.

The present study adopted mainly the research findings of Beebe et al. (1990), King and Silver (1993), Nelson, Al Batal and El Bakary (2002), Al-Issa (2003) and Wannaruk (2004, 2005, 2008). Their studies accorded with the standards set above. In general, the present study took Wannaruk's (2005, 2008) categories of English refusal strategies. The design of the patterns provided the three most frequently used semantic formulae/strategies with examples or patterns to be attached.

Furthermore, it provided the details of status / power and distance. However, the present design adopted Wannaruk's (2004, 2005, 2008) findings with some modifications. The participants in her studies were 40 American postgraduate students. The situation in the present study was adjusted to undergraduate students doing refusals on campus or in American companies, because Chinese undergraduates go to America either for postgraduate study or for working in an American company. As to status / power and distance, refusals to four stimulus types were mainly confined to acquaintance or close relationships between speakers, because they were quite common in daily life. Also, most previous studies utilized the situation which occurs between familiar relationships. Some of the situations designed by Wannaruk's (2004, 2005, 2008) studies were between strangers, which were replaced by a familiar relationship in the present study.

The patterns used in the present study are simply presented as follows. The details are in the handout for the students (Part II) of Appendix A. The contents were adopted from the previous research (Wannaruk, 2004, 2005, 2008). Before the instruction, American native speakers were invited to evaluate the validation of the expressions. Changes were made according to their evaluation.

- 1) Refusals to invitations: I'd love to, but I can't (refusing to higher status); No, thanks, maybe next time (refusing to equal status); Oh, thanks for the invitation, but I am really too busy (refusing to lower status).
- 2) Refusals to suggestions: I had something in mind, I can't (refusing to higher status); That would be nice if I had time (refusing to equal status); Well, it's very important, I'll change next time (refusing to lower status).
- 3) Refusals to offers: I would really like to, but... (refusing to higher status); No,

thank you (refusing to equal status); Don't worry (refusing to lower status).

- 4) Refusals to requests: Oh, I have so much to do. Can't Mary do that for you? (refusing to higher status); I'm sorry (refusing to equal status); I'd really like to help you out but I'm afraid I really don't have the time (refusing to lower status) (adopted from Wannaruk, 2004,2005,2008).

### **3.4 Process of Instruction**

#### **3.4.1 Instructional Materials and Time**

To avoid bias in the research, the instructor was a native speaker of English who was a teacher of the intact groups rather than the researcher. Before the instruction, the researcher trained her to follow the procedures. The instructional materials included two parts, one was for the instructor, and the other was for the participants. The handout for the instructor was a native English refusals model for learners to imitate. The contents of materials for explicit and implicit groups were exactly the same and designed based on instructional targets in section 3.3 with some modifications. They were selected from English textbooks and previous research findings. Before the instruction, these materials were proofread by American native speakers to check if the situations designed in the materials were real in American English situations. Each of the four types was assigned in different situations and were acted out by two American English native speakers. Their acting was recorded. The situation will be presented in Table 3.2 (for details, see Appendix A).

According to previous instructional studies of English refusals, e.g., King and Silver (1993), Morrow (1995), Kondo (2001) and Silva (2003), teaching one speech act needed at least one class hour (50 minutes) and at most 2 class hours. The

present study taught only one speech act, but four stimulus types of one speech act including three different kinds of status, therefore, the instruction time for the study should be prolonged. Thus, the instructional time was two hours for each of the stimulus types and lasted for four weeks. It was planned that the real instruction would be conducted after the participants' regular class so as not to affect their regular learning. The time outline of the instruction is shown in the following table:

**Table 3.2 Contents of Instructional Materials and Time for EG and IG**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>
The 1st Week: 2 hours	1.Refusals to Invitations	1.Refusing a teacher's invitation to a party (L-H) 2. Refusing a friend's invitation to see a movie (E-E) 3. Refusing a junior classmate's invitation to speak for an orientation program (H-L)
The 2nd Week: 2 hours	2.Refusals to Suggestions	1. Refusing a boss's suggestion to change a project design a little bit (L-H). 2. Refusing a friend's suggestion to have a party in your house (E-E) 3. Refusing a high school student's suggestion to skip the details (H-L)
The 3rd Week: 2 hours	3.Refusals to Offers	1. Refusing a dean (teacher)'s offer of teaching assistantship (L-H) 2. Refusing a friend's offer for a ride (E-E) 3. Refusing a cleaning lady's payment for a broken vase (H-L)
The 4th Week: 2 hours	4. Refusals to Requests	1. Refusing a mother's request (L-H) 2. Refusing a classmate's request to use a computer (E-E) 3. Refusing a junior member's request for an interview (H-L)

L-H=a lower refuser to a higher interlocutor

E-E= an equal refuser to an equal interlocutor

H-L= a higher refuser to a lower interlocutor

### **3.4.2 Instructional Methods and Procedures**

For the explicit group, the explicit method was used in the study. The same components as Yoshimi (2001) proposed in his study were followed. For the implicit group, the implicit method was adopted. Similar steps to those in the explicit method were followed, but no explicit information was provided. The procedures used were

based on the combination of the form-comparison condition and the form-search condition in Takahashi's (2001) study and implicit feedback procedures in Koike and Pearson's (2005) study. The following shows a brief procedure of every step (for the detailed lesson plan, see Appendix B).

**Table 3. 3 Instructional Procedures for EG and IG**

<b>Procedures</b>	<b>EG</b>	<b>IG</b>
1.NS Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learners listening to segments for each dialogue</li> <li>2) Learners answering the questions focusing on the gist of the dialogue and refusal realizations</li> </ol>	same as EG
2.Explaining Handout	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Teacher explaining explicitly about the function and use of refusal strategies</li> <li>2) Teacher leading a discussion and comparison of Chinese and American English refusals strategies</li> </ol>	Form-searching and form-comparison: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learners finding any usage containing the English refusals strategies</li> <li>2) Learner comparing their own refusal strategies with those native-English refusals in the corresponding situations</li> <li>3) Teacher providing no comments of learners' discovery and their discussion</li> </ol>
3.Planning Sessions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learners planning the production nonformal, extended discourse</li> <li>2) Learners listening to the dialogues again</li> <li>3) Learners preparing for role play based on the situation in the dialogues</li> <li>4) Learners working in pairs</li> <li>5) Teacher offering an explicit use in refusal strategies whenever learners need</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learners planning the production nonformal, extended discourse based on what they find.</li> <li>2) Learners preparing in pairs</li> <li>3) Teacher never giving an explicit use in refusal strategies and encouraging learners to find by themselves</li> </ol>
4.Communication Session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learners having communicative practice of the target items in conjunction with extended discourse</li> <li>2) Teacher selecting several pairs to act out the dialogue</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) same as EG</li> <li>2) No explicit instruction</li> </ol>

5. Feedback	1) Corrective feedback: Teacher providing feedback on the use of target items and the production of extended discourse 2) Teacher commenting on felicitous/infelicitous realizations of refusals and correcting explicitly any inappropriate use	Implicit feedback: Learners being informed only whether their answer is correct by the teacher stating 'Yes' or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying "What was that?" or "Mm-I didn't understand."
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EG=Explicit Group, IG= Implicit Group

### 3.5 Data Collection

As noted in 3.1, the research design of the present study was a mixed method. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data were involved. The quantitative data were collected through written DCT; while the qualitative data were obtained through the analysis of the responses of written DCT and the categorization of written self-report. The pretest was conducted before the treatment; the posttest was carried out immediately after the treatment; the delayed posttest was administered three months after the treatment. The rationale for the time of administration of the tests will be explained in 3.5.1.3. The format is shown as follows:

**Table 3.4 The Format of Data Collection**

Test	EG	IG	Time
Pretest	Written DCT	Written DCT	One month before Instruction
Posttest	Written DCT	Written DCT	After Instruction
	Written Self-report	Written Self-report	After Written DCT
Delayed posttest	Written DCT	Written DCT	Three months after Instruction

#### 3.5.1 Written DCT

##### 3.5.1.1 Rationale of Using Written DCT

Discourse Completion Task (DCT) items typically consist of a situational description followed by a brief dialogue, with (at least) one turn as an open slot to be completed by the participant (hence the term “discourse completion”). The specified context is designed to constrain the open turn(s) so that a specific communicative act is elicited. DCT formats vary in a number of ways:

- 1) whether they include a first pair part or rejoinder, rejoinder type;
- 2) whether respondents have to provide both (or all) discourse contributions;
- 3) whether the instructions include specific reference to opting out, that is, choosing not to perform the act in question, thus, permitting the researcher to identify sociopragmatic differences in the appropriateness of communicative acts (Bonikowska, 1988 as cited in Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Written DCT was chosen for many reasons. It is easy to administer because of using paper-and-pencil. Written DCT allows the researcher to control features of the situation. The present study had four stimulus types and three different kinds of status and many different situations. It was a suitable method for the design with different situations. Written DCT can quickly gather large amounts of data in a short time. Written DCT can make it easy to statistically compare responses from different groups without any need for transcription. Data elicited with written DCT are consistent with naturally occurring data, at least in the main patterns and formulas (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000; Golato, 2003).

However, written DCT has limitations. For example, written DCT data do not show the interactional facets of a speech event. Written DCT is only written receptive and productive language and it does not encourage oral production or self-reflection. The oral production was not the main purpose of the present study,

therefore, this limitation was not a major problem of the study. Furthermore, written DCT is difficult to score because it requires recruiting, training, scheduling, and paying raters (Brown, 2001). This problem could be solved if the design was systematic and rigorous.

### **3.5.1.2 Design of Written DCT**

Since the instructional materials were based on Wannaruk's (2004, 2005, 2008) four types of refusals, the types and format of written DCT for the tests were similar to her studies with a slight modification. The pretest, posttest and delayed posttest used the same test so as to easily compare the results between the three tests. The only difference was that there was a background information survey for participants in Chinese in the pretest, and the order of the items was different in the three tests.

The general situation was similar to the situations in instructional materials, but with different topics and contents, and is presented as follows (for details, see Appendix C).

#### a) Refusals to invitations

1. Refusing a professor's invitation to attend a lecture (L-H)
2. Refusing a friend's invitation to dinner (E-E)
3. Refusing a freshman's invitation to lunch (H-L)

#### b) Refusals to suggestions

4. Refusing a boss's suggestion to write little reminders (L-H)
5. Refusing a friend's suggestion to try a new diet (E-E)
6. Refusing a student's suggestion to have more conversation in a foreign language class (H-L)

c) Refusals to offers

7. Refusing a boss's promotion with a move to small town (L-H)
8. Refusing a friend's offer of some money (E-E)
9. Refusing a nanny's offer to buy a new pen (H-L)

d) Refusals to requests

10. Refusing a professor's request for help (L-H)
11. Refusing a classmate's request to borrow class notes (E-E)
12. Refusing a junior relative's request (H-L)

To validate the written DCT, some American native speakers, who were males and females in equal numbers and aged between 30-40, were invited to do the test to check whether the results were similar to the research findings in the previous studies. They helped to check the appropriate use of the rubrics in the written DCT as well.

### **3.5.1.3 Administration of Written DCT**

In order to eliminate the pretest effect on the treatment, the pretest was administered one month prior to the treatment. The posttest was conducted one day after the treatment. The delayed posttest was conducted three months after the treatment including a two-month vacation, because the treatment finished one month before the end of the term. Some previous studies conducted the delayed posttest at different times. The shortest one was Koike and Pearson (2005) after only one month, Morrow (1995) conducted it after six months. The longest one was one year later in the study of Liddicoat and Crozet (2001). The present study adopted a different time to the previous studies so as to determine if the results were similar.

All three tests contained the same 12 items and the order of these 12 items

was altered on the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest. The time allotted for each test was 30 minutes. Respondents did it independently without discussion with their classmates. Participants were allowed to ask any questions if they were not clear. The procedures for the three tests were mostly the same and are put as follows:

1) Offering purpose of written DCT and its potential usefulness

The researcher told the participants the reason why the test was conducted, because it was helpful for their English learning. The researcher promised feedback on the results to the participants. The participants were informed that if they performed well in the test, they could earn an additional score in their final examination.

2) Explaining the instruction

The researcher explained how to do the questionnaire to the participants. The researcher encouraged them to ask the questions if they did not understand about the rubrics. If they needed any other help, the researcher would provide it.

3) Checking the answer

After the participants submitted the questionnaire, the researcher checked the answers to avoid any unchecked or not unanswered responses. If it did happen, the students would be required to complete them.

#### **3.5.1.4 Scoring Procedures of Written DCT**

The rating criteria were four aspects of appropriacy according to Hudson et al. (1992, 1995) and Hudson (2001), i.e. correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices and level of formality. The appropriacy or appropriateness was marked by analytic Likert 5 in line with Hudson's (2001) format. The scale of 5 refers to "completely appropriate"; the scale of 4 indicates "mostly appropriate"; the

scale of 3 means “generally appropriate”; the scale of 2 means “not very appropriate but acceptable”; the scale of 1 indicates “not appropriate and not acceptable”. The detailed criteria were explained as follows. The whole format of rating criteria is put in Appendix D.

The first aspect was correction expressions. This aspect refers to the typical use of expressions from the native speaker’s perspective which included an appropriate pattern without grammatical mistakes, in spite of the fact that the linguistic accuracy was not the focus of the study. This category includes the typical expressions used for refusals to speakers of different kinds of status. The raters might depend on their native speaker’s intuition to judge the correctness, i.e. how appropriate the wording or the expressions are. Those using very appropriate expressions and having no grammatical errors could obtain the full score 5. If there were not any grammatical mistakes or only one grammatical mistake and appropriacy was not completely appropriate, the score was reduced to 4. If the number of mistakes and the degree of inappropriateness were increased, the scores were reduced to 3, 2 and 1.

The second aspect was quality of information and referred to appropriateness of information given by the students. In the studies of Hudson et al. (1992, 1995) and Hudson (2001) and some other studies, e.g. Liu (2004), this aspect referred to the amount of information. However, it was very hard to measure the information by the amount, and the present study only considered appropriateness and length, therefore, it was adjusted to quality of information. An appropriate and lengthy explanation for refusal is needed for some native speakers, also, the situation for the written DCT of the present study was located only in a familiar relationship

which needed a longer utterance. But non-native speakers of low proficiency might use very direct and thus shorter-than-native-speakers utterances. If a refusal began with “I can’t” without any reason or explanation might be judged as inappropriate. If a student used an appropriate and lengthy sentence including reasonable explanation, he or she might be marked with a score of 4 or 5. Those who used very short sentences including only two words as “I can’t” were marked with 2 or 3.

The third aspect was the level of strategies choices which tested if learners could choose the strategies provided in the learning targets. This category referred to refusal strategies such as explanation, positive feeling, gratitude etc. used by native speakers. Those who could choose the three most frequently used American English refusal strategies provided in the learning targets were marked with 5. Those who chose strategies one less than the learning strategies were deducted one.

The fourth aspect was level of formality. Formality could be expressed through the degree of formal or informal word choice and the degree of politeness. Use of colloquial speech could be appropriate and polite in American English when the situation was informal and between friends, families and co-workers. Use of formal speech could be appropriate and polite in the situation of high to low and low to high status. However, a degree of appropriateness could be applied. Those who could select words of for being very polite and appropriate to the situation might be marked with the full score of 5. Those who did not use polite and appropriate words were marked a lower score than 5.

The overall score of each item was the mean score of scores for the four aspects. This score was obtained through the adding of four scores and divided by 4 and the whole number was used without a decimal point. If the decimal point was

above 5, it was rounded up; if it is lower than 4, it was rounded down. For instance,  $4+3+2+4=3.25$ , the final score was 3; and  $5+5+4+5=4.75$ , the final score was 5. The full score of a written DCT was 60 since there were 12 items in the test paper as indicated in 3.5.1.2, i.e. 5 (full score of each item) times by 12 (items) = 60. The final total score of each student was the mean score of the two raters. In the same way as was calculated for each item, the final score was rounded off. For example, for  $55+50=52.5$ , the final score was 53. The reliability of the interraters was checked by the use of the Pearson correlation. Before the rating, the two raters who were American English native speakers were trained how to mark based on the instruction for rating given in Appendix D. They could discuss the criteria and show their agreement on the criteria. Then, they marked independently without further discussion.

In order to show the above procedures, an example of one student's responses for refusing an offer of \$20 from a person of equal status is provided. The scores were graded by the two American raters for the present study in line with the above rating criteria. Before marking, the two raters were trained how to follow the rating criteria. The analysis according to the four aspects of appropriacy in the rating criteria is followed.

5: completely appropriate

*You are so kind (gratitude), but I really want to solve the problem by myself (explanation). Thank you all the same (gratitude).* (The average score is  $5+5+5+5=5$ )

In terms of correct expressions, *Thank you all the same* is a very good expression for showing "gratitude"; *but I really want to solve the problem by myself* is also a

very appropriate expression for showing explanation. There are no grammatical mistakes in the expressions. As to quality of information, the sentences contain an appropriate and lengthy content for expressing “gratitude” and “explanation”. In strategies choices, they just match with the learning targets which means it is completely appropriate. The level of formality is very appropriate, because the word choice is suitable for status and the politeness degree is marked by the use of “gratitude” strategy. They are polite in this situation. Therefore, the scores for the four aspects are 5, the full score. The overall performance is excellent.

4: mostly appropriate

*Thank you (gratitude)! My mother will give me money as soon as possible. I think I can go through it (explanation).* (The average score is  $4+4+4+4=4$ )

For correct expressions, the expressions for showing “gratitude” and “explanation” are mostly appropriate. There are no grammatical mistakes. Hence, the score is 4. The quality of information is appropriate and lengthy with two sentences for explanation. Therefore, the score is 4 as well. The strategies choices are appropriate, because strategies are the same as the learning targets but with some variations. Then this aspect is marked 4. The level of formality is appropriate, because it is polite by showing gratitude. The score is 4 as well. Therefore, the total score for it is 4, i.e. mostly appropriate. The overall performance is good.

3: generally appropriate

*No (no), thanks (gratitude), I can manage it (explanation)*

(The average score is  $4+2+4+2=3$ ).

In terms of correct expressions, the expressions are appropriate and have no grammatical mistakes, and the score for it is 4. But the quality of information is

simple and short with one word “no”, especially the sentence *I can manage it* for explanation is comparatively shorter, and the score is reduced to 2. As to the strategies choices, they are exactly the same as the learning targets, but the degree of appropriacy is not very high, and the score is 4. Because of this, the level of formality is very low, because it shows slight impoliteness. Thus, it obtains 2 for being not appropriate. On the whole this answer is adequate.

2: not very appropriate, but acceptable

*No* (no), *thanks* (gratitude) (The average score is  $2+1+3+2=2$ ).

The expressions are correct in grammar, but not very appropriate. Thus, the score for the correct expressions is 2. The quality of information is very short and too direct with only one word “no” for refusal, and then the score for it is only 1 which is the lowest. Comparatively speaking, the strategies choices are very close to the learning targets, but it lacks the most important strategy—“explanation”, and the score for it is 3, a little higher than the other aspects. Since it is incomplete in strategies choices, the level of formality is not very appropriate, because it is very direct and not very polite. Therefore, the total score for it is only 2. The overall performance is poor.

1: not appropriate, not acceptable

*That would be fine* (positive). *But you know, I'm a waste girl, I'm afraid I will cost the \$20 in one day* (explanation) (The average score is  $1+1+1+1=1$ ).

This is a very inappropriate example. The expressions are not very appropriate for explanation by saying *I'm afraid I will cost the \$20 in one day*. The quality of information can not be appropriate too since it is not correct in expressions. The strategies choices are far away from the learning targets and the level of formality is not very appropriate as well. Therefore, the total score for it is only 1 which is the

lowest among the five scales. The overall performance is very poor.

### **3.5.1.5 Analysis of the Responses of Written DCT**

Calculating the mean score of written DCT could only gain a general picture of the results, a detailed performance of the written DCT data could be found in the qualitative analysis of written DCT. The procedures for the analysis are as follows. Firstly, the classifications were divided according to four stimulus types: refusals to invitations, refusals to suggestions, refusals to offers and refusals to requests, because these four types were the format of the learning targets for the present study. Secondly, the refusals strategies were clarified in line with classification of refusal strategies proposed by Beebe et al. (1990, p72-73) which were well recognized and cited mostly in the previous studies and are put in Appendix E. The reason for indicating the strategies is that the learning patterns were mainly the refusal strategies or patterns in the present study. Thirdly, the refusals strategies finding in the written DCT were compared with the learning patterns in Part II of Appendix A so as to examine how far the students were away from the learning targets.

## **3.5.2 Written Self-report**

### **3.5.2.1 Rationale of Using Written Self-report**

After the participants finished doing written DCT, a written self-report was conducted. The form of the written self-report is more participant-directed, open-ended and inclusive. These report data could further confirm the learners' answers in written DCT. It could triangulate the research's interpretation of authentic discourse data, as one of several data types in a multimethod discourse approach, and as one of

the main data sources (Kasper & Rose, 2002). These reports served as one source of data about learners' views of the appropriateness of refusals. Furthermore, these data could be used as further confirmation of the effects of instruction.

### **3.5.2.2 Design of Written Self-report**

The purposes of the written self-report aimed at further confirming the results of the written DCT and evaluating the instructional effects. Then some questions were presented to elicit the participants' self-report on their feelings of the differences between their strategies use before and after the treatment, for example:

---Have you noticed any changes in your performances when realizing refusals after instruction? If so, how do they change?

Please specify.

----What do you think of the teaching method used in the instruction of teaching American refusals?

There were four questions written in Chinese and learners were required to respond in Chinese. Chinese could make learners answer clearly since their English level could not guarantee that they would express themselves freely and correctly. The detailed format is shown in Appendix G.

### **3.5.2.3 Administration of Written Self-report**

Written self-report was administered after the written DCT to each participant. They were encouraged to answer the questions according to their real learning experience after instruction. They were encouraged to answer as much as possible. Participants were required to write more if they provided less information than the researcher needed, for example, if the students wrote only "yes, I've learned

a lot”, they were required to add more specific information.

#### **3.5.2.4 Procedures for Categorizing Written Self-report**

The procedures to categorize the self-report data are as follows. Firstly, the data provided by the respondents were translated into English since their answers were in Chinese. Secondly, the English translation was looked through carefully. Thirdly, every single roles or opinions were identified in detail. Fourthly, the researcher looked at differences and similarities between the statements so as to group them. Fifthly, these statements were grouped roughly into several categories in order to answer the questions raised in written self-report. Sixthly, the examples were found from data to illustrate the categories. Finally, the conclusions were drawn from the responses.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

#### **3.6.1 Quantitative Data**

The scores in the written DCT administrating in the pretest, the posttest and the delayed test were quantitative data. The sores were analyzed by Statistic Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13.0) and could be used to answer the three research questions respectively.

In response to Research Question One, first of all, the results of difference between the pretest and the posttest in each group were obtained through paired samples t-test. Meanwhile the mean, standard deviation (SD), t value were calculated in order to show the value of significant level. Furthermore, the treatment effect should be considered. Therefore, effect size was recommended. Effect size could measure the magnitude of a treatment effect. It indicates the amount of relationship

between one variable and another variable in a standardized way (Howitt & Cramer, 2000). As Cepeda (2008) pointed out:

“In order to obtain the effect size of the dependent groups for within-subjects studies, one must correct for dependence among means in order to make direct comparisons to effect sizes from between-subjects studies. To do this, the correlation between the two means is needed, so that Morris and DeShon’s (2002) equation 8 can be applied.” (p.1)

According to effect size calculator designed by Cepeda (2008), the values of mean, SD and correlation were needed so as to obtain the value of Cohen’s *d* of within-group. Furthermore, the distribution of score in the posttest was counted. The frequency of the distribution was a sensible indicator of the teaching effect, because it could offer a full picture of distribution of the scores. In addition, the range of the mean scores between the pretest and posttest was counted so as to indicate the rank order of four aspects of appropriacy.

In response to Research Question Two, an independent sample t-test between groups was used to gain the result of differences between explicit and implicit groups in written DCT of the posttest. And its effect size could be obtained from the effect size calculator of between groups (Becker, 1999). A comparison of distribution of scores in the posttest between EG and IG was made to examine the detailed tendency of the scores. Except the above, the range of the posttest score between EG and IG was calculated. By doing this, could the difference between the two groups in four aspects of appropriacy be made in a detailed score distribution.

In response to Research Question Three, a paired samples t-test was employed for the result of the posttest and delayed posttest in each group. Its effect size could be gained from the same format as Research Question One. Furthermore, the distribution of score in the delayed posttest among EG and IG was presented so as

to obtain a full picture of the difference of the scores in the posttest. Same purpose as Research Question One, the range of the mean scores between the posttest and the delayed posttest was calculated.

### **3.6.2 Qualitative Data**

The above three research questions were answered quantitatively. The analysis of the responses of written DCT could be used as a qualitative answer. According to the procedures of classification written DCT in 3.5.1.5, the analysis of the responses could embody the performances in four stimulus types and four aspects of appropriacy among the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest. The analysis could be adopted as examples for a further explanation of the quantitative data.

Based on the procedures in 3.5.2.4, the results of written self-report were obtained to answer Research Question Four. There were four questions in written self-report. For Question One, the data showed if the learners had any changes in the performance of refusals after the treatment. For Question Two, the learners declared if they had benefited from the instruction. For Question Three, the answers commented on the teaching methods used in the instruction in the views of learners. For Question Four, the respondents answered that if they could definitely use the refusal expressions they had learned in the instruction when they actually faced a real conversation in an English-speaking context.

## **3.7 The Pilot Study**

### **3.7.1 The Purpose**

The pilot study allowed the researcher to collect feedback about how the instrument worked and whether it performed the tasks that had been designed for.

Based on this information, alterations and fine-tune the final version of the research design could be made (Dornyei, 2003; Oppenheim, 1992). Therefore, the purpose of the pilot study is to check the appropriateness of the principles for the research methodology and whether the following items are appropriate or not for the main study: i.e. 1) the number of participants; 2) teaching procedures; 3) instructional materials; 4) instructional time; 5) instructional targets; 6) test papers design; 7) test papers wording; 8) scoring procedures; 10) statistical methods; and 11) qualitative analysis method.

### **3.7.2 Participants**

Sixty-seven first-year English major students from the College of International Studies at Guizhou University, China participated in the pilot study. Five students who missed one test among the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest were excluded in calculating data, though they had taken part in the major process of training. Thus, sixty-two valid data were collected. Thirty-two participants were in the explicit group and thirty in the implicit group. Based on the Background Information Survey about participants, the average years of learning English before entering the university was 7.3 years, the shortest was four years, the longest was fifteen years, and 56.6% subjects had learned English for six years. The averages score on the National Matriculation English Examination (NMEE) of the explicit and the implicit groups were 118.75 and 114.40 (out of 150) respectively. Also, according to the statistic of an independent sample t-test, there was no significant difference between two groups in terms of English level ( $t=1.13$ ,  $p=.26>.05$ ).

Seven participants reported that they had learned English refusal strategies. Then the researcher interviewed them, they declared that they learned from a textbook,

but not systematically. It was assumed that they did not learn and were not excluded in the pilot. Nobody declared that they had been to English-speaking countries. Furthermore, only three people reported they frequently spoke English with native speakers, and the majority of the participants declared that they occasionally or rarely spoke English with native speakers.

### **3.7.3 Administration of Instruction and Tests**

The pilot study was conducted in the second term of first year of the participants at the College of International Studies, Guizhou University, China. The pretest was administrated in March, 2007, one month before the experiment. The administration procedures followed the procedures in section 3.5.1.3. The test was conducted smoothly.

One month later, in April, the instruction began and lasted four weeks. The learning targets, the instructional material and the instructional time were exactly the same as the research design in sections 3.3 and 3.4. After the treatment, written DCT and written self report were conducted as planned. The participants learned the whole materials very seriously and treated the tests as their usual exams. At the end of April, the training and the posttest finished. No further test was informed to the participants.

Three months later, the delayed posttest was conducted at the end of the term in July, 2007. Due to the limited time, the delayed posttest was conducted three months after instruction without a two-month vacation. If it was conducted after the vacation, the delayed time would be five months which did not fit for the present research design. The purpose of the delayed posttest was to test if the learners could remember the learning strategies after a vacation when there was no exposure for English.

### 3.7.4 Method of Data Collection

Written DCT and written self-report were the main instruments for collecting the data in the pilot. Before administering the written DCT of the pretest, six American native speakers, three males and three females with the average age of 34 were invited to do the written DCT. Their results were almost the same as the previous studies. Furthermore, the instructional contents of NS model were evaluated by them. They all agreed that they were real in American English.

For the scores of the written DCT in the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest, the raters of marking are very important, because their marking may influence the results. Therefore, before the formal marking, two American native speakers who were the instructors of English conversation at Guizhou University, China and had been teaching EFL learners for many years, were trained how to mark. They discussed the criteria with the present researcher and marked two test papers together and then the rest were marked independently. The final score of each participant was the average mean score of the two raters. The full score for each participant was 60.

To guarantee the reliability between the scales of the two American native raters, the Pearson correlation was used by testing if the scores of two raters could balance. According to the p value in three different tests of the two groups, the Pearson correlations of rater 1 and rater 2 were significantly correlated, p values of the three different test were smaller than .01. But in terms of the r values of different tests in the two groups, the values in the posttests of the two groups and the delayed posttest for the explicit group were located in the medium size, because they were lower than .75. It seemed that the two raters needed to be trained carefully so as to

avoid a big range of the grading scores.

As to the written self-report, it was conducted after written DCT. The participants were required to write as much as possible. Some of them wrote less, they were interviewed orally so as to avoid the missing data for the information.

### **3.7.5 Results of Written DCT**

In order to find out if there were any differences for Chinese EFL students using English refusals in terms of appropriacy before and after instruction, the scores of the pretest and the posttest within explicit and implicit groups in the pilot study were compared respectively. The results of a paired samples t-test indicate that only the scores within the explicit group were significantly different,  $t=-4.46$ ,  $p=.001<.05$ . The mean score in the pretest in EG was 40.75, but in the posttest it increased to 43.66. This result means that participants in the explicit group could learn how to refuse appropriately after instruction. The implicit group was not significantly different,  $t=-1.50$ ,  $p=.142>.05$ , but the mean score of the posttest was a little higher than that of the pretest, 37.30 for the pretest and 38.43 for the posttest. It seems that the implicit learning could also lead to a good result but not as high as the explicit learning. Furthermore, the  $d$  value in the explicit group belonged to the large size, it was larger than the value .8 according to Cohen (1988),  $d=-.92>.8$ ; while the  $d$  value in implicit group belonged to the small size, because it was lower than the value .5 according to Cohen (1988),  $d=-.28<.5$ .

To test the differential effects between explicit and implicit instruction to the teaching of English refusals in a Chinese EFL context, an independent samples t-test was used for testing the mean difference between EG and IG of the posttest. To test the effect size between explicit and implicit groups, the effect size calculator of

between groups was used. The result reveals that the mean scores of explicit and implicit groups were significantly different,  $t=8.40$ ,  $p=.001<.05$ . The mean score of the explicit group was 43.66 and much higher than that of the implicit group, i.e. 38.43, in spite of the fact that SD value of EG (2.50) was larger than that of IG (2.37). This means that explicit method was much better in teaching effect in comparison with the implicit instruction. Through the effect size calculator (Becker, 1999), the  $d$  value in both groups belonged to the large size, because it was much larger than the value .8 according to Cohen (1988),  $d=2.17>.8$ . Therefore, there was a significant difference between these two groups. The reason for this result in the pilot study could be that there was difference between EG and IG for the pretest, it was for sure that there was a difference in the results of posttest as shown by the independent sample  $t$ -test. The statistic analysis shows that the scores for the pretest in EG and IG were significantly different before the treatment ( $t=3.24$ ,  $p=.002<.05$ ), the mean score for EG was 40.75, but 37.30 for IG. This result indicates that the treatment should be conducted between two groups which showed no difference in the score of the pretest.

To compare the retention effect of Chinese EFL students' appropriate use of English refusals after instruction, a paired samples  $t$ -test was used. From the analysis figures, we found that although the mean score for the explicit group in the posttest was comparatively high, i.e. 43.66, the mean score for the delayed posttest was 42.41 and lower than that of the posttest. Thus, there was a significant difference among the explicit group,  $t=2.44$ ,  $p=.021<.05$ . This result means that the participants in the explicit group could not remember the learning targets as expected within three months. For the implicit group there was no significant difference. The mean scores for the two tests are 38.43 and 38.40 respectively,  $t=.04$ ,  $p=.962>.05$ . In spite of some

variations among EG and IG, it was likely that the effects of retaining after three months in the groups were comparatively good. The effect size of EG and IG in posttest and delayed posttest was not large. The effect size in the explicit group was small,  $d=.433$ ; the value was not more than the medium size .05. While the  $d$  value in the implicit group was .008, smaller than .2 which means the small scale.

### **3.7.6 Results of Written Self-report**

The results of written self-report were used for answering the fourth research question: “What are the Chinese EFL students’ opinions towards the explicit and implicit instruction for teaching English refusals”? From the four answers of written self-report after treatment, the answers to Question One and Two were almost the same. Almost all participants in explicit and implicit groups declared that they knew how to refuse to the people from different kinds of status in different situations after the treatment, and they knew a systematic way of English refusals as well. The teaching materials were acceptable, because they were well organized and concise.

When the participants were asked in the written self-report for Question Three if the teaching methods in two groups respectively were feasible, only two of them disagreed with the teaching method. The majority of participants agreed that the teaching procedures were clear, and the handouts were well arranged. The teaching time was also acceptable for them.

The students were asked to offer an answer for Question Four if they could use the English refusals strategies when facing a real situation after instruction. The answers to this question were positive. Most of them declared that they could use them freely because the teaching left them a very deep impression.

### **3.7.7 Implications of the Pilot Study**

As indicated in 3.7.1, the purpose of the pilot study was to examine the aspects in relation to the following: the number of participants, teaching procedures, data collection and data analysis. They were checked as follows.

In terms of participants, the number of the participants could meet the necessity of the study. The selection method for participants seemed to be valid. The four questions in the Background Information Survey were set appropriately. The answers to the four questions could be analyzed and classified easily. However, the number of students in two experimental groups was unequal, to guarantee the equal distribution of score among the subjects, it was better to have an equal number of subjects in the two experimental groups.

In terms of teaching including teaching procedures, instructional materials, instructional time, instructional targets, generally speaking, they were all acceptable according to the students. However, some participants offered some very helpful advice, e.g., more dialogues were needed; the patterns for the English refusals varied less and they wanted to learn more patterns. Another two hours were needed for revision after instruction. These suggestions were adopted for the main study.

In regard to the data collection covering test papers design, test papers wording, scoring procedures, some modifications would be made. In the pilot it was found that two situations for written DCT were not quite acceptable for participants. In the situation of offering \$20 to a friend, for most Chinese students this was unacceptable. Another one was refusing an invitation to a person of equal status; the reason offered according to the situation was that “you can’t stand this friend’s husband/wife”. For most Chinese this excuse could not be acceptable too. Hence, the

two situations would be explained to the students according to the way of American culture in the main study. In a situation of refusing an invitation to a person from higher status, one of American raters suggested that the name of the professor could be put for calling, because it was acceptable to call a professor's name directly in America. In addition, the students' answers to the Question One and Two in the written self-report were little overlapped, thus, the students were mentioned to make a clear answer for the two questions or they could be combined for the analysis in the main study to avoid redundancy.

From the perspective of the criteria for rating, one of the raters was puzzled by criteria of the first category (the correct expressions). Since this category considered the correctness of expressions, linguistic accuracy should be the focus of criteria; therefore, the main study would take linguistic accuracy into consideration. The method for testing the reliability and validity was valid. However, the process of validation of the written DCT needed more detailed procedures.

In the pilot study, Pearson correlation values of the two raters were not very high. This means that the two raters for the main study needed to be trained strictly. It was better to have the two raters to mark two or three papers together firstly and then discussed carefully about the criteria to avoid the difference between inter-raters.

As to data analysis, i.e. statistical methods and qualitative method, the quantitative method for the grand score of pre-post-delayed test was acceptable. But the detailed four aspects of appropriacy were needed to elaborate. In the main study they would be presented. The qualitative data needed some examples to illustrate the students' improvement, non-improvement and even decreasing to show the variation of the results in a more specific way. These would be added in the main study.

There are still other aspects for modification. The administration time of the delayed posttest was recommended to conduct three months after instruction including two-month vacation. Due to the constraints of term period in the pilot, the delayed posttest was conducted after three months without a two-month vacation. The main study was suggested to reconsider the limitation carefully and adjusted to requirement of the research design. The most important implication from the analysis was that before the treatment the selection of explicit and implicit groups should be based on the result of the pretest, only the two groups with similar scores could be considered as the treatment groups.

### **3.8 The Main Study**

Based on the implications from the pilot study, the main study was conducted more carefully in terms of selection of subjects, teaching method, teaching time, data collection and statistic methods, which will be presented in the following parts.

#### **3.8.1 Participants**

Sixty-three first-year students of English major from the College of International Studies at Guizhou University, China participated in the main study. One student who missed the delayed posttest was excluded in calculating data, though she had taken part in the major process of training and had taken the pretest and the posttest. Hence, sixty two valid data were collected. However, the number of the two experiment groups was not equal because of intact classes. An equal number of the two experimental groups was recommended so as to avoid a sensitively high or low score as indicated in the pilot study. Therefore, four students' data was deleted

randomly. As a result, twenty-nine participants were in the explicit and implicit groups respectively and the total number of the students was fifty-eight. Based on the Background Information Survey about participants, the averages of age of the explicit and implicit groups were 18.93 and 19.07 respectively. These results suggested that the participants in the present study were very young, almost equal to high school students because they just entered the university and the experiment began at the time of the beginning of their university life. The average scores of the National Matriculation English Examination of explicit and implicit groups were 116.41 and 116.16 (out of 150) respectively. According to the statistic of an independent sample t-test, there was no significant difference between two groups in terms of English level ( $t=.093$ ,  $p=.926>.05$ ), which indicates that the English level of the two groups was equal.

There were four questions for participants to answer in Background Information Survey. Question 1 referred to the length of students' learning English before they entered the university. The average year of learning English before entering the university in EG was 6.52 years, the number for IG was 6.83 years, the shortest one was six years, the longest one was twelve years. More than half of both EG and IG students had learned English for six years, the percentages were 51.3% for EG and 54.9% for IG. 30.2% EG students and 30.3% IG students had learned English for seven years. Thus, the majority of the subjects had studied English for six or seven years. These figures indicate that the experience for learning English had no difference between two groups.

Question 2 asked if students had learned English refusals strategies before. Nobody declared that they had ever learned. Question 3 asked if they had been to

English speaking countries. Nobody reported that they have been to English-speaking countries. Question 4 asked how frequently they spoke English with native speakers. Only one (3.5%) EG student reported that he frequently spoke English with native speakers, but he had never learned English refusal strategies from English native speakers and had never been to English speaking countries. Therefore, he was not excluded from the study. Though 14.8% EG participants and 3.4% IG participants had occasionally spoken to English native speakers, they also had never learned English refusal strategies and had never been to English speaking countries, and they were included in the study. And the majority of the participants (82.1% for EG and 96.5% for IG) declared that they seldom or never spoke English with native speakers.

### 3.8.2 Administration of Instruction and Tests

The main study was conducted in the first term of first-year students of English major at the College of International Studies at Guizhou University, China. The pretest was administered in October, 2007, the first day of the subjects' new terms (first term of their university life) and one month before the experiment. The administration procedures followed the procedures in section 3.5.1.3. The test was conducted smoothly. After the pretest, the test papers were marked by two American native speakers according to the procedures in 3.8.3. It was assumed that the subjects in EG and IG had a similar level in the scores of NMEE (see 3.8.1), but also there were no differences in the pretest as shown in the following table.

**Table 3.5 A Comparison of the Pretest in Written DCT between EG and IG**

Group	M	SD	n	df	t	Sig.
IG	33.31	2.56	29			
EG	33.41	2.41	29	56	.158	.875

From the above table, one can see that the scores for the pretest of DCT were not significantly different before the treatment ( $t=.158$ ,  $p=.875>.05$ ). The mean scores of the two groups were 33.41 and 33.31 which were almost the same and very low. This result indicates that the treatments among the two experimental groups were assumed equally in the perspective of English proficiency and pretest. It was hoped that this balance might guarantee a valid result for the posttest.

With an equal English level and scores of the pretest between EG and IG, one month later, in November, the instruction began and lasted four weeks. The instructional material, the learning targets and the instructional time were exactly the same as the research design in sections 3.3 and 3.4. The only difference with the pilot study was that the experiment was conducted in the regular course time. Because the instructor, an American native speaker, was just the teacher of “Speaking English” course and it was easy for her to conduct it within her control. After the treatment, written DCT and written self report were conducted as planned. The participants learned the whole materials very seriously and treated the tests as their usual exams. At the beginning of December, the training and the posttest finished. No further test was informed to the participants.

Three months later, the delayed posttest was conducted at the beginning of March, 2008. In January and February, after the treatment in December, the subjects had their winter vacation for two months. March was the beginning of the new term. Therefore, it was good to conduct the delayed posttest after a term break to testify if the test could activate their memory. This modification was gained from the implications of the pilot study.

### 3.8.3 Method of Data Collection

Same as the pilot study, written DCT and written self report were the major instruments for collecting the data in the main study. In the pilot study, the reliability of the content of the test paper and the instructional contents of NS model were evaluated by six American native speakers, three males and three females with the average age of 34. The results in the pilot proved that the reliability of the test paper and teaching materials were valid. For the rating of written DCT in the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest, the same procedures had been adopted as the pilot study since the result of it was dependable. They are as follows.

Firstly, two American native speakers were selected from the instructors of “Speaking English” course at Guizhou University, China and they had been teaching EFL learners for many years and were very responsible for their work and very willing to do the marking job. One of them had been a rater in the pilot study. Secondly, they discussed the criteria, marked two test papers together and discussed the reasons for offering scores based on the criteria under the guidance of the researcher. Thirdly, they marked the papers independently. Finally, after they finished marking in four weeks, the researcher calculated the average mean score of the two raters. The full score for each participant was 60.

Having finished the above procedures, to guarantee the reliability between the scales of the two American native raters, the Pearson correlation was used by testing as shown in the following.

**Table 3.6 Correlation of Rater 1 and Rater 2**

Group	Test	Rater	Mean	SD	n	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
EG	Pretest	1	32.07	2.45	29	.819 **	.001
		2	34.38	2.43			
	Posttest	1	51.41	2.63	29	.738 **	.001
		2	55.28	2.58			
	Delayed posttest	1	51.62	2.31	29	.924 **	.001
		2	52.45	2.98			
IG	Pretest	1	31.90	2.25	29	.905 **	.001
		2	34.62	2.84			
	Posttest	1	47.48	2.42	29	.902 **	.001
		2	50.07	2.10			
	Delayed posttest	1	48.17	1.46	29	.603*	.001
		2	47.38	2.02			

\*\* means that correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

\* means that correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 3.6 demonstrates that the scores of two raters could balance and the  $r$  values for the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest for explicit and implicit groups were very high. And they were significantly correlated,  $p$  value was smaller than .01. Furthermore, the values of mean and SD between two raters were similar. The values of the Pearson correlation of the two raters were, in general, higher than the large size of .75. However, the values in the posttest of EG ( $r = .738$ ) and the delayed posttest of IG ( $r = .603$ ) were comparatively lower and belonged to the medium size. To reduce the large range, the mean scores of the two raters were used. The detailed analysis about quantitative and qualitative written DCT will be presented in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

In regard to the analysis of the responses of written DCT, each student's answers in the pretest, the posttest and the delayed posttest were put together so as to compare the changes among the different tests. The refusal strategies were clarified according to Beebe et al. (1990) and then they could be compared with the learning

targets. The analysis was presented in the way of strategies when conducting in a general teaching effect through the comparison between the pre-post-test, the posttest between EG and IG, and among post-delayed-test. If it was in four aspects of appropriacy, the examples were analyzed in these four aspects in detail. These detailed responses were put in Appendix F. However, because of the limited space, only two samples for each stimulus types in EG and IG were selected for presentation.

As to the written self-report, different from the pilot study and in order to avoid participants' interaction, it was conducted after the written DCT. In doing so, students could do it independently at the same time without discussion. The participants were required to write as much as possible. After their submission, the researcher checked in detail so as to avoid missing information. Some of them wrote less, they were asked to write more or were interviewed orally so as to avoid the missing data for the information. The detailed analysis will be shown in section 4.4.

According to the procedures of categorization of written self-report presented in section 3.5.3.4, all the answers to written self-report were translated from Chinese to English. Then they were categorized according to some similar patterns in answers. Based on the categorization, the comparison between EG and IG were figured out through the sample analysis. They were analyzed according to the order of four questions in the written self-report and the analysis was followed. The classification of the written self-report is put in Appendix H.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter mainly described the whole research design. The present study was a quasi-experimental study with a mixed approach. The total number of

participants in the main study was 58 first-year students of English major in China from two intact groups, 29 students in EG and 29 in IG. The instructional targets were four types of refusals and three kinds of status in a familiar relationship. The teaching methods were explicit and implicit methods. The instructional time lasted four weeks with 2 hours per week. Three tests were used to obtain the scores and the instrument for the tests was written DCT. T-test and effect size were used for analyzing quantitative data. Analysis of the responses of written DCT and categorizing the data of written self-report were the methods for the qualitative data. All the procedures were tested in the pilot before the main study.

On the whole, the pilot study suggested that the research methodology designed in Chapter 3 was acceptable. The selection of participants, instructional targets and procedures were appropriate. However, only instructional time was suggested being lengthened, and instructional patterns needed more variations. Test paper design including wording and scoring procedures was feasible, but there were some modifications in some situations and scoring criteria for written DCT. Methods of data analysis were good enough to present the results. In line with the above implication from the pilot study, the detailed information of participants, research process and data collection in the main study were provided. The results and discussion will be shown in the following chapters.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter will present the results of the main study both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results will be presented according to the research questions and research hypotheses which deal with the issues in the following four parts:

- 4.1 The teaching effects after instruction;
- 4.2 The comparison between the explicit and implicit instruction;
- 4.3 The retention after instruction; and
- 4.4 The students' opinions about the instruction.

#### **4.1 The Teaching Effects after Instruction**

In response to the first research question: "Are there any differences for Chinese EFL students using English refusals in terms of appropriacy before and after instruction?" the analysis of the teaching effects in general and four aspects of appropriacy were considered as evidence to the answer. And both quantitative and qualitative results of the pretest and the posttest in written DCT are described and presented so as to test Hypothesis 1 proposed in Chapter 1.

##### **4.1.1 A General Comparison between the Pretest and the Posttest within EG and IG**

The general teaching effects in the present study were reflected by the comparison of the mean scores between the pretest and the posttest and distribution

frequency of improvement among the students after instruction. The comparison of the mean scores can test Hypothesis 1 if there is a significant difference between the two tests. As indicated in 3.6.1, effect size can measure the magnitude of a treatment effect. Therefore, the teaching effects of the instruction can be measured through the measurement of effect size. Furthermore, the distribution of improvement can find out to what extent the students improved after instruction.

To find out the general teaching effects, the scores of pretest and posttest within the two groups were compared respectively. Therefore, a paired samples t-test was used for the statistic method to obtain the results for the first research question and to test Hypothesis 1. The comparison can be illustrated as follows:

**Table 4.1 A Comparison between the Pretest and the Posttest within EG and IG**

Group	Test	Mean	SD	n	df	t	Sig.
EG	Pretest	33.41	2.41	29	28	-31.47*	.0005
	Posttest	53.45	2.44				
IG	Pretest	33.31	2.56	29	28	-28.63*	.0005
	Posttest	49.14	2.18				

\*t value is significant at the 0.05 level (one- tailed).

Table 4.1 shows the comparison results of written DCT between the pretest and the posttest within the explicit group (EG) and the implicit group (IG). It indicated that the pretest and the posttest in both groups were significantly different. The mean scores in the pretest of EG and IG were very low, 33.41 for EG and 33.31 for IG which equal to the scale of 2 meaning “not very appropriate but acceptable” according to the grading criteria for written DCT (see Appendix D); whereas the mean scores increased highly in the posttest, 53.45 for EG and 49.14 for IG which equal to the scale of 4 meaning “mostly appropriate” according to the grading criteria for written DCT (see Appendix D). Therefore, the scores within both explicit and

implicit groups were significantly different, for p value of both EG and IG was .0005 far lower than .05. The result means that participants in both groups could learn how to refuse appropriately after instruction. Although the mean score of the posttest in the implicit group was not as high as that of the explicit group, the mean score of posttest was higher than that of the pretest. This result can show that the implicit instruction could also lead to a good result but not as high as the explicit instruction.

Based on the t-value, mean score and standard deviation, the value of Cohen's d was calculated through Cepeda's (2008) effect size calculator shown as follows:

**Table 4.2 Effect Size of the Pretest and the Posttest within EG and IG**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>d</b>
EG	Pretest	33.41	2.41	29	.004	.98	-5.86
	Posttest	53.58	2.44				
IG	Pretest	33.31	2.56	29	.22	.24	-5.34
	Posttest	49.14	2.18				

Table 4.2 shows the effect size of written DCT among the pretest and the posttest within EG and IG. The table indicates that the effect sizes in both groups were large,  $d = -5.86$  and  $-5.34$ , which were larger than the value of larger size .8 according to Cohen (1988). Furthermore, the correlation of both EG and IG was low and there was no significant difference,  $p = .98/.24 > .05$ . These results reveal that the scores in the pretest were low and could not result in the low score of the posttest. From the above results we can conclude that there could be an increase in scores in the posttest and the scores increased in the posttest were the results of a treatment.

In order to obtain the distribution of improvement in detail, the frequencies of improvement from the pretest to the posttest were calculated. By calculating, we

found that most students obtained a very great improvement, that is, in the pretest they obtained only the score of 2 or 3, but in the posttest the scores increased to 4 or 5. Some of them made an improvement with one scale, i.e. from 2 to 3, or 3 to 4, or 4 to 5. The detailed distribution is put in the following table.

**Table 4.3 Frequency of Improvement in the Posttest within EG and IG**

Sign	EG		IG	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
>2	24	82.8	18	62.1
>1	4	13.8	11	37.9
=	1	3.5	0	0
Total	29	100	29	100

>2 means the score for the improvement is 2;

>1 means the score for the improvement is 1;

= means the scores of the pretest and the posttest are equal.

Table 4.3 reveals that the majority of students in both groups had the improvement with two scales. In other words, the degree of the improvement could be from “inappropriate” to “mostly appropriate”, or “generally appropriate” to “completely appropriate”, and the percentage (82.8%) of the explicit group was higher than that (62.1%) of the implicit group. In EG, 28 students improved from 2 to 4, and this improvement means that 82.8% of the students did not perform appropriately in the pretest, but in the posttest the students’ performance was mostly appropriate. In IG, 18 students which occupy 62.1% had the same increase. The table also shows that only some of the students made an improvement with one scale, 13.8% EG students had this improvement which was much lower than the implicit group with 37.9% students. In addition, only one EG student did not improve and no IG students had the same case.

From the responses of written DCT in the pretest and the posttest (see Appendix F), among the four stimulus types in general, the strategies used by the students in the posttest performed better than those in the pretest. The types of better performance were refusals to offers and requests, because the students' strategies use was similar to the learning targets. Below is an example from EG 23 in refusals to offers in the low-to-high status (L-H). The total score and the mean scores for the four aspects of appropriacy graded by the two raters were indicated after the excerpt (for the rating criteria see 3.5.1.4 and Appendix D). The situation in written DCT of the posttest was that EG 23 had been working in an advertising agency for some time. The boss offered her a raise and promotion, but it involved moving. She did not want to go. One day, the boss called her into his office.

Boss: I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new office in Hicktown. It's a great town---only 3 hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position.

EG 23 refused by saying:

Pre: *Sorry (regret), boss. I think if you let me continue my work, I'll make it better (future acceptance with a condition).* 3, 2, 2, 2=2

Post: *It sounds a good opportunity (positive), but I am preparing the coming examination (explanation).* 4, 4, 3, 5=4

Comparing with the learning targets of refusals to offers in the L-H status (see Part II of Appendix A) which were "negative ability or positive feeling", "gratitude" and "explanation", the strategies used in the pretest were "regret" and "future acceptance" and were deviant from the learning patterns. Thus, the score for the aspect of strategies choices was 2. But the strategies used in the posttest were

“positive feeling” and “explanation” which were very close to the learning patterns. No “gratitude” strategy was used and was different from the learning targets. Thus, the score for it increased to 3 and the overall score for EG 23 increased from 2 to 4. The similar example could be found in IG in refusals to offers and requests. The above analysis indicated that teaching refusals to offers was very effective.

Concerning to the refusals to invitations, the teaching effect in this type was partly effective. The strategies used in the low-to-high status (L-H) were very close to the learning targets such as “positive feeling”, “negative ability” and “explanation”, especially, the patterns of “positive feeling” such as “I’d love to” and “I’d like to” were used very frequently by the students. The result indicates that teaching in this situation was successful. But in the equal-to-equal (E-E) status, the “gratitude” strategy was seldom used by the students which was very common in the learning targets. And in the high-to-low status (H-L), students also rarely used “regret” strategy which was also ranked as the most frequent strategies in the learning targets. This result means the instruction of refusals to invitations in these two situations was not very successful.

However, the total mean scores for the refusals to suggestions increased in the posttest. But it was found that the qualitative data did not show the same increase as the quantitative data, because in general the patterns used in the posttest were different from the learning targets. Among the three most frequent learning strategies, only “explanation” strategy was used by all the students in three different situations, but the other two strategies were different from the learning targets. The following is an example from IG 14 in refusals to suggestions in E-E status. The situation was that IG 14 was at a friend’s house watching TV. The friend recommended her some snack.

She turned it down, saying she had gained weight and did not feel comfortable in her new clothes.

Friend: Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about? It can make you lose weight.

IG 14 refused by saying:

Pre: *Don't you know that, the more delicious the snack is, the more weight will increase* (explanation with question). 2, 2, 2, 2=2

Post: *No* (no), thanks (gratitude). *I'm now trying to lose weight so that I can put my new clothes on* (explanation). 3, 4, 2, 3=3

The learning targets in refusals to suggestions were “pause filler”, “positive feeling” and “explanation”. The only strategy used in the pretest was explanation and no other two strategies of the learning targets were employed. Therefore, the score for the aspect of strategies choices was only 2. The students used “no” and “gratitude” strategies in the posttest, but these two strategies were not the learning targets. Therefore, the score for this aspect was 2 as well. In terms of the learning targets the teaching of refusals to suggestion was not very successful, in spite of the fact that the overall score improved from 2 to 3 and the strategies used by the students in the two tests were reasonable according to the intuition of two American raters.

In conclusion, according to the above results, quantitatively, the teaching effects of explicit and implicit instruction were as good as expected, because the scores in the posttest improved and there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest and its effect size was large. Qualitatively, teaching refusals to offers and requests were very effective, teaching refusals to invitations was partly effective, and the least effectiveness was teaching refusals to suggestions. In general,

the above results indicate that Chinese EFL students were able to use more appropriate English refusals patterns after instruction. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was accepted, because there was difference between the scores before and after instruction and there was an improvement after instruction.

#### **4.1.2 A Comparison between the Pretest and the Posttest within EG and IG in Four Aspects of Appropriacy**

The focus of the present study is to test the teaching effect in terms of appropriacy, then the detailed aspects of appropriacy were compared so as to examine in what aspects the students showed the difference and to answer the first research question and to test Hypothesis 1 further. According to the criteria for the written DCT, four aspects were considered to rate appropriacy from correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices and level of formality. The comparison of the mean scores of the four aspects was reflected by the paired samples t-test. The following summary table will present quantitatively. Then the qualitative data will be presented to confirm the results.

**Table 4.4 A Comparison of Four Aspects of Appropriacy in the Pretest and the Posttest within EG and IG**

Appropriacy	Group	Test	Mean	SD	Range of Mean	n.	df	t	Sig.
Quality of Information	EG	Pretest	32.52	2.47	24.27	29	28	-40.22*	.0005
		Posttest	56.79	2.60					
	IG	Pretest	33.07	2.44	<b>16.96</b>	29	28	-28.24*	.0005
		Posttest	50.03	2.52					
Level of Formality	EG	Pretest	34.10	2.70	23.45	29	28	-45.13*	.0005
		Posttest	57.55	1.50					
	IG	Pretest	35.21	2.51	<b>16.62</b>	29	28	-26.19*	.0005
		Posttest	51.83	2.23					
Strategies Choices	EG	Pretest	31.64	2.92	21.29	29	28	-28.64*	.0005
		Posttest	52.93	2.99					
	IG	Pretest	32.66	3.16	<b>14.58</b>	29	28	-21.69*	.0005
		Posttest	47.24	2.14					
Correct Expressions	EG	Pretest	32.53	2.25	17.81	29	28	-30.53*	.0005
		Posttest	50.34	3.63					
	IG	Pretest	31.93	2.10	<b>16.28</b>	29	28	-30.07*	.0005
		Posttest	48.21	2.87					

\*t value is significant at the 0.05 level (one- tailed).

From Table 4.4, the mean scores of the pretest in both groups were very low, but increased highly in the posttest. There was a significant difference between the pretest and the posttest, p value was .0005 and much smaller than .05. In EG, the mean score of the pretest was 31-35 which was only 2 according to the category of rating scale, for it was “not very appropriate”, but the scores of the posttest increased to above 50 which was 4, for it was “the most appropriate”. This similar result could be found in IG. The mean scores of the posttest in IG were between 47 and 51, though not as high as the explicit group, they were much higher than the mean scores of the pretest which were from 31 to 35. These findings indicate that there was a very high improvement after treatment in four aspects of appropriacy in both EG and IG.

According to the range of the mean scores, the highest improvement in EG was quality of information, the range was 24.27; the second one was level of formality,

the range was 23.45. The improvement in strategies choices was ranked in the third, the range was 21.29. The lowest improvement was correct expressions, the range was 17.81. The results in IG were similar as EG. The ranges of the mean scores in the quality of information and level of formality were the highest, which were 16.96 and 16.62 respectively. The lowest ranges of the mean scores were in the correct expressions and strategies choices, which were 16.28 and 14.58 respectively. Briefly, students in EG and IG could offer appropriate information and proper forms of English refusals after instruction. But their expressions were not as good as expected and so were the strategies choices. It is expected that the major aspect of appropriacy, i.e. strategies choices, could be improved the highest. Surprisingly, the mean scores of it in EG and IG were much lower than the other three aspects, it was even worse in IG which was the lowest in four aspects. It could be concluded that the effects of teaching English refusal strategies were not good enough and there was a room to improve it.

The above quantitative analysis reveals the results only in terms of scores and number. The qualitative description could explain the detailed patterns of an improvement. Therefore, based on the responses of written DCT (see Appendix F), an example from EG 9 in the L-H status of refusals to invitations was selected to show the whole process of improvement. The situation was supposed that EG 9 was in her professor's office talking about her final paper which was due in two weeks. The professor indicated that he had a guest speaker coming to his next class and invited her to attend that lecture but she could not. The student's status was low because the professor was in high status. Hence, this was a refusal to an invitation from higher status.

The professor: By the way, I have a guest speaker in my next class who will be discussing issues which are relevant to your paper. Would you like to attend?

EG 9 refuses by saying:

*Pretest: I very like to attend (positive feeling), but I can't (negative ability). because I have to see my friend in the hospital (explanation). I really very Sorry (regret). 2, 3, 2, 3= 3*

*Posttest: Oh, I'd love to* (positive feeling) *but I can't* (negative ability). *I have a lot of work to do. As you know, the final examination is coming* (explanation).  
5, 5, 5, 5= 5

In terms of correct expression, in the pretest the expression “I very like to attend” had the same meaning as “I’d love to”, but it was not as appropriate as the meaning of “I’d love to” and grammatical incorrect too. Also, the last expression for showing “regret” was not grammatically correct. Hence, it was graded the score 2. While in the posttest, the expression for showing the positive feeling was very appropriate and there was no grammatical mistake. The score increased to 5 in the posttest. In terms of quality of information, the sentence for explanation in the pretest was very short and direct. Then the score of it was 3 for “mostly appropriate”. Whereas the sentence was long and had a general meaning first in the posttest: “I have a lot of work to do”, then the specific explanation was offered: “As you know, the final examination is coming”. Therefore, the score increased to 5 in the posttest. In terms of strategies choices, the strategies used in the pretest were almost the same except “regret” strategy which was not very appropriate and incorrect. Therefore, the student was marked 2 in the pretest. The strategies used in the posttest were exactly the same as the learning targets and the score was 5. In terms of level of formality,

both expressions in the two tests were formal as regard to refusing to a higher status person. However, the expression in the pretest was too humble by saying “Sorry”, and there was no need for this situation according to the learning targets. Hence, the score in pretest was 3, but increased to 5 in the posttest.

Another example is IG 2 in the H-L status of refusals to suggestions. The situation was assumed that IG 2 was a language teacher at a university. It was just about the middle of the term and one of her students asked to speak to her. IG 2 was a teacher and the status was higher, her student was in the lower status. Hence, this example was a refusal to suggestions from the lower status.

Student: Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class recently and we

kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar.

IG 2 refused by saying:

Pre: *I'm not give you chance to practice* (negative ability). *But now we need basic*

(explanation). 2, 3, 3, 2= 3

Post: *It's a good idea* (positive feeling), *but I think we must learn step by step*

(explanation), *maybe next step I'll do what you said* (alternative). 4, 5, 4, 5= 5

In terms of correct expressions, the first sentence in the pretest “I'm not give you chance to practice” was an incorrect expression for showing “negative ability” and there was a grammatical mistake as well. Also, the second sentence “But now we need basic” was incorrect to express the meaning to learn the basic knowledge at first. Therefore, the score for it was only 2; while in the posttest the sentence “It’s a good idea” was appropriate expression for showing “positive feeling”. And the sentence “I think we must learn step by step” was an appropriate expression for expressing to

learn something basic. It was better than the pretest. Therefore, the score for it increased to 4. In terms of quality of information, the explanation sentence in the pretest “But now we need basic” was a short and incomplete expression; while the same explaining sentence “but I think we must learn step by step” was much better than the pretest. Therefore, the score improved from 3 in the pretest to 5 in the posttest. In terms of strategies choices, only two strategies were chosen in the pretest and no “alternative” strategy was used, thus, the score was 3. The strategies in the posttest were almost the same as the learning targets but with some variations of “negative ability” strategy. Therefore, the score was 4. In terms of level of formality, the posttest was more polite and formal than the pretest which was appropriate for this status. The score changed from 2 to 5.

In conclusion, according to the above results, there was a big improvement for Chinese EFL students using English refusals in terms of four aspects of appropriacy after instruction. The comparative higher improvements in EG and IG were the quality of information and level of formality, whereas scores of the correct expressions and strategies choices in EG and IG were comparatively lower. This result testified further for Hypothesis 1. The hypothesis can be accepted because there was a difference and an improvement in four aspects of appropriacy after instruction.

## **4.2 The Comparison between the Explicit and Implicit Instruction**

In response to the second research question: “Are there any differences between explicit and implicit instruction to the teaching of English refusals in Chinese EFL context?” the comparison of the posttest between EG and IG was made in terms of mean scores of written DCT, effect size, distribution of scores and four aspects of

appropriacy. The results are presented both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is hoped that Hypothesis 2 can be tested to determine if there is a significant difference between explicit and implicit instruction.

#### 4.2.1 A General Comparison of the Posttest between EG and IG

The comparison between explicit and implicit instruction was made through the mean scores and the standard deviation of the posttest of EG and IG so as to examine Hypothesis 2 if there was a significant difference between the mean scores of two groups. Therefore, an independent sample t-test was used for testing the mean difference between EG and IG of the posttest. Furthermore, Cohen's d value was calculated through Becker's (1999) effect size calculator with the t-value, the mean score and the standard deviation. The following table shows the results.

**Table 4.5 A Comparison of the Posttest in Written DCT between EG and IG**

<b>Group</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>d</b>
EG	53.45	2.44	29	56	7.08*	.001	1.86
IG	49.14	2.18	29				

\* t value is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

Table 4.5 reveals that the mean scores of explicit and implicit groups were significantly different,  $t=7.084$ ,  $p=.001<.05$ . The mean score of the explicit group was 53.45 and was higher than the value 49.14 of the implicit group, though the range of them was not very large. This result means that the explicit instruction was statistically higher than the implicit instruction in teaching effect. In other words, the explicit instruction seemed to be an effective way for teaching how to refuse in English. The implicit instruction could be used in teaching pragmatic competence as

well, but was not an effective teaching method as the explicit instruction. From the table, the effect size of the two groups was large, Cohen's  $d=1.86>.8$  and we could conclude that the effect size of the implicit group was smaller than the explicit group.

Furthermore, the distribution of scores in EG and IG was counted according to the frequency of the scores so as to show the detailed tendency of the scores in each group. The following table can show the detailed figures.

**Table 4.6 A Comparison of Distribution of Scores in the Posttest between EG and IG**

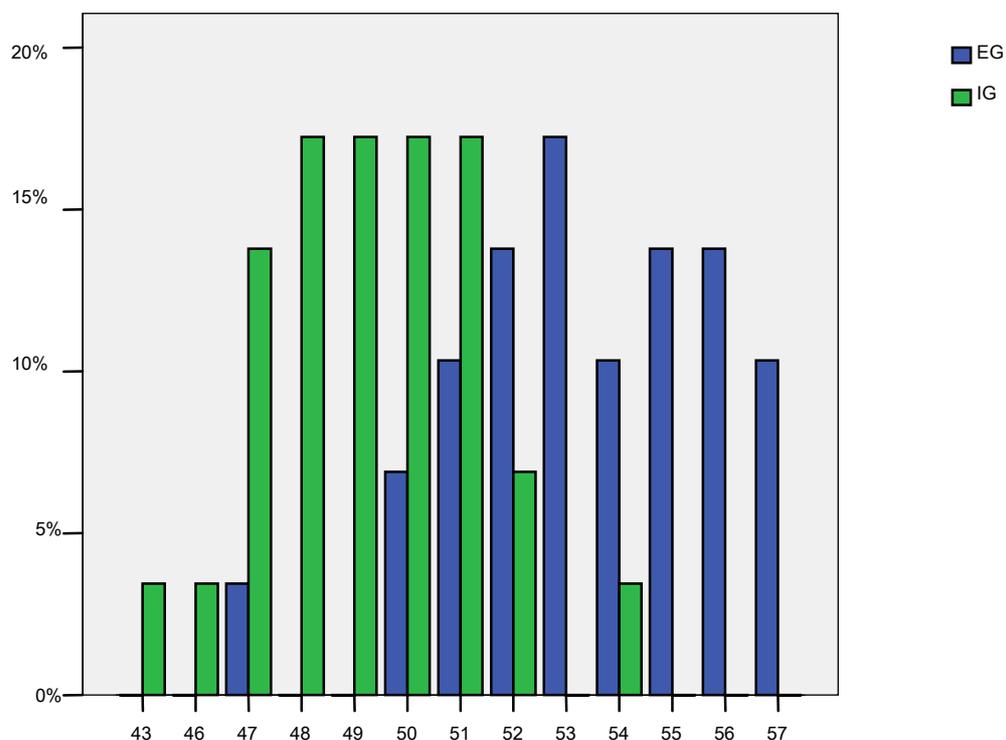
Score	EG		IG	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>#43</b>	0	0	<b>1#</b>	<b>3.5</b>
46	0	0	1	3.5
<b>#47</b>	<b>1#</b>	3.5	4	13.8
48	0	0	5	17.2
49	0	0	5	17.2
<b>Total 1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.2</b>
50	2	6.9	5	17.2
51	3	10.3	5	17.2
52	4	13.8	2	6.9
53	5	17.2	0	0
<b>*54</b>	3	10.3	<b>1*</b>	<b>3.5</b>
55	4	13.8	0	0
56	4	13.8	0	0
<b>*57</b>	<b>3*</b>	10.3	0	0
<b>Total 2</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>96.4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>44.8</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>

\*57 highest in EG      \*54 highest in IG

#47 lowest in EG      #43 lowest in IG

From Table 4.6, 28 EG students obtained the score above 50 and occupied 96.4%; while 13 IG students which occupied 44.8% gained that score. Only one EG student obtained the score below 49; whereas 16 (55.2%) IG students obtained the score and occupied more than half of total IG students. The highest score in EG was 57 and three students (10.3%) gained the score; while the highest score in IG was 54

and only one student (3.5%) obtained the score. The following Figure 4.1 can show the tendency in a different form.



**Figure 4.1 A Comparison of Written DCT in the Posttest between EG and IG**

The above figure reveals that the central tendency in EG was concentrated in the score from 52 to 57 which was very high; while the central tendency in IG was concentrated in the score from 47 to 51 which was not very high and lower than that of EG. The highest score in EG was 57 and was higher than the highest score in IG which was 54. The lowest score in EG was 47 and was higher than the lowest score in IG as well which was 43. The scores from 43 to 51 were occupied by IG which was comparatively low, but the scores from 52 to 57 were occupied by EG which was comparatively high.

Comparing the responses of the posttest between EG and IG (see Appendix F), we found that among the four stimulus types the performances of EG in refusals to invitations and requests were better than that of IG, because the strategies used by EG were closer to the learning targets than those in IG. In the performance in refusals to offers, there was no difference between EG and IG, because both EG and IG students could use English refusal strategies almost the same as learning strategies, and the good teaching effect was obvious. In the performance in refusals to suggestions, there was no difference between EG and IG as well, but both EG and IG students could not use English refusal strategies the same as learning targets, and the teaching effect was unsuccessful.

In refusals to invitations, in the L-H status both EG and IG students could use the same strategies as the learning targets; in the E-E status, more EG students could use “gratitude” strategy, but few IG students used the strategy; in the H-L status, many EG students could use “regret” strategy appropriately as the learning targets, no IG students used this strategy appropriately. In refusals to requests, in the L-H status and E-E status EG students could use more “regret” and “alternative” strategies than IG students; in the H-L status, “positive feeling” strategy as one of the learning targets was used more by EG students. The analysis indicates that the explicit group could achieve a better result than the implicit group in refusals to invitations and requests.

In refusals to offers, both EG and IG students used almost the same English refusals patterns as the learning targets. In the L-H status, the students in both groups could use the learning targets strategies such as “positive feeling”, “gratitude” and “explanation”; in the E-E status, almost all the students in both groups could use the targets strategies such as “no”, “gratitude” and “explanation”; in the H-L status, 100%

students in both groups used “giving comfort” and “letting the interlocutor off the hook” strategies which was very perfect. The analysis shows that the teaching effect in refusals to offers was good, but there was no obvious difference between EG and IG.

However, in refusals to suggestions, the strategies employed in both groups were almost the same, but all far away from the learning targets. In the L-H status, except “explanation” strategy, no students in both groups used the strategies in the learning targets such as “negative ability” and “alternative” strategies. Rather, the students adopted “future acceptance” and “positive feeling” strategies which were deviant from the learning targets. In the E-E status, students in both groups tended to use more “no” and “gratitude” strategies rather than “pause filler” and “positive feeling” strategies. In the H-L status, students used more “positive feeling” and “gratitude” strategies instead of “negative” and “alternative” strategies. The analysis indicates that the teaching effect in refusals to suggestions was not very effective and the explicit and implicit instruction had the same ineffectiveness.

To sum up, according to the above results, the explicit teaching could achieve a better effect than the implicit teaching. The effect size of the explicit group was comparatively larger than that of the implicit group. The frequency of the higher scores in EG was higher than that of IG. Qualitatively, in teaching refusals to invitations and requests the explicit teaching was better than the implicit teaching. In teaching refusals to offers and suggestions there was no difference between the two instructions, but teaching refusal to offers was effective; while no good instructional effect could be found in teaching refusals to suggestions. Although there was a partly ineffectiveness in the qualitative data, a conclusion can be drawn that there was difference between the explicit and implicit instruction. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 can

be rejected because there was a difference between the two instructions and the explicit instruction was better than the implicit instruction.

#### 4.2.2 A Comparison of the Posttest between EG and IG in Four Aspects of Appropriacy

Same purpose as indicated in section 4.1.2, four aspects of appropriacy, i.e. correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices and level of formality were compared between EG and IG separately. It is hoped that the second research question and Hypothesis 2 were tested in the four aspects of appropriacy.

**Table 4.7 A Comparison of Four Aspects of Appropriacy in the Posttest between EG and IG**

<b>Appropriacy</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Range of Mean</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>																																		
Quality of Information	EG	29	56.79	2.59	6.76	56	10.04*	.001																																		
	IG	29	50.03	2.52					Level of Formality	EG	29	57.55	1.50	5.72	56	11,44*	.001	IG	29	51.83	2.24	Strategies Choices	EG	29	52.93	2.99	5.69	56	8.33*	.001	IG	29	47.24	2.15	Correct Expressions	EG	29	50.34	3.64	2.13	56	2.48*
Level of Formality	EG	29	57.55	1.50	5.72	56	11,44*	.001																																		
	IG	29	51.83	2.24					Strategies Choices	EG	29	52.93	2.99	5.69	56	8.33*	.001	IG	29	47.24	2.15	Correct Expressions	EG	29	50.34	3.64	2.13	56	2.48*	.016	IG	29	48.21	2.87								
Strategies Choices	EG	29	52.93	2.99	5.69	56	8.33*	.001																																		
	IG	29	47.24	2.15					Correct Expressions	EG	29	50.34	3.64	2.13	56	2.48*	.016	IG	29	48.21	2.87																					
Correct Expressions	EG	29	50.34	3.64	2.13	56	2.48*	.016																																		
	IG	29	48.21	2.87																																						

\* t-value is significant at the 0.05 level(two- tailed).

Table 4.7 compares four aspects of appropriacy in the posttest between EG and IG. The mean scores of four aspects were significantly different between the two groups,  $p=.016$  and  $.001<.05$ . The mean scores of the explicit group were 50-57 and the highest score was 57.55. These mean scores in EG were much larger than the IG mean scores in which only two of them were about 50. The standard deviation of EG in the correct expressions was 3.64 which was larger than that of IG with 2.87. The central tendency of EG was not good as that of IG. However, this range did not

influence a general better result of EG. In general, the four aspects of appropriacy in EG were much better than those of IG.

Specifically, the order of four aspects of appropriacy was ranked according to the degree of range of the mean scores between EG and IG, then the quality of information was put in the first rank, because the mean score of EG was 56.79, the range with IG was 6.76. Under such an analysis, EG students could offer appropriate information much better than IG students. The second rank was level of formality, because the range of EG and IG in this aspect was 5.72. This difference shows that EG students could use more proper refusal patterns than IG students. The third rank was strategies choices, the range of the two groups was 5.69. It seemed that the explicit teaching was better than IG in teaching English refusal strategies, though the scores for both groups were not very high. The lowest rank was correct expressions, the range between the two groups was only 2.13. The lowest rank of correct expression means that the students in both groups were not good at using appropriate English refusals expressions, though the statistics analysis revealed there was a significant difference.

The above quantitative data indicate the difference between the four aspects of appropriacy. The qualitative data show the difference between EG and IG in a different angle (see Appendix F). Take EG 20 and IG 25 who gained the highest score in EG and IG respectively as an example to show the difference. The situation was one inviting EG 20 or IG 25 to dinner, but he/she really had something important to do and could not accept the invitation. It was a refusal to an invitation from the equal status.

Friend: How about coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party.

EG 20 and IG 25 refuse by saying:

EG 20: *No* (no), *thanks* (gratitude). *I've had another appointment* (explanation).

*Maybe next time* (future acceptance). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

IG 25: *Oh, no* (no), *you know I have a meeting to attend Sunday night* (explanation).

5, 4, 3, 4=4

In terms of correct expressions, both EG 20 and IG 25 gained the full score, because the expressions were appropriate and there were no grammatical mistakes. In quality of information, the information expressed by EG 20 was more than IG 25. EG 25 expressed more information by using gratitude and future acceptance. That was why EG 20 obtained the full score, while IG 25 was graded the lower score than EG 20. The strategies choices by EG 20 were more than IG 25. Four strategies were used by EG 20 and were similar to the learning targets; whereas only two strategies were selected by IG 25 which was away from the learning targets. The score for EG 20 was the full score of 5; while the score for IG 25 was only 3. Since the strategies choices were marked well in EG 20, the level of formality was completely appropriate, because it was polite and proper to the situation. The score for it was 5; the score for IG 25 was 4 because the strategies choices were not as appropriate as EG 20. From the analysis EG 20 was better than IG 25.

Even the students who gained the lowest score in EG and IG could show the difference. The lowest score in EG was 47 while in IG it was 43. Only one student in EG and IG obtained the lowest score respectively. They were EG 4 and IG 15. Take refusals to request in the equal status as an example. The situation was that a classmate, who frequently missed classes, asked to borrow EG 4 and IG 15's class notes, but

he/she did not want to give them to him. This was a refusal to request from the equal status.

The classmate: You know I missed the last class. Could I please borrow your notes from that class?

EG 4 and IG 15 refused by saying:

EG 4: *I'm sorry* (regret). *I think you must borrow others* (alternative). *I need it to review my classes* (explanation). 3, 5, 4, 4=4

IG 15: *Oh, no* (no), *I'll use it in a moment* (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

In terms of correct expressions, the expression of EG 4 was not very appropriate such as “I need it to review my classes”, especially the phrase “review my classes” was not appropriate. The score for it was 3. The expression of IG 15 had no grammatical mistakes, but the expression was short. Therefore, the score for it was 3, too. As to the quality of information of EG 4, it was very lengthy with three sentences. The score for it was the full score 5. But the sentences used by IG 15 were very short and the information was not lengthy. The score for it was only 3. The three strategies used by EG 4 were same as the learning targets but with some variations in expressions and the score for it was 4. The number of strategies used by IG 15 was two and only “explanation” strategy was same as the learning targets and the score for it was 2. Furthermore, the level of formality was polite by using “I’m sorry” to show “regret” strategy or “you may borrow others” to show “alternative” strategy. Thus, the score for EG 4 was 4, but for IG 15 it was 3, because the degree of politeness was not very high.

In general, EG was better than IG in terms of four aspects of appropriacy. Specifically, the quality of information, level of formality and strategies choices in EG

were much better than those in IG. The correct expressions in EG did not perform better than that in IG as the other three aspects. The results in the four aspects of appropriacy can also determine the difference and direction in Hypothesis 2. That is, there was a difference between the explicit and implicit instruction and the explicit instruction was better than the implicit instruction.

### 4.3 The Retention Effect

In response to the third research question, “Can Chinese EFL students retain the appropriate use of English refusals after instruction?” the mean scores, effect size and four aspects of appropriacy of the posttest and delayed posttest were compared quantitatively and qualitatively so as to reflect the retention effect. Also, the distribution frequency of the delayed posttest was counted. The purpose of the comparison is to examine if the students can retain the learning targets three months after instruction. As a result, Hypothesis 3 can be testified accordingly.

#### 4.3.1 A General Comparison of the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest

Firstly, the mean scores of the posttest and the delayed posttest were compared and a paired-samples t-test was used so as to examine Hypothesis 3 in general.

**Table 4.8 A Comparison of the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest within EG and IG**

Group	Test	Mean	SD	n	df	t	Sig.
EG	Posttest	53.45	2.44	29	28	2.42*	.022
	Delayed Posttest	52.03	2.57				
IG	Posttest	49.14	2.18	29	28	2.99*	.006
	Delayed Posttest	48.00	1.53				

\*t value is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

The mean scores of the delayed posttest in EG and IG decreased. The mean score for the delayed posttest of EG was comparatively high, i.e. 52.03, but lower than that of the posttest. There was a significant difference in the explicit group. The participants in the explicit group could not remember the learning targets as expected within three months. For the implicit group, the scores in the delayed posttest decreased and there was a significant difference as well. The mean score (48.00) of the delayed posttest was lower than that (49.14) of the posttest. As a consequence, the effects of retention after three months in the implicit group were not very good as expected.

Secondly, the effect size of EG and IG was calculated. To obtain the effect size, the value of Cohen's *d* was calculated through Cepeda's (2008) effect size calculator. Its effect size was small in both groups. Because *d* values of the two groups fall in the comparatively lower size. Comparatively speaking, the effect size of the explicit group was smaller than the implicit group, because *d* value of EG was .45 which fall in the lower size, i.e. lower than .5; while *d* value of the implicit group was larger than that of EG, .58 which fall in the medium size, i.e. larger than .5, but smaller than the large size of .8. The following table shows the results.

**Table 4.9 Effect Size of the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest within EG and IG**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>d</b>
EG	Pretest	53.45	2.44	29	.21	.266	.45
	Delayed Posttest	52.03	2.57				
IG	Posttest	49.14	2.18	29	.44*	.18	.58
	Delayed Posttest	48.00	1.53				

\*correlation value is significant at the 0.05 level.

Thirdly, in order to detect the full distribution of scores for every student, the frequencies of decreasing, improving and non-improvement were counted as shown in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10 Distribution of Scores in the Delayed Posttest within EG and IG**

Sign	EG		IG	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<	19	65.5	14	48.3
>	8	27.6	6	20.7
=	2	6.9	9	31.0
Total	29	100	29	100

< means the score for the delayed posttest decreased;

> means the score for the delayed posttest increased;

= means the scores of the posttest and the delayed posttest were equal.

From the above table, the scores of the delayed posttest among the majority of students decreased, some students made an improvement in the delayed posttest and very few of them did not improve in the delayed posttest. 65.5% EG students and 48.3 % IG students' scores decreased in the delayed posttest. It seems natural that the students could not remain exactly same scores as the posttest. However, 27.6% EG students and 20.7% IG students had improved. In spite of not very high percentages, the treatment was somewhat effective and could make some students retain for a period of time. 6.9% EG student and 31% IG students obtained the same low scores as the posttest. This sameness indicates further that the instruction seemed to be effective and could make the students keep at least the same level as the posttest.

If we compared the responses of the delayed posttest with the posttest (see Appendix F), we could find that the performance in refusals to invitations and requests was comparatively good in comparison with the pretest. But the students could not retain the achievement as they did in the posttest because their strategies use decreased in the delayed posttest and there was at least one strategy different from the learning strategies especially in refusals to invitations and requests. For example, in EG of refusals to invitations, in the L-H status less students in the delayed posttest used "positive feeling" and "negative ability" strategies, but in the posttest many

students used them; in the E-E status few students used “no” and “gratitude” strategies, instead they used more “positive feeling” strategy which were quite different from the posttest; in the H-L status “future acceptance” strategy which was not the focus in the learning targets was used more than other strategies. In EG of refusals to requests, in the L-H and E-E status, “alternative” strategy was used less by the students in the delayed posttest. Similar decreasing could be found in IG in these two stimulus types. The above analysis can confirm the quantitative results that after three months students could memorize the most strategies but not as expected as in the posttest. As a matter of fact, it was natural that they could not remember exactly the same as the posttest.

In refusals to offers and suggestions, the strategies used in the delayed posttest were almost the same as the posttest in both EG and IG. Differently, the strategies used in refusals to offers in the delayed posttest were closer to the learning targets. But the strategies used in refusals to suggestions were far away from the learning targets. Regardless of the opposite case, it could show that the instruction could make students remember at least the same level as the posttest.

In general, the result could be summarized that the retention for learners was better than the pretest, though it was not as good as the posttest. The effect size was not large in both groups because of decreasing in the delayed posttest. Comparatively speaking, the effect size of the explicit group was smaller than the implicit group. Qualitative data reveal that the strategies used in the delayed posttest decreased and not as expected as the posttest, especially in refusals to invitations and requests. In refusals to offers and suggestions, the students kept the same level as the posttest. The decreasing in the delayed posttest demonstrates that the retention degree

was not as good as the posttest after instruction, but it was much better than the pretest. Hence, Hypothesis 3 was rejected, i.e. the students can retain appropriate use of English refusals three months after instruction.

### 4.3.2 A Comparison between the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest in Four

#### Aspects of Appropriacy

To further answer the third research question and to test Hypothesis 3, four aspects of appropriacy were used. The scores between EG and IG were compared, and then the paired-samples t-test was adopted as presented in the following.

**Table 4.11 A Comparison of Four Aspects of Appropriacy in the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest within EG and IG**

Appropriacy	Group	Test	Mean	SD	Range of Mean	n	df	t	Sig.
Correction Expressions	EG	Posttest	50.34	3.64	5.96	29	28	5.97*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	44.38	4.75					
	IG	Posttest	48.21	2.87	<b>4.49</b>	29	28	7.01*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	43.72	3.48					
Quality of Information	EG	Posttest	56.79	2.60	4.38	29	28	5.96*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	52.41	3.17					
	IG	Posttest	50.03	2.52	<b>1.06</b>	29	28	2.27*	.031
		Delayed Posttest	48.97	1.84					
Level of Formality	EG	Posttest	57.55	1.50	3.69	29	28	9.21*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	53.86	2.01					
	IG	Posttest	51.83	2.23	<b>2.21</b>	29	28	4.99*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	49.62	1.56					
Strategies Choices	EG	Posttest	52.93	2.99	3.07	29	28	3.65*	.001
		Delayed Posttest	49.86	2.74					
	IG	Posttest	47.24	2.14	<b>-.45</b>	29	28	-1.25	.219
		Delayed Posttest	47.69	2.17					

\*t value is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

From the above table, we could see that the case in EG and IG was slightly different. The mean scores of posttest and delayed posttest in EG were all significantly different,  $p=.001<.05$ . Instead of increasing in the delayed posttest, the mean scores in EG all decreased. Among the four aspects of appropriacy, the aspect of correct expressions was the first one that decreased most, the range of the posttest and the delayed posttest was 5.96. The scores of quality of information and level of formality decreased the second and the third most, the ranges were 4.38 and 3.69 respectively. This rank indicates that these three aspects were not emphasized in the instruction of EG; thus, the students forgot. The most less decreasing was the aspect of strategies choices, the range was 3.69. Probably it may be that strategies pattern had left a very strong impression on the students.

While in IG, the tendency of a decrease was different with EG. The mean scores in the correct expressions, quality of information and level of formality were significant different,  $p=.001, .031<.05$ . However, the mean scores of the strategies choices had no significant difference,  $p=.219>.05$ . Same as EG, the biggest range was in the correct expressions, i.e. 4.49, but the second range was in level of formality which was comparatively smaller, i.e. 2.21. The smallest range was only 1.06 in quality of information. These two ranges had the opposite rank with EG. This tendency means that these three aspects were not very impressive for students to learn. Interestingly, instead of decreasing, the mean score of the strategies choices in the delayed posttest increased a little from 47.24 to 47.69. The reasons may be that strategies pattern had left a very strong impression on the students.

The above decreasing could be reflected in the responses data of written DCT (see Appendix F). Here is an example from EG 25 in the E-E status of refusals to

requests. The situation was assumed that a classmate, who frequently missed classes, asked to borrow EG 25's class notes, but she did not want to give them to him.

The classmate: You know I missed the last class. Could I please borrow your notes from that class?

EG 25 refused by saying:

Post: *Oh, I'm sorry* (regret). *I'm still using it* (explanation). *Perhaps some else can help you* (alternative). 5, 4, 5, 5 = 5

Delayed: *I'm sorry* (regret), *but I can't* (negative). *I'm using it now* (explanation).

5, 4, 3, 4 = 4

In terms of correct expressions, the student in both tests used correct expressions for different patterns and there were no grammatical mistakes. The scores for this were 5. In quality of information, the length for "regret" and "explanation" was not very long, e.g. "I'm sorry", "I'm using it now". Thus, the scores for them were both 4 which means "mostly appropriate". In terms of strategies choices, the strategies used in the posttest were almost the same as the learning targets, that is, "regret", "explanation" and "alternative". The score for it was 5 which meant "completely appropriate". While the strategies used in the delayed posttest were away from the learning targets without "alternative" strategy. Therefore, the score for it was reduced to 3. Since the level of strategies choices was appropriate in the posttest, the level of formality was appropriate by expressing regret and explanation in a polite way. Consequently, the score for it was 5 as well. But for the delayed posttest, the strategy use was not very appropriate, the level of formality was "mostly appropriate" by using only regret and explanation. Therefore, the score for it was 4.

Another example is from IG 9 in the H-L status of refusals to offers. The situation was that IG 9 was at his home with his friend. He was admiring the expensive new pen that his father gave him. His friend set the pen down on a low table. At this time, his nanny went past the low table, the pen fell on the floor and it was ruined.

Nanny: Oh, I am so sorry. I'll buy you a new one.

IG 9 refused by saying (Knowing she is only a teenager):

Post: *Forget it* (give comfort), *that's just an accident* (let off the hook). *Besides, I want to change a new one* (let off the hook). 5, 4, 5, 5 = 5

Delayed: *Forget* (give comfort), *it's just an accident* (let off the hook). *I won't blame you* (give comfort). 3, 4, 5, 4 = 4

In terms of correct expressions, the three sentences in the posttest were all correct in expressions and grammar. The score for it was full, i.e. 5. But in the delayed posttest, the first word "Forget" was not appropriate, and the score for it was 3. In quality of information, the information in both tests was not very strong and sentences were comparatively short, but they were acceptable, therefore, the scores for them were equal, that was 4. In strategies choices, comparing with the learning patterns, the strategies used in the posttest were very appropriate, especially the second "let off the hook" strategy was a further supplement for the first one. The score for it was 5. While in the delayed posttest, the sentence "I won't blame you" was another way for giving comfort which was appropriate as the posttest. The score for it was 5. In terms of level of formality, it was a formal situation because of the higher to lower status, both of them were polite; the only difference was the strategies choices in the delayed posttest were lower than the posttest. Therefore, the score for them was different, the delayed posttest decreased.

To sum up, the scores in the delayed posttest decreased mostly in three aspects of appropriacy: correct expressions, quality of information and level of formality. The strategies choices decreased less. Qualitative data confirmed the quantitative data. This result can also confirm Hypothesis 3 because the students can retain appropriate uses of English refusal strategies in four aspects of appropriacy.

#### **4.4 Opinions about the Instruction**

To answer the fourth research question: “What are the Chinese EFL students’ opinions about the explicit and implicit instruction for teaching English refusals?” four questions were raised in the written self-report. The answers to the first and second question mainly concerned with the changes in learning refusal strategies and English learning after instruction. The answers to the third question dealt with the opinions about the explicit and implicit teaching methods. The answers to the fourth question were the opinions about the retention of the learning refusal strategies. Based on the criteria of transcription in 3.5.2.4, the detailed classifications of all the answers were made and they are put in Appendix H. The following sections deal with the classifications in general.

##### **4.4.1 Changes after Instruction**

Question One in the written self-report is “Have you noticed any changes in your performances when realizing refusals after instruction? If so, how do they change? Please specify”. According to the classifications, there were two kinds of answers: positive and negative.

For the positive answers, almost half of EG students and the majority of IG students held that they had known different patterns of English refusals. And some EG

and IG subjects declared that after learning they were likely to say more “Thank you” and “I’d love to but I can’t” which were not used very often in Chinese refusals, and they could avoid repetition of “Sorry” in every situation which usually happened in Chinese refusals. Both EG and IG students thought that they were influenced heavily by Chinese culture before their learning. Also, they reported they knew how to refuse more politely and more euphemistically. Their thought reflected their changes after explicit and implicit instruction. This result could prove the first research question of present study further that there was a good effect of explicit and implicit instruction. On the negative side, they held that there were not many changes after instruction, because the patterns of the different types were similar and there was no obvious difference. The number in this answer was very few. Only four IG participants declared it, while no EG students thought so.

As to Question Two in the written self-report, “In what aspects did the instruction benefit to your performance of English learning? Please refer to the specified part of the instruction”, this part could offer the answer to the fourth research question in another aspect. According to the classifications, more than half of EG subjects showed that they benefited a lot in knowledge about English culture and customs and differences between Chinese and English; some subjects in IG declared so. Again most EG and IG students declared that the instruction was good for improving their oral and listening ability and they knew the different forms and patterns of English refusals. Their clarification can confirm the answer to the first research question, i.e. there was an improvement after the explicit and implicit instruction. Furthermore, Hypothesis 1 was tested by the confirmation of the difference between the pretest and the posttest within EG and IG.

#### 4.4.2 Comments on Teaching Methods

The third question in the written self-report was “What do you think of the teaching method used in the instruction of teaching American refusals?”. The answers to this question could be two sides. One was highly praising, the other held that there was a room for an improvement in the teaching method.

In general, both groups thought that teaching effect was good, because the instruction made them know more about English refusal patterns and they enjoyed learning it. The general comments they offered can be listed as follows:

- 1) Very detailed, systematic and well-focused content; good interaction, teaching materials and handout; and good to be taught by a native speaker.
- 2) Enlarging more knowledge about English culture and widening views; Creating a real situation, enjoying real refusal strategies, easy to learn and understand, and very interesting.
- 3) Practicing and improving oral and listening ability and language ability; Creating a bridge between English and Chinese and correcting many mistakes made in learning English refusals.
- 4) Flexible, useful and practical method; making stubborn learning live; knowing more about American teaching method.
- 5) Teaching how to speak, how to be a good human being and the development of human being.
- 6) Close to native English and enriching our life

In terms of teaching method including content, teaching material, handout, interaction, design etc., some subjects in the explicit and implicit groups thought that

the methods were very detailed and systematic. One of the subjects in the explicit group reported: "*I've learned a lot from it. It's a pity that it only lasted four weeks and it would be nicer to be longer*". Part of subjects in the implicit group thought that method was flexible, useful and practical, and it made boring learning alive and made them know more about American way of teaching.

With regard to the comparison of the explicit teaching and implicit teaching, in general, the implicit teaching was criticized more. Some IG subjects did not think that they had benefited more after the implicit instruction, because they thought that the patterns of English refusals were similar and they could not make a clear distinction. This case might be due to the fact that the implicit teaching method did not show the comparison of different situations. Therefore, some subjects might be confused. As a result, the explicit instruction could lead to a better effect than the implicit instruction. This result can confirm the second research question and Hypothesis 2, that is to say, there was a difference between the explicit and implicit instruction, the former was clearer than the latter.

However, some students in both groups held that there was a room for the instruction to improve. Some EG students suggested that the forms of teaching needed to change in flexibility. Other IG students suggested that a more clear comparison between Chinese and English refusals was highly recommended. For example, in the feedback step in IG, a teacher might offer the suggestions to student's action and offered some comparisons of the patterns so as to make them remember the patterns deeply. Briefly, the implicit instruction had some disadvantages and could not be over the explicit instruction.

#### 4.4.3 Opinions about Retention after Instruction

Question Four in the written self-report was “Do you think you can definitely use the refusal expressions you learned in instruction if you actually face a real conversation in an English-speaking context? Why? Please explain”. There were three kinds of answer. The first was quite agreeable, the second was partly agreeable, the last one was disagreeing.

In line with the analysis, the majority of EG and IG subjects were sure that they could use the English refusal patterns in a real situation, because they thought there were lots of English refusal strategies in their mind. The real situation could activate their memory and then they could use them flexibly. Some subjects indicated that they could use the refusal strategies but with high anxiety. They explained: “*Yes, I can, but at first, a little nervous; Yes, but not well-performed, need practice; Yes, but may be influenced by Chinese culture; Yes, but theoretical speaking it is OK*”. The explanation confirms the third research question that the subjects could memorize the patterns after instruction. However, a small part of subjects declared that they could not use them even if in a real situation, because they were nervous and they could not make a clear difference between different situations. The frequency of it in IG was bigger than that of in EG. Hence, the explicit instruction could make the subjects feel more confident in using American refusal strategies; while the implicit instruction could not reach the outcome as the explicit instruction. These opinions could support the third research question and Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 was rejected by the fact that the students could retain the appropriate use of English refusals patterns, however, the retention effect was decreasing in comparison with the posttest.

## 4.5 Summary

In this chapter the results of the written DCT and the written self-report were presented. The quantitative data were analyzed by independent sample t-test and paired samples t-test, and the frequency of distribution of scores was accounted. The effect size of different groups was calculated through the effect size calculator. As to the qualitative data, the responses of written DCT were first illustrated and then an analysis was presented. Lastly, the transcribing verbatim the results of the written self-report were presented. From the analysis, four research questions have already been answered. The three hypotheses have been testified. The answer to the first research question was positive, both explicit and implicit instructions were good to teach American English refusal strategies. Then Hypothesis 1 was accepted. The answer to the second research question was that there was a difference between explicit and the implicit instruction. Generally speaking, the former was better than the latter. Hence, the null hypothesis of Hypothesis was rejected. The answer to the third research question was positive too. Students could retain English refusal strategies three months after instruction. This result could reject the null hypothesis in Hypothesis 3. The answer to the fourth research question shows that students felt they had learned a lot from the instruction, the teaching methods were acceptable to them and they were sure they could use what they had learned in a real situation. All above answers could be found not only in the quantitative data, but also in the qualitative data. The results in these two kinds of data were almost the same. The following two chapters will discuss the results in detail and summarize the findings.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

This chapter will discuss the results of the present study by comparing with the previous related studies in the literature review in four parts. The first part will illustrate reasonable explanations for the results of teaching effect for teaching pragmatics which deal with the first research question and Hypothesis 1. The second part will discuss the second research question and Hypothesis 2 including the results of the comparison between the explicit and the implicit instruction in teaching pragmatics. The third part will discuss the third research question and Hypothesis 3 concerning the retention of English refusal strategies after instruction. The last part will offer the possible reasons for the interpretation of the results from the perspective of a theoretical framework, i.e. noticing hypothesis for the present study.

#### **5.1 The Teaching Effects after Instruction**

One of the objectives of the present study was to examine the effects of instruction for teaching pragmatics. The first research question was concerned with the issue if instruction of pragmatics was teachable. Hypothesis 1 assumed that there was an improvement after instruction. According to previous analysis in Chapter 4, the results could prove that there was a good effect of teachability after instruction in the present study. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was accepted. The following three sections will discuss the results in line with 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.

### **5.1.1 Factors for Improvement after Instruction**

As noted in the first part of 4.1.1, the present study proved that both explicit and implicit instruction had a positive effect in teaching English refusals. That is, learners receiving instruction in learning pragmatics outperformed those who did not. By comparison with the previous related studies, the present study shared some similarities with them in the following aspects: the number and language level of participants, amount of instructional time, research design and data collection. Other possible interpretation for an improvement after instruction in the present study could be found as discussed in the following three factors.

The first factor is that both EG and IG students showed a great interest in learning how to refuse in English appropriately. It was their first time for them to learn English in this way because they learned English only in written forms such as reading, vocabulary, grammar and writing before they entered the university. The teaching, also, was conducted by an American teacher and arose their great curiosity. After each period, students reported they actively finished their task by searching on line for the related patterns and practicing what they had learned with their American teacher. Their motivation was very high; therefore, the learning was very effective. The same case could be found in Tateyama's (2001) study. One important reason can account for a good effect of explicit teaching in his study is motivation, that is, those in the explicit group who indicated a strong interest in learning Japanese and Japanese culture could score higher. In Cohen's (2008) small-scale study, using the website for learning Spanish pragmatics and performing requests, apologies, and service encounters, it was found to be strong learner motivation to improve pragmatic skills.

The above analysis could be proved in the data of the written self report.

When being asked for how much the instruction helped to his/her English learning, EG 8 declared that: *“firstly, the instruction taught us how to refuse others politely; secondly, it makes me understand that English learning must learn culture and habit; finally, it improves the interest of English learning and it makes me know I have to work very carefully”*. EG 10 stated that *“this instruction not only let me know how to speak in a proper way, but also it taught me how to be a good human being and think about human life”*. From the answer we could see that the instruction seemed to be far beyond learning and to be good for cultivating students’ value and belief to human life. IG 11 expressed the similar idea: *“It improves my spoken English and makes me know I should enlarge my knowledge”*.

The second factor is that the teaching method in the present study was suitable for the students. The explicit teaching highlighted the importance of every pattern and illustrated very clearly in which situation a proper strategy could be applied; the implicit teaching encouraged the learners to find the difference by themselves which made the learners learn the target patterns by heart. According to the comments on the teaching methods in the data of written self-report, the majority of students held that the teaching method was good.

Several comments could be found in students’ answers. The first one offered by EG 5 was that *“it is near our daily life and easy to learn and understand”*. IG 9 commented that *“the teaching is simple and applicable to many students, because it can make students use them in a real life, so the effect is very obvious”*. The second one offered by EG 8 was that *“in the past our English learning is inflexible, but now what we are learning is much more vivid and it enhances our English in every aspect”*. IG 19 declared that *“it makes us learning actively rather*

*than passively memorizing*". The third one was that instruction was conducted by an American native speaker teacher and was very vivid, which was supported by EG 13. IG 23 also agreed that they had a very good interaction with the native speaker teacher. The fourth one was that the instruction had a clear aim and made the students understand easily, which was written by EG 17. The fifth one was proposed by IG 24: "*The instruction makes us know American teaching method and can make us follow fashion*".

The third factor is that the amount of instructional time of the present study was proper for the students, that is, 8 hours lasting for four weeks with two hours per week. Generally speaking, the longer the teaching time is, the better the effect of teaching is. Even 50 minutes' teaching can lead to a good effect, no wonder for the longer time. The instruction time for the treatment was usually short in most of the previous studies due to the features of every speech act. The usual time was several hours such as 2-8, e.g. Billmyer (1990 a, b) with six hours, Morrow (1995) with 3.5 hours, Fukuya and Zhang (2002) with seven 50-minute session during a 10-day period. The shortest one was Silver's (2003) study with only 50 minutes for teaching refusal. The longest one was Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) with 13-week period. Yoshimi's (2001) explicit instruction component was added on to the regular third year curriculum (80 contact hours), and accounted for approximately 30% of the total contact hours. Yoshimi's (2001) study involved the pragmatics teaching into a curriculum which could yield much better results than others.

In conclusion, interests made the students gain an improvement after instruction. A very systematic teaching method made the students improve after instruction. Proper instructional time was another possible factor that led to an

improvement. Hypothesis 1 was testified by the above three factors which provided sound rational for the assumption.

### **5.1.2 Factors for Variation in Four Stimulus Types**

Qualitative data in the second part of 4.1.1 showed that, in general, there was an obvious difference between the pretest and the posttest. But in some aspects there was no difference. Among the four stimulus types of learning targets, teaching refusals to offers and requests were very effective, teaching refusals to invitations was partly effective, and the least effectiveness was teaching refusals to suggestions. Reasons for the results are illustrated as follows.

In teaching of refusals to offers and requests, the subjects could use almost the same as the learning targets. One of the reasons for this is that American ways of refusing to offers and requests are the same as Chinese way of patterns. For example, one of American frequently used refusal strategies to offers is “gratitude” which usually happens in Chinese culture. Another typical one is American frequently used refusal strategies to requests is “regret” strategy by saying “Sorry”, which is mostly used in Chinese culture, too. There is no surprise that Chinese students could easily learn the target patterns. The similarity between the native culture and learning culture facilitated teaching and learning the target patterns. In this case the more similarity between the two cultures is, the larger the effect size is produced, and therefore, the more positive the teaching effect is.

As to the good teaching effect of refusals to offers and requests, as noted above, since the similarity of American and Chinese culture in these two types made the students easily understand the learning targets, some students even could perform

very well in the pretest. For example, in the H-L status of refusals to offers, most students have already known how to use “Don’t worry” as “giving comfort” strategy and “Never mind, I know it was an accident” as “letting the interlocutor off the hook” strategy. It is no wonder that they could use the strategies well in the posttest, even in the delayed posttest. In refusals to requests, in three different kinds of status, the learning targets involve “alternative” strategy and “regret” strategy by saying “Sorry” which are often used by Chinese people when they refuse. According to Chen, Ye and Zhang (1995), Chinese three most frequently used refusal strategies to requests are “explanation”, “alternative” and “regret” (see Table 2.2). Thus, the students could transfer these Chinese strategies to English automatically.

In refusals to invitations, however, some parts of the teaching had a very good effect but some parts needed attention to emphasize. In EG and IG, strategies used by the subjects could be exactly the same as the learning targets in a situation of low-to-high status (L-H). The reason for this is that students were very familiar with the patterns such as “I’d love to” or “I’d like to”. Thus, they could use these patterns very fluently. Interestingly, some students think that they should not use the negative ability expressions including “I can’t” to refuse a person of higher status. But the strategies used in the equal-to-equal status (E-E) and the high-to-low status (H-L) were slightly different with the learning targets. Subjects seldom employed “Thanks” to friends, because they thought that it was unnecessary among friends. “Regret” strategy was seldom used by the students in the posttest, because they were very cautious about using it and they tried to avoid using the same patterns in Chinese. It seems that the students were unclear about the appropriate strategies in a proper situation.

The most difficult type for teaching was refusals to suggestions. In general, the strategies used by the subjects were varied in different situations. The subjects had been confused by some strategies and could not judge which one was the most appropriate. There were at least two aspects revealing no obvious teaching effect. The first aspect was that in three different kinds of status, except the “explanation” strategy, no strategies used in the pretest and the posttest by the students shared the same strategies as the learning targets. The second one was the strategies used in the pretest and the posttest were almost the same and no variations in the posttest, or in other words, no improving teaching effect was produced in the posttest. The reasons can be offered as follows. One is that the patterns for English refusals to suggestions itself are changeable, complex and lengthy. And the patterns offered for the student to learn were not well summarized. It was not easy and applicable for the students to memorize. Thus, the students might forget the target patterns and adopted their own patterns. The other is that the American instructor did not teach it in a very clear way. Through the observation of the video tape, it was found that when teaching this stimulus type students puzzled in learning and raised some questions about the patterns to the instructor, especially the comparison between American and Chinese culture in refusals to suggestions. But the instructor could not answer very satisfactorily due to lack of knowledge of Chinese culture.

However, based on the data in the written self-report four IG students held that there were no changes for them after instruction. IG 2 expressed: “*there are no changes because we just practice English refusals in class but after class we say in Chinese*”. IG 21 added: “*after instruction, I almost forget, in a real situation I still say ‘I’m sorry’*”. The reasons for this are that the real situation was needed when

practicing and English patterns that they had learned probably were little complicated.

To sum up, the similarity of American and Chinese culture could be facilitative to the learning of English refusals to offers, request and invitations. Due to the complicity of English refusals patterns to suggestions, this type might be difficult to learn. This illustration could support the acceptance of Hypothesis 1 mostly, though there was no difference in the performances of refusals to suggestions.

### **5.1.3 Factors for Variation in Four Aspects of Appropriacy**

Based on 4.1.2, in terms of four aspects of appropriacy, there was an improvement for Chinese EFL students using English refusals after the explicit and implicit instruction. The comparative higher improvements in EG and IG were the quality of information and level of formality, a possible reason was more emphasis by the instructor. Throughout the whole teaching process, the instructor emphasized more on how to refuse in a polite way and how to use longer expressions, thus, the level of formality and the quality of information were comparatively easy to learn by the students.

As analyzed in 4.1.2, teaching strategies choices was the focus of the instruction, it was assumed that performances in this aspect should be better than other aspects. But the performances in strategies choices were not good as expected due to the complication of four stimulus types of English refusals. For example, in general, “positive feeling” and “regret” strategies are frequently used in different types and different situations. The students might be confused by the varieties of the patterns and were not sure in which situation they could use them. Therefore, their performances in strategies choices may be influenced.

Concerning to the correct expressions which was the least performance in the four aspects, the reasons may be due to the fact that the student's English proficiency was not very high. Some serious grammatical mistakes might appear. Probably due to the low English proficiency, it was difficult for the students to balance which were the appropriate English refusals expressions when the complexity appeared in refusals to suggestions. A higher linguistic proficiency level correlated with a higher level of pragmatic awareness, which was in agreement with Schauer's (2006) study of pragmatic awareness in an ESL and EFL context.

Because of more emphasis on the quality of information and level of formality, the students could learn the two aspects well. Due to the low English level and complex English refusals patterns, correct expressions and strategies choices could be difficult aspects to teach and to learn. Despite of difference in the degree of improvement in the four aspects of appropriacy, Hypothesis 1 could be accepted reasonably.

## **5.2 The Comparison between the Explicit and Implicit Instruction**

Most studies comparing the effectiveness of different teaching approaches selected two types of pedagogical intervention, and in all cases the intervention could be constructed as explicit versus implicit instruction. Although previous studies merely focused on the explicit and implicit teaching methods, the studies reveal much information. Pragmatic competence can be taught through different teaching methods, or we can say that different teaching methods result in a different learning effect. By comparison, the results of comparison were mixed in previous studies. Most of them showed that an explicit instruction could yield a better result than an implicit instruction. Some studies showed the opposite result, or even there was no

effect at least in some aspects. The present study, in general, supports the results of most studies in which the explicit instruction was more effective than the implicit instruction in teaching most types of refusals. However, some aspects were found to have no effect. In terms of Hypothesis 2, the better results of the explicit instruction could reject the assumption because there was a difference between the two instructions. The following part will discuss the reasons for those achieving a good result and those without a good effect.

### **5.2.1 Factors for Better Results in Explicit Instruction**

As shown in the first part of 4.2.1, the quantitative data of the posttest in EG and IG showed that the explicit group outperformed the implicit group. That is to say, the explicit teaching could achieve a better effect than the implicit teaching. The effect size of the explicit group was comparatively larger than that of the implicit group. The distribution of the scores in the explicit teaching could result in much higher scores than the implicit one. In general, the explicit instruction was salient and targeted at what the learners wanted because of the strategy instruction or strategy-building intervention. As noted by Cohen (2008) and Cohen and Shively (2007), strategy instruction could be an important component to pragmatics instruction, because such instruction was salient and explicit.

The above discussion is on the side of explicit instruction. However, the present study also presented a significant improvement in the implicit instruction. The only difference was that the input condition was different, and its learning outcome was different. For example, implicit feedback as one type of the input condition was a typical kind of implicit instruction which was used in the present study. In the present

study, the implicit instruction was not better than the explicit one. One of the reasons is that the implicit feedback was employed and the students were not clear if their patterns used in practice were right or wrong because the instructor did not give a clear correction of the students' inappropriate usage. Kasper (2001b) does not believe that the implicit feedback is an effective instructional option for sociopragmatics. Learning objects have to be focused (i.e., one learning problem), well identifiable, intensive, consistent, and unambiguously and promptly correctable. Although in ILP studies, Fukuya et al. (1998), Fukuya and Zhang (2002), Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) tried to prove a good effect of an implicit feedback, the effectiveness for teaching pragmatics will rest on the innovative ideas of researchers in the next decade.

Concerning to other possible factors, teaching method is a crucial factor that leads the difference of the results. The teaching methods in the present study were explicit and implicit teaching method with a difference in the explanation stage and feedback stage. The explicit instruction focused on teacher's clear explanation and highlighted the important difference and explicit feedback. The implicit one emphasized on students' searching the difference themselves and the implicit feedback. These features have the similarity with the previous studies. And the results always show that the explicit one was better than the implicit one. For instance, Wildner-Bassett (1984, 1986) found the explicit group outperformed those who received instruction based on the principles of suggestopedia. House's (1996) explicit learners evidenced better integration of elements into discourse than that was observed for the implicit group. Tateyama et al. (1997) found that beginning learners of Japanese as a foreign language role-play performance benefited more

when they were provided with metapragmatic information on the various functions of *sumimasen* than when they were not. Rose and Ng's (2001) study found that learners in the explicit group outperformed their implicit counterparts in responding to compliments underscores the utility of metapragmatic discussion where sociopragmatics was concerned.

Furthermore, the analysis in the written self-report showed that only a small part of EG subjects declared that they could not use English refusal strategies they had learned in the treatment even if in a real situation, because they were nervous and they could not make a clear difference between different situations. But more IG students acknowledged so. The explicit instruction could make the subjects feel more confidence in using American refusal strategies; while the implicit instruction could not reach the outcome as the explicit instruction. This result was consistent with the quantitative data, the reason for this may be that the explicit instruction offered more chance for the students to practice in class and enhanced their confidence in learning English refusals.

Salient features in the explicit instruction could make the students learn the target patterns instantly and, therefore, the confidence in learning could be enhanced. The implicit feedback in the implicit instruction was unclear in teaching and the students could not benefit from the teaching directly. Therefore, the difference in Hypothesis 2 was demonstrated due to the salient features of the explicit instruction.

### **5.2.2 Factors for Variation in Four Stimulus Types**

The present study generally supported the explicit instruction from the quantitative data. Qualitatively, the same result could be found, but in some stimulus types there were no differences between the explicit and implicit instruction. They

are discussed as follows.

Firstly, in the present study, according to the qualitative data in 4.2.1, the posttest results in the explicit group were better than the implicit group in refusals to invitations and requests. The reasons for this result may be due to EG students' knowledge about the two types being better than IG. According to the comparison with target strategies, in the pretest EG students had already known the refusals to invitations and requests strategies because the strategies used in the pretest and posttest had no differences between the explicit group and learning targets; while IG students could not use refusals to invitations and requests strategies appropriately both in the pretest and posttest. Another reason could be that the salient features in the explicit method made the students learn the strategies easily as discussed in 5.2.1.

Secondly, there was no difference between the explicit and implicit groups in refusals to offers. Or put it in other words, both explicit and implicit instruction could produce an improving result in learning pragmatics, but no difference between the two for which was better. As indicated in 5.1.2, American and Chinese cultures in refusals to offers were similar and both EG and IG students could easily adopt the strategies in the tests.

Thirdly, another case in the present study is that there were no differences between the two methods and there were no good teaching effects as well. The typical example was teaching refusals to suggestions in any situations. One of the reasons is that the complicity of strategies involving some uncertainties and cultural differences. In one aspect American strategies in refusals to suggestions tend to be complex and flexible and are not easy to learn; in other aspect, Chinese refusal strategies tend to show "positive feeling" first, and the learners were heavily

influenced by it. Both factors confused them. Another reason is that the implicit instruction was tricky. The teaching made learners find the pattern themselves. Since the patterns were not certain, the students could not find them out. These two factors could be found more or less in the previous studies. Fukuya et al. (1998) and Fukuya and Clark's (2001) studies showed an inconclusive result. The reasons may be resulted by "a complex relationship between length of instruction, learner proficiency level, and difficulty of learning targets that must be considered in assessing the effects of length of instruction on pragmatic learning" (Rose, 2005, p.395).

The above inconclusive results could be further explained in teaching method. According to the data in the written self-report two EG and IG students respectively disagreed that the teaching methods were good. They proposed some suggestions. EG 20 suggested that the teaching method needed to improve. EG 27 stated that "*the method is OK, but it needs time for me to suit the method*". IG 13 advised that "*it would be nice that if teacher could provide us some suggestions in practice*". IG 27 held that "*the method needs to be more impressive*". She suggested that "*a comparison between three different kinds of status (high, equal, low) is badly needed. Otherwise I would not know and be confused by the expressions in different situations*".

Qualitatively, in refusals to invitations and requests explicit teaching was better than the implicit teaching. The reasons could be that the students' knowledge in these types in the explicit group was better than in the implicit group. In refusals to offer and suggestions, there were no differences between the two groups. The reason for refusals to offers might be the similarity of the two cultures and the explanation for refusals to suggestions could be that the patterns were very complicated. Due to the variation, Hypothesis 2 was partly supported.

### 5.2.3 Factors for Variation in Four Aspects of Appropriacy

As indicated in 4.2.2, EG was better than IG in terms of three aspects of appropriacy, that is, quality of information, level of formality and strategies choices in EG were much better than those in IG. The performance in correct expressions of EG was not better than that in IG as the other three aspects. One possible reason for this is that the target patterns in terms of proper information, formality and strategies were the foci of the learning and teaching. In the explicit group, the instructor adopted the explicit instruction and highlighted these aspects, therefore, the impression left on the students were very deep. While in the implicit groups, these aspects were implied in the teachers' implicit instruction and the students were encouraged to find out these differences by themselves. The impression left on them could not be very deep. The above analysis indicates that the different degree of emphasis may lead to a different learning effect. The explicit instruction might lead to a very high degree of emphasis, and hence, the learning effect was comparatively good, while the degree of emphasis in the implicit group was not very strong, and thus, the learning effect could not be good.

Specifically, the focus of teaching in the present study was teaching the strategies or patterns of English refusals, it was taken for granted that the aspect of strategies choices should be gained the highest score, but the scores for this aspect in the average were ranked in the lower place. In EG, the score for it was ranked the third place; while in IG the score for it was the last place of the four aspects. It reveals that EG was better than IG in the aspect of strategies choices. The data in the comparison of the posttest between EG and IG show that the effect of teaching strategies choices was not very good. For example, in the equal to equal status, the

implicit group was not very good in refusing an invitation due to using more “positive” strategy. The same case happened in the high to low status, both EG and IG learners adopted too much “positive” and “regret” strategies. The reason for this is that the implicit instruction did not emphasize more the differences of these strategies.

Furthermore, because of incorrect expressions and too much information, the implicit group was not good in three different situations in refusals to offer. The reason for this is that they used too many strategies and explained with too many words, therefore, led to errors and redundancy. Another case for being ineffective was that there was no significant difference between EG and IG in refusals to suggestions, especially in the implicit group. In the lower to higher status, the learners used more “gratitude” and “positive” strategies. In the equal to equal status, the strategies they used were too formal. In the high to low status, their strategies choices were not very good because they used more “positive” strategy. One of the reasons for the above inappropriacy is that they were heavily influenced by Chinese culture. Another reason is that there was a problem in the implicit instruction. IG subjects suggested highly a clearer comparison between Chinese and English refusals. Also, in the feedback step, teachers might offer the comments to student’s responses and provided some comparisons of the patterns so as to make them remember the strategies or patterns better.

Due to the salient features in the explicit instruction, the performances in quality of information, level of formality and strategies choices in EG were better than that in IG. Heavily affected by Chinese culture and not clearly presented features in

the implicit instruction, the strategies choices could not perform well enough in IG. The rejection of Hypothesis 2 was supported fully in the four aspects of appropriacy.

### **5.3 The Retention Effect**

According to Kasper and Rose (2002), a delayed posttest is a standard design feature in interventional research because without their use it is not possible to determine whether the gains that students made through instruction are durable. The results presented in 4.3.1 reveal that in comparison with the pretest the gains that students made through instruction were durable in the perspectives of quantitative and qualitative data, four stimulus types and four aspects of appropriacy. However, there was a decrease in comparison with the posttest. Hypothesis 3 was rejected in two aspects. On the one hand the direction was negative because there was a decrease in the delayed posttest. The factors for the decrease are discussed as follows. On the other hand there was an improvement in comparison with the pretest. The factors will be discussed in 5.4.3.

#### **5.3.1 Factors for Decreasing in the Delayed Posttest**

As indicated in 4.3.1, the present study proves that both explicit and implicit instruction did a good effect in retention of English refusals. In comparison with the pretest, the scores in the delayed posttest gained largely. But in comparison with the posttest, the scores in the delayed posttest decreased. The case in EG and IG was the same. From Table 4.8, the mean score for the explicit group in the posttest was comparatively high, but the mean score for the delayed posttest was lower than that of the posttest. This decrease means that the participants in the explicit group could not remember the learning targets as expected after three months. Similarly, the results

in IG indicated the same case. The mean score of the delayed posttest in IG was also lower than that of the posttest. The decrease also indicates that the effects of retaining after three months in the implicit group were not good as expected. The decrease of the delayed posttest was natural, because as the time past, the memory for the learning targets could decrease. Similar results could be proved in Liddicoat and Crozet's (2001) results in their delayed posttest after a year. The learners in their study produced contents which was similar to that produced immediately after instruction, but features of form had changed and more closely resembled the language behaviour found before instruction. In Koike and Pearson's (2005) study, the scores in the delayed posttest in general decreased.

Other factors for this decreasing could be found in the data of the written self-report. Some students stated that they had no confidence in using English refusal strategies as indicated in 4.4.3. EG 3 held that she would be a little nervous. EG 4 offered the reason that *"because it lacks more practice and maybe I can not use them very well"*. IG 8 agreed that she lacked practice and maybe she could not use them very fluently. EG 28 provided another reason that *"because of some personal reasons like inactive personality and bad spoken English, maybe I can not refuse very well"*. IG 2 held that *"I can not say it very well because of culture differences and different habits"*. IG 5 explained that *"there is a problem in teaching method, because some comparisons are not well differentiated"*.

Although it is natural for decreasing in the delayed posttest, because of some personal reasons such as nerves or personalities and so on, the scores in the delayed posttest could not be as high as that in the posttest. Hypothesis 3 was rejected because of the negative results.

### 5.3.2 Factors for Decreasing Scores in Four Stimulus Types

Qualitative data in the second part in 4.3.1 revealed that the numbers of students' strategies decreased in the delayed posttest because there was at least one strategy different from the learning strategies especially in refusals to invitations and requests. The reason may be that the learning targets were complex because they involved four stimulus types and three different kinds of status. These complicating patterns made the students forget some trifling differences between them. For example, the students could only remember "I'd love to" as a general pattern in refusals to invitations after the treatment, they might forget to put in which exact situation three months after the treatment. Therefore, it is natural for them to forget one or two strategies taught by the teachers.

Also, there was one case proved resistant to the instruction among some students. In the present study, such a case was atypical. In the pretest, some students liked to use "regret" strategy by saying "sorry" in every situation which is only used in refusals to requests in American refusal strategies, but a commonly used Chinese strategy in every situation. After instruction the above situation was reduced, but still few students kept on using it. They could not change it immediately after instruction and let alone after three months. If the time is past, they may forget the learning targets and use their own patterns again. Likewise, House (1996) found that even though learners in her explicit group had made considerable progress in incorporating pragmatic routines and discourse strategies into role-play interaction, they continued to evidence negative transfer from German. Liddicoat and Crozet (2001) and Yoshimi (2001) also found that learners had difficulty incorporating some target features into online interaction.

In refusals to offers and suggestions, the students kept the same score as the posttest. The strategies used in refusals to offers in the delayed posttest were close to the learning targets. Comparatively speaking, the patterns in this type were easy to learn and remember. Therefore, it was for sure that the students could retain after three months. Those having the same scores but without a good effect were refusals to suggestions in three different kinds of status. This failure may be due to the fact that the input of refusals to suggestions by the instruction was not very effective.

To sum up, due to the complicated four stimulus types and complex patterns in different situations, it is very natural for the students to forget some strategies patterns. The decreasing could also reject Hypothesis 3 from a negative direction.

### **5.3.3 Factors for Decreasing Scores in Four Aspects of Appropriacy**

The results in 4.3.2 indicated that in terms of four aspects of appropriacy, the scores of correct expressions, quality of information and level of formality in the delayed posttest decreased most. The strategies choices decreased the least. Qualitative data confirm the quantitative data. Two possible factors can explain these results.

One factor is that the strategies patterns were the focus of the learning process. The materials were provided in the format of strategies patterns and the instructor put an emphasis of strategies in teaching, therefore, the strategies were strengthened in the students' memory. Therefore, their scores for it were not very low. The other three aspects could not be fully occupied in the students' mind after a period of time, because the other three aspects were emphasized less. As indicated

in Tomlin and Villa (1994), “in general, the human mind seems limited in the sense of not being able to process fully all of the stimuli bombarding it at any given time” (p.188).

Another factor is that the students’ interest in learning kept very high. Even after instruction, some students still hoped to learn more patterns of English refusals. Some students’ awareness of refusing appropriately was activated and they tended to be willing to communicate with English native speakers and searched on line for more English refusal patterns and strategies. Therefore, the scores for strategies choices decreased less. Instead of decreasing, IG scores for this aspect increased. The reason for this may be that IG students were more active in learning.

In general, attention as limited-capacity system and interest could be accounted for the students’ very good attention in the four aspects of appropriacy. This positive effect could be strong support to the assumption in Hypothesis 3, because students can retain the patterns in four aspects of appropriacy.

## **5.4 From the Perspective of Noticing Hypothesis**

### **5.4.1 An Overview of Noticing Hypothesis**

An important purpose of the present study was to examine if noticing can produce a good learning and teaching effect. The results shown in Chapter 4 indicate that an awareness of noticing could yield an improvement in the posttest and even in the delayed posttest in comparison with the pretest. This result seems to support Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis. As a consequence, Hypothesis 1 could be proved that the difference after instruction might be due to noticing factors in the instruction. In fact, most ILP studies in the instruction of pragmatic ability hold

the view of noticing hypothesis as their theoretical framework, e.g. Rose and Ng (2001), Takahashi (2001), Tateyama (2001), Yoshimi (2001), Fukuya and Zhang (2002), Silva (2003), Alcon (2005), Takahashi (2005), Martinez-For and Fukuya (2005) and Koike and Pearson (2005). It can be concluded from the previous studies that cognitive theory was and will remain a key approach to explain interlanguage pragmatic development (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

According to Kasper and Rose (2002), the noticing hypothesis deals with condition of input and attention and how attention makes learners intake. There are two key terms in the hypothesis. One is *noticing* that refers to surface level phenomena and item learning. The other is *understanding* that refers to deeper level(s) of abstraction related to (semantic, syntactic, or communicative) meaning and system learning. Empirical support for the facilitative effects of awareness on foreign language behavior and, consequently, for Schmidt's (1990) noticing hypothesis, has been found in a few published classroom-based studies (e.g., Alanen, 1995; Leow, 1997; Robinson, 1997a, 1997b; Rosa, 1999; Rosa and O'Neil, 1999 as cited in Leow, 2000).

Schmidt (1995) applied his distinction between *noticing* and *understanding* to pragmatics. In pragmatics *noticing* means awareness of a particular pattern relating to some speech acts such as requests, refusals and so on. *Understanding* means that learners can use the various forms with the consideration of politeness, elements of context such as social distance, power, level of imposition and so on (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

The response to the first research question in the present study was concerned with the issue if noticing could lead to understanding. The answer to this

question was positive. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was accepted positively. Then the response to the second research question was to examine the degree of noticing and the outcome of understanding. The answers show that there was a different degree if the noticing was different. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was rejected because of the degree of noticing. The more noticing was, the better understanding was. Finally, the response to the third research question was to find out if noticing could yield good intake and achieve the final goal of retention. The answers to this question were affirmative. Hypothesis 3 was rejected because of good retention in comparison with the pretest. Generally speaking, the results in the present study supported the noticing hypothesis and testified the three hypotheses. However, there are some minor facets different from the noticing hypothesis. The following sections will discuss the results of the first to third research question and three hypotheses.

#### **5.4.2 Noticing and Understanding after Instruction**

According to the first part of 4.1.1, quantitative data revealed that the teaching effects of explicit and implicit instruction were good, because the scores in the posttest improved; and there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest; and effect sizes were large. It was probably due to the fact that the instruction produced a good teaching and learning effect. From the perspective of noticing hypothesis, if the learners were taught to notice the target forms, a good effect could be achieved. In other words, the instruction could make the learners notice English refusals' patterns and strategies in the target language. Consequently, this result seems to support Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis in terms of the

aspect that noticing could lead to understanding and the understanding could result in a good learning effect.

Based on 4.1.2, the improvement for Chinese EFL students using English refusals was salient in terms of four aspects of appropriacy after the explicit and implicit instruction. The comparative higher improvements in EG and IG were the quality of information and level of formality, whereas scores of the correct expressions and strategies choices in EG and IG were comparatively lower. This prominent feature may be because of more emphasis of quality of information and level of formality by the instructor during the teaching. Attention was drawn by the instructor; therefore, the students might notice the forms specially.

Specifically, the above results testify noticing hypothesis in different aspects. The present study suggested that different levels of awareness led to a difference in processing, i.e. more awareness contributed more recognition and accurate production of noticed English refusals forms. The findings of the present study provided the empirical support for facilitating the degrees of awareness on pragmatic competence. The present study also indicated that learners who demonstrated awareness of the targeted English refusals forms during the experimental exposure took in speaking significantly more of these forms. Leow's (1997, 2000) studies quantitatively and qualitatively addressed the role of awareness in relation to the noticing hypothesis in SLA. The results obtained by Fukuya and Clark, 2001, Silva, 2003 and Takshashi, 2005 and so on in the field of ILP studies supported Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis, since they illustrated how making learners notice the specific target language features as result of instruction promoted learning (Alcon, 2005).

In line with the data in the written self-report, as indicated in 4.4.1, the majority of students declared that they had learned how to refuse appropriately in English and had known the differences between Chinese and English refusals. It means that both groups benefited from the instruction. Most EG and IG subjects reported that they were more likely to say more “Thank you” and avoid repetition of “Sorry” in every situation because they noticed that these patterns were different between American and Chinese refusals after their learning. Here are some typical answers for changes after instruction of English refusals from EG and IG respectively.

EG 8 held that *“Yes, there are a lot changes. When refusing in the past, I could only say ‘I’m sorry’, and it was very difficult for me to say more in detail. But after this instruction, I have known a lot of refusal ways, and have known how to refuse to different persons in different situations and make the refusals more reasonable and understandable”*. EG 10 made even more interesting comments, *“after instruction, I even like to say ‘I’d love to but I can’t’ and can say more ‘thanks’ or ‘thank you’ or ‘thank you for your invitation/suggestion’”*. IG 11 expressed the same ideas: *“After instruction, my refusal act is not limited only ‘No, thanks’ or ‘I’m sorry’. I can have different refusals way to different persons”*. The answers for above can be accounted for that before the instruction Chinese EFL students only knew English refusal strategies, e.g. ‘I’m sorry’ or ‘No, thanks’. They seldom expressed ‘I’d love to, but I can’t’. They were influenced heavily by Chinese refusal habit of saying ‘sorry’ quite often. Such negative transfer was reduced after instruction.

In sum, the relationship between noticing and understanding illustrated that the learners noticed the learning targets and then deeper understanding could appear.

The fact that noticing leads to understanding gives robust support for the acceptance of Hypothesis 1. Noticing makes the difference after instruction and explains further the acceptance of Hypothesis 1.

#### **5.4.3 Degree of Noticing and Understanding**

As indicated in the first part of 4.2.1, there was difference between the explicit and implicit instruction. The quantitative data show that the explicit teaching was better than the implicit teaching. The response to the second research question and Hypothesis 2 is to testify the degree of noticing and the result of understanding. The answers show that there was a different degree if the noticing was different. From the perspective of noticing hypothesis, this difference may be due to the degree of noticing. Probably the students' attention in the explicit group was stronger than the implicit group. And the teacher's explicit explanation and explicit feedback could enhance the students' awareness. While the implicit comparison and feedback might mislead the students and their notice was not very concentrated. A conclusion in the present study can be drawn from is that the high degree of noticing can be stronger in teaching pragmatic competence. In fact, the issue of the depth of noticing or awareness and its learning outcome has been controversial in the field of SLA. Despite of the controversy, previous studies provided further evidence that higher levels of awareness were associated with more explicit conditions and that learners with greater awareness had an increased ability to recognize and produce target forms than those with less awareness (Leow, 2000).

Furthermore, the improvement in the posttest means that the high degree of noticing leads to very effective intake. In other words, the level of awareness is a

crucial determinant for the level of intake of L2 forms. This statement, in turn, implies that if higher levels of awareness were assured by manipulating input, a learner's intake of target forms could be greatly enhanced, even in implicit input conditions. As held by Takahashi (2001), "lots of previous studies provided evidence that high levels of attention-drawing activities are more helpful for learners in gaining the mastery of target-language structures than simple exposure to positive evidence" (p.171). Takahashi (2001) found that the target pragmatic features were found to be most effectively high degree of input enhancement with explicit metapragmatic information. At the same time the performance of those participants in the implicit enhancement conditions who failed to provide the target pragmatic features in the input did not lead to learning. Thus, the degree of input enhancement can determine the degree of noticing the learning targets.

Besides, corrective feedback in the procedures of explicit instruction can enhance the degree of noticing. Feedback was the last stage of the explicit and implicit instruction in the present study. For the explicit instruction, the correction was direct and obvious; for the implicit instruction there was no correction. Same as Yoshimi (2001) noted, communicative practice and corrective feedback may enhance the "noticing" afforded by the explicit instruction. Therefore, the present study suggested that receiving feedback on one's own production would be expected to have a beneficial effect on the learners in EG, whereas over-hearing feedback to the other learners in IG would not necessarily be expected to have this effect.

In addition, the various forms of input led to noticing, that is, the four different stimulus types (refusals to invitations, suggestions, offers and requests) and three different situations (high, equal and low) made the students notice the different

English refusals patterns related to these types and situations. Therefore, the students can have an awareness to notice the different forms and various input. Koike and Pearson (2005) argue that it was not easy to determine the form of the input in the classroom that most effectively aided noticing by the learners. Therefore, it should be explicit so that learners could deduce the information from explanations and rules, rather than implicit, by which learners induce it by observation, intuition, and analogy. In regard to the nature of input, selective input may well benefit EFL students. Same statement could be found in the discussion about availability of pragmatic input in Cohen and Shively's (2007) study.

To sum up the above discussion, quantitatively, the possible interpretations for the explicit group being better than the implicit group were because of the different levels of noticing, different outcomes of intake, and different forms of input in teaching. The degree of noticing could illustrate the rejection of Hypothesis 2, because the more noticing is, the stronger the effect is.

#### **5.4.4 Intake and Retention after Instruction**

In general, the results in 4.3.1 could be summarized that the retention for learners was good because the scores in the delayed posttest were better than the pretest, though it was not as good as the posttest. The reason accounted for this is that the explicit and implicit instruction left the students a very good impression and they could remember the target patterns even after a winter vacation. As a consequence, their noticing was very clear and the impression was deep as well. This result indicated that noticing could yield good intake and therefore, the study achieved the final goal of retention. Koike and Pearson's (2005) study proved the

same results. They conducted a delayed posttest in 4 weeks after instruction. The scores in the delayed posttest were comparatively higher than the pretest. This indicates that an instruction could yield an improvement even after a period of instructional time.

In terms of four stimulus types, those with a good effect in the delayed posttest were refusals to invitations and requests. The typical expression that used correctly by the learners was “I’d love to”. After instruction students knew that this expression was often used for refusing to invitations in the low to high status and should not be used in other situations. But in the pretest they were confused and used in any situations. Another improvement was that students learned to avoid saying “Sorry” in any situations. They knew “Sorry” strategy should only be used to refuse to requests in English. This improvement is the result of understanding and intake that makes the students retain.

As noted in 4.4.3, most students declared in the written self-report that when they faced a real situation, they could remember what they had learned. The reasons could be found in the data of written self-report. EG 5 explained that:” *the instruction is very impressive and has a very clear aim. After learning, I can remember the native like expressions and so when I face a real context I can use them very well*”. IG 13 shared the same opinion that “*it is the first time for me to learn English in such an impressive way, it improves my spoken English*”. Five students in EG and IG respectively thought that “*there are a lot of refusal strategies in my brain. I’ve learned a lot of good English refusals and good English knowledge*”.

Briefly, the above discussion illustrated that noticing the learning targets by the explicit and implicit instruction could produce a good learning result and the

retention could be gained via final intake. The good retention could be a possible reason for the explanation of Hypothesis 3.

## **5.5 Summary**

This chapter mainly discussed the reasons for the results in response to three research questions and research hypotheses. The main reasons for results of the first research question and hypothesis were that the teaching time and teaching methods were appropriate. The major reason for the results of the second research question and hypothesis was a very clear and systematic teaching method in the explicit instruction. The good teaching effect could account for the answer in the third research question and hypothesis. Some other reasons could be traced to account for the non-effect instruction. First, teaching method in the implicit group was not very clear and systematic. Second, the learners were heavily influenced by Chinese culture and habit and could not avoid Chinese way of refusals. The above reasons could also be traced back in the noticing hypothesis. Those who had paid much attention to the target forms could produce a comparatively good refusal strategy. That means attention made them aware. The level or degree of attention or noticing could yield different learning outcomes. The input or teaching method in the implicit group was not very much highlighted and the result of the learning was not as good as what was found in the explicit instruction. Finally, very good noticing could lead to very good intake and retention. The delayed posttest in the present study explained well for this final statement. Besides, the data in the written self-report supported the results for the three research questions and hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this chapter, the research findings will be summarized and a conclusion will be drawn according to the results of the present study. Implications to teaching and learning will be presented. Finally, suggestions for the further study will be described in detail.

#### **6.1 A Summary of the Findings**

In line with the results and discussion in the previous chapters, the four research questions raised in the study can be answered and the hypotheses established could be tested in the following aspects.

Generally speaking, the effect of learning English refusals is positive after instruction. The participants learned how to refuse appropriately in English after the explicit and implicit instruction. The main reasons for the good results of teaching effects are that the students were highly motivated, the teaching time and teaching method were appropriate. From the perspective of stimulus types, the learners did well in learning refusals to invitations, offers and requests. The similarity of American culture and Chinese culture could be the possible reasons. Because of the complicity of English refusals patterns to suggestions, the students' performance in refusals to suggestions might not be well enough. In terms of appropriacy, EFL learners performed better in the aspects of quality of information and level of

formality; whereas the performances in correct expressions and strategies choices were comparatively weaker. Due to the low English level and complex English refusals patterns, the students' performances in correct expressions and strategies choices could not be well-done. These findings could support strongly to accept Hypothesis 1. That is, there was a difference of the scores between the pretest and posttest. The difference tended to be a positive direction, because the achievements of the posttest were much better than that of the pretest.

As to the comparison of the two instructions, the explicit instruction is better than the implicit instruction for teaching English refusals. The implicit instruction is an effective method for instruction of English refusals, but it is not as good as the explicit one. The major reason is a very clear and systematic teaching method in the explicit instruction; while the teaching method in the implicit group is not as clear and systematic as the explicit one. The second reason is that the learners were heavily influenced by Chinese culture and habit and could not avoid Chinese way of refusals. However, qualitatively, the performances in refusals to invitations and requests in explicit group were better than those in the implicit group. The reasons could be that the students' knowledge in these types in the explicit group was better than that in the implicit group. In refusals to offers and suggestions, there was no difference between the two groups. The reason for refusals to offers might be the similarity of the two cultures and the explanation for refusals to suggestions could be that the patterns were very complicated. Due to the salient features in the explicit instruction, the performances in quality of information, level of formality and strategies choices in EG were better than IG. Heavily affected by Chinese culture and not clearly presented feature in the implicit instruction, the learners could not perform

well enough in the strategies choices. The findings can also offer evidence to reject Hypothesis 2, i.e. there was a difference between the explicit and implicit instruction. In terms of the effect, the achievement of the explicit instruction was better than the implicit instruction.

Furthermore, the participants can retain English refusals patterns after three months. Comparing to the pretest, the scores in the delayed posttest improved, the good teaching effect and students' interest of learning can account for this result; while comparing with the posttest, the achievement decreased in the delayed posttest. This decrease may be natural after a period of time without exposure. Qualitative data reveal that the strategies used in the delayed posttest decreased and not as expected as the posttest, especially in refusals to invitations and requests. In refusals to offers and suggestions, the students kept the same level as the posttest. The scores in the delayed posttest decreased mostly in three aspects of appropriacy: correct expressions, quality of information and level of formality. The strategies choices decreased less. Attention as limited-capacity system could be accounted for the students' decrease in scores. These findings are summarized from the answers to the third research question. The findings could reject Hypothesis 3. There was a difference between the posttest and the delayed posttest. However, the retention effect tends to be a negative direction. The scores of the delayed posttest decreased.

Lastly, students' opinions to the instruction are affirmative. Qualitative data in written self-report show students feel that they have improved in learning English refusal patterns after instruction. Because most students declared that they had learned how to refuse appropriately in English and had known the difference between Chinese and English refusals. As to the comments on the teaching methods, the

majority of students reported that the method was good. Several reasons could be found in students' answers. First, the patterns were close to students' daily life and easy to learn and understand. Second, the learning was vivid and enhanced students' English in every aspect. Third, instruction was conducted by an American native speaker teacher who made the instruction very vivid. Fourth, the instruction had a clear aim and made the learning targets understandable. Fifth, the instruction made the students know American teaching method and made them follow fashion. Most students declared that when they faced a real situation, they could remember what they had learned.

The above results can be found a reasonable interpretation in Schmidt's (1993) Noticing Hypothesis. Those who had paid much attention to the target forms could produce a comparatively good refusal strategy. Special attention made them aware. This explanation could support Hypothesis 1. The level or degree of attention or noticing could yield different learning outcomes. Therefore, the input or teaching method in the implicit group was not very much highlighted and the result of the learning was not as good as the explicit instruction. The better result of the explicit instruction could be a reasonable support to reject the assumption of Hypothesis 2. Finally, very good noticing could lead to very good intake, and thus, good retention. The delayed posttest in the present study explained well the final statement. As a consequence, the good retention in the delayed posttest could be obtained and then rejected Hypothesis 3.

## **6.2 Pedagogical Implications**

Since the results of teaching pragmatic competence are affirmative and the findings of the present study reveal that good effects can be achieved through the

explicit and implicit teaching, therefore, the implications to the pedagogy can be summarized in the following aspects.

Firstly, teaching English refusals can adopt the four stimulus types for the instruction rather than employ the general patterns such as “I’d love to, but I can’t”. Refusals to invitations, suggestions, offers and requests are very common English refusals types and these types can be flexible in different situations including refusing to a person of high status, equal status and low status. The patterns of these English refusal strategies can be varied and the teachers need to make a very clear comparison between them.

Secondly, when teaching English refusal patterns to EFL learners, English culture and learners’ native culture need to put into the instruction so as to make the learners have a very clear picture of the differences between the two cultures. As the present study indicated, teaching English refusals to offers and requests are comparatively easy, because the Chinese and English refusals share lots of similarities. For example, using “regret” strategy by saying “I’m sorry” to refusing requests are used in both English and Chinese. Therefore, the students can learn it automatically. But English refusals to invitations and especially refusals to suggestions are difficult to teach, because there are some variations between English and Chinese refusals. Therefore, in these situations, the cultural difference should be compared so as to make the students have a clear distinction between them.

Thirdly, among the four aspects of appropriacy, teaching correct expressions and strategies choices are comparatively hard due to the complexity of the patterns or strategies, refusals to suggestions and invitations in particular. Hence, teachers need to pay special attention to the difference of the patterns, expressions and strategies;

otherwise the students may be confused by the patterns offered by the teachers' input.

Fourthly, in terms of teaching effectiveness, the explicit instruction is highly recommended for the instruction of English refusals. In the explicit instruction, learners can learn the patterns directly, rather than infer and search the patterns indirectly. The teachers may highlight the learning targets by an explicit explanation; therefore, the learners can learn the patterns automatically.

Finally, different degrees of noticing can lead to different teaching effects. Hence, if a teacher wanted to make the students learn the targets well, he/she would put a special emphasis on a real pattern for learning. If the students could be taught with a very strong effect, a stronger impression they would achieve. Hence, the teachers are recommended to emphasize to English refusals to suggestions and invitations because these two types are complicated and clear noticing is needed to pay attention to. In order to make the students notice the patterns, teachers need to make the dialogue of English refusals patterns vivid and interesting. The situations offered by the teachers should be real, and if possible, some opportunities for communication with native speakers should be created for the students to make them practice in a real situation. Therefore, teachers need to prepare more for the instruction.

### **6.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

The present study tends to prove that English refusals are teachable and different teaching methods can result in different teaching effects. However, due to some limitations of the present study, some factors might not be considered in the experiment. The following factors may be taken into the consideration for the further study.

Number of students may be enlarged in the further study. The participants in the present study were from the intact groups and belonged to a small sample size because of being lower than 30 students. If we want to make the study robust in population, the further study may take a larger sample size, e.g., larger than 30 students into consideration. If it did so, a sample size calculator is needed.

To avoid extraneous effects such as an interaction with friends of high English level, English native speakers or searching on line during the experiment, if it is possible, the future study may select the students who never have chances to know the learning targets or choose those who are poor in English and never know any English refusals patterns at all as subjects.

To overcome the norm for the teaching targets, more English refusals patterns are needed. In the future, if more studies conducted in British English or other varieties of English could be found out, then the patterns could be used for a comparison and the learners could learn more patterns or expressions. Furthermore, some patterns such as refusals to suggestions need to modify in a simple and clear way based on more related studies.

More time is needed for students to practice the patterns so as to make them digest the learning targets thoroughly. Therefore, the further study needs to invent a situation for the students to practice or use the learning targets in a real situation and to test if they could use the learning targets flexibly in a real life.

The reliability and validity of the design of written DCT need to consider carefully so as to make it authentic and justifiable. A further study needs more related studies for reference to modify the situation of written DCT. Furthermore, the criteria for assessing the responses of written DCT, four aspects of appropriacy in particular,

need to state concretely to avoid subjectivity. If it is possible, interaction in the response of the situation may be considered as a standard to judge the appropriateness. Therefore, role plays are needed for the confirmation of the results in written DCT.

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# **Appendix A**

## **Instructional Materials**

### **Part I Handout for Instructor (For Explicit and Implicit Groups)**

#### **Unit 1 English Refusals to Invitations**

##### **Dialogue 1: Refusing a teacher's invitation to a party (lower to higher status)**

Teacher: I'm having a party for my students this weekend. Will you be able to come?

Student: I'd love to, but I can't. I have to work. I have a lot of homework due in the next week. Thank you for the invitation.

Teacher: That's too bad. I was hoping you could come.

##### **Dialogue 2: Refusing a friend's invitation to see a movie (equal to equal status)**

Rose and Nancy live in a same dormitory. One evening Rose invites Nancy out.

Rose: We are going to see a movie tonight. Would you like to come along?

Nancy: Mmm, no, you know I don't like movies too much.

Rose: That's too bad. Well then, maybe next time.

##### **Dialogue 3: Refusing a junior classmate's invitation to speak for an orientation program (higher to lower status)**

John is a senior undergraduate. Mike, a sophomore who is in charge of the "Students' Organization".

Mike: The "Students' Organization" will hold an orientation program for the freshmen this Thursday. The topic is about life on the university campus. So we would like to invite you to be a guest speaker.

John: Oh, thanks for the invitation, but I already have a previous engagement, so I won't be able to attend.

Mike: I'm sorry to hear that. Maybe next time.

## **Unit 2 English Refusals to Suggestions**

### **Dialogue 1: Refusing a boss's suggestion to change a project design a little bit (lower to higher status)**

The boss and Johnson, an engineer of the company, are discussing about their company's new project design.

Boss: I think your design is a little too small. I would suggest that you make it bigger.

Johnson: Hmm... I had something in mind. I was thinking that smaller will be more suitable for our customers.

Boss: Okay. You know what's best for the customer.

### **Dialogue 2: Refusing a friend's suggestion to have a party in your house (equal to equal status)**

Gaby: Let's have a party.

George: What a good idea. When shall we have it?

Gaby: What about Saturday evening?

George: Fine and where shall we have it?

Gaby: In your flat.

George: Oh..., you know what my landlady's like. She won't let us have a party there.

Gaby: Let's ask Doris. Perhaps we can have it in her flat.

### **Dialogue 3: Refusing a high school student's suggestion to skip the details (higher to lower status)**

High School Student: I already understood everything in the first chapters. You don't need to bother with all the gritty details. Why don't you skip the details?

College Student: Well, actually it's very important that we review it anyway. That way, you can show me how much you know, too.

High School Student: Alright. No problem.

### Unit 3 English Refusals to Offers

#### Dialogue 1: Refusing a dean (teacher)'s offer of a teaching assistantship (lower to higher status)

Today a teacher calls Mary into his office.

Teacher: Our department needs to hire a teaching assistant this term. We think you are best suited for the job. You will work twelve hours a week. It will take you some time. But it is a good experience. Are you interested in taking the job?

Mary: It sounds like a great opportunity, but I'm going to have to pass on it. I am just too busy.

Teacher: Well then. Maybe next time.

#### Dialogue 2: Refusing a neighbor's offer for a ride (equal to equal status)

Tim is walking down the street and it starts raining hard. A young guy, who lives nearby and is an acquaintance, stops the car and offers Tim a ride.

Young guy: It's raining cats and dogs! Do you need a ride?

Tim: No. Thanks. I'm almost there.

Young guy: Okay. Bye.

#### Dialogue 3: Refusing a cleaning lady's payment for a broken vase (higher to lower status)

Peter arrives home and notices that his cleaning lady is extremely upset. She comes rushing up to Peter.

Cleaning lady: Oh God, I'm so sorry! I had an awful accident. While I was cleaning I bumped into the table and your china vase fell and broke. I feel just terrible about it. I'll pay for it.

Peter: Oh, never mind, don't worry about it. It's just an accident.

Cleaning lady: Thank you. It's very kind of you.

### Unit 4 English Refusals to Requests

#### Dialogue 1: Refusing a mother's request (lower to higher status)

Mother: I wonder if you could go to the bank and mail this package at the post office for me tomorrow.

John: Oh, I'm sorry, Mom, but I can't. I have that doctor's appointment. Can't Carrie (sister) do it for you?

Mother: Never mind. I'll go there myself.

**Dialogue 2: Refusing a classmate's request to use a computer (equal to equal status)**

Tina is in a computer room working on an assignment which is due tomorrow morning. It is late at night and she still has a lot to do. The computer room is very crowded and there are students waiting to use the computer. One of Tina's classmate approaches her.

Classmate: Excuse me. Do you think you could let me use the computer for twenty minutes?

Tina: I'm sorry. I still have a lot to finish before tomorrow. Perhaps someone else does not have such a tight deadline.

Classmate: That's okay.

**Dialogue 3: Refusing a junior member's request for an interview (higher to lower status)**

During lunch time at the university, a junior member in Robson's department asks Robson for a favor.

Junior member: I am doing a project that requires me to interview subjects. Could I interview you for 15 minutes?

Robson: I really like to help you out, but I'm afraid I'm really strapped for time right now and can't really afford to.

Junior member: That's too bad. Thanks anyway.

## Part II Handout for Participants---Types of English Refusals

### For Explicit Group

#### Unit 1 English Refusals to Invitations

Refuser /Interlocutor Status	Learning Targets	Typical Expressions	Situation/ Distance
Lower to Higher Status	1.Positive feeling 2.Negative ability 3.Explanation	I'd love to but I can't this weekend; I'd love to, but I can't. I have to work; I'd love to but I have a lot of stats homework due in the morning; Oh, I'd love to, but I have to be out of town for the weekend; I'd like to come but I've already made plans. Thank you for the invitation. Maybe some other time.	Refusing a teacher's /a boss's invitation to a party (familiar relationship)
Equal to Equal Status	1. No 2.Gratitude, Future acceptance 3. Explanation	Nah, I need to get back and work on my project; Oh, no, you know I don't like movies too much No, thanks dude, maybe next time	Refusing a friend's invitation to see a movie (familiar relationship)
Higher to Lower Status	1.Gratitude 2.Regret 3.Explanation	Oh, thanks for the invitation, but I already have a previous engagement so I won't be able to attend. Sorry, but I'm not prepared enough to address the group. Maybe next time. Thanks, I'm honored but I am really too busy.	Refusing a junior student's or an employee's invitation to speak for a lecture, to attend a party or dinner (familiar relationship)

## Unit 2 English Refusals to Suggestions

<b>Refuser /Interlocutor Status</b>	<b>Learning Targets</b>	<b>Typical Expressions</b>	<b>Situation /Distance</b>
Lower to Higher Status	1.Negative ability, Pause filler 2.Explanation 3.Alternative	Well, I had planned to take another course next semester. I'll take the stats after that.  Hmm...I had something else in mind. I was thinking I ought to take Professor X' class since it's only offered every other semester. And I thought I would pick up stats over the summer.  I would rather not. I think I know enough to be able to figure it out.	Refusing an advisor's suggestion to study another course or a boss's suggestion (familiar relationship)
Equal to Equal Status	1.Pause filler 2.Positive feeling 3. Explanation	That would be nice if I had time That's how I meant for it to be Oh, I'm tired of working on it. I'm just going to hand it in and see what I get.	Refusing a friend's suggestions about a research topic or to try a new design (familiar relationship)
Higher to Lower Status	1.Negative ability 2. Explanation 3. Alternative	In order to understand the rest of it, I must go over the first chapters.  Well, actually it's very important that we review it anyway. That way, you can show how much you know, too!  I'll change the design next time.	Refusing a student's suggestion to skip the details or an employee's suggestion to change a design (familiar relationship)

### Unit 3 English Refusals to Offers

Refuser /Interlocutor Status	Learning Targets	Typical Expressions	Situation /Distance
Lower to Higher Status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive feeling (Negative ability),</li> <li>2. Gratitude</li> <li>3. Explanation</li> </ol>	<p>It sounds like a great opportunity, but I'm going to have to pass on it. I am just too busy.</p> <p>No. Thanks. I have a number of other things I want to focus on.</p> <p>I'm afraid I have too much to do.</p> <p>I would really like to, but I'm really busy these days and I wouldn't be able to give you 100%.</p>	Refusing a dean's offer or a boss's offer (familiar relationship)
Equal to Equal Status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No</li> <li>2. Gratitude</li> <li>3. Explanation</li> </ol>	<p>No. Thank you you're very kind.</p> <p>No. Thank you. I don't have far to go and I will be okay.</p> <p>No. Thanks. I'm almost there.</p> <p>No. Thank you. I'm full.</p>	Refusing a friend's offer for a ride/a piece of cake (familiar relationship)
Higher to Lower Status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give a comfort</li> <li>2. Letting the interlocutor off the hook.</li> </ol>	<p>Don't worry.</p> <p>Never mind, I know it was an accident.</p>	Refusing a cleaning lady's paying for broken vase (familiar relationship)

### Unit 4 English Refusals to Requests

<b>Refuser /Interlocutor Status</b>	<b>Learning Targets</b>	<b>Typical Expressions</b>	<b>Situation /Distance</b>
Lower to Higher Status	1. Explanation 2. Alternative 3. Regret	Oh, I can't. I have that doctor's appointment. Can't Carrie (sister) do that for you? Oh, Boss! I have so much to do tomorrow. Can't Mary do that for you? I'm sorry Mom, but I can't. I have to be at the library tomorrow.	Refusing a mother's request or a boss's request (familiar relationship)
Equal to Equal Status	1.Regret 2.Expanation 3. Alternative	I'm sorry but I need to be glued to this computer until tomorrow morning. I have so much left to do. I'm sorry I still have a lot to finish before tomorrow. Perhaps someone else does not have such a tight deadline. I'm really behind but I'll let you know when I'm done if you still need it.	Refusing a friend's request to use a computer or to borrow something (familiar relationship)
Higher to Lower Status	1.Positive feeling 2. Regret 3. Explanation	I'm terribly sorry but I don't have a minute. I'm sorry but I really don't have the time right now. I'd really like to help you out but I'm afraid I'm really strapped for time right now and can't really afford to. Sorry, I'm late for an appointment.	Refusing a junior member's request to interview /a student for help of an assignment (familiar relationship)

(adopted from Wannaruk 2004, 2005, 2008)

**For Implicit Group****Unit 1 English Refusals to Invitations**

---I'd love to but I can't this weekend.

---I'd love to, but I can't. I have to work.

---I'd love to but I have a lot of stats homework due in the morning.

---Oh, I'd love to, but I have to be out of town for the weekend.

---I'd like to come but I've already made plans.

---Thank you for the invitation. Maybe some other time.

---Nah, I need to get on back. I was going to work on the project.

---Oh, no, you know I don't like movies too much.

---No, thanks dude, maybe next time.

---Oh, thanks for the invitation, but I already have a previous engagement so I won't be able to attend.

---Sorry, but I'm not prepared enough to address the group. Maybe next time.

---Thanks, I'm honored but I am really too busy.

**Unit 2 English Refusal to Suggestions**

- Well, I had planned to take other course that semester. I'll take the stats after that.
- Hmm...I had something else in mind. I was thinking I ought to take Professor X' class since it's only offered every other semester. And I thought I would pick up stats over the summer.
- I would rather not. I think I know enough to be able to do it.
- That would be nice if I had time.
- That's how I meant for it to be.
- Oh, I'm tired of working on it. I'm just going to hand it in and see what I get.
- In order to understand the rest of it, I must go over the first chapters.
- Well, actually it's very important that we review it any way. That way, you can show how much you know, too!
- I'll change the design next time.

**Unit 3 English Refusal to Offers**

---I'm afraid I have too much to do.

---It sounds like a great opportunity, but I'm going to have to pass it up. I am just too busy.

---No. Thanks. I have a number of other things I want to focus on.

---I would really like to but I'm really busy these days and I wouldn't be able to give you 100%.

---No. Thank you you're very kind.

---No. Thank you. I don't have far to go and I will be okay.

---No. Thanks. I'm almost there.

---No. Thank you. I'm full.

---Don't worry.

---Never mind, I know it was an accident.

**Unit 4 English Refusals to Requests**

---I'm sorry Mom, but I can't. I have to be at the library tomorrow.

---Oh, I can't. I have that doctor's appointment. Can't Carrie (sister) do that for you?

---Oh, Boss! I have so much to do tomorrow. Can't Mary do that for you?

---I'm sorry but I need to be glued to this computer until tomorrow morning. I have so much left to do.

---I'm sorry I still have a lot to finish before tomorrow. Perhaps someone else does not have such a tight deadline.

---I'm really behind but I'll let you know when I'm done if you still need it.

---I'm terribly sorry but I don't have a minute.

---I'm sorry but I really don't have the time right now.

---I'd really like to help you out but I'm afraid I'm really strapped for time right now and can't really afford to.

---Sorry I'm late for an appointment.

(adopted from Wannaruk 2004, 2005, 2008)

## **Appendix B**

### **Lesson Plan**

#### **1. For Explicit Group**

##### **Unit 1 English Refusals to Invitations**

**Time:** 100 minutes

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to invitations in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to invitations
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 1 (for explicit group)

**Procedures:**

##### **Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

Listen to the cassette including three sample dialogues (see Appendix A: Part I---Unit 1) one by one and then answer one question after each dialogue (without script).

Question 1 to Dialogue 1: Did the student accept the teacher's invitation? If no, Why?

Question 2 to Dialogue 2: Did Nancy accept Rose's invitation? If no, why?

Question 3 to Dialogue 3: Did John accept Mike's invitation? If no, why?

Listen to the cassette again (with script) and answer the questions:

How did the student refuse his teacher?

How did Nancy refuse Rose?

How did John refuse Mike?

What are the differences between these three refusals?

##### **Step 2: The explanatory handout (15 minutes)**

The teacher gives out a handout about "Types of Instruction Targets: English

Refusals to Invitations” (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Explicit Group, Unit 1) and then summarizes the expressions and functions of American refusals to invitations.

Americans tend to begin with expressions like "*Well,*" "*Thank you,*" "*I'd love to go,*" then use an expression of regret/apology followed by an excuse to speakers of either higher, lower, or equal status. Expressions of regret and gratitude are used frequently in declining invitations, e.g.

Refusing a boss's invitation to a farewell party (refusing a person of higher status):

I can't attend on Saturday evening. I apologize.

Refusing a friend's birthday invitation (refusing a friend):

Oh, I feel bad about this. I'm really sorry. I can't.

Saturday evening? Oh, goodness, I have a date Saturday evening.

Now look at the handout. Let's read the table together. Can you find any differences between three different kinds of status? Are there any similarities and differences between Chinese and American English refusals to invitations?

### **Step 3: The Planning Session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing an invitation from your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

### **Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

### **Step 5: Corrective feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. Let's discuss together if you say the refusal expressions appropriately.

## Unit 2 English Refusals to Suggestions

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to suggestions in different situations.

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to suggestions
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 2 (for explicit group)

**Procedures:**

### **Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

Listen to the cassette including three dialogues (see Appendix A: Part I---Unit 2) one by one and then answer one question after each dialogue (without script).

Question 1 to Dialogue 1: Did Johnson accept the Boss's suggestion? If no, why?

Question 2 to Dialogue 2: Did George accept Gaby' suggestion? If no, why?

Question 3 to Dialogue 3: Did the college student accept a high school student's suggestions? If no, why?

Listen to the cassette again (with script) and answer the questions:

How did Johnson refuse his boss?

How did George refuse Gaby?

How did the college student refuse the high school student?

What are the differences between these three refusals?

### **Step 2: The explanatory handout (15 minutes)**

The teacher gives out a handout about "Types of Instruction Targets: refusals to suggestions" (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Explicit Group, Unit 2) and then summarizes the expressions and functions of American refusals to suggestions.

In general, native speakers of American English tend to be sensitive to status equals versus status unequals (either higher or lower). They talk to people of higher or lower status than themselves in a similar way, but they speak to status equals in a different way than status unequals. For instance, they tend to say "*Thank you*" at the end of their refusal to a friend (equal status) who makes an invitation, but not with others of unequal status. Offering an alternative to be pursued by the refuser

or making suggestions for the recipient of the refusal to carry out are common strategies. In few cases, expressions of gratitude and attempts to dissuade are offered as well.

Now look at the handout. Let's read the table together. Can you find any differences between three different kinds of status? Are there any similarities and differences between Chinese and American English refusals to suggestions?

**Step 3: The Planning Session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing a suggestion from your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Corrective feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. Let's discuss together if you say the refusal expressions appropriately.

### Unit 3 English Refusals to Offers

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to offers in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to offers
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 3 (for explicit group)

**Procedures:**

**Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette including three dialogues (see Appendix A: Part I---Unit 3) one by one and then answer one question after each dialogue (without script).

Question 1 to Dialogue 1: Did Mary accept the teacher's offer? If no, why?

Question 2 to Dialogue 2: Did Tim accept the young guy's offer? If no, why?

Question 3 to Dialogue 3: Did Peter accept the cleaning lady's offer? If no, why?

Listen to the cassette again (with script) and answer the questions:

How did Mary refuse his teacher?

How did Tim refuse the young guy?

How did Peter refuse the cleaning lady?

What are the differences between these three refusals?

**Step 2: The explanatory handout (15 minutes)**

The teacher gives out a handout about "Types of Instruction Targets: refusals to offers" (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Explicit Group, Unit 3) and then summarizes the expressions and functions of American refusals to offers.

When a cleaning woman offers to pay for a broken base, Americans might say, "*Don't worry*" or "*Never mind*" and reinforce it with expressions like "*I know it was an accident,*" letting the interlocutor off the hook.

Now look at the handout. Let's read the table together. Can you find any differences between three different kinds of status? Are there any similarities and differences between Chinese and American English refusals to offers?

**Step 3: The Planning Session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing an offer from your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Corrective feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. Let's discuss together if you say the refusal expressions appropriately.

## Unit 4 English Refusals to Requests

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to requests in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to requests
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 4 (for explicit group)

**Procedures:**

### **Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

Listen to the cassette including three dialogues (see Appendix A: Part I---Unit 4) one by one and then answer one question after each dialogue (without script).

Question 1 to Dialogue 1: Did John accept his mother's request? If no, why?

Question 2 to Dialogue 2: Did Tina accept her classmate's request? If no, why?

Question 3 to Dialogue 3: Did Robson accept junior member's request? If no, why?

Listen to the cassette again (with script) and answer the questions:

How did John refuse his mother?

How did Tina refuse his classmate?

How did Robson refuse his junior member?

What are the differences between these three refusals?

### **Step 2: The explanatory handout (15 minutes)**

The teacher gives out a handout about "Types of Instruction Targets: refusals to requests" (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Explicit Group Unit 4) and then summarizes the expressions and functions of American refusals to requests.

Excuses are commonly given as part of American refusals. Americans typically start with expressing a positive opinion or feeling about the requests or requester (or pause fillers *uhh/well/oh/uhm* when talking to a higher-status person), then express regret (*I'm sorry*), and finally give an excuse, especially when talking to someone of higher or lower status than themselves (unequal status). With equal status, Americans generally give an expression of regret or apology, then give an excuse, e.g.

Refusing a boss' request to stay at work late:

Sorry, I have plans. I would but I have plans. I can't do it today. I had a prior commitment and since you just told me now, and my shift usually ends at seven, I probably can't stay late this evening.

I'd really like to. Really? But, you know I can't. I've got a lot of stuff I've got to do. Perhaps we can do it another time? But tonight's a bad time.

Refusing to lend a classmate notes:

I just don't feel comfortable giving you my notes because I worked so hard and it doesn't seem that you've done that much.

Now look at the handout. Let's read the table together. Can you find any differences between three different kinds of statues? Are there any similarities and differences between Chinese and American English refusals to requests?

### **Step 3: The Planning Session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing a request from your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

### **Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

### **Step 5: Corrective feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. Let's discuss together if you say the refusal expressions appropriately.

Notes: Part of the above passages taken from Felix-Brasdefer (2002), American English Refusals. Retrieved from <http://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/refusals/index.html>

## 2. For Implicit Group

### Unit 1 English Refusals to Invitations

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to invitations in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to invitations
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 1 (for implicit group)

**Procedures:**

**Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

This procedure is the same as Step 1 of Unit 1 in explicit group.

**Step 2: Form-searching and Form-comparison (15 minutes):**

Now find out any patterns of American refusals to invitations in the three dialogues. Then the teacher gives out the handout including patterns of refusals to invitations (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Implicit Group, Unit 1). Now compare the patterns in the handout with the patterns you have found out.

**Step 3: The planning session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing an invitation from your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Implicit feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. (Learners will be informed only whether their answer is correct by the teacher stating ‘Yes’ or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying “What was that?” or “Mm-I didn’t understand.”)

## **Unit 2 English Refusals to Suggestions**

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to suggestions in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to suggestions
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 2 (for implicit group)

**Procedures:**

**Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

This procedure is the same as Step 1 of Unit 2 in explicit group.

**Step 2: Form-searching and Form-comparison (15 minutes):**

Now find out any patterns of American refusals to suggestions in the three dialogues. Then the teacher gives out the handout including patterns of refusals to suggestions (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Implicit Group, Unit 2). Now compare the patterns in the handout with the patterns you have found out.

**Step 3: The planning session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing a suggestion of your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Implicit feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. (Learners will be informed only whether their answer is correct by the teacher stating 'Yes' or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying "What was that?" or "Mm-I didn't understand.")

### Unit 3 English Refusals to Offers

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to offers in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to offers
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 3 (for implicit group)

**Procedures:**

**Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15 minutes)**

This procedure is the same as Step 1 of Unit 3 in explicit group.

**Step 2: Form-searching and Form-comparison (15 minutes):**

Now find out any patterns of American refusals to offers in the three dialogues. Then the teacher gives out the including patterns of refusals to offers (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Implicit Group, Unit 3). Now compare the patterns in the handout with the patterns you have found out.

**Step 3: The planning session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing an offer of your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Implicit feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. (Learners will be informed only whether their answer is correct by the teacher stating 'Yes' or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying "What was that?" or "Mm-I didn't understand.")

## Unit 4 English Refusals to Requests

**Time: 100 minutes**

**Objectives:** To learn how to refuse to requests in different situations

**Materials:**

- 1) A cassette of three dialogues including English refusals to requests
- 2) Handout of sample dialogues for listening
- 3) Handout of types of English refusals----Unit 4 (for implicit group)

**Procedures:**

**Step 1: Exposure of NS model (15minutes)**

This procedure is the same as Step 1 of Unit 4 in explicit group.

**Step 2: Form-searching and Form-comparison (15 minutes):**

Now find out any patterns of American refusals to requests in the three dialogues. Then the teacher gives out the handout including patterns of refusals to requests (see Appendix A: Handout for Participants---For Implicit Group, Unit 4). Now compare the patterns in the handout with the patterns you have found out.

**Step 3: The planning session (20 minutes)**

Listen to the cassette again, and then work in pairs to prepare the dialogues for refusing an offer of your teacher, your friend and your junior classmates. Try to speak naturally.

**Step 4: Communicative practice (30 minutes)**

Now act out your dialogue, and your acting will be videotaped.

**Step 5: Implicit feedback (20 minutes)**

Now I show your acting. (Learners will be informed only whether their answer is correct by the teacher stating 'Yes' or simply nodding or moving on to the next item, or incorrect by the teacher saying "What was that?" or "Mm-I didn't understand.")

# Appendix C

## Written DCT

### 1. Pretest

#### Part I. Background Information Survey

##### 个人信息表

姓名 \_\_\_\_\_ 班级 \_\_\_\_\_  
性别 \_\_\_\_\_ 年龄 \_\_\_\_\_  
高考英语成绩(笔试) \_\_\_\_\_

1. 进贵州大学前你学了多少年英语?

2. 你学过美国英语的拒绝策略吗?

是 否

若是, 在哪里?

多久 周学时

3. 你到过英语国家吗?

是 否

若是, 在哪里? 多久?

4. 你经常和英语本族语者说英语吗?

通常 偶尔 很少 从不

### Background Information Survey

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Class\_\_\_\_\_

Gender\_\_\_\_\_

Age\_\_\_\_\_

Score of National Matriculation English Examination (written)

\_\_\_\_\_

1. How long have you learned English before you enter this university?

2. Have you ever learned American English refusal strategies?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_

No\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, Where\_\_\_\_\_

How long\_\_\_\_\_How many hours per week\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you ever been to English –speaking countries?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_

No\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, where\_\_\_\_\_

How long\_\_\_\_\_

4. How frequently do you speak English with native speakers?

Frequently\_\_\_\_\_ Occasionally\_\_\_\_\_ Rarely\_\_\_\_\_ Never\_\_\_\_\_

### Part II. Written DCT

In this questionnaire, you will find several communication situations in which you interact with someone. Pretend you are the person in the situation. You must refuse all requests, suggestions, invitations, and offers. Write down your response. Respond as you would in an actual situation.

1. You are in your professor's office talking about your final paper which is due in two weeks. Your professor indicates that he has a guest speaker coming to his

next class and invites you to attend that lecture but you cannot. (Invitation: refusing to higher status)

Your professor: By the way, I have a guest speaker in my next class who will be discussing issues which are relevant to your paper. Would you like to attend?

You refuse by saying:

2. A friend invites you to dinner, but you have something important to do and you really can't stand this friend's husband/wife. (Invitation: refusing to equal status)

Friend: How about coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party.

You refuse by saying:

3. You are a senior student in your department. A freshman, whom you met a few times before, invites you to lunch in the university cafeteria but you do not want to go. (Invitation: refusing to lower status)

Freshman: I haven't had my lunch yet. Would you like to join me?

You refuse by saying:

4. You are at your desk trying to find a report that your boss just asked for. While you are searching through the mess on your desk, your boss walks over. (suggestions: refusing to higher status)

Boss: You know, maybe you should try and organize yourself better. I always write myself little notes to remind me of things. Perhaps you should give it a try!

You refuse by saying:

5. You are at a friend's house watching TV. The friend recommends a snack to you. You turn it down, saying that you have gained weight and don't feel comfortable in your new clothes.

Friend: Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about? It can make you lose weight. (suggestions: refusing to equal status)

You refuse by saying:

6. You are a language teacher at a university. It is just about the middle of the term now and one of your students asks to speak to you.

Student: Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class recently and we kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar. (suggestion: refusing to lower status)

You refuse by saying:

7. You've been working in an advertising agency now for some time. The boss offers you a raise and promotion, but it involves moving. You don't want to go. Today, the boss calls you into his office. (offer: refusing to higher status)

Boss: I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new office in Hicktown. It's a great town---only 3 hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position.

You refuse by saying:

8. You are going through some financial difficulties. One of your friends offers you some money but you do not want to accept it. (offer: refusing to equal status)

Your friend: I know you are having some financial difficulties these days. You always help me whenever I need something. I can lend you \$20. Would you accept it from me?

You refuse by saying:

9. You are at your home with your friend. You are admiring the expensive new pen that your father gave you. Your friend sets the pen down on a low table. At this time, your nanny goes past the low table, the pen falls on the floor and it is ruined. (offer: refusing to lower status)

Nanny: Oh, I am so sorry. I'll buy you a new one.

You refuse by saying (Knowing she is only a teenager):

10. Your professor wants you to help plan a class party, but you are very busy this week. (request: refusing to high status)

Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?

You refuse by saying:

11. A classmate, who frequently misses classes, asks to borrow your class notes, but you do not want to give them to him. (request: refusing to equal status)

Your classmate: You know I missed the last class. Could I please borrow your notes from that class?

You refuse by saying:

12. You only have one day left before taking a final exam. While you are studying for the exam, one of your junior relatives, who is in high school, asks if you would help him with his homework but you cannot. (request: refusing to lower status)

Your relative: I'm having problems with some of my homework assignments. Would you please help me with some of my homework tonight?

You refuse by saying:

## 2. Posttest

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire, you will find several communication situations in which you interact with someone. Pretend you are the person in the situation. You must refuse all requests, suggestions, invitations, and offers. Write down your response. Respond as you would in an actual situation.

1. A friend invites you to dinner, but you have something important to do and you really can't stand this friend's husband/wife. (Invitation: refusing to equal status)  
 Friend: How about coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party.

You refuse by saying:

2. You are at your home with your friend. You are admiring the expensive new pen that your father gave you. Your friend sets the pen down on a low table. At this time, your nanny goes past the low table, the pen falls on the floor and it is ruined. (offer: refusing to lower status)

Nanny: Oh, I am so sorry. I'll buy you a new one.

You refuse by saying (Knowing she is only a teenager):

3. A classmate, who frequently misses classes, asks to borrow your class notes, but you do not want to give them to him. (request: refusing to equal status)

Your classmate: You know I missed the last class. Could I please borrow your notes from that class?

You refuse by saying:

4. You are in your professor's office talking about your final paper which is due in two weeks. Your professor indicates that he has a guest speaker coming to his next class and invites you to attend that lecture but you cannot. (Invitation: refusing to higher status)

Your professor: By the way, I have a guest speaker in my next class who will be discussing issues which are relevant to your paper. Would you like to attend?

You refuse by saying:

5. You are at your desk trying to find a report that your boss just asked for. While you are searching through the mess on your desk, your boss walks over. (suggestions: refusing to higher status)

Boss: You know, maybe you should try and organize yourself better. I always write myself little notes to remind me of things. Perhaps you should give it a try!

You refuse by saying:

6. You are a senior student in your department. A freshman, whom you met a few times before, invites you to lunch in the university cafeteria but you do not want to go. (Invitation: refusing to lower status)

Freshman: I haven't had my lunch yet. Would you like to join me?

You refuse by saying:

7. You are a language teacher at a university. It is just about the middle of the term now and one of your students asks to speak to you.

Student: Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class recently and we kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar. (suggestion: refusing to lower status)

You refuse by saying:

8. You only have one day left before taking a final exam. While you are studying for the exam, one of your junior relatives, who is in high school, asks if you would help him with his homework but you cannot. (request: refusing to lower status)

Your relative: I'm having problems with some of my homework assignments. Would you please help me with some of my homework tonight?

You refuse by saying:

9. You've been working in an advertising agency now for some time. The boss offers you a raise and promotion, but it involves moving. You don't want to go. Today, the boss calls you into his office. (offer: refusing to higher status)

Boss: I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new office in Hicktown. It's a great town---only 3 hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position.

You refuse by saying:

10. You are at a friend's house watching TV. The friend recommends a snack to you. You turn it down, saying that you have gained weight and don't feel comfortable in your new clothes.

Friend: Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about? It can make you lose weight. (suggestions: refusing to equal status)

You refuse by saying:

11. Your professor wants you to help plan a class party, but you are very busy this week. (request: refusing to high status)

Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?

You refuse by saying:

12. You are going through some financial difficulties. One of your friends offers you some money but you do not want to accept it. (offer: refusing to equal status)

Your friend: I know you are having some financial difficulties these days. You always help me whenever I need something. I can lend you \$20. Would you accept it from me?

You refuse by saying:

## Appendix D

### Criteria for Assessing Participants' Responses to Written DCT

You are to rate the appropriateness of the responses of EFL learners to the written DCT items on the four aspects: correct expressions, quality of information, strategies choices, level of formality. The appropriacy or appropriateness is marked by analytic Likert 5, that is, 5--completely appropriate; 4—mostly appropriate; 3—general appropriate; 2--- not very appropriate but acceptable; 1--- not appropriate and not acceptable. The format is as follows.

Scale	<b>Criteria for Four Aspects of Appropriacy</b>			
	<b>Correct Expressions</b>	<b>Quality of Information</b>	<b>Strategies Choices</b>	<b>Level of Formality</b>
5	Completely appropriate	Completely appropriate	Completely appropriate	Completely appropriate
4	Mostly appropriate	Mostly appropriate	Mostly appropriate	Mostly appropriate
3	Generally appropriate	Generally appropriate	Generally appropriate	Generally appropriate
2	Not very appropriate but acceptable	Not very appropriate but acceptable	Not very appropriate but acceptable	Not very appropriate but acceptable
1	Not appropriate and not acceptable	Not appropriate and not acceptable	Not appropriate and not acceptable	Not appropriate and not acceptable
O	The mean score of the above four items			

O= Overall score

Explanations of the above criteria are provided below. The following criteria are just for your reference. You are to use your native speaker intuition and reactions and compare them to what your native speaker norm might be. Do not use what you think might say as the sole criteria for your rating.

## 1. Correct Expressions

This category includes the typical expressions used for refusals in three different kinds of refuser status (low-high, equal-equal and high-low). The correct expressions referred to an appropriate pattern without grammatical mistakes, in spite that the linguistic accuracy was not the focus of the study. You may depend on your native speaker's intuition to judge the correctness. The question to ask is: How appropriate is the wording/are the expressions? The criteria can be as follows:

5: Completely appropriate

Complete appropriate expressions and no grammatical mistakes

4: Mostly appropriate

Appropriate expressions, no or at most one grammatical mistake

3: Generally appropriate

Generally appropriate expressions, one grammatical mistake

2: Not very appropriate, but acceptable

Not very appropriate expressions, two or three grammatical mistakes

1: Not appropriate, not acceptable

Not very appropriate expressions, more than three grammatical mistakes

## 2. Quality of Information

This aspect refers to appropriateness of the information given by the students. An appropriate and lengthy explanation for refusal is needed for some native speakers, also, the situation for the written DCT of the present study is located only in a familiar relationship which needs a longer utterance. But non-native speakers of low proficiency might use very direct and thus shorter-than-native-speakers utterance. If a refusal begins with "I can't" without any reason or explanation may be judged as inappropriate. You can judge appropriateness based on your intuition. The question is: How appropriate is the quality of information?

5: Completely appropriate

Completely appropriate with very lengthy sentences

4: Mostly appropriate

Mostly appropriate with lengthy sentences

3: Generally appropriate

Generally appropriate with short sentences

2: Not very appropriate, but acceptable

Not very appropriate with very short sentences

1: Not appropriate, not acceptable

Not appropriate sentences with very short sentences

### **3. Strategies Choices**

This category refers to refusal strategies like explanation, positive feeling, gratitude etc. used by native speakers. Those who can choose the three most frequently used American English refusal strategies provided in the learning targets can be regarded as the holder of scale of 5. You may judge according to your intuition. The question is: How appropriate is the strategies choice?

5: Completely appropriate

Exactly same as the learning targets

4: Mostly appropriate

1 strategy with some variations to the learning targets

3: Generally appropriate

1 strategy different with the learning targets

2: Not very appropriate, but acceptable

2 strategies different with the learning targets

1: Not appropriate, not acceptable

No strategies same as the learning targets

### **4. Level of Formality**

Formality can be expressed through the degree of formal or informal word choice and the degree of politeness. Use of colloquial speech can be appropriate and polite in American English when the situation is informal and between friends, families and co-workers. Use of formal speech can be appropriate and polite in the situation of high to low and low to high status. However, a degree of appropriateness can be applied. You are the judge. The question is: How appropriate is the level of formality?

## 5: Completely appropriate

Use very polite and very appropriate words for the situation

## 4: Mostly appropriate

Use polite and appropriate words for the situation

## 3: Generally appropriate

Use some words being not very polite and not very appropriate for the situation

## 2: Not very appropriate, but acceptable

Use words being not very polite and not very appropriate for the situation

## 1: Not appropriate, not acceptable

Use very impolite words and completely not very appropriate for the situation

(adapted from Hudson et al., 1992,1995; Hudson, 2001)

The following examples are analysis of samples in four stimulus types.

They are just for your reference.

Stimulus Types/Status	Learning Targets	Student's Response	Correct Expressions	Quality of Information	Strategies Choices	Level of Formality
<b>Refusals to Invitations</b>						
Professor: By the way, I have a guest speaker in my next class who will be discussing issues which are relevant to your paper. Would you like to attend?  <b>L-H</b>	1.Positive feeling 2.Negative ability 3.Explanation	Oh, I'd love to (positive feeling) but I can't (negative ability). I have a lot of work to do (explanation). As you know, the final examination is coming (explanation)	5 Completely appropriate for expressions and no grammatical mistakes	5 Longer sentences for explanation and having a general meaning first, then the specific explanation	5 Three strategies uses exactly same as the learning targets	5 Very polite and formal word choice
Friend: How about Coming over for dinner Sunday night? We're having a small dinner party. <b>E-E</b>	1. No 2.Gratitude, Future acceptance 3. Explanation	Oh, no (no), you know I have a meeting to attend Sunday night (explanation).	5 Completely correct expression, no grammatical mistakes	4 Mostly appropriate with lengthy sentence for explanation	3 No gratitude strategy	4 Polite and informal but without showing "gratitude"
Freshman: I haven't had my lunch yet. Would you like to join me?	1.Gratitude 2.Regret 3.Explanation	I'm sorry (regret), I have no time now (explanation).	3 Generally appropriate, though no grammatical	3 Generally appropriate, but short sentences	3 No gratitude strategy	4 Polite and informal without showing

<b>H-L</b>			mistake			gratitude
<b>Refusals to suggestions</b>						
<b>Boss:</b> You know, maybe you should try and organize yourself better. I always write myself little notes to remind me of things. Perhaps you should give it a try! <b>L-H</b>	1.Negative ability, Pause filler 2.Explanation 3.Alternative	Well, um, I have something in my mind (explanation). Maybe next time I'll try (future acceptance).	4 Mostly appropriate, no grammatical mistakes	5 Completely appropriate and lengthy sentences	4 Some variations with pause filler, but no negative strategy	5 Very polite and very appropriate word
<b>Friend:</b> Hey, why don't you try this new diet I've been telling you about? It can make you lose weight. <b>E-E</b>	1.Pause filler 2.Positive feeling 3. Explanation	Don't you know that, the more delicious the snack is, the more weight will increase (explanation with question).	2 Expressions not very appropriate in spite of no grammatical mistakes	2 Expressions being not very appropriate, though with lengthy sentence	2 2 strategies missing, only explanation strategy same as the learning target	2 Not very polite without saying "positive feeling"
<b>Student:</b> Ah, excuse me, some of the students were talking after class recently and we kind of feel that the class would be better if you could give us more practice in conversation and less on grammar. <b>H-L</b>	1.Negative ability 2. Explanation 3. Alternative	I'm not give you chance to practice (negative ability). But now we need basic (explanation).	2 Incorrect expressions and 2 grammatical mistakes	3 Generally appropriate with short and incomplete sentences	3 No alternative strategy	2 Not very polite and appropriate
<b>Refusals to offers</b>						
<b>Boss:</b> I'd like to offer you an executive position in our new office in Hicktown. It's a great town---only 3 hours from here by plane. And, a nice raise comes with the position. <b>L-H</b>	1.(Negative ability), positive feeling 2. Gratitude 3.Explanation	It sounds a good opportunity (positive), but I am preparing the coming examination (explanation).	4 Mostly appropriate expressions and no grammatical mistakes	4 Mostly appropriate with lengthy and not very direct sentences	3 No gratitude strategy	5 Very formal and polite expression
<b>Friend:</b> I know you are having some financial difficulties these days. You always help me whenever I need something. I can lend you \$20. Would you accept it from me? <b>E-E</b>	1. No 2. Gratitude 3. Explanation	No (no), thanks (gratitude). I think I can be able to work it out successfully (explanation).	5 Completely correct expressions no grammatical mistakes	5 Completely appropriate with very lengthy sentences	5 Exactly same as the learning targets	5 Very polite and appropriate to the situation
<b>Nanny:</b> Oh, I am so sorry. I'll buy you a new one.	1. Give comfort 2. Letting the interlocutor off the hook.	Forget (give comfort), it's just an accident (let off the hook). I won't blame you	3 Generally appropriate, 1 grammatical mistake	4 Mostly appropriate, lengthy sentence	5 Exactly same as the learning targets	4 Mostly polite and appropriate

<b>H-L</b>		(give comfort).				
<b>Refusals to requests</b>						
<p>Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?</p> <p><b>L-H</b></p>	<p>1. Explanation 2. Alternative 3. Regret</p>	<p>I'm sorry(regret), I can't (negative). I have a lot to do (explanation), maybe next time (future acceptance).</p>	<p>5 Completely appropriate, no grammatical mistakes</p>	<p>5 Completely appropriate, lengthy sentences</p>	<p>4 Future acceptance strategy with some variations of alternative</p>	<p>5 Very polite and formal</p>
<p>Classmate: You know I missed the last class. Could I please borrow your notes from that class?</p> <p><b>E-E</b></p>	<p>1.Regret 2.Expanation 3. Alternative</p>	<p>Oh, no (no), I'll use it in a moment (explanation).</p>	<p>3 Generally appropriate, though no grammatical mistakes</p>	<p>3 Generally appropriate, short sentences</p>	<p>2 2 strategies different from the learning targets (no regret and alternative strategy)</p>	<p>3 Not very polite, without gratitude and regret strategies</p>
<p>Relative: I'm having problems with some of my homework assignments. Would you please help me with some of my homework tonight?</p> <p><b>H-L</b></p>	<p>1.Positive feeling 2. Regret 3. Explanation</p>	<p>I'm so sorry (regret). I can't come (negative). I'm busy with my examination (explanation).</p>	<p>4 Mostly appropriate expressions, no grammatical mistakes</p>	<p>5 Completely appropriate and lengthy explanation</p>	<p>3 No positive strategy</p>	<p>4 Polite and formal but no positive feeling</p>

L-H=a lower refuser to a higher interlocutor  
E-E= an equal refuser to an equal interlocutor  
H-L= a higher refuser to a lower interlocutor

# **Appendix E**

## **Classifications of Refusal Strategies**

### **For Assessing the Performances of Written DCT)**

#### **I. Direct**

1. Performative (e.g., “I refuse”)
2. Nonperformative statement
  - 1) “No”
  - 2) Negative willingness/ability (“I can’t”, “I won’t”, “I don’t think so.”)

#### **II. Indirect**

1. Statement of regret (e.g., “I’m sorry...”; “I feel terrible...”)
2. Wish (e.g. “I wish I could help you...”)
3. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., “My children will be home that night.”; “ I have a headache.”)
4. Statement of alternative
  - 1) I can do X instead of Y (e.g., “I’d rather...” “I’d prefer...”)
  - 2) Why don’t you do X instead of Y (e.g., “Why don’t you ask someone else?”)
5. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., “If you had asked me earlier, I would have...”)
6. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., “I’ll do it next time”; “I promise I’ll...” or “Next time I’ll...”---using “will” of promise or “promise”)
7. Statement of principle (e.g., “I never do business with friends.”)
8. Statement of philosophy (e.g., “One can’t be too careful”.)

### 9. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor

- 1) Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (e.g., “I won’t be any fun tonight” to refuse an invitation)
- 2) Guilt trip (e.g., waitress to customers who want to sit a while: “I can’t make a living off people who just order coffee.”)
- 3) Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack (e.g., “who do you think you are?”; “That’s a terrible idea!”)
- 4) Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
- 5) Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., “Don’t worry about it.”; “That’s okay”)
- 6) self-defense (e.g. “I’m trying my best.” “I’m doing all I can do”.)

### 10. Acceptance that functions as a refusal

- 1) Unspecific or indefinite reply
- 2) Lack of enthusiasm

### 11. Avoidance

- 1) Nonverbal
  - a. Silence
  - b. Hesitation
  - c. Do nothing
  - d. Physical departure
- 2) Verbal
  - a. Topic switch
  - b. Joke
  - c. Repetition of part of request, etc. (e.g., “Monday?”)
  - d. Postponement (e.g., I’ll think about it.”)
  - e. Hedging (e.g., “Gee, I don’t know” “I’m not sure.”)

### **Adjuncts to Refusals**

1. Statement of positive opinion/feeling of agreement (“That’s a good idea...”; “I’d love to...”)
2. Statement of empathy (e.g., “I realize you are in a difficult situation.”)
3. Pause fillers ((e.g., “uhh”; “well”; “oh”; “uhm”)
4. Gratitude/appreciation

(Cited in Beebe, L.M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R., 1990, p.72-73)

## **Appendix F**

### **Responses of Written DCT in the Pretest, the Posttest and the Delayed Posttest (Excerpts)**

#### **A. Explicit group**

##### **The first type: Refusals to invitations**

1. Invitations (EG9) Li Yanqing( Johnathan)

1) Low to high

Pre: I very like to attend (positive), but I can't (negative). because I have to see my friend in the hospitable(explanation). I really very sorry (regret). 2, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Oh, I love to (positive) but I can't (negative), I have a lot of work to do. As you know, the final examination is coming (explanation). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: It's very considerate of you (gratitude). However I can't come (negative) for that the final paper is due in two weeks (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: Oh, thank you for your invitation (gratitude). But I have something important to do (explanation). Pleased allow me invite you next time (future alterative). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Post: Oh, no (no) as you know your wife don't like me and I really can't stand your wife (explanation). 4, 3, 3, 2=3

Delayed: Thank you for your invitation (gratitude). However, I have something important this Sunday night (explanation). 5, 5, 3, 4=4

3) High to low

Pre: Oh, thank you (gratitude), but I had invite a friend of mine to restaurant (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Oh, thank you for your invitation (gratitude), but I already have a previous

engagement (explanation). So I won't be able to come (negative). 5, 5, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Oh. It's a pity (regret) that I have a plan to go out in lunch time (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 4=3

## 2. Invitations (EG 15) He Lingling

### 1) Low to high

Pre: Er, I'm glad to attend it (positive), but I must keep my promise to my friend (explanation), what about next time (future acceptance), I'm sorry (regret).

3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: I'd really love to (positive), but I'm too busy (explanation). 5, 5, 3, 5=5

Delayed: I'd like to (positive), but I'll attend another lecture and I have promised that (explanation). maybe next time (future acceptance). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

### 2) equal to equal

Pre: I'd like that (positive). what about you come to my house for dinner Sunday night? (future suggestion) 2, 2, 1, 2=2

Post: No (no), maybe we'll have next time (future alternative), I really want to stay with you alone (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I'd like to (positive), but I'm busy these days (explanation), if I have time, I'll invite you to dinner (future alternative), ok? 3, 4, 3, 4=4

### 3) High to low

Pre: I'm sorry (regret), I have no time now (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 2=3

Post: Thanks for your invitation (gratitude), but I'm really busy now (explanation). Maybe next time (future alternative). 5, 5, 3, 5=5

Delayed: I'd love to (positive) but there is something else I must do (explanation). Maybe next time (future alternative). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

## **The second type: Refusals to suggestions**

### 3. Suggestions (EG 28 ) Tao Yongfeng

## 1) Low to high:

Pre: Oh, you are right (positive). But I have my own way of doing things (explanation). I will do better, Please believe me (future alternative).

3, 3, 3, 4=3

Post: Hmm, I had something in mind (explanation). I think I can remember what I must do (explanation with confidence). Thanks for your suggestion (gratitude). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

Delayed: Thank you for the advice (gratitude), dear boss. But I think I can make it (explanation with confidence). 2, 3, 2, 3=3

## 2) Equal to equal

Pre: The diet is fine (positive), but I've gained so much weigh now and my new clothes can't fit me (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: No (no), thanks (gratitude). I'd better not (negative). I've gained too much weight and I'm afraid my new clothes won't suit me (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 4=4

Delayed: Oh, no (no). They are delicious (positive), but I'm afraid that my new clothes will complain (explanation). 3, 3, 5, 5=4

## 3) High to low

Pre: EG As a university student, you all should depend on yourselves, don't you think so? (explanation with suggestion) 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Maybe you're right (positive), but I think after you master grammar well, then you can practice, too (explanation). 5, 5, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Very good advice (positive). But it is obvious that most of you are making rapid progress in this method, haven't you noticed it? (explanation)

4, 4, 3, 4=4

## 4. Suggestions (EG20 ) Zhang Hu (James)

## 1) Low to high

Pre: Sorry (regret), sir. I'm afraid I can't agree with you (negative). Because I'm

not used to writing myself little notes to remind things (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: I would rather not (negative). I think I know how to deal with myself (explanation). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Thanks for your suggestion (gratitude), but I think I have my own opinion to solve it (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 4=3

2) Equal to equal

Pre: No (no), I have gained weight and I don't feel in my new clothes (explanation).

Just take it for yourself (dissuade interlocutor). 3, 3, 2, 2=3

Post: No (No), thank you (gratitude). You are very kind (gratitude). I'm full (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Delayed: No (no), thank you (gratitude). But I don't feel comfortable (explanation).

3, 3, 2, 3=3

3) High to low

Pre: It's good to you to say so (positive). But I am so busy that I don't have any other time (explanation). I'm sorry (regret), how about talking with your friends and classmates (alternative)? 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Thanks for your suggestion (gratitude). I'll change the design next time (future acceptance). 3, 3, 2, 4=3

Delayed: Oh, I'm sorry about that (regret), because I've something important to do (explanation). 2, 2, 2, 3=2

### **The third type: Refusals to offers**

#### **5. Offer (EG14) Fan Shuzhen**

1) Low to high

Pre: Thank you for your offering (gratitude), boss. But it's too far away from my house (explanation). I'm afraid I couldn't have enough time (negative).

3, 3, 4, 4=4

Post: It sounds like a great opportunity (positive), but I'm going to have to pass on it.

I think it's too far away from here (explanation). 5, 5, 3, 5=5

Delayed: Oh, thank you for your offering (gratitude), it sounds like a great chance (positive). But it's too far away from my home, I'm afraid I'll be homesick (explanation). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

2) Equal to equal

Pre: Thank you very much (gratitude). But I think I will overcome these difficulties on my own soon (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 4=3

Post: No (no), thanks (gratitude). I think I can be able to work it out successfully (explanation). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: Thank you very much (gratitude), but I think I can make it out successfully (explanation). 5, 4, 3, 5=4

3) High to low

Pre: You don't need to do so (dissuade). Although it's ruined, it's value will never change (give comfort). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Oh, never mind. Don't worry about it (give comfort). It just an accident. (let off the hook). 3, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: Oh, never mind (give comfort). It's just an accident (let off the hook). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

6. Offers (EG 23) Fu Tiejun (Tammy)

1) Low to high

Pre: Sorry (regret), boss. I think if you let me continue my work, I'll make it better (future acceptance with condition). 3, 2, 2, 2=2

Post: It sounds a good opportunity (positive), but I am preparing the coming examination (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 5=4

Delayed: That's a good opportunity for me (positive), but I want to live in this town (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 5=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: Oh, it's very kind of you (gratitude). But I want to solve it by myself  
(explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Oh, I'm afraid I have too much to do (explanation). 5, 4, 3, 5=4

Delayed: Thank you (gratitude), but I can go through it (explanation). 4, 3, 3, 4=4

3) High to low

Pre: oh, it's doesn't matter (give comfort), next time you should care (remind). 3, 3,  
2, 3=3

Post: Don't worry (give comfort), I know it was an accident (let off the hook). 5, 5,  
5, 5=5

Delayed: Oh, I think this is a accident, not your fault (let off the hook), never mind  
(give comfort). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

### **The fourth type: Refusals to requests**

#### 7. Requests (EG25 ) Mao Nan

1) Low to high

Pre: I'm afraid I can't (negative). I'm very busy this week (explanation). I will  
try my best to help it next time (future alternative). Sorry, professor (regret).

3, 3, 4, 4=4

Post: Oh, I'm sorry (regret). I'm just too busy this week (explanation). Perhaps  
John can help you (alternative). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: I'm sorry (regret). I'm very busy this week (explanation). Perhaps Lucy  
can help you (alternative). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

2) Equal to equal

Pre: I'm afraid you can't (negative). My notes from that class is not very clear  
(explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Oh, I'm sorry (regret). I'm still using it (explanation). Perhaps some else can  
help you (alternative). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: I'm sorry (regret), but I can't (negative). I'm using it now

(explanation). 5, 4, 3, 4=4

3) High to low

Pre: I'm afraid I can't help (negative). Tomorrow is the day of my final exam, so I must review my lessons now (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Oh, I really want to help you out (positive), but I'll take the final exam tomorrow (explanation). So I really can't afford to (negative). 5, 5, 4, 5=5

Delayed: Oh, I'm sorry (regret), but I can't help you (negative). I'm very busy now because of the final exam (explanation). 5, 5, 4, 5=5

8. Requests (EG4) Bao Anni (Ann)

1) Low to high

Pre: I'm sorry. Professor (regret). I have many work this week (explanation). I want to help you (positive). But I have no time (explanation). I'll ask help for my classmates (alternative). 3, 3, 4, 4=4

Post: I'm sorry (regret). I have many homework to do this week (explanation). Can't Jane do that for you (alternative)? 3, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: I'm terribly sorry (regret). I must finish my report this week (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 5, 5, 4, 5=5

2) Equal to equal

Pre: I'm sorry (regret). I need these notes for review my classes (explanation). You can borrow another one (alternative). 4, 4, 5, 4=4

Post: I'm sorry (regret). I think you must borrow others (alternative). I need it to review my classes (explanation). 4, 4, 5, 4=4

Delayed: I have to say sorry to you (regret). I need it to review my lessons (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

3) High to low

Pre: I want to help you (positive). But I'm studying for my exam (explanation). If you can wait, I'll help you after exam. Then I have enough time to help you

(future alternative). 4, 4, 3, 3=4

Post: I'm so sorry (regret). I must study for my final exam (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 5, 5, 3, 5=5

Delayed: I'm sorry (regret). I must attend a meeting tonight (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 5, 5, 3, 5=5

## **B. Implicit group**

### **The first type: Refusals to invitations**

#### 1. Invitations (IG7) Xu Shichao(Amy)

##### 1) Low to high

Pre: Sorry (regret), I have no time in the next class (explanation). 1, 2, 2, 2=2

Post: I'd love to (positive). But I have a lot of homework to finish (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I'd love to (positive). But the next week I have a lot of things to do in the Student Union (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

##### 2) Equal to equal

Pre: I'd love to (positive), but I'm afraid I can't have many things to do on Sunday (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Oh, no (no), I don't want to go (negative). I have many things to do (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Oh, sorry (regret). I am very busy today (explanation). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

##### 3) High to low

Pre: I'm afraid I can't (negative). I have my lunch already (explanation). 2, 2, 2, 3=2

Post: I'd love to (positive), but I afraid I can't (negative). I'm very busy now (explanation). So maybe next time (future acceptance). 3, 4, 2, 4=3

Delayed: Oh, sorry (regret). I'm busy now (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 4, 3, 3, 4=4

## 2. Invitations (IG 27) Chen Si (Carri)

### 1) Low to high

Pre: Oh, I think that will be great (positive). But I'm afraid that I can't go (negative), because I will attend a important meeting in that day (explanation). 3, 4, 5, 4=4

Post: I'd love to (positive), but I can't (negative). My final paper is due in two weeks (explanation). Thans for your invitation (gratitude). 3, 5, 4, 5=4

Delayed: It's my honor (gratitude), but I'm busy in doing my homework (explanation). Thanks for you invitation (gratitude). 4, 4, 2, 4=4

### 2) Equal to equal

Pre: That sounds great (positive)! But I'm busy doing my work on Sunday (explanation). 3, 2, 2, 3=3

Post: Hmm, No (no). You know I'm busy in my work (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: No (no), thanks (gratitude). I have a lot of things to do (explanation). 5, 4, 5, 5=5

### 3) High to low

Pre: Sorry (regret), I have many thing to do now, so I can't go with you (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Thanks for your invitation (gratitude), I have a lot of work to do (explanation), maybe next time (future acceptance). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: That's a good idea (positive). But I still have a lot of work to do (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

## **The second type: Refusals to suggestions**

### 3. Suggestions (IG 25) Wang Tingting (Chesin)

#### 1) Low to high

Pre: I think I needn't try it (negative), if I make some notes which will waste me so much time that I can't finish the work you give me. I must save every time to

work hard (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 3=4

Post: Thanks (gratitude), it's a good idea (positive), but I have something in my mind. It's just an accident. I always have a good arrangement about my job (explanation). 4, 3, 2, 3=3

Delayed: It sounds a good idea (positive), but I think I will do it better (explanation). 4, 3, 3, 4=4.

#### 2) Equal to equal

Pre: Oh, thanks (gratitude), but I'm very satisfied with my weight. It's so healthy. I also can buy some new clothes now. How wonderful it is! (explanation).

3, 3, 2, 2=3

Post: Oh, No (no). I can't gain weight any more, because I feel so bad in my new clothes (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 4=3

Delayed: No (no), thanks (gratitude). I feel so nice now (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

#### 3) High to low

Pre: Maybe you are right (positive), but you must face final examinations which have so many grammars on it. At that time, conversation isn't there (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: Thanks for your suggestions (gratitude), but I know that the best method to study the language for you (explanation). Don't worry (give comfort).

4, 4, 2, 3=3

Delayed: It sounds not bad (positive), but I have had a plan to the language study (explanation). Thanks (gratitude). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

### 4. Suggestions (IG 14) Li Mei(Miki)

#### 1) Low to high

Pre: It's a good idea (positive), but I want to improve my ability of remember (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 3=4

Post: Umm... I have something in my mind, but I think writing notes will take me a

lot of time (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 4=4

Delayed: That sounds a good idea (positive), but I think I can practise the ability of memory in my way (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: Don't you know that, the more delicious the snack is, the more weight will increase (explanation with question). 2, 2, 2, 2=2

Post: No (no), thanks (gratitude). I'm now trying to lose weight so that I can put my new clothes on (explanation). 3, 4, 2, 3=3

Delayed: Sorry (gratitude), I have gained weight and I feel uncomfortable in my new clothes (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 4=3.

3) High to low

Pre: I know that practice makes perfect and practice is important (positive), but if you don't know grammar, how could you speak in English? (explanation with question). 2, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: I think it's necessary for you to grasp the grammar before you have a conversation. So you'd better practice more on grammar (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

Delayed: Good advice (positive), but if you couldn't grasp the grammar, how can you give a good conversation? (explanation with question). 4, 3, 2, 3=3

### **The third type: Refusals to offers**

5. Offers (IG 15) Wang Fang (Joan)

1) Low to high

Pre: Thank you very much (gratitude). I know it's a good job, but I very miss everything of here (explanation). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

Post: It sounds very well (positive), but I have to live with my parents here (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I'm very glad to hear it (positive), but it's far from my family

(explanation). I don't want to accept it (negative). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: I know it very important for me (positive), but you have told me that you'll send money to you parents (explanation), so I can't accept (negative). Thank you (gratitude). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: No (no), I still have some money to support myself (explanation). 5, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I have borrowed some money from Jane (explanation). 4, 3, 2, 3=3

3) High to low

Pre: Don't worry (give comfort), it doesn't matter (give comfort). I still have other pens to write. I don't need a new one (let off the hook). 4, 4, 5, 4=4

Post: Don't worry (give comfort), it's just a accident (let off the hook). 4, 4, 4, 5=4

Delayed: Don't worry (give comfort), it's just an accident (let off the hook).

5, 5, 5, 5=5

6. Offers (IG9) Liu Xi (Landseer)

1) Low to high

Pre: Thank you very much (gratitude). Although an executive position has so much attraction. I love the life I have now better (explanation). You may ask someone other (alternative). 4, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: That's a good chance (positive). But I prefer where I'm living now (explanation). Thank you (gratitude). 4, 4, 5, 5=5

Delayed: I think it's a good chance (positive), but I prefer my life now (explanation).

4, 4, 3, 4=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: It doesn't matter (give comfort). I can get through it by myself (explanation). Thank you for your hot heart (gratitude). 2, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: Thank you (gratitude). I thank I can get through the problem by myself (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Oh, you are so kind (gratitude), but I will solve it by myself (explanation).

4, 4, 3, 4=4

3) High to low

Pre: Don't care about it (give comfort). You are just a teenager, besides you don't want this happen, too (let off the hook). There is no need to buy a new one

(negative). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

Post: Forget it (give comfort), that's just an accident (let off the hook). Besides, I want to change a new one (let off the hook). 5, 5, 5, 5=5

Delayed: Forget (give comfort), it's just an accident (let off the hook). I won't blame you (give comfort). 3, 4, 5, 4=4

#### **The fourth type: Refusals to requests**

7. Requests (IG22) Xu Yuanqiu (Terry)

1) Low to high

Pre: Oh, I am so sorry (regret). I'm very busy this week. I have a lot of work to do (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 3=4

Post: I think it's a great opportunity for me (positive). But this week I'm very busy doing my homework (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 4=4

Delayed: I think it's a good chance for me (positive), but I have to finish my homework, I'm very busy (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 4=4

2) Equal to equal

Pre: I'm afraid I can't (negative). I just have lend it to Lily (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: No (no), I'm reading it now (explanation). 4, 3, 3, 4=4

Delayed: Sorry (regret), I'm busy in studying, the note is necessary for me (explanation). 4, 3, 2, 3=3

3) High to low

Pre: Oh, I'm afraid I can't (negative). You know I only have one day left before taking a final exam. I'm too busy to help you (explanation). 3, 3, 2, 3=3

Post: I really want to help you with your homework (positive). But I must get

preparation for my final exam (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I'd love to (positive). But now I'm busy in preparing my final exam, it's very important for me (explanation). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

#### 8. Requests (IG18) Ye Huan (Doris)

##### 1) Low to high

Pre: I'm sorry (regret), I think I can't do it (negative). Because I'm very busy this week (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: I'm sorry (regret). I'm very busy this week (explanation). I'm afraid I can't do it (negative). 3, 4, 3, 3=3

Delayed: It sounds a good chance (positive). But I'm so busy (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 3, 4, 4, 3=4

##### 2) Equal to equal

Pre: Sorry (regret), my notes are using by me now (explanation). 2, 3, 3, 2=3

Post: I'm afraid I can't give them to you (negative). Because I'm using them now (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

Delayed: I'm afraid you can't (negative). I'm using it now (explanation). 4, 4, 2, 3=3

##### 3) High to low

Pre: Sorry (regret), I think I couldn't (negative). I have another thing to do (explanation). 3, 3, 3, 3=3

Post: I really like to help you out (positive) but I'm ready for my final exam (explanation). Maybe next time (future acceptance). 4, 4, 3, 4=4

Delayed: I want to give you help (positive). But I have too many homework to ready for my final exam (explanation). 3, 4, 3, 4=4

## Appendix G

### Written Self-Report (English and Chinese)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you noticed any changes in your performances when realizing refusals after instruction? If so, how do they change? Please specify.
2. In what aspects did the instruction benefit to your performance of English learning? Please refer to the specified part of the instruction.
3. What do you think of the teaching method used in the instruction of teaching American refusals?
4. Do you think you can definitely use the refusal expressions you learned in the instruction if you actually face a real conversation in an English-speaking context? Why? Please explain.

## 书面报告学习体会

姓名 \_\_\_\_\_

班级 \_\_\_\_\_

1. 学习了美国英语拒绝策略后，你感到你的英语拒绝行为有变化吗？若有，请详细说明。
2. 本次教学对你的英语学习有何帮助？若有，请详细说明。
3. 你认为本次美国拒绝策略的教学方法可行吗？为什么？
4. 当你面对真实场景时，你认为你能使用本次所学到的英语拒绝策略吗？为什么？

## Appendix H

### Categorization of Written Self-report

#### A. Explicit Group

##### 1. Changes

###### Agree:

- 1) Yes, knowing western custom in refusal.  
1 (EG1), 2(EG2), 3 (EG6), 4 (EG28)
- 2) Yes, knowing different forms and patterns of English refusals  
1(EG2), 2(EG3), 3(EG4), 4 (EG5), 5 (EG6), 6(EG8), 7(EG11), 8(EG12), 9(EG13),  
10 (EG14), 11(EG15), 12(EG20), 13(EG22), 14(EG25)
- 3) Yes, knowing to say more polite and more euphemistic.  
1 (EG9), 2(EG16), 3 (EG17), 4(EG18), 5(EG23), 6(EG24)
- 4) Yes, I like to say “I’d love to but I can’t”.  
1(EG10), 2(EG19), 3(EG21)
- 5) Yes, learn to say more: Thank you” and avoid saying “Sorry “in every situation.  
1 (EG23), 2(EG24), 3(EG27), 4(EG.29)

**Disagree:** None

##### 2. Benefits to English learning

- 1) Knowledge about how to refuse appropriately in English  
1(EG1), 2(EG6), 3(EG11), 4(EG12), 5(EG21), 6(EG25), 7(EG28)
- 2) Knowledge about native English  
1(EG2), 2(EG5), 3(EG16), 4(EG17), 5(EG18)
- 3) Knowledge about English culture, customs and life style.  
1(EG2), 2(EG5), 3(EG8), 4(EG11), 5(EG12), 6(EG13), 7(EG15)
- 4) Difference between Chinese and English  
1 (EG3), 2(EG14), 3(EG15), 4(EG20)
- 5) Improving oral and listening English ability

- 1(EG 2), 2(EG8), 3(EG11), 4(EG18), 5(EG19), 6(EG22), 7(EG24)
- 6) Different forms and patterns of English refusals  
1(EG9), 2 (EG23), 3(EG29)
- 7) Good to daily life  
1(EG12)
- 8) Learning through real situation and dialogue  
1(EG14)
- 9) Avoid saying “Sorry “in every situation  
1(EG27)

### **3. Teaching methods**

#### **Agree:**

- 1) Creating a bridge between English and Chinese and correcting many mistakes made in learning English refusals  
1(EG2), 2(EG3), 3(EG25)
- 2) Enlarging more knowledge about English culture and being close to native English  
1(EG6), 2(EG11), 3(EG16), 4(EG19), 5(EG29)
- 3) Good for practicing oral and listening ability  
1 (EG9), 2(EG12)
- 4) Creating a real situation, enjoy real refusal strategies, easy to learn and understand, and interesting.  
1 (EG1), 2 (EG4), 3 (EG 5), 3(EG10), 4 (EG12), 5 (EG26)
- 5) Method being flexible, useful and practical, making stubborn learning live, knowing more about American teaching method.  
1(EG8), 2(EG24)
- 6) Very detailed, systematic and well-focused content, good interaction, teaching materials and handout, and good to be taught by native speaker.  
1(EG13), 2(EG17), 3(EG21), 4(EG22), 5(EG23), 6(EG28)
- 7) Teaching me how to speak, but to consider how to be human being and the development of human being.  
1(EG10)

**Disagree:**

- 1) Need to improve in forms  
1(EG20)
- 2) Not to be accustomed quickly  
1(EG27)

**4. Using in a real situation****Agree:**

- 1) Using through practice in a real situation  
1(EG1), 2(EG2), 3(EG3), 4(EG5), 5(EG6), 6(EG8), 7(EG13), 8(EG14),  
9(EG15), 10(EG17), 11(EG20), 12(EG21), 13(EG22), 14(EG23), 15(EG24),  
16(EG28), 17(EG29)
- 2) A lot of refusal strategies in my brain with good English knowledge  
1 (EG9), 2(EG10)

**Partly agree:**

- 1) Yes, but at first, a little nervous.  
1(EG3), 2(EG11), 3(EG17)
- 2) Yes, but not well-performed, need practice.  
1 (EG4)
- 3) Yes, but influenced by Chinese culture.  
1(EG 6)
- 4) Yes, but theoretical speaking it is OK.  
1(EG8)

**Disagree:**

- 1) No, I can't, different way of thinking, a little nervous.  
1(EG19), 2(EG26), 3(EG27)

**B. Implicit Group****1. Changes****Agree:**

- 1) Yes, knowing western custom in refusal  
1 (IG1), 2 (IG2), 3 (IG10)

2) Yes, knowing different forms and patterns of English refusals.

1(IG6), 2(IG7), 3(IG8), 4 (IG9), 5 (IG11), 6(IG12), 7(IG14), 8(IG15), 9(IG16),  
10(IG17), 11(IG18), 12 (IG19), 13(IG20), 14(IG22), 15(IG23), 16(IG24), 17(IG25),  
18(IG26), 19(IG27), 20(IG28), 21(IG29)

3) Yes, learn to say more polite and more euphemistic.

1 (IG18)

4) Yes, learn to say more: Thank you”, avoid to say “Sorry “in every situation.

1 (IG1), 2(IG6), 3(IG9), 4(IG11), 5(IG14), 6(IG17), 7(IG18), 8(IG20), 9(IG22),  
10(IG23), 11(IG24), 12(IG25), 13(IG26), 14(IG29)

### **Disagree:**

Not many, less chance to refuse English native speakers and they are the same  
and there is no difference.

1(IG2), 2(IG5), 3(IG13), 4(IG21)

## **2. Benefits to English learning**

1) Knowledge about how to refuse appropriately in English

1(IG3), 2(IG9), 3(IG15), 4(IG18), 5(IG22), 6(IG24), 7(IG27), 8(IG28),  
9(IG29)

2) Knowledge about native English

1(IG19)

3) Knowledge about English culture, customs and life style

1(IG4), 2(IG6), 3(IG10), 4(IG18), 5(IG19), 6(IG20), 7(IG23)

4) Difference between Chinese and English

1 (IG2), 2(IG16)

5) Improving oral and listening English ability, esp. different situations using different  
patterns and enlarging knowledge

1 (IG1), 2 (IG11), 3(IG12), 4(IG16), 5(IG17), 6(IG19), 7(IG20), 8 (IG23), 9(IG25),  
10(IG28)

6) Different forms and patterns of English refusals

1(IG5), 2 (IG17), 3(IG21), 4(IG26)

7) Good to daily life

1(IG12)

8) Being good to be taught by a native speaker, the handout being good.

1(IG13)

9) Learning through real situation and dialogue

1(IG14)

10) Avoiding saying “Sorry “in every situation.

1(IG8), 2(IG14), 3(IG24)

11) Feeling curiosity about American English

1(IG6)

14) Knowledge about communication skills

1 (IG7)

### **3. Teaching methods**

#### **Agree:**

1) Creating a bridge between English and Chinese, correcting many mistakes made in learning English refusals and Chinese style English refusal

1(IG1), 2 (IG 2), 3 (IG15), 4(IG25)

2) Enlarging more knowledge about English culture and widening our view

1(IG5), 2(IG7), 3(IG21), 4(IG29)

3) Close to native English and enriching our life

1(IG14), 2 (IG24), 3(IG25)

4) Practicing and improving oral and listening ability and language ability

1 (IG4), 2(IG7), 3(IG11), 4(IG18), 5(IG23), 6(IG24), 7(IG26)

5) Creating a real situation, enjoying refusal strategies, easy to understand, easy to learn, making up dialogue and practice.

1 (IG9), 2 (IG16), 3 (IG17), 4(IG 19)

6) Teaching method being flexible, making stubborn learning live, interesting and vivid, knowing more about American teaching method, teaching method being useful and practical.

1(IG8), 2(IG9), 3 (IG12), 4(IG18), 5(IG19), 6(IG20), 7(IG24)

7) Very detailed, good interaction and teaching materials, systematic design with analysis and comparison, good to be taught by native speaker.

1(IG2), 2 (IG3), 3(IG6), 4(IG12), 5(IG18), 6(IG23)

- 8) Teaching me how to speak, but also to consider how to be human being and the development of human being.

1(IG10)

**Disagree:**

- 1) Need to improve in exercises, less to the point, fewer suggestions.

1(IG13)

- 2) Not to accustom quickly, not clear in different kinds of status, not clear comparison.

1(IG27)

**4. Using in a real situation**

**Agree:**

- 1) Using through practice in a real situation

1(IG1), 2 (IG3), 3 (IG4), 4 (IG9), 5(IG11), 6(IG13), 7(IG), 8(IG14), 9(IG18),  
10(IG19), 11(IG22), 12(IG25), 13(IG26), 14(IG29)

- 2) There are a lot of refusal strategies in my brain. I've learnt a lot of good English refusals and good English knowledge.

1(IG6), 2(IG9), 3(IG24), 4(IG28)

**Partly agree:**

- 1) Yes, but not sure, at first, a little nervous.

1 (IG17), 2(IG)

- 2) Yes, but not well-performed, need practice.

1 (IG7), 2(IG20), 3(IG23), 4(IG27)

- 3) Yes, but Influenced by Chinese culture.

1(IG 2), 2(IG16), 3 (IG27)

- 5) Yes, but theoretical speaking it is OK.

1 (IG8)

**Disagree:**

- 1) Partly can, I feel they are same, there is no difference and I may forget.

1(IG5), 2(IG15), 3(IG21)

- 2) No, I can't, different way of thinking, a little nervous.

1(IG19), 2(IG26), 3(IG27)

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Lingli Duan was born in October, 1965 in Guizhou, China. She graduated from Guizhou Normal University, China in 1986 and obtained her B.A. in English. In 2004 she received her M.A. in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics from Guandong University of Foreign Studies, China. She obtained a Ph.D. in English Language Studies from Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhorn Ratchasima, Thailand in 2009.

In the past fourteen years, she has worked as an associate professor, M.A. advisor, vice-dean of the College of International Studies at Guizhou University, China. She is a member of the China Pragmatics Association and a board member of the Guizhou Foreign Languages Association. At present, she works as an associate professor at Sichuan International Studies University, Chongqing, China. Her academic interests include interlanguage pragmatics and methodology. She has published more than ten research papers in well-known Chinese journals in recent years. She chaired a research project sponsored by the Education Department of Guizhou Province in 2005 and was awarded a second prize for Provincial Level Teaching Achievement of Guizhou Province in 2008. She has attended many research conferences. In September, 2008, she was awarded a prize as an excellent presenter at the 10<sup>th</sup> Graduate Research Conference at Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand. She can be reached at [duanlingli@hotmail.com](mailto:duanlingli@hotmail.com).