กลวิธีการปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีนระดับบัณฑิตศึกษา: การศึกษาข้ามวัฒนธรรม

นางสาวรสอุบล วีระชัยรัตนา

REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH BY THAI

AND CHINESE GRADUATE STUDENTS:

A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

Rotubon Weerachairattana

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Master of Arts in English Language Studies

Suranaree University of Technology

Academic Year 2014

REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH BY THAI AND CHINESE

GRADUATE STUDENTS: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

Suranaree University of Technology has approved this thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Thesis Examining Committee

_____

(Dr. Jitpanat Suwanthep)

Chairperson

_____

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Anchalee Wannaruk)

Member (Thesis Advisor)

_____

(Asst. Prof. Dr. Nawamin Prachanant)

Member

_____

(Dr. Butsakorn Yodkamlue)

Member

_____   _____

(Prof. Dr. Sukit Limpijumnong)   (Dr. Peerasak Siriyothin)

Vice Rector for Academic Affairs   Dean of Institute of Social Technology

and Innovation

รสอุบล วีระชัยรัตนา : กลวิธีการปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีน ระดับบัณฑิตศึกษา: การศึกษาข้ามวัฒนธรรม (REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH BY THAI AND CHINESE GRADUATE STUDENTS: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY) อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา : รองศาสตราจารย์ ดร.อัญชลี วรรณรักษ์, 217 หน้า

เนื่องจากมีการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษานานาชาติเพิ่มมากขึ้นเพื่อการสื่อสารข้าม วัฒนธรรมในการศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษาทั้งในประเทศไทยและประเทศจีน รวมไปถึงธรรมชาติใน การทำให้เสียหน้าของวัจนกรรมการปฏิเสธ งานวิจัยนี้ได้ศึกษาและเปรียบเทียบการใช้กลวิธีการ ปฏิเสธเป็นภาษาอังกฤษของนักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีนระดับบัณฑิตศึกษาในสถานการณ์เชิง วิชาการ ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยนี้คือนักศึกษาระดับบัณฑิตศึกษาชาวไทยจำนวน 60 คน ซึ่งประกอบไป ด้วยนักศึกษาที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาไทยจำนวน 30 คนและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 30 คน และนักศึกษาระดับบัณฑิตศึกษาชาวจีนจำนวน 60 คน ซึ่งประกอบไปด้วยนักศึกษาที่ตอบ แบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาจีนจำนวน 30 คนและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 30 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ใน งานวิจัยนี้คือแบบสอบถามชนิดเติมเต็มบทสนทนาและการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อติดตามผล แบบสอบถาม ชนิดเติมเต็มบทสนทนาประกอบไปด้วย 12 สถานการณ์ ซึ่งแบ่งออกเป็นสถานการณ์การปฏิเสธคำ เชิญ 3 สถานการณ์ คำขอร้อง 3 สถานการณ์ ข้อเสนอ 3 สถานการณ์ และคำแนะนำ 3 สถานการณ์ คำตอบจากแบบสอบถามทั้งหมดถูกนำมาเข้ารหัสตามกลวิธีการปฏิเสธของบีบี ทาคาฮาชิ และ ยูลิส-เวลท์ซ (1990) ข้อมูลที่เข้ารหัสแล้วถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์หาความถี่ มีการใช้การทดสอบค่าเฉลี่ย ของกลุ่มตัวอย่างสองกลุ่มที่มีความเป็นอิสระต่อกันเพื่อหาความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญระหว่าง กลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวไทยที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาไทยและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวจีน ที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาจีนและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ และกลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีนที่ ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ นอกจากนี้ยังมีการศึกษาเนื้อหาของกลวิธีการปฏิเสธด้วย ผลการวิจัยมีดังต่อไปนี้

    1. กลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวไทยที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาไทยและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่ม นักศึกษาชาวจีนที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาจีนและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ และกลุ่ม นักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีนที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ มีความเหมือน มากกว่าความแตกต่างในการใช้กลวิธีการปฏิเสธโดยเฉพาะในกลุ่ม 'คำกล่าวให้ เหตุผล' และ 'คำกล่าวขอโทษ'

2. พบความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญระหว่างกลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวไทยที่ตอบแบบสอบถาม
   เป็นภาษาไทยและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษในการใช้ 'คำกล่าวปฏิเสธอย่างตรงไปตรงมา'
   'คำเติมช่วงเงียบ' 'คำกล่าวแสดงสามารถเชิงลบ' 'คำกล่าวตอบรับในอนาคต' 'คำกล่าว
   แสดงความรู้สึกเชิงบวก' 'คำกล่าวให้เหตุผล' 'คำกล่าวขอโทษ' และ 'คำกล่าว
   ยืนกราน'

3. สำหรับกลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวจีนที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาจีนและเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ
   พบความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญในการใช้ 'คำกล่าวแสดงความรู้สึกเชิงบวก'
   'คำกล่าวขอบคุณ' 'คำกล่าวเสนอทางเลือกอื่น' 'คำกล่าวปฏิเสธอย่างตรงไปตรงมา'
   'คำกล่าวตอบรับในอนาคต' 'คำกล่าวให้เหตุผล' และ 'คำกล่าวผัดผ่อนการให้คำตอบ'

4. ระหว่างกลุ่มนักศึกษาชาวไทยและชาวจีนที่ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ
   พบความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญในการใช้ 'คำกล่าวขอโทษ' 'คำกล่าวขอบคุณ'
   'คำกล่าวแสดงความสามารถเชิงลบ' 'คำกล่าวแสดงความรู้สึกเชิงบวก' 'คำกล่าวเสนอ
   ทางเลือกอื่น' 'คำกล่าวปฏิเสธอย่างตรงไปตรงมา' และ 'คำกล่าวตอบรับในอนาคต'

        ปัจจัยที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการใช้กลวิธีการปฏิเสธ ได้แก่ สถานะของคู่สนทนา วัฒนธรรมของ
ภาษาที่หนึ่ง ธรรมชาติของสถานการณ์ ความรู้ความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาที่สอง และการสอนใน
ห้องเรียน ผลการวิจัยนี้นอกจากจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการสื่อสารข้ามวัฒนธรรมแล้ว ยังได้เสนอ
แนวทางในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษานานาชาติอีกด้วย

สาขาวิชาภาษาต่างประเทศ	ลายมือชื่อนักศึกษา_____
ปีการศึกษา 2557	ลายมือชื่ออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา_____

ROTUBON WEERACHAIRATTANA : REFUSAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH BY THAI AND CHINESE GRADUATE STUDENTS: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY. THESIS ADVISOR : ASSOC. PROF. ANCHALEE WANNARUK, Ph.D., 217 PP.

REFUSAL STRATEGIES/THAI/CHINESE/CROSS-CULTURAL PRAGMATICS

Due to the increasing use of English as an International Language (EIL) in cross-cultural communication in Thai and Chinese higher education as well as the face-threatening nature of a speech act of refusal, the present study primarily investigated and compared the use of refusal strategies in English by Thai and Chinese graduate students in an academic setting. The participants were 60 Thai graduate students, 30 responding in Thai (TTs) and 30 responding in English (TEs) and 60 Chinese graduate students, 30 responding in Chinese (CCs) and 30 responding in English (CEs). The research instruments were the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and a follow-up interview. The DCT included 12 situations which could be categorized into three invitations, three requests, three offers, and three suggestions. All DCT responses were coded based on the classification of refusals developed by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990). The coded data were analyzed in terms of frequency. The independent-samples t-test was performed to find significant differences between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. The content of the strategies was also investigated. The findings are as follows:

1. There were more similarities than differences between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, TEs and CEs, notably in the categories for 'Explanation' and 'Regret'.

2. Significant differences between TTs and TEs were found in the use of 'No', 'Pause filler', 'Negative ability', 'Future acceptance', 'Positive feeling', 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Insistence'.

3. For CCs and CEs, significant differences were found in the use of 'Positive feeling', 'Gratitude', 'Alternative', 'No', 'Future acceptance', 'Explanation', and 'Postponement'.

4. For TEs and CEs, significant differences were found in the use of 'Regret', 'Gratitude', 'Negative ability', 'Positive feeling', 'Alternative', 'No', and 'Future acceptance'.

Possible factors influencing these strategies were the status of the interlocutor, L1 culture, the nature of the situation, L2 proficiency, and classroom instruction. These findings not only contribute to cross-cultural communication, but also provide pedagogical implications for the learning and teaching of EIL.

School of Foreign Languages   Student's Signature_____

Academic Year 2014   Advisor's Signature_____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this thesis has been the most important and toughest part of my life as an MA student. To complete it, it required not only time and effort, but also generous help and support as well as constant encouragement from many, many people, to whom I would like to express my sincerest gratitude.

My first and deepest gratitude goes to my thesis advisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Anchalee Wannaruk. Throughout the whole process of my thesis writing, she has always been ready and quick to offer me helpful and valuable comments and suggestions with her expertise in pragmatics and years of experience in research. She has also been kind, patient, and understanding by allowing me to study and explore this particular field at my own pace, while at the same time gradually taking me in the right direction whenever I lost my way. I am proud to have her as my thesis advisor.

I would also like to express my genuine appreciation to the committee members, Dr. Jitpanat Suwanthep, Dr. Butsakorn Yodkamlue, and Asst. Prof. Dr. Nawamin Prachanant who spent a great deal of their precious time reading my whole thesis and offered me valuable comments and suggestions, which not only helped improve and strengthen my work, but also provided me with new insights into research.

My gratitude also goes to so many Thai and Chinese friends who never hesitated to give me help and assistance in collecting and analyzing the data from the very first step of the pilot study to the final step of the main study. Please know that I truly appreciate what you did for me. People to whom I owe the most are all the respondents

who took time out of their busy schedule to take part in my study. Without them, I could never accomplish this research work.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Prakong and Kuruwan Weerachairattana and my grandparents, Sawaeng and Phin Suphanklang. I would like to thank them for all their love, support, and encouragement in whatever I do. Their faith in me has always reminded me never to give up on my dreams no matter how long it might take.

Rotubon Weerachairattana

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

Tables   **Page**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introduction to the present study which primarily aims at investigating refusals performed in English by Thai and Chinese graduate students in an academic setting. It starts with the background of the study, followed by a statement of the problem, the rationale of the study, the research objectives and research questions, and the significance of the study. Then, definitions of key terms as well as the scope and limitations of the study are provided. This chapter ends with an outline of the entire thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

To be successful in English language learning, it has generally been assumed that English language learners need to attain native-like competence in the language (McKay, 2003). Kuchuk (2012), for example, states that the target model in the learning and teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been the so-called native speakers of English. Similarly, Yano (2006) points out that many English teachers still focus their teaching on the values of native English speakers as well as how they think and see the world, even when the learning goal is the ability to communicate cross-culturally. The focus on the achievement of native-like competence has also manifested itself in a number of second language acquisition (SLA) studies, which are likely to relate to the failure and success of second or foreign language learners when compared to native speakers (Cook, 1999).

One of the aspects that have attracted much scholarly attention is the pragmatic competence of non-native English speakers. In these studies (e.g. Sairhun, 1999; Kwon, 2003; Wannaruk, 2005, 2008; Prachanant, 2006; Al-Eryani, 2007; Allami & Naeimi, 20011), the performance of a particular speech act of non-native speakers is compared to that of native speakers (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). The results often reveal that while there are some similarities in the performance of speech acts between the two groups, non-native speakers may differ from native speakers in what they say and when they say it (Pearson, 2010). In other words, non-native English speakers at times fail to produce appropriate language in the English language community, which has generally been assumed to be due to the transfer from the pragmatic rules of their first language (McKay, 2002; Pearson, 2010; Allami & Naeimi, 2011). Not only do these findings help predict potential problems during cross-cultural encounters, but they also suggest that non-native English speakers are expected to speak the same way as native speakers do, which also indicates the notion that as non-native speakers, they are inferior to native speakers (Kuchuk, 2012).

Recently, the status of native and non-native English speakers has changed since the English language has achieved an international status as a result of its historical and present-day widespread use all over the world (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). Instead of being seen as a second or foreign language, English has been increasingly acknowledged as an international language (Llurda, 2004; Sasaki, Suzuki, & Yoneda, 2006). McKay (2002) claims that English as an International Language (EIL) is used for cross-cultural communication by native speakers of English and bilingual users of English or those who speak English as a second language along with the one or more

other languages they speak. She further explains that these bilingual users have different levels of English language proficiency to serve their particular communicative needs.

However, it is claimed that the number of non-native English speakers continues to grow so that now it far exceeds the number of native English speakers (Graddol, 2000; McKay, 2002, 2003; Llurda, 2004; Clyne & Sharifian, 2008; Misso & Maadad, 2011). This situation leads to a change in the notion of the ownership of English. Widdowson (1994, as cited in Llurda, 2004) holds that the ownership of English should be shared by people both in native-speaking communities and in newly arrived members of the English speaking community, that is, both native speakers and non-native speakers of English. Consequently, in the EIL paradigm, the English spoken by both native and non-native English speakers is considered to be legitimate varieties of English (Kuchuk, 2012). This also suggests that the different norms of their usages are also recognized as Seidlhofer (2003) points out:

> …in the use of EIL conditions hold which are different from situations when a language is clearly associated with its native and its place of origin, whether it is spoken by those native speakers or by people who have learnt it as a foreign language: different attitudes and expectations (should) prevail, and different norms (should) apply. (p. 9)

The discussion above has led to the conclusion that EIL is a movement away from the native speaker model, which also includes the use of language at the level of pragmatics (Kuchuk, 2012). McKay (2003) implies that as an international language, English belongs to its users; therefore, how to appropriately use English in different contexts should also depend on the users' own sense of appropriateness. As a result, English used by non-native speakers may reflect the cultural norms and values of their native language to some extent, as also reported in many early studies (e.g. Kwon, 2003; Han, 2006; Guo, 2012; Boonkongsaen, 2013; Shishavan & Sharifian 2013).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Since the last decade, cross-cultural exchanges and encounters have increased rapidly (Al-Shboul, Maros, & Yasin, 2012). When people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds come into contact with each other, the use of a language spoken and comprehended by both parties is required as a medium of communication, and the English language is most widely used (Dombi, 2011). It is, however, claimed that most cross-cultural encounters today occur between non-native speakers of English as Yano (2003) notes "...in fact communication between non-native speakers of English is far greater in frequency, amount, and significance as well as the number of speakers today (Crystal 1997, Graddol 1997)" (p. 78). The causes of the growth in such encounters could be similar to those of the growth in English language learning, that is, the need to access scientific and technological knowledge, international organizations, international economic trade, and also higher education (McKay, 2003).

As a result of the recent globalization, it is undeniable that education, particularly higher education has undergone a considerable change (Graddol, 2000). Altbach and Teichler (2001) state that the globalized and knowledge-based economy of the 21st century has led to internationalization in higher education. Internationalization is described as "a process of integrating an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the goals, functions, and delivery of higher education" (Knight, 2012, p. 4). As for universities, Bhumiratana and Commins (2012) argue that internationalization mostly causes changes at the teaching level, and one of those changes is the increasing introduction of international programs, which has attracted a number of international students, as in the current situation in Thai and Chinese higher education.

In Thailand, according to the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) (2009), more international programs have been offered in various fields both at undergraduate and graduate levels in private and public universities. In 2008, there were as many as 884 international programs using English as a medium of instruction. This number included 296 undergraduate programs, 350 master's degree programs, 215 doctoral degree programs, and 23 other degree programs, which almost doubled the number of international programs offered in 2004 (Sinhaneti, 2009).

Additionally, it was revealed that the number of international students who studied in public and private higher education institutes in Thailand from 2008 to 2011 increased greatly. That is, Thailand hosted 16,361 international students at 96 higher education institutions in 2008 (OHEC, 2008), 19,052 international students at 103 higher education institutions in 2009 (OHEC, 2010), 20,155 international students at 103 higher education institutes in 2010 (OHEC, 2011), and 20,309 international students at 103 higher education institutes in 2011 (OHEC, 2013). These students came from different countries and regions. The top ten sending countries from 2008 to 2011 included China, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, the United States, Korea, Japan, Germany, India, and Bangladesh (OHEC, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013).

Higher education in China is also in a similar situation. Kirkpatrick (2007) states that many schools and universities in China now provide courses conducted in the English language. These courses, of course, have lured more and more international students who may not be good at Chinese but wish to pursue their education in China from all over the world. According to the Ministry of Education (MOE) (2009), China now provides a wide variety of English-taught programs in many disciplines in higher

education institutes. These programs are offered to scholars as well as to those who want to study for a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, or a doctoral degree.

The number of international students accepted by Chinese universities, research and development institutes, and other higher education institutes has rapidly grown each year. For instance, in 2009, China hosted as many as 238,184 international students from 190 countries at 610 higher education institutes (MOE, 2010), 265,090 international students from 194 countries at 620 higher education institutes in 2010 (MOE, 2011), 292,611 international students from 194 countries at 660 higher education institutions in 2011 (China Scholarship Council [CSC], 2012), and 328,330 international students from about 200 countries at 690 higher education institutes in 2012 (MOE, 2013, as cited in Study in China, 2013). South Korea, the United States, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Russia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan were reported to be the top ten sending countries in these four years (MOE, 2010, 2011; CSC, 2012; MOE, 2013, as cited in Study in China, 2013).

The discussion above suggests that many international students have visited Thailand and China to receive higher education and that today they continue to increase steadily in number. Therefore, it can be predicted that greater opportunities for cross-cultural communication between international students and local professors, students, or university staff in Thai and Chinese higher education are likely to arise. However, although it is necessary for international students to know some Thai when they live and study in Thailand or some Chinese when they live and study in China, the English language still plays an important role not only as a medium of instruction, but also as a medium of daily communication.

Kuriscak (2010) and Pearson (2010) hold that in our everyday communication, we use language to perform a wide variety of functions or speech acts; for example, we speak to greet, request, compliment, complain, apologize etc. Thus, in daily conversations on campus, performing a wide range of speech acts in English for international students should not be considered exceptional. Nevertheless, Wolfson (1983, as cited in Prachanant, 2006) posits that rules for speaking appropriately can vary considerably from one society to another. Similarly, although speech acts are basic components of all languages, the appropriate performance of a particular speech act can vary from one culture to another (Farnia & Wu, 2012). Therefore, it is possible that differences exist in the realization of speech acts in the English language between two cultures. These differences may cause minor misunderstandings, hard feelings, and even prejudices (Pearson, 2010).

1.3 Rationale of the Study

A speech act of refusal is selected as the focus of the present study due to its face-threatening nature (Eslami, 2010). Since it is generally believed that persons expect their conversational partners to recognize and acknowledge their face wants or needs (LoCastro, 2003), improper performance of a speech act of refusal can cause the loss of faces, which may lead to unintended offenses (Al-Shboul et al. 2012), negative impressions during communication (Wannaruk, 2005), and the destruction of social relationships (Prachanant, 2006). Apart from the complex nature of refusals, different contextual factors, namely the degrees of intimacy, power, and weight of impositions, are to be taken into consideration (Brown & Levinson, 1987; LoCastro, 2003). A sufficient amount of culture-specific knowledge is also necessary for appropriate

understanding and production of this speech act (Gass & Houck, 1999; Eslami, 2010). Saying *no* is, thus, considered a difficult task for some non-native speakers (Al-Kahtani, 2005). Additionally, although many researchers have paid greater attention to a speech act of refusal, this speech act has not been widely studied when compared to other face-threatening speech acts, such as apologies, requests, and complaints (Allami & Naemi, 2011; Guo, 2012). This speech act is, therefore, well worth examining.

The selection of *an academic setting* as the focus of the present investigation is motivated by an increasingly international environment in higher education in many countries. Similar to the discussion earlier, an increase in the number of English-medium programs has caused higher education institutes to open themselves up to a greater diversity of students and teachers (Bradford, 2012). This situation has resulted in multiple opportunities in academic and social communication in English among students, faculty members, and staff with different norms and expectations. More cross-cultural encounters in an academic setting can also take place through the involvement in international academic activities. These activities may consist of the exchange of students, faculty members, or staff, participation in international conferences, international research collaboration, etc. Therefore, it can be predicted that students, especially at graduate level, who are currently studying abroad and/or aim to pursue an academic profession after graduation will inevitably face greater challenges in cross-cultural contact and communication in the global academic community. In addition, it was found that each of the previous studies using a DCT as a data-gathering method usually examines refusals in different settings (e.g. a workplace, a restaurant, or a friend's house). Very few studies investigate refusals, specifically in an academic

setting (e.g. Geyang, 2007; Farnia & Wu, 2012). These reasons provide strong support for the present study to investigate refusals in an academic setting.

Thai and Chinese graduate students are of interest mainly because there are a considerable number of cross-cultural exchanges and encounters between Thai and Chinese students and teachers in an academic setting. In higher education in Thailand, it is reported that Chinese students make up the largest group of international students. For example, there were 7,301, 8,993, 9,329, 8,444 Chinese students enrolling in Thai higher education institutes in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively (OHEC, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013). Similarly, Thailand was among the top five countries sending students to study in Chinese higher education and there has been a steady growth in this area. For instance, Thai students attending Chinese higher education institutes increased from 11,379 in 2009 (MOE, 2010) to 16,675 in 2012 (MOE, 2013, as cited in Study in China, 2013).

Furthermore, Thai people are brought up in a society that highly values being caring and considerate for others (Knutson, 1994), which makes it difficult for them to say *no*, especially when they are asked for help (Chaidaroon, 2003). As a result, in order not to hurt others' feelings and avoid conflicts, they are prone to be indirect and reticent in their language and behavior (Niratpattanasai, 2002, as cited in Barr, 2004) by displaying reluctance or simply saying *yes* when in fact they mean *no* (Bornmaan, 2001). In addition, when it comes to disagreement with the ideas of their elders in the presence of older people, Thai people tend to remain silent, which is regarded as appropriate behavior (Knutson, Hwang, & Vivatanaukul, 1995, as cited in Knutson, 1994). Nevertheless, although these verbal and non-verbal forms of behavior which indicate indirect refusals are acceptable in Thai culture, they can be misunderstood and viewed by another culture as inappropriate or even rude (Wannaruk, 2005).

In the same vein, in an attempt to preserve harmonious relationships with others, Chinese people also prefer indirect ways of communication (Lin, 2014). Therefore, to prevent conflicts which may result from refusing directly, Chinese people often say *yes* for *no* in a situation in which communication is other-serving (Ma, 1996, as cited in Hong, 2011). This response, however, might be understood by people who are linguistically and culturally different as complete acceptance. In addition, Chen and Zhang (1995, as cited in Ma, 2008) revealed that refusals made by the Chinese subjects in their study can be divided into *substantial refusals* in which the speakers who say *yes* mean *no*, and *ritual refusals* in which the speaker says *no* to offers and invitations to show politeness and consideration for the interlocutors, although their intention is, in fact, to accept the proposed acts. It is possible that the latter type of refusals can be one of the causes for confusion in communication with Chinese people.

It can be seen that although both Thai and Chinese culture place crucial importance on the harmony in a society, it is premature to assume that both cultures are similar when expressing politeness in refusing. This speech act may be influenced by the cultural norms and values of their native languages. Therefore, it is worth investigating the differences, which might lead to misunderstandings and unintended offenses (Al-Shboul et al., 2012) when Thai and Chinese people have to communicate with each other in English.

Lastly, most of the previous research studies often examine refusals realized by non-native English speakers in comparison to those realized by native English speakers (e.g. Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1999; Wannaruk, 2005, 2008; Keshavarz, Eslami, and Ghahraman, 2006; and Al-Eryani, 2007; Allami & Naeimi, 2011). A small number of studies focus on a comparison of refusals performed in English by two or

more groups of non-native English speakers. Examples of these studies include Farnia and Abdul Sattar (2010), Farnia and Wu (2012), and Al-Shboul et al. (2012). However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have been found to compare refusals performed in English by Thai and Chinese graduate students.

1.4 Research Objectives and Research Questions

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To compare the use of refusal strategies between Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs) and Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) in an academic setting

2. To compare the use of refusal strategies between Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs) in an academic setting

3. To compare the use of refusal strategies between Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs) in an academic setting

To respond to the research objectives, the present investigation is specifically designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences between Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs) and Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) in the use of refusal strategies in an academic setting?

2. What are the similarities and differences between Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs) in the use of refusal strategies in an academic setting?

3. What are the similarities and differences between Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs) in the use of refusal strategies in an academic setting?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present study will not only make contributions to cross-cultural communication, but also provide implications for the learning and teaching of English in terms of pragmatics as explained below:

Since one of the challenges presented by cross-cultural communication is the ability to understand speech acts cross-culturally (Fahey, 2005), newcomers in a given culture should possess knowledge of the meaning of a particular speech act in that culture (Farnia & Wu, 2012) to successfully and effectively communicate in a new cultural setting. The findings of the present study will provide information about the similarities and differences in terms of culture and linguistics between Thai and Chinese graduate students when they make refusals both in their L1 (Thai or Chinese) and their L2 (English) in an academic setting. This information may help raise both parties' awareness of cultural differences when they are engaged in situations in which they need to perform this face-threatening act. It should lead to a greater open-mindedness and they may also become more cautious in employing strategies to make appropriate refusals in order to avoid being labeled as rude, impolite, or disrespectful (Wannaruk, 2008), which in turn will also lead to greater success in cross-cultural encounters.

The present study could also be of great help in the learning and teaching of pragmatics, particularly in the EIL paradigm. In an attempt to move away from the native speaker model and to focus on the use of English in cross-cultural

communication in an EIL classroom (McKay, 2003; Kuchuk, 2012), one of the strategies McKay (2002) proposed as a way to develop productive cross-cultural interactions is to raise students' awareness that pragmatic rules can vary from culture to culture. Since speech acts can be regarded as the most relevant in the field of pragmatics (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010), it is crucially important to integrate them into the English language classroom and for students to know how they are enacted in English by different cultures. Therefore, the findings of this study can be included as part of the pragmatic content of an EIL program.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

The key terms and their definitions as used in the present study are provided as follows:

"Refusal strategies" refers to semantic formulas, based on the classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990), which TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs employ in refusing invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions in an academic setting. A semantic formula can be "a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion, any one or more of which can be used to perform the act in question" (Cohen, 1996, p. 254). Examples of the semantic formulas are 'Regret' (e.g. *"I'm sorry."*), 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"I don't think so."*), and 'Alternative' (e.g. *"Why don't you ask someone else?"*).

"Academic setting" is defined as the context of the situations in which requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions are made to a graduate student by the Director of the Office of International Affairs, the Dean of the Graduate School, an advisor, a

graduate student, a master's student, a new friend, a roommate, or a classmate. These situations tend to occur in higher education and/or are related to academic issues.

"Thai graduate students responding in Thai" (TTs) refers to Thai students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities and responding to the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in Thai.

"Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese" (CCs) refers to Chinese students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Chinese and Thai universities and responding to the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in Chinese.

"Thai graduate students responding in English" (TEs) refers to Thai students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities and responding to the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in English.

"Chinese graduate students responding in English" (CEs) refers to Chinese students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities and responding to the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in English.

"Social power (P)" is the relative power of a speaker and a hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987) in terms of authority in an academic setting. Specifically, the social power of the Director of the Office of International Affairs, the Dean of the Graduate School, or an advisor and a graduate student is set as *high-low*. Meanwhile, the social power of a graduate student, a master's student, a new friend, a roommate, or a classmate and a graduate student is set as *equal*.

"Social distance (D)" is the degree of closeness or familiarity between a speaker and a hearer (Locastro, 2003; O'Keeffe, Clancy, & Adolphs, 2011). Specifically, the social distance between an advisor, a roommate, or a classmate and a graduate student

is set as *familiar*. Meanwhile, the social distance between the Director of the Office of International Affairs, the Dean of the Graduate School, a graduate school, a master's student, or a new friend and a graduate student is set as *unfamiliar.*

"Rank of imposition (R)" refers to the degree of pressure that requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions put on TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs to accept them.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1. The present study investigates the use of refusal strategies in an academic setting by four groups of participants: 30 TTs, 30 CCs, 30 TEs, and 30 CEs. However, the subjects in the present study are limited not only in terms of number, but also in terms of the level of higher education at which they are currently studying. Therefore, it is important to note that the findings of the present study may not be generalized to other groups of Thai and Chinese graduate students in other contexts.

2. The data for this study are collected by means of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). Although it has been reported that data obtained from a DCT can differ from naturally occurring data (Wannaruk, 2008; Al-Shboul et al., 2012), Beebe and Cummings (1996, as cited in Billmyer and Varghese, 2000) state that data obtained from a written DCT are similar to naturally occurring talk in terms of main patterns and formulas. In addition, a DCT allows the researcher to control contextual factors for each situation and to collect data from a large number of respondents in a short period of time (Barron, 2003). Follow-up interviews are also employed in this study to provide better insights into the subjects' choice and content of refusal strategies.

1.8 Outline of the Thesis

To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher will first review crucial concepts and previous research studies related to the present study in Chapter 2. Crucial concepts will include cooperative principle, speech acts, politeness, and a speech act of refusal. The discussion of the relationship between pragmatics and communicative competence as well as the relationship between pragmatic failure and cross-cultural communication will also be provided. Lastly, data collection methods and findings from previous research studies on refusals will be reviewed.

Chapter 3 will explain the research methodology used in the present study, which will be divided into three parts: 1) the development of the DCT, 2) the pilot study, which is aimed at checking the validity and reliability of the DCT and finding possible questions for the follow-up interviews in the main study, and 3) the main study, which is aimed at answering the research questions of the present study.

Chapter 4 will present the results of the present study based on a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. The three most frequently used strategies for each group in each situation will be provided with examples. Examples in Thai and Chinese will be translated into English for readers' ease of understanding and those in English will be shown without grammatical corrections. The significant differences between each pair will also be presented.

Chapter 5 will discuss the similarities and differences in the choice and the content of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. Possible factors contributing to the similarities and differences will also be presented.

Chapter 6 will conclude the main findings of the present study concerning the use of refusal strategies by TTs, TEs, CCs, and CEs. Based on these findings, the

pedagogical implications are discussed and some suggestions for further research are also offered.

1.9 Summary

The present study investigates and compares how refusals are realized in English by Thai and Chinese graduate students in an academic setting. This study was undertaken as a result of the widespread use of EIL in cross-cultural communication between non-native English speakers in Thai and Chinese higher education as well as the face-threatening nature of a speech act of refusal. These factors led to the research objectives and the research questions of this study. The findings obtained from this study are expected to be useful in cross-cultural communication and the learning and teaching of EIL. The key terms used in the present study were also defined. Due to the limitations in terms of the subjects and the research instruments, the findings of this study may not be generalizable and applicable to other contexts.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature and previous research studies related to the present study. The review is divided into seven sections. The first section introduces Grice's cooperative principle as well as speech acts. Then, politeness theory, specifically Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, is described. The third and the fourth section explain the relationship between pragmatics and communicative competence and between pragmatic failure and cross-cultural communication, respectively. Next, the characteristics as well as classifications of refusals are presented. Methods of data collection employed in previous research studies on refusals as well as their advantages and disadvantages are presented in the following section. In the last section, previous studies on refusals are reviewed.

2.1 Grice's Cooperative Principle

This study is located in the area of pragmatics, which has generally been referred to as the study of language in relation to the context in which it is used (Chapman, 2000; Cutting, 2002; Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011). One of the concepts that have contributed greatly to the field of pragmatics is the cooperative principle. This principle was introduced and formulated by H. P. Grice, a philosopher of language, and it was based on the assumption that the speaker and the hearer behave collaboratively when they engage in a linguistic interaction, that is, the success of the conversation can be achieved

if the speaker intends to communicate something and the hearer recognizes his/her communicative intention (Yule, 1996; Chapman, 2000). According to Grice (2008), the cooperative principle has a rough general notion as follows: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (p. 28).

The cooperative principle includes four conversational areas, labeled as maxims, in which the speaker and the hearer cooperate, namely maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner (Chapman, 2010). The following table shows the four maxims with brief explanations as well as their sub-maxims:

Table 2.1 Cooperative Principle (Grice, 2008, p. 28-29)

Maxim of Quantity: The quantity of information to be provided
1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange). 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
Maxim of Quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.
1. Do not say what you believe to be false. 2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Maxim of Relation: Be relevant.
Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous.
1. Avoid obscurity of expression 2. Avoid ambiguity. 3. Be brief (Avoid unnecessary prolixity.) 4. Be orderly.

In a fully cooperative linguistic interaction, it is expected that people generally follow these four maxims of conversation (Yule, 1996). In other words, they normally give as much information as is required and provide true, relevant, and clear information. The cooperative principle contributes to conversation in that it provides a better understanding of how people make sense of each other in their interaction even when they do not seem to behave cooperatively.

The usefulness of the cooperative principle can be clearly illustrated and explained from Yule (1996)'s example: one woman asks her friend how she likes the hamburger she is eating during their lunch. Her friend replies *"A hamburger is a hamburger"*. Yule explains that the response the woman receives does not seem to make sense since it is obvious that a hamburger is a hamburger. However, following the notion of the cooperative principle, the woman will assume that her friend is behaving cooperatively, which means that she must intend to communicate something more than what she says. The meaning of the message that is not said but being communicated is called an *implicature*. Yule further explains that the speaker expects the hearer to be able to draw an inference or understand the additional meaning of her response based on what the hearer knows. In this case, Yule suggests that the woman may interpret her friend's response as having no opinion about the taste of the hamburger; however, other implicatures can also be drawn, depending on other aspects of the context.

The implicatures that arise in conversation are called *conversational implicatures*, which can be divided into two types: *generalized conversational implicatures* and *particularized conversational implicatures* (Chapman, 2000). Generalized conversational implicatures can be drawn from "the use of a particular word and from the hearer's knowledge of the literal meaning of this word together with his assumption that the speaker is behaving co-operatively" (Chapman, 2000, p. 134). Meanwhile, the context in which the utterance is produced infers particularized conversational implicatures (Peccei, 1999).

Apart from Grice's cooperative principle, speech acts are another crucial concept of pragmatics, which will be presented in the following section.

2.2 Speech Acts

In our daily social communication, we engage in a wide range of *speech acts* (Kuriscak, 2010), which are sometimes referred to as *language acts* or *linguistic acts* (Searle, 2008). Its concept was first introduced by J. L. Austin (1962). Speech acts, although not the whole of pragmatics, have been regarded as a central concept which have been given a great deal of scrutiny by many researchers in this field (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). The study of speech acts, according to Gass & Houck (1999), has often been conducted on three aspects: 1) the realization of a speech act within a given language, 2) the realization of a speech act across languages, and 3) the production or the recognition of a speech act in a language by non-native speakers of that language. In this section, speech acts will be defined and the speech act theory will be explained.

2.2.1 Definitions of Speech Acts

Speech acts have been defined by several scholars and researchers. Pre-theoretically, speech acts are defined as "acts done in the process of speaking" (Sadock, 2006, p. 53). Acts in this regard mean all sorts of acts performed in the course of speaking, from aspirating a consonant, to forming a sentence, to insulting a guest (Sadock, 2006). Searle (2008) and Cruse (2000) offer more specific definitions of speech acts since they place a particular emphasis on the illocutionary force of the utterance or the communicative intention of the speaker. Searle (2008) recognizes that a variety of acts are produced when people utter a sentence; however, merely acts which can be classified into making statements, asking questions, issuing commands, etc. are called illocutionary acts as he puts it:

> In a typical speech situation involving a speaker, a hearer, and an utterance by the speaker, there are many kinds of acts associated with the speaker's utterance. The speaker will characteristically have moved his jaw and his tongue and made noises. In addition, he will characteristically have performed some acts within the class which includes informing or irritating or boring his hearers; he will further characteristically have performed acts within the class which includes referring to Kennedy or Khrushchev or the North Pole; he will also have performed acts within the class which includes commands, giving reports, greeting, and warning. The members of this last class are what Austin called illocutionary acts…(p. 8)

It is important to note that speech acts are sometimes referred to as illocutionary acts as Yule (1996) suggests that both are generally interpreted as the illocutionary force of an utterance. In line with Searle (2008), Cruse (2000) claims that people must make a statement with a particular illocutionary force when they use language to communicate. By doing so, they perform particular kinds of action, such as stating, promising, warning, and so on, which have come to be known as speech acts. The definitions of speech acts used in the present study are confined to those provided by Searle (2008) and Cruse (2000).

2.2.2 Speech Act Theory

J. L. Austin, a philosopher of language, has been regarded as the father of speech acts (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). The basic notion of speech acts stemmed from his lecture at Harvard University which was edited and published in *How to Do Things with Words* (Chapman, 2000; LoCastro, 2003; Sadock, 2006). Austin (1962) argues that "the more we consider a statement not as a sentence (or proposition), but as an act of speech…the more we study the whole thing as an act (p. 20)." Simply put, an utterance people produce is seen more as a form of action, rather than as a form of statement (LoCastro, 2003).

To deal with language as a form of action, Austin first distinguishes *performative utterances* from *constative utterances* (Verschueren, 1999). According to

Sadock (2006), constative utterances are utterances that seem to be mainly used for saying something, rather than doing something whereas performative utterances seem to be designed for doing something. Different from constative utterances, performative utterances cannot be evaluated along a dimension of truth, but along a dimension of felicity (Verschueren, 1999). In other words, unlike constative utterances, performative utterances cannot be said to be true or false, but appropriate or inappropriate in a given context.

Austin claims that people can perform actions via utterances by performative verbs which explicitly describe the acts being performed as the speaker utters them (LoCastro, 2003). In addition, those actions are to be performed under appropriate circumstances, technically known as felicity conditions, in order to be recognized as intended (Yule, 1996). "For Austin, the felicity conditions are that the context and roles of participants must be recognised by all parties; the action must be carried out completely; and the persons must have the right intentions" (Cutting, 2002, p. 18).

Austin's argument about performative utterances is, however, not without problems as he later found out that actions can be performed via utterances not only by performative verbs (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010) and that all utterances, in fact, consist of both descriptive and effective aspects, that is, they are both statements and actions at the same time (Verschueren, 1999; Sadock, 2006). Therefore, in analyzing speech or an utterance, there are two aspects to be taken into consideration, that is, what message it conveys and what acts it performs (Chapman, 2000).

According to Austin (1962), speech acts can be analyzed on three levels: *locutionary acts*, *illocutionary acts*, and *perlocutionary acts*. Locutionary acts are acts of forming sounds and words to create meaningful utterances in a particular language,

with their literal meaning (Peccei, 1999). Illocutionary acts are associated with the intention of the speaker in producing utterances, which is sometimes known as the illocutionary force of the utterance (Chapman, 2000). Examples of this type of act in the English language include apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request (Yule, 1996). At the level of perlocutionary acts, the effects of the speaker's utterances on the hearer or the hearer's reaction to those utterances are of concern (Cutting, 2002).

Of these three levels of acts, illocutionary acts have been given the greatest interest by Austin (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). Austin classifies illocutionary acts into five types according to performative verbs (Peccei, 1999). Sadock (2006) provides a brief explanation of each type as follows: 1) *verdictives*, acts of delivering a finding (e.g. acquitting, and reading something as), 2) *exercitives*, acts of making a decision for or against a course of action (e.g. appointing and ordering), 3) *commissives*, acts of committing the speaker to a course of action (e.g. contracting and giving one's word), 4) *behabitives*, acts of expressing attitudes towards others' actions, fortunes, or attitudes (e.g. apologizing and welcoming), and 5) *explosives*, acts of presenting views, making arguments, and clarifying (e.g. denying and informing). However, since a performative verb is not necessary for all utterances as stated previously, a revision of Austin's classification of speech acts was, therefore, needed.

Searle proposes five general categories of speech acts, based not on performative verbs (Peccei, 1999), but on general functional characteristics (Yule, 1996; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). The descriptions of the five categories are briefly provided by Cutting (2002) as follows: 1) *declarations*, utterances that can change the world (e.g. *"I declare"* and *"I resign"*), 2) *representatives*, utterances that

state what is believed to be the case (e.g. describing and predicting), 3) *expressives*, utterances that are used to express feelings (e.g. apologizing and congratulating), 4) *directives*, utterances that are used to make the hearer do something (e.g. requesting and commanding), and 5) *commissives*, utterances that commit the speaker to do something in the future (threatening and volunteering). A speech act of refusal, which is the concern of the present study, falls under the last category.

Searle further proposes that speech acts can be classified as *direct* and *indirect* based on the relationship between their linguistic structures and the work they are doing (Peccei, 1999). According to Cutting (2002), Searle believes that direct speech acts are performed when the speaker wants to convey the literal meaning of the words in his/her utterances, which means that the form directly corresponds to the function. That is, a declarative is matched to an assertion, an imperative to an order or a request, and an interrogative to a question (Yaghoobi, 2002). On the one hand, when there is an indirect relationship between form and function, the meaning of the words do not conform to the exact or primary meaning of the words, resulting in the performance of indirect speech acts (Yule, 1996). "Can you call me a taxi?', which is an interrogative structure, can be a good example of either a direct or an indirect speech act, that is, if it serves as a question asking the hearer's ability to call a taxi, it is a direct speech act, but if it is interpreted as a request, it is then an indirect speech act (Verschueren, 1999). In the English language, indirect speech acts play a more dominant role than direct speech acts in linguistic politeness (Yule, 1969). The concept of politeness will be described and discussed in the following section.

2.3 Politeness

2.3.1 Characteristics of Politeness

Politeness has been regarded as one of the important concepts in the field of pragmatics which is rarely discussed by Austin, Searle, and Grice (Peccei, 1999). Politeness is part of the language use that helps foster the harmony and success of the day-to-day social interaction which Cutting (2002) refers to as " the choices that are made in language use, the linguistic expressions that give people space and show a friendly attitude to them, if one wants to save face or be appreciated in return" (p. 45). According to Yule (1996), politeness in pragmatics does not generally mean the appropriateness of social behavior or etiquette in a particular culture, but it is specifically referred to the impact of interpreting what is said beyond what is intended to be conveyed and evaluating it as rude and inconsiderate or considerate and thoughtful based on the social relationships between the speaker and the hearer. Therefore, to avoid conflicts and promote interpersonal relations with others in communication, people need to use language appropriately and politely (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011), which leads to the use of indirect language to imply a certain idea (Peccei, 1999).

Politeness has been the focus of attention in a number of previous research studies in the field of pragmatics. This phenomenon has been studied by many linguistics, sociologists, and language philosophers (Prachanant, 2006) who also have proposed various politeness theories within the framework of pragmatics. The present study looks at politeness with particular regard to face-saving. To be specific, it is Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, the most widely known and influential theory to date (Barron, 2003), that is employed as a theoretical framework for this study.

2.3.2 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory assumes that both the speaker and the hearer in a conversation are rational individuals who attempt to use the most efficient strategies to achieve their communicative purposes (Barron, 2003) and that politeness phenomena are seen as universal principles of human interaction in every single society regardless of the degree of isolation (Gumperz, 1987). However, the concept of politeness can differ across languages and cultures. In other words, what is considered polite in a given situation in one culture may not be polite in another culture (Wannaruk, 2005; Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011). In Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, three concepts are proposed as central to linguistic politeness, including face, face-threatening acts, and politeness strategies.

The notion of *face* in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is based on that proposed by Goffman (1956, 1959, 1967, as cited in O'Keeffe et al., 2011). They define face as the public self-image that every conversational participant wants or needs to be recognized and acknowledged by his/her conversational partner (LoCastro, 2003) and it is something that can be invested, lost, maintained, or enhanced and must be attended to during conversation (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Yule (1996) states that politeness can be described as showing awareness of another person's face, thus resulting in an attempt by conversational participants to preserve each other's face over the course of conversation (Barron, 2003). Face, for Brown and Levinson (1987), can be divided into two types: 1) *positive face*, which is the desire to be liked by others, to be seen in a positive way, and to be accepted as part of the group and 2) *negative face*, which is the desire to be independent as well as not to be imposed on by others (Yule, 1996; Peccei, 1999; Cutting, 2002; LoCastro, 2003).

The second concept of this politeness theory relates to speech acts. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that certain kinds of speech acts are considered intrinsically *face-threatening acts* (FTAs) since performing these acts can threaten a conversational partner's expectations regarding his/her public self-image or face, either positive or negative (Yule, 1996; Barron, 2003). Thus, to create harmonious day-to-day social interaction, the conversational participants attempt to save each other's face by saying something that helps lesson the effects of the actions that can be interpreted as threat to face (Yule, 1996). Brown and Levinson (1987) present five possible super-strategies from which we can choose to perform FTAs as illustrated below. It is important to note that the second and the third super-strategies are regarded as the key notions of their politeness strategies. Brown and Levinson (1987) provide detailed explanation of each of the aforementioned super-strategies, which are briefly described as follows:

1) *Doing the FTA on record without redressive action, baldly:* The FTA is performed in the most direct and clear manner possible. In other words, the communicative intention of the speaker is unambiguously conveyed to the hearer. (e.g. "Do X!")

2) *Doing the FTA on record with redressive action (positive politeness):* By doing redressive action, the speaker attempts to pay attention to the hearer's face, but for this super-strategy, positive politeness, it is aimed at showing awareness of the hearer's positive face.

3) *Doing the FTA on record with redressive action (negative politeness):* Similar to the second super-strategy, the hearer's face is acknowledged by the speaker, but it is oriented towards the negative face.

4) *Doing the FTA off the record:* This super-strategy involves performing the FTA unambiguously to express more than one communicative intention in order not to commit the speaker to the future action

5) *Don't do the FTA:* In some situations, it is possible that the speaker chooses to perform the FTA not by saying something, but by using his/her gestures

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the realization of a given FTA in a given situation was influenced by three major sociological factors, including 1) *the social distance (D)* of the speaker and the hearer, 2) *the relative power (P)* of the speaker and the hearer, and *the absolute ranking (R) of impositions* in a particular culture. Both social distance and power involve the relationship between the conversational partners (Yule, 1996). Social distance can be described in terms of familiarity and unfamiliarity (Barron, 2003) and may depend on other factors, such as age, gender, role, education, class, and ethnicity (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). Meanwhile, social power can be described in terms of superiority and inferiority. The last sociological factor is the ranking of impositions which relates to a degree of threat of the FTAs perceived within a particular culture (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). For example, the imposition of requesting to borrow a pen is less costly to the addressee than that of requesting to borrow a car or a large amount of money (LoCastro, 2003).

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory is relevant to the present study not only because a speech act of refusal, the focus of the study, is intrinsically face-threatening in nature, but also because all sociological factors will be taken into account for the design of the instrument for the main study. After the review of the key concepts, the next two sections will discuss pragmatics in relation to other areas, that is, communicative competence and cross-cultural communication.

2.4 Pragmatics and Communicative Competence

Pragmatics has developed as a significant area of linguistic analysis as a result of the sole interest of researchers in linguistic forms and structures without attention to the use of language in actual conversations (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). Simply put, pragmatics is related to the use of language in real-life situations. This notion of pragmatics serves as a basis for the development of the concept of *communicative competence* which was proposed by Hymes (1972) (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). According to Niezgoda and Röver (2001), communicative competence is the speaker's ability to appropriately use language knowledge (i.e. syntax, morphology, semantics, lexis, and phonology) for a particular purpose in a given context. This concept has been developed into a series of models by several researchers (Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010). Examples of the models are shown below:

Canale and Swain (1980) establish a model of communicative competence which is later refined by Canale (1983). Canale describes communicative competence as consisting of four components as follows: 1) grammatical competence, which is the knowledge of language code (verbal or non-verbal) and the rules of the language (e.g. vocabulary, spelling, word, and sentence formation, etc.), 2) sociolinguistic competence, which is the knowledge of sociocultural rules and rules of discourse, 3) discourse competence, which is the knowledge of combining grammatical forms and meanings in different genres, and 4) strategic competence, which is the knowledge of using verbal and non-verbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns in communication and to enhance the effectiveness of communication.

In Bachman's (1990, as cited in Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008) model, communicative competence includes three components which are described as follows:

1) language competence, which is divided into organizational competence (i.e. grammatical competence and textual competence) and pragmatic competence (i.e. illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence), 2) strategic competence, which involves the mental ability to appropriately apply language competence to actual communication, and 3) physiological mechanism, which is the neurological and psychological process related to the use of language.

Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1995) describe communicative competence as consisting of five elements as follows: 1) discourse competence, which involves selecting, sequencing, and arranging words, structures, sentences and utterances to form both spoken and written texts, 2) sociocultural competence, which is related to the appropriate use of language in a certain social and cultural context of actual communication in relation to different pragmatic factors, 3) linguistic competence, which refers to knowledge about syntax, morphology, lexicon, phonology, and orthography 4) actional competence, which is the ability to convey and understand communicative purposes, and 5) strategic competence, which refers to knowledge about communication strategies.

It can be seen from these three models of communicative competence that knowledge of pragmatics is significant in communication as reflected in sociolinguistic competence in the first model, pragmatic competence in the second model, and sociocultural competence and actional competence in the last model. This knowledge requires not only the ability to use language appropriately in a given context, but the ability to convey and recognize the communicative intention. Failure to apply this knowledge can, therefore, lead to failure in communication, especially in cross-cultural communication as discussed below.

2.5 Pragmatic Failure and Cross-Cultural Communication

According to Thomas (2006), *pragmatic failure* has been regarded as one important source of misunderstandings and breakdowns in cross-cultural communication. She refers it to "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said" (p. 22). In other words, the force or the purpose of the speaker's utterances is misunderstood or misinterpreted by his/her conversational partner as shown in the following examples given by Thomas (2006):

1) The hearer interprets the force of the speaker's utterance as stronger or weaker than the speaker intended he/she should interpret it;

2) The hearer interprets the speaker's utterance as an order whereas the speaker intended a request;

3) The hearer interprets the speaker's utterance as ambivalent where the speaker intended no ambivalence;

4) The hearer is expected by the speaker to be able to infer the force of his/her utterance based on the knowledge or beliefs which they do not share.

Thomas (2006) states that although the term *cross-cultural* pragmatic failure is likely to suggest that pragmatic failure occurs in interactions between native and non-native speakers and that there is a single system of pragmatic values and norms in a particular society, cross-cultural pragmatic failure, in reality, can take place in any interactions between two people who are linguistically or culturally different. Specifically, it can be the communication either between native speakers, between native and non-native speakers, or between non-native speakers. However, it should be noted that cross-cultural pragmatic failure tends to be a feature of communication between native and non-native speakers or between non-native speakers (Barron, 2003).

According to Thomas (2006), pragmatic failure can be distinguished into two major types: pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure. She mentions that *pragmalinguistic failure* "occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by S onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language" (p. 32). She further mentions that this type of pragmatic failure is caused by teaching-induced errors and pragmalinguistic transfer. For example, since the speaker inappropriately uses directness or modification, the hearer interprets the illocutionary force of the speaker's utterance as a request, instead of a command (Barron, 2003). *Sociopragmatic failure*, on the other hand, arises from the mismatches in the judgments of the size of imposition, cost/benefit, social distance, and relative power, rights and obligations, etc. (Thomas, 2006). For instance, the speaker may view his/her interlocutor's linguistic behavior as impolite possibly because the speaker assesses the status of the interlocutor to be lower than his/her actual status (Barron, 2003).

It can be seen that pragmatic failure can cause breakdowns in cross-cultural communication. This type of failure can occur in the performance of speech acts, including a speech act of refusal. The next section will present the characteristics as well as the classification of refusals.

2.6 Speech Act of Refusal

2.6.1 Characteristics of Speech Act of Refusal

One of the speech acts that has been increasingly received a great deal of investigation is the speech act of refusal (Gass & Houck, 1990). Refusals are interesting in that they are "a major cross-cultural 'sticking point' for many nonnative speakers" (Beebe et al., 1990, p. 56). The following are the characteristics of a speech act of refusal:

1) A speech act of refusal is "one of a relatively small number of speech acts which can be characterized as a response to another's act (e.g. to a request, invitation, offer, and suggestion)" (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 2).

2) A speech act of refusal requires an immediate response; therefore, it is impossible for the refuser to spend considerable time on planning and executing this type of speech act (Gass & Houck, 1999).

3) A speech act of refusal is face-threatening since it contradicts the expectations of an interlocutor, hence a disprefered speech act (Eslami, 2010). In other words, making refusals is telling a conversational partner something that he/she does not want to hear; thus, the refuser needs to build support in order to help his/her conversational partner avoid embarrassment (Beebe et al., 1990).

4) A speech act of refusal can be performed directly or indirectly. To soften the negative of effects of a direct refusal, the indirect forms are employed, such as the use of adverbs (e.g. unfortunately), mental state predicates (e.g. *"I don't think…"*), alternatives (e.g. *"Why don't we go out dinner next week instead?"*), etc. (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). In addition, this speech act often involves a long negotiated sequence (Beebe et al., 1990; Gass & Houck, 1999)

5) The form and the content of a speech act of refusal vary according to the eliciting speech act (e.g. request, invitation, offer, or suggestion) as well as other social variables (e.g. the status of the interlocutor) (Beebe et al., 1990).

6) To appropriately understand and produce refusals, the refuser requires a high level of pragmatic competence and a certain amount of culture-specific knowledge and ability (Gass & Houck, 1990; Eslami, 2010).

Due to the complex nature of refusals, the present study will focus on this particular speech act.

2.6.2 Classifications of Refusals

In previous research studies on refusals, attempts have been made not only to investigate how a speech act of refusal is realized in different cultures, but also to group refusal responses into different categories. One of the earliest comparative studies on a speech act of refusal is Rubin (1983, as cited in Eslami, 2010). Apart from pointing out that three levels of knowledge, including a form-function relation, the social parameter of saying no, and the underlying values are necessary for non-native speakers to send or receive a message of *no*, Rubin (1983, as cited in Eslami, 2010) proposes a classification of refusal strategies. Rubin's classification (1983, p. 12-13 as cited in Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 11) consists of nine ways of saying *no* across cultures as presented as follows:

1) Be silent, hesitate, show a lack of enthusiasm
2) Offer an alternative
3) Postponement
4) Put the blame on a third party or something over which you have no control
5) Avoidance
6) General acceptance of an offer but giving no details
7) Divert and distract the addressee
8) General acceptance with excuses
9) Say what is offered is inappropriate

However, according to Gass and Houck (1999) and Sinthukiow and Modehiran (2013), the best-known and the most widely used classification is that proposed by Beebe et al. (1990, p. 72-73). In this classification, refusal responses are divided into

semantic formulas (expressions which were used to perform a refusal) and *adjuncts* (expressions which cannot stand alone to perform a refusal, but go together with semantic formulas) (Gass & Houck, 1999; Eslami, 2010). Semantic formulas are divided into two major categorizes: *direct* and *indirect* while adjuncts consist of four categories as shown below:

I. Direct

A.   Performative (e.g., "I refuse.")

B.   Nonperformative statement
1. "No"
2. Negative willingness/ability ("I can't." "I won't." "I don't think so.")

II. Indirect

A.   Statement of regret (e.g., "I'm sorry…"; "I feel terrible…")

B.   Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help you…")

C.   Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; "I have a headache.")

D.   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?")

E.   Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have…")

F.   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")

G.   Statement of principle (e.g., "I never do business with friends.")

H.   Statement of philosophy (e.g., "One can't be too careful.")

I.   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 the interlocutor off the hook (e.g., "Don't worry about it." "That's okay." "You don't have to.")

6. Self-defense (e.g., "I'm trying my best." "I'm doing all I can do." "I do nutting wrong.")

J.   Acceptance that functions as a refusal
       1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
       2. Lack of enthusiasm

K.   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 or 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 filler (e.g., "uhh"; "well", "Oh", "uhm")

4. Gratitude/appreciation

In most research studies on refusals, refusal responses obtained from the subjects were analyzed in terms of semantic formulas based on Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification. These studies were, for instance, Amarien (1997), Wannaruk (2005, 2008), Nguyen (2006), Geyang (2007), Farnia & Abdul Sattar (2010), Abdul Sattar,

Che Lah, & Raja Suleiman (2011), Farnia & Wu, (2012), and Guo (2012). Refusal responses from the participants in the present investigation will also be analyzed based on this classification. In the following section, frequently used methods of data collection employed in previous studies on refusals will be introduced.

2.7 Methods of Data Collection Employed in Previous Research Studies on Refusals

As mentioned previously, non-native speakers' production of a particular speech act has been the main focus of a number of research studies on speech acts (Gass & Houck, 1999), including the present study. To collect production data on the level of speech act or a speech act sequence, several methods have been employed, which can be classified into *ethnographic data collection* and *elicitation procedures* (e.g. elicited conversation, role-plays, and production questionnaires) (Barron, 2003).

2.7.1 Ethnographic Data Collection

It is undeniable that ethnographic approaches yield better quality of data than other methods since the researchers observe and collect data in a speech community (Nurani, 2009). These data are obtained from actual and natural conversations (Hinkel, 1997), thus "being authentic and close to life" (Yuan, 2001, p. 274). Therefore, not only speech, but every component of interaction, such as laughter, silence, eye contact, and gesture can be observed (Golato, 2003). Despite its strengths, ethnographic data collection has some weaknesses. For example, observing the interlocutors' use of language in naturalistic situations without their permission is considered illegal and unethical (Aston, 1995, as cited in Hinkel, 1997). In addition, in real-life interactions, control over variables, namely the social relationship, power, distance, status, gender,

and age differences between interlocutors is impossible (Yuan, 2001), which consequently makes it difficult for cross-cultural comparisons (Prachanant, 2006). As a result of the limitations of naturalistic data collection, several elicitation instruments have been proposed. Role-plays and production questionnaires, specifically Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), however, have been used the most frequently as instruments (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011).

2.7.2 Role-Plays

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), there are two types of *role-plays*: closed and open. They describe the former as involving the participants being asked to give a one-turn oral response to a given situation. On the one hand, the participants are provided with the details of a situation, such as the purpose of the conversation and their relationship with their conversation partner; however, the outcome of the conversation is not provided (Schauer, 2009). Aside from allowing the researcher observation of sociopragmatic factors, role-plays can be a good choice of data-gathering method in that data obtained through this method are produced orally and provide an insight into turn-taking behavior and negotiation of meaning (Golato, 2003; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011).

It has been found that some research studies on refusals use role-play interactions as the main method of gathering data. Félix-Brasdefer (2004), for example, used role-plays to investigate the sequential organization of politeness strategies of American learners of Spanish. In this study, there were ten role-play situations: six experimental refusal prompts and four distractor items (i.e. apology and complaint). The six refusal prompts were divided into types of situations: situations of formal status (lower-higher) and situations of informal status (equal). Each type included an

invitation, a suggestion, and a request. The interview was conducted in Spanish for L1 and L2 Spanish groups and in English for L1 English group.

In another of his studies, Félix-Brasdefer (2008) collected refusals to invitations produced by male native speakers of American English who were advanced learners of Spanish as a foreign language by means of open role-play interactions. The invitations included an invitation from a friend to a birthday party (formal) and an invitation from a boss to a farewell party (informal). During the role-plays, each learner interacted with two Mexican speakers: a college professor in Spanish literature in the farewell situation and a college student for the birthday situation.

Role-plays were also employed as a means to assess the outcome of the instruction in interventional studies on refusals. Bacelar Da Silva (2003), for example, used two role-play situations as a pre-test and as a post-test. Each role-play was related to an invitation to a different event from a person of equal status. The relationship between the speakers was not close or intimate.

However, while role-plays have several strengths, they are not without problems. The weaknesses of this method are, for instance, the absence of consequences for the role players' inappropriate linguistic behavior (e.g. being rude), which is contrary to actual conversations (Golato, 2003) and the considerable amount of time required in collecting and transcribing data (Prachanant, 2006).

2.7.3 DCTs

An instrument that is considered time-efficient (Tanck, 2004) and easy to use (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000) is the Discourse Completion Task (DCT), which was first employed to investigate the realization of speech acts by Blum-Kulka (1982). A DCT is described by Kasper & Dahl (1991) as a written questionnaire in which the

participants are usually asked to complete the blank space of a brief dialog after the description of a situation in which a speech act under the investigation occurs. According to Nurani (2009), there are five types of DCTs described as follows:

1) *the classic DCT*: In this format, a rejoinder is provided at the end of the situation and/or an interlocutor's utterance is provided at the beginning.

2) *the dialogue construction*: This DCT format may be initiated by an interlocutor's utterance; however, unlike the previous format, the rejoinder is not presented.

3) *the open item verbal response*: The participants are free to respond verbally to the given situation. Their responses are not restricted by an interlocutor's initiation as well as rejoinder.

4) *the open item free response construction*: The participants can give a verbal response, a non-verbal response, or no response at all to a given situation.

5) *the content-enriched DCT developed by Billmyer and Varghese (2000)*: This DCT format is a modification of the open item verbal response. The differences between these two types are that this new format provides detailed contextual information regarding a situation, specifically time and place (Félix-Brasdefer, 2010), and the participants are asked to write their responses.

DCTs have been employed as a primary means of gathering data in a number of research studies on speech acts, including the speech act of refusal. For instance, Duan (2008) developed a written DCT based on Wannaruk (2004, 2005, 2008) for testing English learners' pragmatic knowledge before and after the treatment in interventional studies on refusals. The DCT consisted of 12 situations which varied according to eliciting acts: three invitations, three suggestions, three offers, and three requests. The

interlocutors' levels of social power (i.e. higher, equal, and lower) and levels of social distance (i.e. high, equal, and lower) were also taken into consideration.

Written DCTs have been claimed to be the most common instrument for eliciting speech acts in pragmatics research (Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Félix-Brasdefer, 2010) mainly due to the convenience to administering them (Golato, 2003; Billmyer and Varghese, 2000), the ability to control variables in situations (Golato, 2003; Schauer & Adolphs, 2006), the efficiency of time in collecting a large amount of data (Billmyer and Varghese, 2000; Tanck, 2004), and comparability with other groups without the need to make a transcription (Duan, 2008). However, they also have some drawbacks. For instance, Tanck (2004) mentions that a written DCT may not be able to elicit authentic data since by writing, the participants can change their responses, which is not likely to occur in authentic conversations. Beebe and Cummings (1996, as cited in Billmyer and Varghese, 2000), in contrast, find that data obtained from a written DCT are similar to naturally occurring talk in terms of main patterns and formulas. Since a written DCT has several advantages as discussed previously, it will be used as the main method of data collection in the present investigation.

2.8 Previous Research Studies on Speech Act of Refusal

Previous research studies on the speech act of refusal as reviewed in this section are categorized into three parts: the use of refusal strategies by different cultural groups, the use of refusal strategies by Thai speakers, and the use of refusal strategies by Chinese speakers as shown as follows:

2.8.1 The Use of Refusal Strategies by Different Cultural Groups

Beebe et al. (1990) investigated pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. 60 subjects participated in this study: 20 Japanese speaking Japanese (JJs), 20 Japanese speaking English (JEs), and 20 Americans speaking English (AEs). Data were collected by means of a DCT which included three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions. Each eliciting act required a refusal to an interlocutor of higher, equal, or lower status. The DCT responses were analyzed in terms of semantic formulas and coded based on the classification of refusals. The results indicated evidence of negative transfer in JE refusals in three areas: the order of semantic formulas, the frequency of semantic formulas, and the content of semantic formulas. Interestingly, JJs and JEs tended to refuse differently to interlocutors of unequal status whereas AEs made different responses to acquaintances of equal status. Possibly, sensitivity to a higher status person affected semantic formulas used by JJs and JEs while the degree of familiarity was more likely to influence those used by AEs.

Similar to Beebe et al. (1990), Kwon (2003) investigated pragmatic transfer in Korean EFL learners' refusals. 118 subjects participated in this study: 40 native speakers of Korea (NK), 37 native speakers of American English (NE), and 111 Korean EFL learners who were divided into levels of beginners, intermediate, and advanced. Data were coded according to the classification of refusals established by Beebe et al. (1990) and analyzed in terms of quantity and quality. The findings revealed that pragmatic transfer was the most prevalent among advanced learners due to their greater linguistic ability. In other words, advanced learners were able to transfer sensitivity to a higher status person, the preferred strategies in their native language (i.e. 'Pause fillers', 'Hedging', 'Postponement', 'Statement of solidarity', 'Statement of

acknowledgment' and 'Statement of alternative'), and the tone of refusal strategies to their performance of refusals in English. Also, they were more similar to NKs than the other two groups in the frequency of their use of direct strategies. On the one hand, advanced learners diverged from the Korean norms by adopting the target language preferred strategies like 'Positive feeling' and 'Gratitude'. Additionally, their refusals were sometimes more verbose and softened than those made by NKs and NEs, resulting from the overuse of both NKs' and NEs' preferred strategies.

In a similar vein, Al-Eryani (2007) compared the use of refusal strategies by 20 Yemeni learners of English (YELs), 20 Yemeni Arabic native speakers (YANSs), and 20 American English native speakers (AENSs). Data were gathered using a DCT developed by Beebe et al. (1990). The DCT responses were analyzed in terms of units of semantic formulas and coded based on the refusal taxonomy established by Beebe et al. (1990). The findings showed that although the two language groups employed a similar range of refusal strategies, they varied in the order, frequency, and content of semantic formulas according to the status of the interlocutors and types of eliciting acts and that both pragmatic transfer and pragmatic competence were indicated in YEL refusals. That is, YELs tended to use a similar choice and order of semantic formulas to AENSs in refusing an invitation from an interlocutor of lower status. Specifically, YANSs tended to employ 'Excuse' in the first position of semantic formulas while YELs and AENSs tended to use 'Regret' or 'Positive feeling' in the first position and 'Excuse' or 'Regret' in the second and third position. YELs with higher proficiency were more similar to AENSs in terms of order, frequency, and content of semantic formulas than YELS with lower English language proficiency.

Similar to Al-Eryani (2007), Allami and Naeimi (2011) used a DCT developed by Beebe et al.'s (1990) to investigate refusal strategies employed by 31 native speakers of Persian and 30 Persian-speaking learners of English comprising three levels of English proficiency. The data obtained from these two groups were compared to those obtained from 37 American native speakers of English in Kwon's (2003) study. All responses were coded based on the classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990). The findings revealed that the status of the interlocutors and types of eliciting acts affected the performance of refusals in English by the EFL learners. However, native speakers of English and native speakers of Persian differed in terms of the frequency shift and the content of semantic formulas. While the frequency of refusal strategies used by American native speakers of English seemed be consistent regardless of the status of the interlocutors, native speakers of Persian showed a higher level of frequency shift. It was also found that the EFL learners with upper-intermediate levels of proficiency showed greater transfer of L1 sociocultural norms to their refusals in English and made more pragmatic errors than those with lower-intermediate or intermediate levels of proficiency.

Instead of focusing on a specific language group, Tanck (2004) compared the use of refusals and complaints made by 12 native speakers of English and those made by 13 non-native speakers of English, whose first language included Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, or Thai. The researcher developed a DCT which comprised situations in a university setting. The relationship between the speakers and the hearers in each situation were either equal or unequal. The results revealed common strategies employed by native speakers in refusing invitations: 'Expression of Regret', 'Excuse', and 'Offer of Alternative'. These strategies were also

used by non-native speakers. However, non-native speakers tended to give fewer excuses and alternatives when rejecting a professor's invitation as well as expressions of regret and alternatives when refusing a classmate's invitation to lunch. While native speakers often offered specific excuses when refusing a professor, non-native speakers tended to do the same with a classmate.

Similar to Tanck (2004), Al-Kahtani (2005) compared the use of refusal strategies by native and non-native speakers of English. The participants in this study consisted of three different cultural groups: 10 Americans, 10 Arabs speaking English (AEs), and 10 Japanese speaking English (JEs). Data were collected and analyzed based on Beebe et al. (1990). The findings revealed that all groups differed in three areas: the order of semantic formulas, the frequency of semantic formulas, and the content of semantic formulas, but not in all situations. The content of excuses given by JEs and AEs were unclear and not as specific as the Americans. Interestingly, JEs were reported to use 'Statement of principle' and 'Statement of philosophy' more often than the other two groups. In addition, both JEs and AEs were likely to use language in a more formal manner than the Americans.

In line with Tanck (2004) and Al-Kahtani (2005), Nguyen (2006) also examined refusals made by native and non-native speakers of English. Specifically, it compared strategies used by 40 Australian English native speakers (AEs) and 40 Vietnamese learners of English (VEs) in refusing requests. Data were collected by means of a DCT which included 19 situations related to everyday life and varying in terms of three levels of social status (i.e. high, equal, and low), three levels of social distance (i.e. intimate, acquaintance, and stranger), and two levels of gender relationship (i.e. same and opposite). The findings showed that AEs and VEs shared both similarities and

differences in the employment of refusal strategies. VEs tended to use more 'Regret', 'Explanation', 'Statement of empathy', and 'Addressing term' than AEs. Meanwhile, AEs tended to be more direct by using 'Unwillingness/doubt' and 'No' and 'Statement of principle'. These differences were believed to result from the differences between the two cultures. When the same number of refusal strategies was used by both groups with interlocutors of any status type, the social status and social distance of the requesters were likely to affect VEs' choice of strategies. In addition, both groups often expressed 'Regret' to interlocutors of the opposite gender. VEs were more likely to use 'No' and 'Statement of alternative' when refusing interlocutors of the same gender. AEs, on the other hand, used these strategies in refusing those of the opposite gender.

In a study similar to that of Al-Katahni (2005), Geyang (2007) conducted a pilot study on the use of refusal strategies by three different cultural groups. Participants in this study consisted of 26 Japanese EFL learners, 31 Chinese EFL learners, and five English native speakers. Data were collected using a DCT which was comprised of two situations in academic contexts: 1) a teacher's suggestion on a report and 2) a good friend's suggestion to take a speaking class. It was found that all groups used the provided external reasons in their refusals as well as 'Disagreement'. However, the American group preferred to disagree in the first position of semantic formulas, the Chinese in the second position, and the Japanese in the third position. The Japanese group was reported to use more semantic formulas than the other two groups. In addition, they frequently adopted 'Gratitude', 'Positive evaluation', 'Explanation', 'Mind', and 'Request' in situation 1 while 'Positive evaluation' was frequently employed by these learners in situation 2. The Chinese group was similar to the Japanese group in the use of 'Disagreement' and similar to the American group in the

use of 'Gratitude', 'Mind', 'Positive evaluation', and 'Understanding'. For the preferred sequences, the Japanese group favored the 'yes-but sequence'. The Japanese group and the Chinese group preferred the '(because)-so sequence'. Meanwhile the American group preferred the reversed pattern. The power of interlocutors was found to affect how these three groups refused to some extent.

Unlike the previous studies above, Al-Shboul et al. (2012) compared the performance of a speech act of refusal in English between two groups of non-native speakers. Specifically, six Jordanian EFL learners and six Malaysian ESL learners participated in this study. Data were collected by means of a DCT and analyzed based on Beebe et al. (1990). The findings showed that both groups used almost similar strategies with similar frequency. The similarities between the two cultural groups resulted from religious similarities and collectivist cultural orientation. However, Jordanian respondents were likely to use indirect strategies in refusing an interlocutor of any status type whereas Malaysian respondents seemed to be direct in refusing an interlocutor of higher and equal status. Malaysian respondents were likely to express 'Gratitude' more frequently than Jordanian respondents. In addition, none of Jordanian respondents employed 'Promise of future acceptance' whereas none of Malaysian respondents employed 'Statement of philosophy'.

Motivated by the use of English as an International Language (EIL), Shishavan and Sharifian (2013) compared the employment of refusal strategies between L1 (Persian) and L2 (English) with regard to gender and the status of the interlocutor. The subjects in this study included 86 undergraduate students majoring in English. Two methods of data collection, a DCT and a Focus Group Interview (FGI) were employed. The DCT responses were coded based on the modified version of Beebe et al.'s

classification of refusals and analyzed as head acts and supportive moves. It was found that Persian and English responses given by the subjects were similar in the use of head acts which could be divided into direct head acts (i.e. 'Explicit refusals', 'Statements of negative ability/willingness', and 'Hedge performative') and indirect head acts (e.g. 'Reasons and Explanations', 'Statement of alternatives', 'Letting the interlocutor off the hook', 'Conditional acceptance'). Although the subjects made similar choices of supportive moves when making refusals in both Persian and English to interlocutors of either the same or opposite gender and interlocutors of equal or higher social power, their responses in both languages differed in terms of frequency. Furthermore, the interview data indicated that the participants transferred their native cultural scheme of ritual politeness and statement/feeling of distance-out-of-respect to the performance of refusals in English.

2.8.2 The Use of Refusal Strategies by Thai Speakers

Similar to Beebe et al. (1990), Sairhun (1999) investigated pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals. Participants included 50 American university students responding in English and 50 Thai university students responding in Thai and English. Data were collected using a DCT which consisted of six requests and six suggestions. The findings indicated that there were differences in the choice and content of American English refusals and Thai refusals. For example, Thai subjects tended to be less direct than American subjects when refusing both requests and suggestions. It was also found that pragmatic transfer from Thai to English produced by Thai EFL learners existed in the employment of: 1) intensifiers (e.g. *really* or *very*) in regret and gratitude, 2) hedging using the phrase *"I'm afraid…"*), 3) the pattern *"Yes, but…"* in showing positive feelings, 4) family members and personal matters (e.g. father, mother, or uncle) as

explanations, and 5) admonishment. In addition, social status seemed to influence refusal strategies used by Thai subjects in Thai and English to a greater extent than those used by the American subjects.

In the same way, Wannaruk (2005, 2008) studied pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals. 120 subjects participated in this study: 40 Thai graduate students responding in Thai, 40 Thai EFL graduate students responding in English, and 40 American graduate students responding in English. Data were collected through a DCT and a follow-up interview. The DCT consisted of three requests, three suggestions, three invitations, and three offers from an interlocutor of higher, equal, or lower status with whom they were familiar or unfamiliar. All situations were related to university students. The findings revealed that pragmatic transfer occurred in three areas: 1) choice of refusal strategies, 2) length of refusal strategies, and 3) content of refusal strategies. The status of the interlocutors and types of eliciting acts played a role in influencing the strategies used by all groups. Language proficiency level was also an important factor influencing the content of 'Explanation'. In other words, learners with high English proficiency usually gave clearer and more specific reasons. Those with low English proficiency were likely to rely on word-for-word translation when giving responses in English.

Unlike the previous studies above, Kittisiriprasert (2011) focused only on the use of refusal strategies in English by 19 Thai graduate students. Data were gathered by means of a DCT which consisted of 12 situations with different levels of social power and social distance. Data were coded based on the classification of refusal developed by Beebe et al. (1990) and Sairhun (1999). It was shown that the subjects employed both direct strategies and indirect strategies. Indirect strategies consisted of

'Explanation', 'Apologizing', 'Giving advice', 'Expressing positive opinion', and 'Expressing gratitude'. New strategies also emerged in this study, for example, 'Greetings', 'Hesitation', 'Accepting with condition', 'Asking for sympathy', 'Promising', 'Expressing negative opinion', and 'Showing intention and caring'. In addition, the subjects' problems in making refusals were evident in the use of incorrect language functions, adopting unconventional expressions, and making grammatical mistakes, which possibly resulted from the influence of their native language and a lack of knowledge and experience in using English expressions.

Based on the use of English as a means of cross-cultural communication between non-native speakers, Farnia and Abdul Sattar (2010) examined refusals to requests in English by 20 Malay and 20 Thai university students. Data were collected by means of a DCT. The DCT included three situations: a Thai-host mother's request to take care of her son, a Thai-host sister's request to help her finish her homework, and a Thai-host brother's request to help him build a plastic model airplane. They found that Thai and Malay university students used similar strategies in refusing requests to someone older, someone the same age, someone younger and both groups preferred using indirect strategies to using the direct ones. Thus, misunderstandings were not much found in cross-cultural communication between Malay and Thai university students in this study. However, age factor was reported to affect the frequency and content of the strategies used by each group.

Consistent with the study of Farnia and Abdul Sattar (2010), Boonkongsaen (2013) investigated refusals performed in English by Thais and Filipinos. Data were collected from 30 Filipino and 30 Thai teachers of English using a DCT which was comprised of three invitations, three suggestions, three offers, and three requests. Data

were coded according to the classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990) and analyzed in terms of frequency. Overall, both groups preferred indirect strategies to direct ones. However, Filipinos employed direct strategies more frequently than Thais. Both groups favored 'Explanation' most, often followed by 'Regret'. Types of eliciting acts as well as the status of the interlocutors were found to play an important role in influencing the use of refusal strategies by Thais. In other words, Thais tended to employ direct strategies less frequently than Filipinos, particularly when declining offers to a higher status person. The strategy use in English by both groups was thought likely to mirror the cultural values of both societies with Thais showing higher sensitivity to social rank.

2.8.3 The Use of Refusal Strategies by Chinese Speakers

Hong (2011) compared refusals made by native and non-native speakers of Chinese to the professor's invitation to a Chinese New Year party. Data were collected through a DCT from 30 Chinese and 30 American college students and analyzed as consisting of head acts and supportive moves. The results showed that there were both similarities and differences in their strategy use. The strategies employed by both groups included 'Explanation', 'Addressing with title', 'Thanking', 'Apologizing', 'Promising future event', 'Greeting', and 'Direct refusal'. Similarities in frequency between the two groups existed in the use of 'Explanation', 'Thanking', 'Apologizing', and 'Greeting'. Non-native speakers showed a higher frequency of use in 'Direct refusal' than native speakers and they never used 'Providing alternative', 'Exclamation', and 'Indirect compliant' in their refusals, which was assumed to be due to a lack of sociocultural competence in the L2. In addition, the similarities and differences in their strategy use seemed to be influenced by contextual factors, the

power relations between students and teachers, and the indirect communicative patterns of East Asia.

In addition, Guo (2012) modified Beebe et al.'s (1990) DCT to explore Chinese and English refusal strategies. There were eight DCT situations likely to occur to both Chinese and American college students. The situations were divided into two requests, two invitations, three offers, and one suggestion. Rank of impositions, levels of relative power (i.e. higher and equal), and levels of social distance (i.e. neutral, near, and nearer) were also taken into consideration. It was found that there were more similarities than differences in the use of refusal strategies by both Chinese and North American speakers. However, American participants tended to be more direct than Chinese participants. 'Reason' was found to be most frequently used by both groups; however, the content of reasons given by American participants was broader and more direct than that of Chinese participants. Generally, Chinese participants preferred 'Reason' and 'Statement of alternative' whereas American participants preferred 'Regret' and 'Consideration of interlocutor's feelings'. In addition, the choice of refusal strategies in both Chinese and American refusals was influenced by context as well as the relative social distance and power. For instance, it was hard for Chinese participants to refuse a person of higher status and they appeared to be economical in their strategy use. In addition, they were concerned about the age and the status of interlocutors as illustrated in the use of address terms. It also seemed that American participants were concerned about their personal rights. The differences between Chinese and American refusals could be attributed to their cultural differences.

Unlike to the two previous studies above, Han (2006) examined sociocultural transfer from Chinese to English produced by Chinese EFL learners and factors

influencing the transfer. 100 subjects participated in this study: 50 Chinese EFL learners and 100 British English native speakers. A DCT, which comprised 16 situations familiar to university students, was administered and followed by a semi-structured interview. The DCT data were analyzed in terms of units of semantic formulas and coded based on Liao and Bresnahen's (1994) classification of refusals. The findings revealed that sociocultural transfer existed in the options for semantic formulas, including the use of rhetorical question, returning a favor, and acceptance of ambivalence as well as its content, including explanation and negative consequence. Factors which possibly motivated the transfer were traditional socio-psychological ideology, social system and political factors, and economy.

Similarly, Lin (2014) studied the use of refusal strategies by 30 native Mandarin Chinese native speakers, 30 Chinese EFL learners, and 30 American English native speakers in terms of perception and performance. A Scale Response Questionnaire (SRQ) and a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) were employed in this study. The DCT data were coded according to the revised classification of refusals established by Beebe et al. (1990). The results from SQR showed that Chinese EFL learners perceived a greater face-threat towards refusals than the other two groups, which may have contributed to a more frequent use of indirect strategies and adjuncts. With regard to direct strategies, all groups preferred 'Negative ability' along with mitigating devices. Meanwhile, 'Explanation' was their most favored indirect use of strategy and the use of family matters and health problems as reasons by the learners was influenced by their L1. For refusal patterns, the Chinese group tended to use 'Explanation' before 'Regret' whereas the American group and the EFL learners preferred 'Regret' followed by 'Explanation' or 'Negative ability'.

Based on the growth in cross-cultural communication in English between non-native speakers, Farnia and Wu (2012) investigated refusals to invitations made in English by Chinese international students and Malaysian students in Malaysia. Data were collected by means of a DCT which consisted of two situations with the interlocutor of equal (a friend) or high-low status (a supervisor). It was reported that the Chinese group employed 'Excuse, reason, explanation' and 'Statement of regret' as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. Malay students, in contrast, preferred 'Statement of regret' and 'Excuse, reason, explanation' as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. For the third most frequent strategy, both groups used 'Negative ability/willingness'. Statistical analysis showed that in refusing a friend, Chinese respondents used significantly more 'Statement of regret' and 'Expression of gratitude' than Malaysian respondents. Meanwhile, Malaysian respondents used significantly more 'Alerter' (e.g. sir and dear) and 'Repayment' than Chinese respondents. In refusing a supervisor, Malaysian respondents used significantly more 'Expression of negative ability', 'Statement of regret', 'Alerter'; 'Greetings', and 'Repayment' than their Chinese counterparts. Levels of grammatical competence were found to influence the degree of elaboration of strategies in each group. Additionally, it was found that the selection of language of thought was a conditioning factor in the planning and execution of refusals.

The findings from the above-mentioned studies can be summarized as follows: 1) Similarities and differences exist in the choice, frequency, order, and content of refusal strategies between two or more languages (e.g. Thai, Chinese, and English) and between native and non-native English speakers; 2) Indirect strategies are preferred in order to save the face of the interlocutors and 'Excuse, reason, explanation' is reported

by most studies as the most frequently used strategy.; 3) The performance of a speech act in English by non-native speakers reflects their native cultural norms to some extent.; 4) Factors influencing the use of refusal strategies, for example, include types of eliciting acts, the social power, and social distance of an interlocutor, the L1 culture, levels of the target language proficiency, and instructional effects.; and 6) Native English speakers (e.g. American and Australian) tend to be more direct in their refusals than non-native English speakers, especially those from Asian countries. These findings will be crucial for the present study in that they can be compared to the findings obtained from the present study to investigate the similarities and differences.

2.9 Summary

This chapter reviews crucial concepts and previous research studies related to the present study. Crucial concepts include cooperative principle, speech acts, politeness, and a speech act of refusal. Following these, the relationship between pragmatics and communicative competence as well as the relationship between pragmatic failure and cross-cultural communication are discussed. Then, data collection methods and previous studies on refusals are reviewed. The information from this chapter has been used for the research design of the present investigation, which will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology employed in the present study to compare the use of refusal strategies in an academic setting: 1) between Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs) and Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs), 2) between Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs), and 3) between Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs). This study employed two methods of data collection: a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and a follow-up interview. The methodology was divided into three phases: 1) the development of the DCT, 2) the pilot study, and 3) the main study as described below.

3.1 Development of the DCT

From the discussion on the methods of data collection employed in previous research studies on refusals in Chapter 2, it can be concluded that the ideal data-gathering method does not exist. All available methods have both strengths and weaknesses. In order to select the most appropriate method, Yuan (2001) suggests that researchers should base their decisions on methodology according to their research questions and objectives.

After considering the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods as well as the research questions and objectives of the present study, the researcher

selected the DCT as the main means of gathering the data primarily due to these reasons: *firstly*, although a large amount of time was needed for the development, the DCT was easy to administer and would enable the researcher to collect data from a large number of respondents in a relatively brief period of time (Barron, 2003). *Secondly*, the DCT allowed the researcher to control features of the situations, such as types of eliciting acts and interlocutors' levels of social power and distance (Golato, 2003; Schauer & Adolphs, 2006), resulting in data which could be compared across different cultural groups (Barron, 2003). The development of the DCT for this study, including designing the DCT situations and determining the appropriateness of the DCT situations will be explained in the next section.

3.1.1 Designing the DCT Situations

To develop situations that could elicit refusals in an academic setting, the researcher referred to two sources in terms of design and content: 1) situations included in the DCTs and role-plays from 15 previous studies on refusals (Beebe et al., 1990; Amarien, 1997; Tanck, 2004; Bacelar Da Silva, 2003; Félix-Bradesfer, 2004; Wannaruk, 2005; Nguyen, 2006; Geyang, 2007; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008; Duan, 2010; Farnia & Abdul Sattar, 2010; Abdul Sattar et al., 2011; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011; Farnia & Wu, 2012; Guo, 2012) and 2) actual situations in which refusals could be given by graduate students in Thai and Chinese higher education.

Based on these two sources, the criteria for the design of the DCT for the present study were set as follows: *firstly*, the DCT contained 12 situations which could be categorized into four types of eliciting acts: three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions. Invitations are defined as types of requests made from the thoughtfulness and kindness of an inviter, requests as politely asking for something,

offers as presenting something for the other person, and suggestions as ideas proposed to the other person to consider (Nelson, Carson, Al Batal, & Bakary, 2002).

Secondly, three social factors, including *social power*, *social distance*, and *rank of imposition*s were selected to be studied because these factors seemed to play a more dominant role than all the other factors in the performance of speech acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Specifically, the researcher took into account two levels of social distance (i.e. familiar and unfamiliar) and two levels of social power (i.e. equal and higher). However, the rank of impositions was not controlled.

Thirdly, the situations were likely to take place in higher education and/or relate to academic issues. In addition, these situations could occur to students, especially at graduate level, regardless of their academic majors.

Lastly, the part where a refusal was to be given in each situation was specifically designed for a graduate student. Therefore, the subjects were not required to take any special roles (Wannaruk, 2005, 2008), but to act themselves and respond as they would do in actual situations (Trosborg, 1995, as cited in Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011).

The content of these 12 DCT situations was adapted from the content of the situations from the two sources to meet the above-mentioned criteria and distributed as shown in Table 3.1. To determine the appropriateness of these situations, the researcher conducted a structured interview with Thai and Chinese graduate students in the following step as explained in the following page:

Table 3.1 Distribution of 12 DCT Situations for the Structured Interview

Situation	Eliciting Act	Description	Interlocutor	
			Social Power*	Social Distance**
1	Invitation	A graduate student invites another graduate student, to whom he/she has talked a few times before, to the Ph.D. thesis defense.	=	+
2	Invitation	A professor invites a graduate student to a workshop by a guest speaker.	+	+
3	Invitation	An advisor invites an advisee to lunch with other advisees.	+	-
4	Request	A graduate student requests another graduate student, whom he/she meets for the first time, to complete a questionnaire for about 20 minutes.	=	+
5	Request	A classmate requests his/her classmate to proofread a term paper.	=	-
6	Request	A professor requests a current graduate student to attend an orientation for new students.	+	+
7	Offer	A classmate offers tutoring to his/her classmate before an examination.	=	-
8	Offer	A professor offers a research grant to a graduate student.	+	+
9	Offer	An advisor offers a teaching assistantship to an advisee.	+	-
10	Suggestion	A new graduate student suggests another new graduate student enrolls in a certain course.	=	+
11	Suggestion	A classmate suggests his/her classmate narrows down a research topic.	=	-
12	Suggestion	An advisor suggests an advisee presents research at an international conference abroad.	+	-

* + higher, = equal
** - familiar, + unfamiliar

3.1.2 Determining the Appropriateness of the DCT Situations

Since the present study is motivated by the idea that contact and communication in English between Thai and Chinese people are likely to increase in both Thai and Chinese higher education, it was essential that the researcher found out whether the 12 situations obtained from the previous step were feasible in both Thai and Chinese contexts or not. In so doing, the structured interview was conducted as follows:

3.1.2.1 Subjects

20 subjects participated in the structured interview, which comprised 10 Thai and 10 Chines graduate students in Thailand. The Thai participants consisted of five English major and five non-English major students. Meanwhile, the Chinese students included six English major and four non-English major students. It should be noted that although currently pursuing higher education in Thailand, the Chinese participants had been students in Chinese higher education. In other words, all of them obtained a bachelor's degree from Chinese universities. Eight received a master's degree from Chinese universities while the other two received a master's degree from the same Thai university. The information about the subjects for this step is summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Summary of the Subjects for the Structured Interview

		Thai subjects n = 10	Chinese subjects n = 10
Major	**English**	5	6
	Non-English	5	4
Gender	**Male**	5	5
	Female	5	5

3.1.2.2 Method of Data Collection

A structured interview was used in this step which enabled the researcher to ask the participants the same set of questions that focused precisely on the information the researcher wanted, which made it easier for the researcher to compare the participants' responses (McKey & Gass, 2005). In this study, the subjects were interviewed individually. The researcher first read each situation to the subject and then asked the question *"Could this situation happen in Thailand/China?"*, which was

adapted from Nelson et al. (2002) . The interview with the Chinese subjects was conducted in English while the interview with the Thai subjects was in Thai. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes.

3.1.2.3 Data Analysis

To determine the appropriateness of the 12 DCT situations, data obtained from the structured interviews were analyzed by frequency. If all or the majority of the interviewees in each group responded that a given situation could happen in their country, that situation would be included as one of the situations in the DCT for the pilot study.

3.1.2.4 Results of the Structured Interview

All the Thai interviewees agreed that the 12 DCT situations could happen in Thailand, but the chance of their occurrence may vary from situation to situation. For instance, classmates' discussion on the research topic may occur more frequently than an unfamiliar graduate student's request to fill out a questionnaire. Similarly, the Chinese interviewees reported that all the situations could also take place in China. To be specific, all of them stated that the 10 situations (i.e. situation 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12) could happen in China, and nine out of 10 stated that two of the situations (i.e. situation 4 and 11) could happen in China. For situation 4, only one Chinese interviewee mentioned that he had never seen such a situation since the research in his field did not involve human subjects. For situation 11, only one Chinese participant stated that an advisor should be the only one who could give suggestions on the scope of the research topic.

Additionally, the interviewees provided useful information for improvements of the DCT situations to better suit both Thai and Chinese academic

contexts. For example, for situation 1, a graduate student's invitation to the Ph.D. thesis defense was modified to a graduate student's invitation to his/her own thesis defense to be in accordance with the understanding of most respondents. Another example is situation 7 in which a classmate offers tutoring to another classmate before the examination. Most Chinese participants mentioned that it was not quite normal for such a situation to happen between classmates, but only between very good friends. However, classmates may share note summaries or special resources. In addition, for situation 8 in which a professor offers a research grant to a graduate student, both groups seemed to agree that this kind of grant was usually provided by the government or the university. In fact, an advisor may occasionally offer research assistantships to some graduate students to work closely with him/her on a research project.

After these changes, the DCT was developed using the classic format. That is, after a brief description of a situation, a short dialogue is initiated by the first speaker acting as a stimulus and ended by a rejoinder, the conversational partner's positive/negative response (Barron, 2003). In order not to bias the choice of responses, the researcher did not state clearly what sort of responses was required; therefore, the rejoinders were presented to ensure that the respondents would provide a refusal (Beebe et al., 1990). The example below demonstrates the format of a DCT situation used in the present investigation:

Situation 2: *A graduate student approaches you.*

Student: *Excuse me. I'm a master's student here. I'm doing a mini research project on how graduate students use the Internet. Do you have 20 minutes to fill out a questionnaire?*

You: _____

Student: *Okay then. Thanks anyway.*

After the development of the DCT, the researcher asked two native English speakers to check the correctness and the naturalness of the language in each situation. To ensure its effectiveness in eliciting refusals, the DCT was pre-administered to Thai and Chinese graduate students in the pilot study as described in the following section.

3.2 Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was twofold: *first*, to gain information about the reliability and validity of the DCT and *second*, to find out possible guided questions for a follow-up interview in the main study. Below are the details of the pilot study:

3.2.1 Subjects

The subjects in the pilot study consisted of eight Thai and eight Chinese graduate students in Thai higher education. 15 subjects were taken from the structured interview in the development of the DCT (see 3.1.2.1) while one Chinese subject was included particularly in this study to replace another one from the structured interview who was not available at the time of the study. Each group included four English major and four non-English major students as well as four males and four females.

3.2.2 Methods of Data Collection

The pilot study involved two methods of data collection: the DCT and a retrospective interview as explained in the following page:

3.2.2.1 DCT

The pilot study of the DCT was preliminarily aimed at finding out: 1) whether the participants clearly understood the situations and 2) whether the situations could elicit the speech act under investigation (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011). The

researcher arranged to meet each respondent in person at his/her convenience. Each respondent was asked to read the directions. They were allowed to ask any questions before responding to the 12 DCT situations. Data obtained from the

DCT and comments from the respondents were used to modify the situations.

3.2.2.2 Retrospective Interview

Each subject was asked to report or verbalize their thought sequences immediately after the completion of the DCT. The main purpose of the interview was to find out possible questions to be included in the interview guide for a follow-up interview in the main study. Specifically, the researcher started interviewing each subject with a general question *"What were you paying attention to when you responded to this situation?"*, which was adapted from Félix-Brasdefer (2008). Additional questions were asked based on the interviewees' responses. During the interview, the subjects were allowed to review their responses. The Chinese subjects were interviewed in English while the Thai subjects were interviewed in Thai. The whole process of the pilot study for each subject, including the DCT and the interview lasted approximately an hour.

3.2.3 Adjustment of Methods of Data Collection after the Pilot Study

3.2.3.1 DCT

The results of the pilot study revealed that some modifications of the DCT were needed to increase its effectiveness in eliciting refusals. Examples are as follows: *firstly*, some respondents stated that the directions provided in the DCT were not clear, which resulted in responses that could not be used for the study. To make sure that the subjects understood what they were supposed to do, the researcher provided additional explanations in the directions. *Secondly*, to establish a clearer status for the

interlocutors, the researcher specified the position of the interlocutors. For instance, *a professor* was assigned as *the Director of the Office of International Affairs* or *the Dean of the Graduate School*. *Thirdly*, instead of refusing, some respondents accepted in a few situations, for instance, a graduate student's request to complete a questionnaire. These respondents mentioned that the rejoinders in these situations were ambiguous in that the response could be either a refusal or an acceptance. Therefore, the rejoinders were modified in a way that made it difficult for them to write anything appropriate other than a refusal. *Lastly*, to gain better insight into the realization of a speech act of refusal by each group, the respondents were asked to rate the degree of pressure they felt to accept the proposed act immediately after each situation.

Table 3.3 shows the final version of the DCT situations. The English version of the DCT (see Appendix A) was translated into Thai and Chinese (see Appendices B and C, respectively). The Thai version was translated by the researcher who is a native Thai speaker and assessed by two native Thai speakers who are fluent in English. Similarly, the Chinese version was translated by a native Chinese speaker who is fluent in English and assessed by another native Chinese speaker who is fluent in English.

Table 3.3 Distribution of 12 DCT Situations for the Main Study

Situation	Eliciting Act	Description	Interlocutor	
			Social Power*	Social Distance**
1	Invitation	A graduate student invites another graduate student from the same department, to whom he/she has talked a few times before, to his/her thesis defense.	=	+
2	Invitation	The Director of the Office of International Affairs invites a graduate student to a welcome party for new international students	+	+
3	Invitation	An advisor invites an advisee to lunch with other advisees.	+	-
4	Request	A master's student requests a graduate student, whom he/she meets for the first time, to complete a questionnaire for about 20 minutes.	=	+
5	Request	A roommate requests his/her roommate to proofread a term paper.	=	-
6	Request	The Dean of the Graduate School requests a current graduate student to demonstrate online registration for courses to new students at an orientation.	+	+
7	Offer	A classmate offers a book of abstracts to his/her classmate.	=	-
8	Offer	The Dean of the Graduate School offers a teaching assistantship to a graduate student.	+	+
9	Offer	An advisor offers a research assistantship to an advisee.	+	-
10	Suggestion	A new graduate student suggests another new graduate student enrolls in a certain course.	=	+
11	Suggestion	A classmate suggests his/her classmate, who works in the same field, narrows down a research topic.	=	-
12	Suggestion	An advisor suggests an advisee presents research at an international conference in Singapore.	+	-

*   + higher, = equal
** - familiar, + unfamiliar

3.2.3.2 Retrospective Interview

Several questions were generated during the interview, which ranged from general questions (e.g. *"What were you paying attention to when you responded to this situation?"*) to more specific ones (e.g. *"Did the status of your conversational partners affect how you refused in these situations?*). To construct the interview guide, the researcher selected questions that helped the researcher obtain deeper insight into the subjects' perceptions of the situations as well as factors influencing their choice of strategies.

A week after the pilot study, the questions in the interview guide were pre-administered to two Thai and two Chinese subjects from the pilot study to find out whether there were any problems with the questions, sequence, timing, recording, and other technical matters (Prachanant, 2006). The final version of the English interview guide (see Appendix D) and the Thai interview guide (see Appendix E) was used with the Chinese subjects and the Thai subjects in the main study, respectively.

3.3 Main Study

To answer the research questions and to achieve the research objectives of the present study, the researcher employed the following research methodology:

3.3.1 Subjects

120 subjects were selected to participate in this study as described below:

3.3.1.1 Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs)

The TT group included 30 Thai students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities. The subjects comprised 15 males and 15 females and their ages ranged from 24-36 years of age.

3.3.1.2 Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs)

The CC group included 30 Chinese students, which consisted of 17 students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Chinese universities, eight students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities, two students holding a master's degree in Engineering from Chinese universities, and three students holding a bachelor's degree in Engineering from Chinese universities. The subjects comprised 16 males and 14 females and their age ranged from 22-38 years of age.

3.3.1.3 Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs)

The TE group included 30 Thai students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities. The subjects comprised 15 English major students and 15 non-English major students as well as 14 males and 16 females. Their ages ranged from 22-43 years of age.

3.3.1.4 Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs)

The CE group included 30 Chinese students currently studying a variety of academic majors at graduate level at Thai universities. The subjects comprised 15 English major students and 15 non-English major students as well as 12 males and 18 females. Their ages ranged from 23-48 years of age.

Although there was a wide range of ages of the subjects in the present study, which could be one of the factors influencing the differences in their use of refusal strategies, most of them were studying at the same level of higher education, that is, at graduate level. In addition, it was difficult to control the English language proficiency of both Thai and Chinese subjects responding the DCT in English since they were from different universities. Instead, the researcher categorized the subjects

based on their fields of study into two main groups: English major and non-English major. It was assumed that English major students had a higher English proficiency than the non-English major students.

3.3.2 Methods of Data Collection

Similar to the pilot study, methods of data collection employed in the main study included the DCT and a follow-up interview as described below:

3.3.2.1 DCT

The major purpose of the DCT was to explore the use of refusal strategies by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs. Prior to the administration of the DCT, all respondents were asked to sign a consent form giving their permission which was adapted from Tanck (2004) and Nguyen (2006) (see Appendices F and G) and to complete a background information survey, including age, gender, nationality, educational background, etc. (see Appendices H and I).

The English version of the DCT (see Appendix A) was administered to TEs and CEs. Meanwhile, the Thai version (see Appendix B) was used with TTs and the Chinese version (see Appendix C) with CCs. Before responding to the DCT, the researcher asked the respondents to read the directions and explained to them once again that they must read the information given in each situation thoroughly and respond as naturally as possible. The respondents were told that grammatical accuracy was not the focus of the study (Beebe et al., 1990) in order that they would not feel they were being tested on this aspect (Prachanant, 2006). Then the respondents responded to the 12 DCT situations by writing what they would actually say in the blank space provided in each situation. After each situation, they were asked to rate how much pressure they felt to accept the proposed act.

3.3.2.2 Follow-up Interview

A follow-up interview was aimed at obtaining additional information about the respondents' perceptions of the situations and factors influencing their choice of refusal strategies. The interview data were used for the discussion of the findings from the DCT data in Chapter 5. For the present study, 10 TEs and 10 CEs were selected to participate in the interview according to the guideline for the selection (see Appendix J). The guidelines were developed based on the responses of the participants in the pilot study.

Prior to the interview, the participants who were willing to be interviewed on audiotape were asked to sign a consent form giving their permission which was adapted from Tanck (2004) and Nguyen (2006) (see Appendices K and L). The respondents were interviewed based on the questions in the interview guides (see Appendices D and E). During the interview, the participants could review their responses. The Chinese interviewees were interviewed either in Chinese or in English while the Thai interviewees were interviewed in Thai.

3.3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.3.1 Coding

Following the data analysis methods used by many research studies on a speech act of refusal (e.g. Beebe et al., 1990; Wannaruk, 2005, 2008; Keshavarz et al., 2006), each refusal was analyzed as consisting of units in terms of semantic formulas, "a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion, any one or more of which can be used to perform the act in question" (Cohen, 1996, p. 254), and coded based on the classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990) (see 2.6.2). It is important to mention that the classification was slightly adapted based on the data found

in this study (see Appendix M). In other words, 'Wish' was integrated into 'Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement' and 'Set condition for future acceptance' into 'Promise of future acceptance'. Semantic formulas which were not found in the data were removed whereas other semantic formulas found in the data were added to the classification.

If a respondent, for example, responded to a situation in which a professor offers a teaching assistantship, by saying *"I really want to, but I can't handle it. There are too many courses in this term. Sorry"*, this refusal was analyzed as consisting of four units and coded (shown in brackets) as illustrated below:

(i) I really want to, [Positive feeling]

(ii) but I can't handle it. [Negative ability]

(iii) There are too many courses in this term. [Explanation]

(iv) Sorry. [Regret]

This respondent used four semantic formulas or four refusal strategies: one 'Positive feeling', one 'Negative ability', one 'Explanation', and one 'Regret'.

The same semantic formula possibly reoccurred within the same refusal provided by a respondent in a given academic situation. If two or more units of the same semantic formula occurred next to each other, the total number of this semantic formula was counted as one since they were considered as the same utterance. For example, if a respondent refused an advisor's invitation to lunch with other advisees, saying *"I'm sorry, so sorry. I have made an appointment already"*, this refusal was analyzed as consisting of three units and coded (shown in the brackets) as illustrated below:

(i) I'm sorry, [Regret]

(ii) so sorry. [Regret]

(iii) I have made an appointment already. [Explanation]

This respondent used two semantic formulas or two refusal strategies: one 'Regret' and one 'Explanation'.

However, if two or more units of the same semantic formula did not occur next to each other, the total number of this semantic formula was equal to that of its units appearing in a given refusal since they were considered as different utterances. For instance, if a respondent refused an advisor's invitation to lunch with other advisees, saying *"Sorry. I have made an appointment already. So sorry."*, this refusal was analyzed as consisting of three units and coded (shown in the brackets) as shown below:

(i) Sorry. [Regret]

(ii) I have made an appointment already. [Explanation]

(iii) So sorry. [Regret]

This respondent used two semantic formulas or two refusal strategies: two 'Regret' and one 'Explanation'.

3.3.3.2 Intercoder Reliability

According to Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken (2002, p. 589), intercoder reliability is defined as "the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion". Wannaruk (1997, as cited in Prachanant, 2006) mentions that the value of intercoder reliability should be more than 80%. In this study, all English, Thai, and Chinese responses were coded by the researcher. It should be noted that the researcher coded the Chinese responses from the English translation made by a native Chinese speaker who is fluent in English. To ensure the accuracy of the English translation, a week after his translation, the same

native Chinese speaker was asked to separate sentences of each Chinese response and its English translation in order to recheck and revise his translation. To ensure the reliability of coding, 30% of the English responses were coded by one trained native English speaker, 30% of the Thai responses by one trained native Thai speaker, and 30% of the Chinese responses by one trained native Chinese speaker. It was found that although coders reached a high level of consistency in coding (88.1% for the Thai data, 94.2% for the Chinese data, and 96.2% for the English data), there was some disagreement which was recoded by the coders after they reviewed the classification. If disagreement remained, the third intercoder who was an expert in this field was consulted in order to obtain a consensus.

3.3.3.3 Quantitative Analysis

The coded data were analyzed in terms of frequency. To compare the frequency between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs, a statistical analysis of the data was conducted using the Social Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Specifically, an independent-samples t-test was performed. Differences were considered significant if $p \leq 0.05$.

3.3.3.4 Qualitative Analysis

Based on Kwon (2003), the similarities and differences in the content of refusal strategies employed by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs, such as the specificity and persuasiveness of explanations and the degree of directness were investigated. For example, *"I'm not free this afternoon."* and *"I have an appointment with my supervisor at 2 p.m."* were categorized as 'Explanation'. The latter explanation was, however, more specific and persuasive. In addition, for a situation in which the participants chose to use direct strategies, they may differ in the degree of directness since some

participants adopted lexical mitigators to soften their direct tone. For instance, refusing by saying *"I can't."* obviously sounded more direct and abrupt than *"I don't think I can."* or *"I'm afraid I can't."*

3.4 Summary

The DCT and the follow-up interview were employed to investigate the use of refusal strategies by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs in an academic setting. Both quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis were carried out to investigate the choice and content of refusal strategies used by all groups. The findings from the data analysis will be presented in the following chapter.
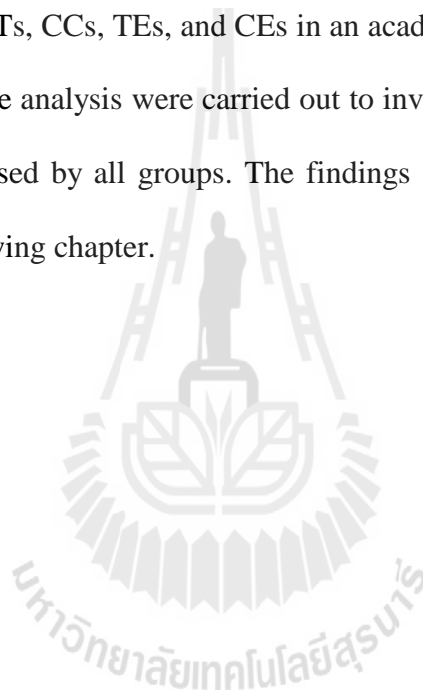
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the data analysis to answer the research questions of this study. The findings are presented in three major sections as follows: 1) comparison of refusal strategies between Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs) and Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs), 2) comparison of refusal strategies between Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs), and 3) comparison of refusal strategies between Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs) and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs).

4.1 Comparison of Refusal Strategies between TTs and TEs

This section presents a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs according to eliciting acts (invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions). The independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the frequency of refusal strategies. Examples of the strategy use by TTs are provided and translated into English for better understanding.

4.1.1 Invitations

Table 4.1 displays a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs in refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student (=power, +distance), an invitation to a welcome party for international students from the Director of the

Office of International Affairs (+power, +distance), and an invitation to lunch from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TTs and TEs for all invitations.

4.1.1.1 Invitation to a Thesis Defense

In refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student, both TTs and TEs employed 10 strategies. 'Explanation' was used by both groups as the most frequent strategy. However, TEs (f=29) gave explanations more frequently than TTs (f=26). Examples below show common explanations provided by TTs:

> แต่บ่ายนี้เรามีเรียนถึงบ่ายสี่โมง
> *[tae bai ni rao mi rian thueng bai si mong]*
> *"But in the afternoon, I have a class until 4 p.m." (TT5)*

> แต่เราไม่ว่าง
> *[tae rao mai wang]*
> *"But I'm not free." (TT21)*

Both TTs and TEs indicated their preference for 'Regret' in refusing this invitation. Nevertheless, 'Regret' was the second most frequently used strategy for TTs (f=18). They, for instance, said เสียใจจัง *[siachai chang]* *"It's a pity"* and ขอโทษนะที่ไม่ได้เข้าฟัง *[khothot na thi mai dai khao fang]* *"I'm sorry for not being able to attend"*. Meanwhile, TEs used 'Regret' as the third most frequent strategy (f=11). The second most frequently used strategy for TEs was 'Positive feeling' (f=13) whereas TTs preferred 'Expressing good wishes' (f=8) as illustrated below. It should be noted that 'Expressing good wishes' was also commonly adopted by TEs (f=8).

> แต่จะเป็นกำลังใจให้นะ โชคดีในการสอบจ้ะ
> *[tae cha pen kamlangchai hai na chokdi nai kan sop cha]*
> *"But you have my support. Good luck on the defense." (TT12)*

Table 4.1 Refusal Strategies Used by TTs and TEs for Invitations

Refusal Strategies	Thesis Defense from graduate student (=power, +distance)			Welcome Party from Director (+power, +distance)			Lunch from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TT count	TE count	Sig.	TT count	TE count	Sig.	TT count	TE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	26	29	N.S.	28	27	N.S.	30	27	N.S.
2. Regret	18	11	N.S.	15	12	N.S.	15	13	N.S.
3. Positive feeling	7	13	N.S.	12	10	N.S.	1	4	N.S.
4. Negative ability	3	6	N.S.	7	10	N.S.	4	9	N.S.
5. Future acceptance	3	0	N.S.	5	2	N.S.	5	3	N.S.
6. Expressing Good wishes*	8	8	N.S.	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.
7. Pause filler	4	5	N.S.	**0**	**4**	**0.043**	0	2	N.S.
8. Gratitude	0	1	N.S.	3	4	N.S.	5	2	N.S.
9. No	**0**	**4**	**0.043**	1	3	N.S.	0	3	N.S.
10. Repetition	0	1	N.S.	1	1	N.S.	1	1	N.S.
11. Expression of surprise*	4	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
12. Statement of acknowledgment*	2	0	N.S.	2	0	N.S.	0	0	-
13. Hedging	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	1	1	N.S.
14. Alternative	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.
15. Past acceptance	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.	0	0	-
16. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.
17. Postponement	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
Total	**76**	**79**		**77**	**74**		**65**	**67**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
*new strategy found

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between the two Thai groups in the use of 'No', $t(29.000) = -2.112$, $p = 0.043$. This result indicates that TEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) are likely to say 'No' directly while TTs never use this strategy.

4.1.1.2 Invitation to a Welcome Party for International Students

When refusing an invitation to a welcome party from the Director, TTs used 11 strategies while TEs used 10 strategies. Four strategies frequently employed by both groups were 'Explanation', 'Regret', 'Positive feeling', and 'Negative ability'. 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were used by TTs and TEs as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. TTs (f=28) provided 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs (f=27). The following examples show explanations typically given by TTs:

> วันศุกร์ดิฉันมีธุระกับที่บ้าน
> *[wan suk dichan mi thura kap thang ban]*
> *"On Friday, I have to run an errand with my family." (TT8)*

> เพราะผมมีกำหนดเดินทางไปต่างจังหวัดพอดี
> *[phro phom mi kamnot doenthang pai tangchangwat phodi]*
> *"Because I have planned to travel out of town." (TT26)*

Similarly, it was reported that TTs (f=15) expressed 'Regret' more frequently than TEs (f=12). TTs, for example, said ขอโทษด้วยนะคะ *[khothot duai na kha]* *"I'm sorry".* As for the third most frequently employed strategy, TTs favored 'Positive feeling' (e.g. ท่าทางจะต้องสนุกแน่เลย *[thathang cha tong sanuk nae loei] "Looks like fun"*) (f=12) while TEs preferred not only 'Positive feeling' (f=10), but also 'Negative ability' (f=10).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated a significant difference between the two Thai groups in the use of 'Pause filler', $t(29.000) = -2.112$,

$p = 0.043$. This result suggests that TEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) tend to employ 'Pause filler'. The TT group, on the other hand, does not use this strategy at all.

4.1.1.3 Invitation to Lunch

In refusing an advisor's invitation to lunch, TTs employed 10 strategies while TEs employed 12 strategies. In line with the previous invitation, 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were employed by both TTs (f=30 and f=15, respectively) and TEs (f=27 and f=13, respectively) as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. Common explanations used by TTs are shown below:

> พอดีหนูมีนัดเย็นนี้แล้วค่ะ
> *[phodi nu mi nat yen ni laeo kha]*
> *"I already have an appointment this evening." (TT2)*
>
> อาจารย์ครับวันศุกร์ผมมีนัดแล้วครับ ต้องไปทำธุระกับแม่
> *[achan khrap wan suk phom mi nat laeo khrap tong pai tham thura kap mae]*
> *"Professor, I already have an appointment on Friday. I have to run an errand with my mother."(TT16)*

The two groups differed in their third most frequently used strategy. TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=9) whereas TTs preferred 'Future acceptance' (e.g. ครั้งหน้าไม่พลาดแน่เลยค่ะ *[khrang na mai phlat nae loei kha] "Next time, I will definitely not miss it"*) (f=5) as well as 'Gratitude' (e.g. ขอบคุณมากครับที่ชวนผม *[khopkhun mak khrap thi chuan phom] "Thank you very much for inviting me"*) (f=5). Interestingly, only TTs were reported to use 'Expressing good wishes' (f=2) in this situation.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between the two Thai groups.

4.1.2 Requests

Table 4.2 shows a comparison of refusals strategies between TTs and TEs when refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student (=power, +distance), a request to proofread a term paper from a roommate (=power, -distance), and a request to demonstrate online registration for courses from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, +distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TTs and TEs for all requests.

4.1.2.1 Request to Complete a Questionnaire

When refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student, TTs used only 6 strategies and TEs used only 7 strategies. 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were employed by TTs (f=30 and f=21, respectively) and TEs (f=30 and f=23, respectively) as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. The rest of the strategies were used by both groups with relative low frequency. Examples below illustrate common explanations provided by TTs:

> *ตอนนี้ไม่สะดวกค่ะ*
> *[tonni mai saduak kha]*
> *"Now it's not convenient." (TT1)*

> *ตอนนี้ต้องรีบไปพบอาจารย์พอดีครับ*
> *[tonni tong rip pai phob achan phodi khrap]*
> *"Now I must hurry to meet the professor." (TT29)*

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between the two Thai groups in the use of 'No', $t(29.000) = -2.693$, $p = 0.012$. The result suggests that only TEs ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.41$) tend to say 'No' directly in this situation.

Table 4.2 Refusal Strategies Used by TTs and TEs for Requests

Refusal Strategies	Questionnaire from master's student (=power, +distance)			Term Paper from roommate (=power, -distance)			Online Registration from Dean (+power, +distance)		
	TT count	**TE** count	**Sig.**	**TT** count	**TE** count	**Sig.**	**TT** count	**TE** count	**Sig.**
1. Explanation	30	30	N.S.	29	26	N.S.	29	27	N.S.
2. Regret	21	23	N.S.	14	20	N.S.	13	20	N.S.
3. Negative ability	3	4	N.S.	**3**	**10**	**0.029**	**5**	**12**	**0.046**
4. Alternative	2	0	N.S.	7	5	N.S.	10	5	N.S.
5. Future acceptance	3	4	N.S.	**8**	**2**	**0.039**	1	0	N.S.
6. Pause filler	3	4	N.S.	**0**	**5**	**0.023**	1	2	N.S.
7. No	**0**	**6**	**0.012**	0	2	N.S.	**0**	**4**	**0.043**
8. Positive feeling	0	2	N.S.	2	5	N.S.	1	1	N.S.
9. Repetition	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	2	N.S.
10. Request for more information*	0	0	-	3	0	N.S.	0	0	-
11. Gratitude	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	2	N.S.
12. Request for empathy	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
13. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
14. Asking for approval*	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
15. Statement of acknowledgement*	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
Total	**62**	**73**		**67**	**78**		**61**	**75**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
         *new strategy found

4.1.2.2 Request to Proofread a Term Paper

In refusing a roommate's request to proofread a term paper, TTs employed 8 strategies while TEs employed 11 strategies. 'Explanation' was employed by both TTs (f=29) and TEs (f=26) as the most frequent strategy. Examples of explanations typically given by TTs are shown below:

> *ยังไม่ว่างเลยจ้ะ เรามีรายงานที่ต้องแก้ส่งอาจารย์คืนนี้*
> *[yang mai wang loei cha rao yang mi rai-ngan thi tong kae song achan khuen ni]*
> *"I'm not free. I have to revise my report and submit it to the professor tonight." (TT8)*
>
> *เราติดสอบพรุ่งนี้ต้องรีบไปอ่านหนังสือสอบเหมือนกัน*
> *[rao tit sop phrungni tong rip an nangsue sop muean kan]*
> *"I have an exam tomorrow. I have to study as well." (TT16)*

'Regret' was the second most frequently used strategy for both TEs (f=20) and TTs (e.g. *ขอโทษจริงๆ นะ [khothot ching ching na] "Really sorry"*) (f=14). The third most frequently used strategy for both groups was different. While TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=10), TTs preferred 'Future acceptance' (f=8), such as *เราจะช่วยดูให้คืนนี้ [rao cha chuai du hai khuen ni] "I will help proofread it tonight"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that three strategies indicated significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Negative ability', $t(49.180) = -2.249$, $p = 0.029$, 'Future acceptance', $t(45.758) = 2.121$, $p = 0.039$, and 'Pause filler', $t(29.000) = -2.408$, $p = 0.023$. The results suggest that TEs ($M = 0.33$, $SD = 0.48$) employ 'Negative ability' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.10$, $SD = 0.31$). In addition, only TEs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$) use 'Pause filler'. Conversely, TTs use ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) 'Future acceptance' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.07$, $SD = 0.25$).

4.1.2.3 Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

When refusing a request to demonstrate how to register online for courses from the Dean, TTs employed 8 strategies while TEs employed 9 strategies. Consistent with the previous two requests, 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were used by TTs (f=29 and f=13, respectively) and TEs (f=27 and f=20, respectively) as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. Examples of explanations typically given by TTs are shown as follows:

วันอังคารหน้าติดประชุมงานที่ศูนย์วิจัยค่ะ
[wan angkhan na tit prachum ngan thi sunwuchai kha]
"Next Tuesday, I have a meeting at the research center." (TT12)

มีสอนทั้งวันเลยค่ะวันอังคาร
[mi son thang wan loei kha wan angkhan]
"I have to teach all day on Tuesday." (TT15)

As for the third most frequently employed strategy, TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=12) while TTs preferred 'Alternative' (f=10), such as ถ้าอาจารย์มีงานเตรียมเอกสารอะไรให้หนูช่วย บอกได้เลยนะคะ *[tha achan mi ngan triam ekkasan aria hai nu chuai bok dai loei na kha] "If you need any help with document preparation, please feel free to let me know".*

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Negative ability', $t(54.144) = -2.041$, $p = 0.046$ and 'No', $t(29.000) = -2.112$, $p = 0.043$. The results indicate that TEs ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 0.50$) employ 'Negative ability' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$). In addition, TEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) tend to state 'No' in this situation whereas TTs never employ this strategy.

4.1.3 Offers

Table 4.3 shows a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs when refusing an offer of a book of abstracts from a classmate (=power, -distance), an offer of a teaching assistantship from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, +distance), and an offer of a research assistantship from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TTs and TEs for all offers.

4.1.3.1 Offer of a Book of Abstracts

When refusing a book of abstracts from a classmate, TTs used 13 strategies whereas TEs used 12 strategies. Both TTs (f=21) and TEs (f=21) employed 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. Examples of explanations generally given by TTs are shown below:

ตอนนี้เรามีหนังสือที่ต้องอ่านเยอะมาก
[tonni rao mi nangsue thi tong an yoe mak]
"Now I have a lot of books to read." (TT1)

แต่งานนี้ไม่เกี่ยวกับงานที่เราทำเลย
[tae ngan ni mai kiaokap ngan thi rao tham loei]
"But this work is not related to the work I'm doing at all." (TT14)

Both groups used 'Future acceptance' as the second most frequent strategy. TTs (f=16), however, used 'Future acceptance' more frequently than TEs (f=13). They said, for instance, ไว้อ่านของที่โหลดมาแล้วจะไปยืมนะ *[wai an khong thi lot ma laeo cha pai yuem na] "If I finish reading what I have downloaded, I will borrow it"*. For the third most frequently used strategy, TTs preferred 'Positive feeling' (e.g. ดีจังเลย *[di chang loei] "That's so good"* and น่าสนใจ *[nasonchai] "Interesting"*) (f=14) whereas TEs favored 'Gratitude' (f=10), which was also used frequently by TTs (f=9).

Table 4.3 Refusal Strategies Used by TTs and TEs for Offers

Refusal Strategies	Book of Abstracts from classmate (=power, -distance)			Teaching Assistant from Dean (+power, +distance)			Research Assistant from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TT count	TE count	Sig.	TT count	TE count	Sig.	TT count	TE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	21	21	N.S.	31	25	0.013	31	26	0.024
2. Positive feeling	**14**	**6**	0.029	17	13	N.S.	9	9	N.S.
3. Future acceptance	16	13	N.S.	6	4	N.S.	5	4	N.S.
4. Regret	1	4	N.S.	10	8	N.S.	**5**	**13**	0.037
5. Gratitude	9	10	N.S.	3	4	N.S.	3	6	N.S.
6. Negative ability	4	3	N.S.	2	6	N.S.	2	5	N.S.
7. No	**1**	**8**	0.012	**0**	**6**	0.012	0	3	N.S.
8. Pause filler	2	3	N.S.	1	0	N.S.	1	3	N.S.
9. Alternative	2	1	N.S.	0	1	N.S.	3	0	N.S.
10. Request for more information*	3	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
11. Let the interlocutor off the hook	2	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
12. Statement of acknowledgement*	3	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
13. Hedging	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.
14. Performative	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
15. Request for empathy	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
16. Expression of surprise*	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**79**	**72**		**71**	**68**		**59**	**70**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
         *new strategy found

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed that two strategies indicated significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Positive feeling', $t(55.383) = 2.246$, $p = 0.029$ and 'No', $t(38.304) = -2.633$, $p = 0.012$. The results suggest that TTs ($M = 0.47$, $SD = 0.51$) employ 'Positive feeling' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.41$). Conversely, TEs ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) state 'No' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.1.3.2 Offer of a Teaching Assistantship

TTs employed 8 strategies whereas TEs employed 9 strategies when refusing an offer of a teaching assistantship from the Dean. Both groups were alike in their top three frequently used strategies. That is, they employed 'Explanation', 'Positive feeling', and 'Regret' as the most, the second most, and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. 'Explanation' was used by TTs (f=31) more frequently than by TTs (f=25). The examples below are common explanations offered by TTs:

แต่ว่าเทอมนี้หนูเร่งวิทยานิพนธ์ค่ะ หนูกลัวไม่จบ
[taewa thoem ni nu reng witthaya niphon kha nu klua mai chop]
"But this semester I'm trying to finish my thesis. I'm afraid I won't graduate on time." (TT2)

แต่ว่าเทอมนี้หนูต้องออกไปเก็บข้อมูล
[taewa thoem ni nu tong ok pai kep khomun]
"But this semester I will be away to collect data." (TT9)

'Positive feeling' (e.g. จริงๆ แล้วเป็นสิ่งที่ผมอยากทำมาก *[ching ching laeo pen sing thi phom yak tham mak] "Actually, it is what I really want to do"*) and 'Regret' *(e.g.* น่าเสียดายจัง *[nasiadai chang] "It's a pity")* were adopted by TTs (f=17 and f=10, respectively) more frequently than by TEs (f=13 and f=8, respectively).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Explanation', $t(41.769) = 2.604$, $p = 0.013$ and 'No', $t(29.000) = -2.693$, $p = 0.012$. The results suggest that TTs ($M = 1.03$, $SD = 0.18$) use 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.83$, $SD = 0.38$). Meanwhile, only TEs ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.41$) say 'No' directly in this situation.

4.1.3.3 Offer of a Research Assistantship

TTs adopted 8 strategies while TEs adopted 9 strategies when refusing an advisor's offer of a research assistantship. Both TTs and TEs favored 'Explanation' the most. Nevertheless, TTs ($f=31$) gave 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs ($f=26$). Examples of typical explanations given by TTs are as follows:

> แต่ตอนนี้ผมต้องช่วยอาจารย์ A และ B ทำอยู่นะครับ
> *[tae tonni phom tong chuai achan A lae B tham yu na khrap]*
> *"But now I have to help professor A and professor B." (TT18)*
>
> ผมยังทำวิจัยของผมไม่เสร็จเลยครับ
> *[phom yang tham wichai khong phom mai set loei khrap]*
> *"I haven't finished my own research." (TT21)*

The second most frequently used strategy for TTs was 'Positive feeling' (e.g. สนใจครับอาจารย์ *[sonchai khrap achan] "I'm interested, professor"*) ($f=9$). TEs, on the contrary, preferred 'Regret' ($f=13$). For the third most frequent strategy, TTs preferred not only 'Regret' (e.g. ขอโทษนะคะ *[khothot na kha] "I'm sorry"*) ($f=5$), but also 'Future acceptance' (e.g. ไว้โอกาสหน้าได้ไหมคะ *[wai okat na dai mai kha] "Can it be next time?"*) ($f=5$). Meanwhile, TEs preferred 'Positive feeling' ($f=9$).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Explanation',

$t(44.006) = 2.335$, $p = 0.024$ and 'Regret', $t(50.539) = -2.138$, $p = 0.037$. The results suggest that TTs ($M = 1.03$, $SD = 0.18$) provide 'Explanation' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.87$, $SD = 0.35$). Meanwhile, TEs ($M = 0.43$, $SD = 0.57$) express 'Regret' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$).

4.1.4 Suggestions

Table 4.4 presents a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs in refusing a suggestion to take a course from a new friend (=power, +distance), a suggestion to narrow down a research topic from a classmate (=power, -distance), and a suggestion to present research work at an international conference in Singapore from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TTs and TEs for all suggestions.

4.1.4.1 Suggestion to Take a Course

TTs employed 10 strategies while TEs employed 11 strategies when refusing a new friend's suggestion to take a course. It was reported that both TTs (f=25) and TEs (f=21) favored 'Explanation' the most. Examples of common explanations given by TTs are as follows:

> เราไม่ชอบ
> [rao mai chop]
> "I don't like it." (TT3)

> เรามีวิชาที่เราอยากเรียนละคิดว่าจะลงทะเบียนแล้วจ้ะ
> [rao mi wicha thi rao yak rian lae khit wa cha longthabian laeo cha]
> "I already have a course that I want to study and that I think I will register for." (TT5)

The second most frequently used strategy for TTs was 'Pause filler' (e.g. อืม [uem] "umm") (f=5) whereas TEs preferred 'Postponement' (f=8). 'No'

Table 4.4 Refusal Strategies Used by TTs and the TEs for Suggestions

Refusal Strategies	Course from new friend (=power, +distance)			Research Topic from classmate (=power, -distance)			International Conference from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TT	TE	Sig.	TT	TE	Sig.	TT	TE	Sig.
	count	count		count	count		count	count	
1. Explanation	25	21	N.S.	11	18	N.S.	26	27	N.S.
2. Positive feeling	3	6	N.S.	7	5	N.S.	9	9	N.S.
3. Gratitude	0	2	N.S.	6	10	NN.S.	5	6	N.S.
4. Negative ability	1	5	N.S.	1	7	0.024	2	8	0.039
5. Self-defense	0	0	-	12	10	N.S.	0	0	-
6. Postponement	3	8	N.S.	7	2	N.S.	0	0	-
7. Pause filler	5	5	N.S.	1	5	N.S.	2	1	N.S.
8. Regret	2	5	N.S.	0	1	N.S.	3	7	N.S.
9. Future acceptance	3	4	N.S.	1	0	N.S.	4	4	N.S.
10. No	4	3	N.S.	1	1	N.S.	0	2	N.S.
11. Alternative	3	1	N.S.	0	0	-	5	2	N.S.
12. Expression of surprise*	0	0	-	5	4	N.S.	1	0	N.S.
13. Hedging	0	3	N.S.	0	1	N.S.	1	0	N.S.
14. Statement of acknowledgement*	0	0	-	2	1	N.S.	2	0	N.S.
15. Insistence*	0	0	-	4	0	0.043	0	0	-
16. Request for more information*	0	0	-	0	0	-	2	1	N.S.
17. Let the interlocutor off the hook	2	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
18. Criticize	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
19. Repetition	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
20. Sarcasm*	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
Total	51	63		61	65		62	67	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
*new strategy found

(e.g. *ไม่เอาอ่ะ [mai ao a] "No"*) (f=4) was adopted by TTs as the third most frequent strategy while TEs preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=6). It should be noted that 'Pause filler' and 'No' were also adopted by TEs with similar frequency.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between the two Thai groups.

4.1.4.2 Suggestion to Narrow down a Research Topic

TTs used 15 strategies whereas TEs used 12 strategies in refusing a classmate's suggestion to narrow down a research topic. While TEs adopted 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy (f=18), TTs preferred 'Self-defense' (f=12) as shown in the following examples:

> *เราคิดว่าโอเคแล้วนะ ไม่กว้างเลย*
> *[rao khit wa o khe laeo na mai kwang loei]*
> *"I think it's okay already, not broad at all." (TT21)*

> *เราว่ามันดีแล้วนะ*
> *[rao wa man di laew na]*
> *"I think it's good already." (TT25)*

TEs employed 'Self-defense' (f=10) and 'Gratitude' (f=10) as the second most frequent strategies. TTs, on the other hand, favored 'Explanation' (f=11). The following examples demonstrate typical explanations provided by TTs:

> *แต่เราว่าการวิจัยที่มีขอบข่ายกว้างๆ ก็ท้าทายดีนะ*
> *[tae rao wa kan wichai thi mi khopkhao kwang kwang ko thathai di na]*
> *"But I think research with a broad scope is challenging." (TT5)*

> *อีกอย่างเราก็ชอบหัวข้อนี้มาก อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาก็บอกว่าน่าจะทำหัวข้อนี้ได้ดี*
> *[ik yang rao ko chop huakho ni mak achan thiprueksa ko bok wa na cha tham huakho ni dai di]*
> *"Another thing is I like this topic very much. My advisor also told me that I would be able to do it very well. " (TT8)*

For the third most frequent strategy, TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=7). However, TTs preferred 'Positive feeling' (e.g. เราก็คิดแบบนั้นเหมือนกัน *[rao ko khit baep nan muean kan] "I think so too"*) (f=7) as well as 'Postponement' (e.g. แต่เราจะลองคิดดูอีกที นะ *[tae rao cha long khit du ik thi na] "But I will think about it again"*) (f=7). Interestingly, TTs were found to employ 'Sarcasm' (e.g. งั้นก็คิดมาให้หน่อยสิ *[ngan ko khit ma hai noi si] "Can you come up with a better idea?"*) (f=1) and 'Criticize' (e.g. ยุ่ง *[yung] "Mind your own business"*) (f=1) in refusing a classmate's suggestion.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated that two refusal strategies showed significant differences between the two Thai groups, i.e. 'Negative ability', $t(39.119) = -2.344$, $p = 0.024$ and 'Insistence', $t(29.000) = 2.112$, $p = 0.043$. The results suggest that TEs ($M = 0.23$, $SD = 0.43$) employ 'Negative ability' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$). In contrast, only TTs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) use 'Insistence'.

4.1.4.3 Suggestion to Present Research in Singapore

TTs employed 12 strategies whereas TEs employed 10 strategies when refusing an advisor's suggestion to present their work in Singapore. It was reported that TTs (f=26) and TEs (f=27) favored 'Explanation' the most. Examples of typical explanations provided by TTs are shown below:

> แต่หนูรู้สึกว่าหนูยังไม่พร้อมเลยค่ะ วิจัยของหนูก็ยัง ไม่เรียบร้อยสมบูรณ์
> *[tae nu rusuek wa nu yang mai phrom loei kha wichai khong nu ko yang mai riaproi sombun]*
> *"But I feel I'm not ready yet. Also, my research is not fully finished."*
> *(TT9)*

> เพิ่งลงทะเบียนนำเสนอผลงานอีกที่หนึ่งเองค่ะ เป็นช่วงวันและเวลาเดียวกันพอดีเลย
> *[phoeng longthabian nam sanoe phonngan ik thi nueng eng kha pen chuang wan lae wela diaokan phodi loei]*

"I have just registered to present my work at another conference, which will be held on the same date and at the same time." (TT12)

Both TTs (f=9) and TEs (f=9) also adopted 'Positive feeling' as the second most frequent strategy. Examples of 'Positive feeling' used by TTs were หนูว่ามันเป็นโอกาส ที่ดีเลยค่ะ *[nu wa man pen okat thi di loei kha] "I think it is really a good opportunity"* and ผมอยากไป *[phom yak pai] "I want to attend".* The third most frequently employed strategies for TTs included 'Gratitude' (e.g. อาจารย์คะ หนูขอบคุณมากเลยนะคะที่อาจารย์นึกถึงหนู *[achan kha nu khopkhun mak loei nakha thi achan nuke thueng nu] "Professor, thank you very much for thinking of me"*) (f=5) and 'Alternative' (e.g. ผมว่าจะส่งไปที่เกาหลีครับมันอยู่ ภายในปีนี้เอง *[phom wa cha song pai thi kaoli khrap man yu phainai pi ni eng] "I think I will submit it to the conference in Korea. It will be held this year."*) (f=5). TEs, on the other hand, favored 'Negative ability' (f=8).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between the two Thai groups in the use of 'Negative ability', $t(45.758) = -2.121$, $p = 0.039$. The result suggests that TEs ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) state 'Negative ability' more frequently than TTs ($M = 0.07$, $SD = 0.25$).

4.2 Comparison of Refusal Strategies between CCs and CEs

This section presents a comparison of refusal strategies between CCs and CEs according to types of eliciting acts (invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions). The independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the frequency of refusal strategies. Examples of the strategy use by CCs are provided and translated into English for better understanding.

4.2.1 Invitations

Table 4.5 presents a comparison of refusal strategies between CCs and CEs when refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student (=power, +distance), an invitation to a welcome party for international students from the Director of the Office of International Affairs (+power, +distance), and an invitation to lunch from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by CCs and CEs for all invitations.

4.2.1.1 Invitation to a Thesis Defense

CCs employed 11 strategies whereas CEs employed 12 strategies when refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student. Both CCs (f=27) and CEs (f=28) used 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. Examples below show explanations typically given by CCs:

> 下午老板要开会。
> *[xià wǔ lǎo bǎn yào kāi huì]*
> *"I have a meeting with my boss (advisor) this afternoon." (CC16)*
>
> 但是我和你的研究方向不同, 怕听不懂答辩内容。
> *[dàn shì wǒ hé nǐ de yán jiū fāng xiàng bù tóng pà tīng bù dǒng dá biàn nèi róng]*
> *"But you and I study different fields. I'm afraid I don't understand your topic." (C18)*

In addition to 'Explanation', CCs (f=20) and CEs (f=19) adopted 'Regret' (e.g. 太遗憾了。 *[tài yí hàn le]* *"It's a pity"* and 十分抱歉。 *[shí fēn bào qiàn]* *"I'm very sorry"*) as the second most frequent strategy. For the third most frequent strategy, CEs used 'Positive feeling' (f=15) whereas CCs preferred 'Negative ability' (e.g. 我恐怕去不了。 *[wǒ kǒng pà qù bù liǎo]* *"I'm afraid I can't go there"*) (f=15). Interestingly, 'Expressing good wishes', which is a new strategy, was adopted

Table 4.5 Refusal Strategies Used by CCs and CEs for Invitations

Refusal Strategies	Thesis Defense from graduate student (=power, +distance)			Welcome Party from Director (+power, +distance)			Lunch from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	CC count	CE count	Sig.	CC count	CE count	Sig.	CC count	CE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	27	28	N.S.	29	28	N.S.	29	28	N.S.
2. Regret	20	19	N.S.	20	13	N.S.	24	21	N.S.
3. Negative ability	15	8	N.S.	12	9	N.S.	6	4	N.S.
4. Positive feeling	**5**	**15**	**0.006**	**3**	**12**	**0.007**	4	9	N.S.
5. Gratitude	**0**	**4**	**0.043**	1	3	N.S.	**1**	**9**	**0.006**
6. Pause filler	1	4	N.S.	3	4	N.S.	2	2	N.S.
7. Expressing good wishes*	7	4	N.S.	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.
8. Repetition	1	1	N.S.	4	2	N.S.	2	0	N.S.
9. Future acceptance	1	1	N.S.	2	2	N.S.	2	0	N.S.
10. No	0	2	N.S.	0	2	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
11. Alternative	2	0	N.S.	2	0	N.S.	1	0	N.S.
12. Expression of surprise*	1	2	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
13. Statement of empathy	1	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
14. Request for empathy	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
15. Hedging	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
Total	**81**	**89**		**76**	**75**		**75**	**74**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
            *new strategy found

by both CCs and CEs. However, CCs (f=7) were reported to employ 'Expressing good wishes' (e.g. *祝你成功！ [zhù nǐ chéng gōng] "I wish you success!"*) more frequently than did CEs (f=4).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Positive feeling', $t(53.623) = -2.878$, $p = 0.006$ and 'Gratitude' $t(29.000) = -2.112$, $p = 0.043$. The results suggest that CEs ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.51$) employ 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$). CEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) also express 'Gratitude' whereas CCs never use this strategy.

4.2.1.2 Invitation to a Welcome Party for International Students

CCs and CEs employed 9 strategies in refusing an invitation to a welcome party from the Director. In line with the previous invitation, both groups used 'Explanation' and 'Regret' as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. However, CCs (f=29) gave explanations more frequently than CEs (f=28). Below are examples of typical explanations used by CCs.

> *我还有一个很重要的报告要写呀。*
> *[wǒ hái yǒu yī gè hěn zhòng yào de bào gào yào xiě ya]*
> *"I still have to write an important report." (CC2)*

> *我周五约了父母吃饭。*
> *[wǒ zhōu wǔ yuē le fù mǔ chī fàn]*
> *"I have an appointment to have dinner with my parents this Friday."*
> *(CC11)*

Similarly, CCs (f=20) expressed 'Regret' (e.g. *不好意思啦, 处长。[bù hǎo yì sī lā, chù zhǎng] "I do feel sorry, Director"*) more frequently than CEs (f=13). The third most frequently used strategy for CEs was 'Positive feeling' (f=12) while CCs preferred 'Negative ability' (e.g. *恐怕参加不了迎新晚会了。[kǒng pà cān jiā bù*

liǎo yíng xīn wǎn huì le] "I'm afraid I cannot attend the welcome party") (f=12).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between the two Chinese groups in the use of 'Positive feeling', $t(48.068) =$ -2.812, $p = 0.007$. The result suggests that CEs ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 0.50$) state 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.10$, $SD = 0.31$).

4.2.1.3 Invitation to Lunch

When refusing an invitation to lunch from an advisor, CCs adopted 12 strategies while CEs adopted 7 strategies. 'Explanation' was adopted by both CCs (f=29) and CEs (f=28) as the most frequent strategy. Below are examples of typical explanations given by CCs:

那天我要带奶奶去做身体检查。
[nà tiān wǒ yào dài nǎi nai qù zuò shēn tǐ jiǎn chá]
"That day I have to take my grandmother to have a checkup." (CC15)

星期五我正好要回家呢。
[xīng qī wǔ wǒ zhèng hǎo yào huí jiā ne]
"I'm going home on Friday." (CC16)

Both groups also used 'Regret' as the second most frequent strategy. However, CCs (f=24) used 'Regret' more frequently than CEs (f=21). The third most frequently used strategy for CCs was 'Negative ability' (f=6). For example, they said 恐怕来不了。*[kǒng pà lái bù le] "I'm afraid I cannot come"*. Meanwhile, CEs favored 'Positive feeling' (f=9) as well as 'Gratitude' (f=9). CCs were also found to employ 'Expressing good wishes' (f=2) in this situation.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded a significant difference between the two Chinese groups in the use of 'Gratitude', $t(37.695) = -$ 2.918, $p = 0.006$. The result suggests that CEs ($M = 0.30$, $SD = 0.47$) express 'Gratitude' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.2.2 Requests

Table 4.6 presents a comparison of refusal strategies between CCs and CEs when refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student (=power, +distance), a request to proofread a term paper from a roommate (=power, -distance), and a request to demonstrate online registration for courses from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, +distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by CCs and CEs for all requests.

4.2.2.1 Request to Complete a Questionnaire

CCs employed 8 strategies whereas CEs employed 10 strategies when refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student. 'Explanation' was used by both CCs (f=30) and CEs (f=29) as the most frequent strategy. The following examples demonstrate explanations given by CCs:

> 你看到我现在也是很忙，确实抽不出时间。
> [nǐ kàn dào wǒ xiàn zài yě shì hěn máng, què shí chōu bù chū shí jiān]
> "You see I am also very busy now and I really cannot spare any time." (CC3)
>
> 我要赶着去考试。
> [wǒ yào gǎn zhe qù kǎo shì]
> "I am in a hurry to take an exam." (CC22)

Both CCs (f=23) and CEs (f=24) also employed 'Regret' as the second most frequent strategy. For the third most frequently used strategy, CCs favored 'Alternative' (f=6), such as 你找一下其他人吧。[nǐ zhǎo yí xià qí tā rén ba] "You'd better ask somebody else". CEs, on the one hand, preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=5).

Table 4.6 Refusal Strategies Used by CCs and CEs for Requests

Refusal Strategies	Questionnaire from master's student (=power, +distance)			Term Paper from roommate (=power, -distance)			Online Registration from Dean (+power, +distance)		
	CC count	**CE** count	**Sig.**	**CC** count	**CE** count	**Sig.**	**CC** count	**CE** count	**Sig.**
1. Explanation	30	29	N.S.	30	29	N.S.	29	30	N.S.
2. Regret	23	24	N.S.	16	23	N.S.	21	19	N.S.
3. Positive feeling	**0**	**5**	**0.023**	3	7	N.S.	**5**	**13**	**0.024**
4. Alternative	**6**	**0**	**0.012**	**8**	**1**	**0.012**	**8**	**0**	**0.003**
5. Negative ability	3	2	N.S.	4	4	N.S.	4	4	N.S.
6. Future acceptance	4	2	N.S.	2	1	N.S.	4	1	N.S.
7. No	0	2	N.S.	1	3	N.S.	0	2	N.S.
8. Pause filler	0	2	N.S.	0	2	N.S.	1	3	N.S.
9. Repetition	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.
10. Request for more information*	1	2	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
11. Greeting*	1	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
12. Request for empathy	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
13. Topic switch	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
14. Gratitude	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
15. Asking for approval*	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
16. Statement of acknowledgement*	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**69**	**70**		**64**	**72**		**75**	**73**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
            *new strategy found

Additionally, both CCs and CEs were reported to employ 'Greeting' (e.g. 你好！*[nǐ hǎo] "Hello!"*) (f=1), which was never found in other situations.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Positive feeling', $t(29.000) = -2.408$, $p = 0.023$ and 'Alternative', $t(29.000) = 2.693$, $p = 0.012$. The results indicate that CEs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$) state 'Positive feeling' while CCs never use this strategy. In contrast, CCs ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.41$) offer 'Alternative' while CEs never use this strategy.

4.2.2.2 Request to Proofread a Term Paper

When refusing a request to proofread a term paper from a roommate, CCs used 7 strategies and CEs used 10 strategies. Both CCs and CEs employed 'Explanation' and 'Regret' as the first and second most frequent strategy, respectively. Nevertheless, CCs (f=30) provided 'Explanation' more frequently than CEs (f=29). Below are examples of explanations typically given by CCs:

> *说实话那门课我学的不太好。*
> *[shuō shí huà nà mén kè wǒ xué de bù tài hǎo]*
> *"To be honest, I didn't do well in that course."(CC11)*

> *今天我得写作业，因为明天轮到我做报告，有点来不及了。*
> *[jīn tiān wǒ děi xiě zuò yè, yīn wéi míng tiān lún dào wǒ zuò bào gào, yǒu diǎn lái bu jí le]*
> *"I have to finish my homework today because it will be my turn to do my presentation tomorrow and I am running out of time." (CC19)*

On the other hand, 'Regret' was used by CEs (f=23) more frequently than by CCs (e.g. 不好意思。*[bù hǎo yì sī] "I'm sorry"*) (f=16). For the third most frequent strategy, CCs used 'Alternative' (f=8), for example, 我觉得你找同一专业的同学好些。*[wǒ jué de nǐ zhǎo tong yī zhuān yè de tong xué hǎo xiē] "I think you'd better ask*

someone else in the same major to help you". In contrast, CEs preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=7).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the two Chinese groups in the use of 'Alternative', $t(38.304) = 2.633$, $p = 0.012$. The result suggests that CCs ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) suggests 'Alternative' more frequently than CEs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.2.2.3 Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

CCs used 10 strategies whereas CEs used 8 strategies when refusing a request to demonstrate online registration for courses from the Dean. In line with the previous two requests, both groups used 'Explanation' and 'Regret' as the most and the second most frequent strategy, respectively. CEs (f=30) gave 'Explanation' more frequently than CCs (f=29). Examples of explanations given by CCs are shown as follows:

> 我正好有考试。
> [wǒ zhèng hǎo yǒu kǎo shì]
> "I happen to have an exam." (CC11)
>
> 下周二我要和导师出差, 去参加一个很重要的学术会议。
> [xià zhōu èr wǒ yào hé dǎo shī chū chai, qù cān jiā yī gè hěn zhòng yào de xué shù huì yì]
> "I'm going to be on a trip for a very important academic conference with my advisor next Tuesday." (CC14)

On the one hand, CCs (f=21) expressed 'Regret' more frequently than CEs (f=19). As for the third most frequent strategy, CEs favored 'Positive feeling' (f=13) whereas CCs preferred 'Alternative' (f=8). Below is an example of 'Alternative' given by CCs:

> 要不您问一下计算机专业的学生吧。
> [yào bu nín wèn yí xià jì suàn jī zhuān yè de xué sheng ba]
> "Would you please ask students majoring in Computer Science?" (CC23)

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed that two strategies indicated significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Positive feeling', $t(53.854) = -2.316$, $p = 0.024$ and 'Alternative', $t(29.000) = 3.247$, $p = 0.003$. The results indicate that CEs ($M = 0.43$, $SD = 0.51$) state 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$). Meanwhile, CCs ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) offer 'Alternative' whereas CEs never use this strategy.

4.2.3 Offers

Table 4.7 presents a comparison of refusal strategies between CCs and CEs when refusing an offer of a book of abstracts from a classmate (=power, -distance), an offer of a teaching assistantship from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, +distance), and an offer of a research assistantship from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by CCs and CEs for all offers.

4.2.3.1 Offer of a Book of Abstracts

CCs and CEs employed 9 strategies in refusing an offer of a book of abstracts from a classmate. Both CCs (f=26) and CEs (f=24) favored 'Explanation' the most. Examples of explanations used by CCs are shown below:

> 我最近正在准备考试。
> *[wǒ zuì jìn zhèng zài zhǔn bèi kǎo shì]*
> *"I'm preparing for an exam recently." (CC13)*

> 这两天导师布置了一堆书目还没看完呢。
> *[zhè liǎng tiān dǎo shī bù zhì le yì duī shū mù hái méi kàn wán ne]*
> *"I still have not finished the references my advisor assigned me to read." (CC28)*

The next most frequently used strategy for both groups was 'Future acceptance'. However, CCs (f=18) used 'Future acceptance' more frequently than

Table 4.7 Refusal Strategies Used by CCs and CEs for Offers

Refusal Strategies	Book of Abstracts from classmate (=power, -distance)			Teaching Assistant from Dean (+power, +distance)			Research Assistant from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	CC	**CE**	**Sig.**	**CC**	**CE**	**Sig.**	**CC**	**CE**	**Sig.**
	count	count		count	count		count	count	
1. Explanation	26	24	N.S.	29	27	N.S.	29	28	N.S.
2. Positive feeling	6	12	N.S.	**5**	**16**	**0.003**	8	14	N.S.
3. Regret	4	4	N.S.	14	11	N.S.	14	13	N.S.
4. Future acceptance	18	14	N.S.	3	1	N.S.	**6**	**1**	**0.047**
5. Gratitude	11	12	N.S.	4	5	N.S.	**1**	**9**	**0.006**
6. Negative ability	1	4	N.S.	4	3	N.S.	8	5	N.S.
7. Pause filler	4	1	N.S.	1	2	N.S.	0	3	N.S.
8. No	1	2	N.S.	**0**	**4**	**0.043**	0	2	N.S.
9. Alternative	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	2	3	N.S.
10. Repetition	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.	0	0	-
11. Hedging	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
12. Request for empathy	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
13. Expression of surprise*	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
14. Statement of acknowledgement*	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**72**	**74**		**62**	**71**		**69**	**79**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
          *new strategy found

CEs (f=14). CCs said, for example, *如果有需要我会联系你的。[rú guǒ yǒu xū yào wǒ huì lián xì nǐ de] "I'll contact you if necessary"*. For the third most frequent strategy, CCs used 'Gratitude' (f=11), such as *谢谢你的好意。[xiè xiè nǐ de hǎo yì] "Thank you for your kindness"*. Meanwhile, CEs preferred 'Gratitude' (f=12) as well as 'Positive feeling' (f=12).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between the two Chinese groups.

4.2.3.2 Offer of a Teaching Assistantship

CCs employed 9 strategies while CEs employed 10 strategies when refusing an offer of a teaching assistantship from the Dean. Both CCs and CEs showed their preference for 'Explanation', 'Positive feeling', and 'Regret'. 'Explanation' was adopted as the most frequent strategy by both CCs (f=29) and CEs (f=27). Below are examples of explanations commonly given by CCs:

> *我怕我能力有限。*
> *[wǒ pà wǒ néng lì yǒu xiàn]*
> *"I'm afraid I am not capable enough." (CC11)*
>
> *我想在这学期先完成自己的小论文, 这样明年不会有太大压力。*
> *[wǒ xiǎng zài zhè xué qī xiān wán chéng zì jǐ de xiǎo lùn wén, zhè yàng míng nián bú huì yǒu tài dà yā lì]*
> *"I want to finish my project paper this semester so I will not feel much pressure next year." (CC18)*

CEs used 'Positive feeling' (f=16) and 'Regret' (f=11) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. Conversely, CCs used 'Regret' (e.g. *对不起, 处长。[duì bù qǐ, chù zhǎng] "I'm sorry, Dean"*) (f=14) and 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *真是个好机会。[zhēn shì gè hǎo jī huì] "It is really a good opportunity"*) (f=5) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed that two strategies indicated significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Positive feeling', $t(53.680) = -3.171$, $p = 0.003$ and 'No', $t(29.000) = -2.112$, $p = 0.043$. These results suggest that CEs ($M = 0.53$, $SD = 0.51$) employ 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$). Furthermore, CEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) state 'No' whereas CCs never use this strategy.

4.2.3.3 Offer of a Research Assistantship

CCs used 8 strategies while CEs used 10 strategies in refusing an offer of a research assistantship from an advisor. Both CCs and CEs favored 'Explanation' the most. CCs (f=29) gave 'Explanation' more frequently than CEs (f=28). Examples of explanations generally given by CCs are shown as follows:

> 我时间可能不够用, 最近在赶论文。
> *[wǒ shí jiān kě néng bù gòu yòng, zuì jìn zài gǎn lùn wén]*
> *"Maybe I don't have enough time because I have been busy writing my thesis recently." (CC10)*

> 最近我在收集论文的资料, 没有空闲的时间。
> *[zuì jìn wǒ zài shōu jí lùn wén de zī liào, méi yǒu kòng xián de shí jiān]*
> *"I'm collecting data for my research so I don't have any spare time." (CC19)*

Both groups also showed frequent use of 'Regret' and 'Positive feeling'. Specifically, CCs used 'Regret' (e.g. 对不起, 导师。 *[duì bù qǐ, dǎo shī]* *"I'm sorry, advisor"*) (f=14) as the second most frequent strategy while CEs favored 'Positive feeling' (f=14). Conversely, while CEs used 'Regret' (f=13) as the third most frequent strategy, CCs preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=8), such as 老师, 我很愿意帮助您。 *[lǎo shī, wǒ hěn yuàn yì bāng zhù nín]* *"Professor, I'd really love to help you"* and 'Negative ability' (f=8), such as CCs stated 可能不能帮您了。 *[kě néng bù néng bāng nín le]* *"Maybe I cannot help you"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Future acceptance', $t(40.225) = 2.047$, $p = 0.047$ and 'Gratitude', $t(37.695) = -2.918$, $p = 0.006$. The results suggest that CCs ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.41$) use 'Future acceptance' more frequently than CEs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$). Meanwhile, CEs ($M = 0.30$, $SD = 0.47$) use 'Gratitude' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.2.4 Suggestions

Table 4.8 presents a comparison of refusal strategies between CCs and CEs when refusing a suggestion to take a course from a new friend (=power, +distance), a suggestion to narrow down a research topic from a classmate (=power, -distance), and a suggestion to present research at an international conference in Singapore from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by CCs and CEs for all suggestions.

4.2.4.1 Suggestion to Take a Course

CCs employed 12 strategies while CEs employed 13 strategies when refusing a suggestion to take a course from a new friend. Both groups used 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. However, CCs (f=24) gave explanations more frequently than CEs (f=22). The examples below illustrate typical explanations given by CCs:

> 我觉得这门课需要很好的基础。
> *[wǒ jué de zhè mén kè xū yào hěn hǎo de jī chǔ]*
> *"I suppose this course demands a good foundation."(CC11)*

> 我课选满了都。
> *[wǒ kè xuǎn mǎn le dōu]*
> *"I have selected enough courses." (CC16)*

Table 4.8 Refusal Strategies Used by CCs and CEs for Suggestions

Refusal Strategies	Course from new friend (=power, +distance)			Research Topic from classmate (=power, -distance)			International Conference from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	CC count	CE count	Sig.	CC count	CE count	Sig.	CC count	CE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	24	22	N.S.	23	15	0.032	30	29	N.S.
2. Positive feeling	5	10	N.S.	4	7	N.S.	5	13	0.024
3. Regret	3	4	N.S.	0	0	-	8	13	N.S.
4. Gratitude	1	4	N.S.	3	7	N.S.	3	9	N.S.
5. Negative ability	2	4	N.S.	1	3	N.S.	8	6	N.S.
6. Postponement	3	3	N.S.	1	7	0.024	1	0	N.S.
7. Self-defense	0	0	-	6	7	N.S.	0	0	-
8. Pause filler	1	3	N.S.	1	4	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
9. No	0	3	N.S.	0	3	N.S.	0	2	N.S.
10. Future acceptance	1	3	N.S.	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.
11. Statement of principle	3	0	N.S.	1	2	N.S.	0	0	-
12. Insistence*	0	0	-	3	3	N.S.	0	0	-
13. Alternative	4	0	0.043	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
14. Hedging	1	3	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
15. Asking for approval*	0	0	-	3	1	N.S.	0	0	-
16. Expression of surprise*	0	1	N.S.	0	2	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
17. Repetition	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.
18. Performative	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
19. Request for empathy	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
20. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
21. Silence	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
22. Topic switch	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
23. Request for more information*	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
24. Statement of acknowledgment*	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
Total	**49**	**62**		**47**	**64**		**59**	**75**	

Note:　N.S. = no significant difference
　　　　*new strategy found

Both groups also employed 'Positive feeling' as the second most frequent strategy. However, CEs (f=10) stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs (f=5). CCs, for instance, said *确认不错的一门课。[què rèn bú cuò de yī mén kè] "Surely, it is not a bad course".* For the third most frequent strategy, CCs favored 'Alternative' (f=4). For example, they stated *但是这门课比较适合最后一年来修, 不适合本学期。[dàn shì zhè mén kè bǐ jiào shì hé zuì hòu yì nián lái xiū, bù shì hé běn xué qī] "But the course suits the final academic year better, not this semester".* Meanwhile, CEs preferred as many as three strategies, namely 'Regret' (f=4), 'Gratitude' (f=4), and 'Negative ability' (f=4).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded a significant difference between the two Chinese groups in the use of 'Alternative', $t(29.000) = 2.112$, $p = 0.043$. The result suggests that CCs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) offer 'Alternative' whereas CEs never use this strategy.

4.2.2.2 Suggestion to Narrow down a Research Topic

CCs used 11 strategies while CEs used 15 strategies when refusing a classmate's suggestion to narrow down a research topic. It was found that 'Explanation' was the most favored strategy for both groups. However, CCs (f=23) used this strategy more frequently than CEs (F=15). Examples of explanations given by CCs are shown below:

> *其实我就是想拓展一下相关内容, 显得充实一点啊。*
> *[qí shí wǒ jiù shì xiǎng tuò zhǎn yí xià xiāng guan nèi róng, xiǎn de chōng shí yì diǎn a]*
> *"In fact, I'd like to learn more related knowledge, which will make me more knowledgeable." (CC9)*
>
> *题目大一点, 内容会更丰富。*
> *[tí mù dà yì diǎn, nèi róng huì gèng fēng fù]*
> *"The broader the topic is, the more I can write about it." (CC29)*

The second most frequently employed strategies for CEs included as many as four strategies, namely 'Positive feeling' (f=7), 'Gratitude' (f=7), 'Postponement' (f=7), and 'Self-defense' (f=7). Meanwhile, CCs favored 'Self-defense' (f=6), such as 我觉得完全没问题。 *[wǒ jué de wán quán méi wèn tí] "I don't think there is a problem at all"* and 我认为这个题目很有意思。 *[wǒ rèn wéi zhè ge tí mù hěn yǒu yì si] "I find this topic very interesting"*. CEs used 'Pause filler' (f=4) as the third most frequent strategy whereas CCs preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=4). Examples of 'Positive feeling' used by CCs are 就这个问题而言, 你确实提得很好。 *[jiù zhè gè wèn tí ér yán, nǐ què shí tí dé hěn hǎo] "In terms of this problem, you really made a good suggestion"* and 我觉得也是。 *[wǒ jué de yě shì] "I think so"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that two strategies showed significant differences between the two Chinese groups, i.e. 'Explanation', $t(56.448) = 2.193$, $p = 0.032$ and 'Postponement', $t(39.119) = -2.344$, $p = 0.024$. The results suggest that CCs ($M = 0.77$, $SD = 0.43$) give 'Explanation' more frequently than CEs ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.51$). Conversely, CEs ($M = 0.23$, $SD = 0.43$) use 'Postponement' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.2.2.3 Suggestion to Present Research in Singapore

Both CCs and CEs employed 9 strategies when refusing an advisor's suggestion to present their work in Singapore. In addition, both groups used 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. However, CCs (f=30) provided explanations more frequently than CEs (f=29). The examples below illustrate typical explanations given by CCs:

> 我觉得我的那个论文还需要修改。
> *[wǒ jué de wǒ de nà gè lùn wén hái xū yào xiū gǎi]*
> *"I think my thesis still needs to be revised." (CC8)*

六月我没有空, 公司要我去中国视察工作。
[liù yuè wǒ méi yǒu kòng, gōng sī yào wǒ qù zhōng guó shì chá gōng zuò]
"I am not available this June because my company wants me to go to China to inspect the work." (CC22)

'Positive feeling' (f=13) and 'Regret' (f=13) were the second most frequently employed strategies for CEs. Meanwhile, CCs preferred 'Regret' (f=8) and 'Negative ability' (e.g. *明年六月的话, 可能没有机会了。[míng nián liù yuè de huà, kě néng méi yǒu jī huì le] "If next June, probably I will not have the chance"*) (f=8). For the third most frequently used strategy, CEs favored 'Gratitude' (f=9) whereas CCs preferred 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *的确是个好机会。[dí què shì gè hǎo jī huì] "It really is a good opportunity"*) (f=5).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated that a significant difference between the two Chinese groups in the use of 'Positive feeling', $t(53.854)=$ -2.316, $p = 0.024$. The result suggests that CEs ($M = 0.43$, $SD=0.51$) employ 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$).

4.3 Comparison of Refusal Strategies between TEs and CEs

This section presents a comparison of refusal strategies between TEs and CEs according to eliciting acts (invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions) . The independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the frequency of refusal strategies. Examples of the strategies used by TEs and CEs are also provided without any grammatical corrections.

4.3.1 Invitations

Table 4.9 displays a comparison of refusal strategies between TEs and CEs in refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student (=power, +distance) ,

an invitation to a welcome party for international students from the Director of the Office of International Affairs (+power, +distance), and an invitation to lunch from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TEs and CEs for all invitations.

4.3.1.1 Invitation to a Thesis Defense

TEs used 10 strategies while CEs used 12 strategies when refusing an invitation to a thesis defense from a graduate student. Interestingly, 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Positive feeling' were the top three most frequently used strategies for both TEs and CEs. The most favored strategy for both groups was 'Explanation'. However, TEs (f=29) gave explanations more frequently than CEs (f=28). The following examples illustrate explanations typically provided by TEs and CEs:

> *I'm not free this afternoon. (TE5)*
> *I have an appointment with my supervisor at 2 p.m. (TE7)*
> *I have an academic reading class this afternoon. (CE2)*
> *But I will listen to an important seminar. (CE27)*

TEs were reported to employ 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I would like to"* and *"Your topic is really interesting"*) (f=13) and 'Regret' (e.g. *"Sorry"* and "*I'm very apologized to you*") (f=11) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. On the other hand, CEs adopted 'Regret' (e.g. *"It's a pity"* and *"I'm sorry"*) (f=19) and 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I really want to go"* and *"That's a good idea"*) (f=15) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. Both TEs and CEs also adopted 'Expressing good wishes'. TEs (f=8) used 'Expressing good wishes' more frequently than CEs (f=4). TEs said, for example

Table 4.9 Refusal Strategies Used by TEs and CEs for Invitations

Refusal Strategies	Thesis Defense from graduate student (=power, +distance)			Welcome Party from Director (+power, +distance)			Lunch from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TE	CE	Sig.	TE	CE	Sig.	TE	CE	Sig.
	count	count		count	count		count	count	
1. Explanation	29	28	N.S.	27	28	N.S.	27	28	N.S.
2. Regret	**11**	**19**	**0.039**	12	13	N.S.	13	21	N.S.
3. Positive feeling	13	15	N.S.	10	12	N.S.	4	9	N.S.
4. Negative ability	6	8	N.S.	10	9	N.S.	9	4	N.S.
5. Gratitude	1	4	N.S.	4	3	N.S.	**2**	**9**	**0.020**
6. Pause filler	5	4	N.S.	4	4	N.S.	2	2	N.S.
7. No	4	2	N.S.	3	2	N.S.	3	1	N.S.
8. Expressing good wishes*	8	4	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
9. Future acceptance	0	1	N.S.	2	2	N.S.	3	0	N.S.
10. Repetition	1	1	N.S.	1	2	N.S.	1	0	N.S.
11. Expression of surprise*	1	2	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
12. Alternative	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
13. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
14. Postponement	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
15. Hedging	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.
16. Statement of empathy	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**79**	**89**		**74**	**75**		**67**	**74**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
*new strategy found

"Congrats, by the way" and *"I will keep finger crossed for you"*. Similarly, CEs stated *"Congratulations first"* and *"Good luck to you"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated a significant difference between TEs and CEs in the use of 'Regret', $t(29.00580) = -2.107, p = 0.039$. The result suggests that CEs ($M = 0.63, SD = 0.49$) express 'Regret' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.37, SD = 0.49$).

4.3.1.2 Invitation to a Welcome Party for International Students

When refusing an invitation to a welcome party from the Director, TEs employed 10 strategies while CEs employed 9 strategies. Both TEs and CEs used 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. CEs (f=28), however, used 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs (f=27). Some examples of explanations generally used by both groups are shown below:

> *But I have another appointment which can't be rescheduled. (TE1)*
>
> *Because I have to go to my hometown, Lopburi, on that Friday night. (TE8)*
>
> *I'm not available that night. I will have an appointment with my friend. He will stay only on that day. (CE1)*
>
> *But I must study for next week's test. (CE20)*

TEs and CEs used 'Regret' as the second most frequent strategy. Similar to 'Explanation', CEs (f=13) used 'Regret' more frequently than TEs (f=12). Both groups expressed 'Regret' in a similar way. They stated, for instance, *"Sorry"* and *"So sorry for that"*. 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"Actually, I would like to join in the party"*) (f=12) was employed by CEs as the third most frequent strategy. Meanwhile, not only 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"Yeah, I would like to come"*) (f=10), but also 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"I really can't that night"*) (f=10) were the third most frequently used strategy for

TEs. It should be noted that 'Negative ability' was also employed by CEs, but with less frequency (f=9).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

4.3.1.3 Invitation to Lunch

When refusing an advisor's invitation to lunch, CEs employed only 7 strategies whereas TEs employed 12 strategies. 'Explanation' was used as the most frequent strategy by both TEs (f=27) and CEs (f=28). The examples below demonstrate explanations typically given by both groups:

> *I have an appointment with an expert at that time. (TE10)*
>
> *I plan to come back home. I have dinner with my family. (TE23)*
>
> *However, I am going to Bangkok to pick up my friends coming from China this Friday. (CE12)*
>
> *I have a headache. (CE22)*

'Regret' was the next most frequently employed strategy for both TEs and CEs. It was found that CEs (f=21) showed 'Regret' much more frequently than TEs (f=13). TEs said, for example, *"But it's a pity"* and *"Sorry about that"*. In a similar way, CEs said *"That's too bad"* and *"I'm so sorry, teacher"*. For the third most frequent strategy, TEs employed 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"I think I can't join this time"*) (f=9). Meanwhile, CEs favored 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I really like to come with you"*) (f=9) as well as 'Gratitude' (e.g. "*Thank you for your invitation"*) (f=9).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between TEs and CEs in the use of 'Gratitude', $t(44.798) = -2.408, p = 0.020$. The result indicates that CEs ($M = 0.30$, $SD = 0.47$) expressed 'Gratitude' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.07$, $SD = 0.25$).

4.3.2 Requests

Table 4.10 displays a comparison of refusal strategies between TEs and CEs in refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student (=power, +distance), a request to proofread a term paper from a roommate (+power, +distance), and a request to demonstrate online registration for courses from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TEs and CEs for all requests.

4.3.2.1 Request to Complete a Questionnaire

When refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student, TEs used 7 strategies whereas CEs used 10 strategies. Both groups favored 'Explanation' the most. TEs (f=30), however, gave explanations more frequently than CEs (f=29). Examples below are explanations given by both groups:

> *I am in a hurry right now. (TE5)*
>
> *I don't have time because I have a class now. (TE19)*
>
> *But I'm on my way to see my supervisor. (CE12)*
>
> *I am catching the bus. (CE20)*

The second most frequently used strategy for both groups was 'Regret' (e.g. *"Sorry"* and *"I'm so sorry"*). 'Regret' was used by CEs (f=24) more frequently than by TEs (f=23). While the third most frequently employed strategy for TEs was 'No' (f=6), CEs preferred 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I'd like to"* and *"I'd love to help"*) (f=5).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

Table 4.10 Refusal Strategies Used by TEs and CEs for Requests

Refusal Strategies	Questionnaire from master's student (=power, +distance)			Term Paper from roommate (=power, -distance)			Online Registration from Dean (+power, +distance)		
	TE count	CE count	Sig.	TE count	CE count	Sig.	TE count	CE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	30	29	N.S.	26	29	N.S.	27	30	N.S.
2. Regret	23	24	N.S.	20	23	N.S.	20	19	N.S.
3. Negative ability	4	2	N.S.	10	4	N.S.	**12**	**4**	**0.020**
4. Positive feeling	2	5	N.S.	5	7	N.S.	**1**	**13**	**0.000**
5. No	6	2	N.S.	2	3	N.S.	4	2	N.S.
6. Pause filler	4	2	N.S.	5	2	N.S.	2	3	N.S.
7. Alternative	0	0	-	5	1	N.S.	**5**	**0**	**0.023**
8. Future acceptance	4	2	N.S.	2	1	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
9. Repetition	0	0	-	0	0	-	2	1	N.S.
10. Request for empathy	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.	0	0	-
11. Gratitude	0	0	-	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.
12. Request for more information*	0	2	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
13. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
14. Topic switch	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
15. Asking for approval*	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
16. Greeting*	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
17. Statement of acknowledgment*	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**73**	**70**		**78**	**72**		**75**	**73**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
*new strategy found

4.3.2.2 Request to Proofread a Term Paper

When refusing a roommate's request to proofread a term paper, TEs employed 11 strategies whereas CEs employed 10 strategies. Both groups favored 'Explanation' the most. However, CEs (f=29) provided 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs (f=26). The following examples illustrate typical explanations used by both groups:

> *I have a lot of things to do this week. All are urgent and important. (TE1)*
>
> *I'm struggling to finish mine tonight. (TE11)*
>
> *Because I'm very busy. I'll meet my advisor tomorrow. I'm doing some preparation for that. (CE8)*
>
> *Today I have homework. (CE20)*

The second most frequently employed strategy for both groups was 'Regret' (e.g. *"Sorry"* and *"I'm sorry"*). CEs (f=23), once again, expressed 'Regret' much more frequently than TEs (f=20). Conversely, it was revealed that TEs and CEs employed different strategies as the third most frequent strategy. That is, TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=10) (e.g. *I can't do it for you"* and *"but I can't help you"*) whereas CEs preferred 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I'd like to help you"* and *"I'm very glad to do it"*) (f=7).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test indicated no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

4.3.2.3 Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

When refusing a request to show how to register online for courses from the Dean, TEs employed 9 strategies while CEs employed 8 strategies. Both TEs and CEs used 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. However, CEs (f=30) provided

explanations more frequently than TEs (f=27). Explanations generally used by both groups are shown in the following examples:

> *I have to take my mom to see the doctor since she has a problem with her eyes. (TE4)*
>
> *I've already planned my LAB work on that day. (TE18)*
>
> *I have to meet my supervisor at Tuesday. You know it's hard to change the schedule. (CE3)*
>
> *But I have to do my part-time job on that day. (CE30)*

For the second most frequent strategy, both TEs and CEs adopted 'Regret'. 'Regret' was used by TEs (f=20) more frequently than by CEs (f=19). Typical expressions of 'Regret' used by both groups included *"Sorry"* and *"I'm so sorry"*. Both groups employed different strategies as the third most frequent strategy. TEs favored 'Negative ability' (f=12), such as *"I won't show up that day"* and "*I could not join the orientation"*. Meanwhile, CEs preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=13), such as *"It's my pleasure to do so"* and *"I really want to come to see our new students"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test revealed that three strategies showed significant differences between TEs and CEs, i.e. 'Negative ability', $t(51.670) = 2.408$, $p = 0.020$, 'Positive feeling', $t(36.482) = -4.087$, $p = 0.000$, and 'Alternative', $t(29.000) = 2.408$, $p = 0.023$. The results suggest that TEs ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 0.50$) employ 'Negative ability' more frequently than CEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$). TEs ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.38$) also offer 'Alternative' whereas CEs never use this strategy. Conversely, CEs ($M = 0.43$, $SD = 0.50$) state 'Positive feeling' more frequently than TEs ($M = 0.03$, $SD = 0.18$).

4.3.3 Offers

Table 4.11 shows a comparison of refusal strategies between TEs and CEs in refusing an offer of a book of abstracts from a classmate (=power, -distance), an offer of a teaching assistantship from the Dean of the Graduate School (+power, +distance), and an offer of a research assistantship from an advisor (+power, -distance). The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TEs and CEs for all offers.

4.3.3.1 Offer of a Book of Abstracts

TEs used 12 strategies while CEs used 9 strategies when refusing a classmate's offer of a book of abstracts. Both TEs and CEs favored 'Explanation' the most. However, CEs (f=24) gave explanations more frequently than TEs (f=21). Examples of explanations commonly given by TEs and CEs are shown as follows:

> *I don't have enough time to read extensively. I need time to work on my own topic at this moment. (TE6)*
>
> *Now I'm writing my work. (TE30)*
>
> *But I think I already have enough books to read. (CE1)*
>
> *These days I am busy with my project. (CE23)*

Both TEs and CEs employed 'Future acceptance' as the second most frequent strategy. However, CEs (e.g. *"I'll have a look at it later"*) (f=14) used 'Future acceptance' more frequently than TEs (e.g. *"Please send to me next time"*) (f=13). While TEs employed 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thank you for your kindness"*) as the third most frequent strategy (f=10), CEs preferred both 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thank you very much. You are really kind"*) (f=12) and 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"Sounds interesting"* and *"I'd love to"*) (f=12).

Table 4.11 Refusal Strategies Used by TEs and CEs for Offers

Refusal Strategies	Book of Abstracts from classmate (=power, -distance)			Teaching Assistant from Dean (+power, +distance)			Research Assistant from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TE count	CE count	Sig.	TE count	CE count	Sig.	TE count	CE count	Sig.
1. Explanation	21	24	N.S.	25	27	N.S.	26	28	N.S.
2. Positive feeling	6	12	N.S.	13	16	N.S.	9	14	N.S.
3. Regret	4	4	N.S.	8	11	N.S.	13	13	N.S.
4. Gratitude	10	12	N.S.	4	5	N.S.	6	9	N.S.
5. Future acceptance	13	14	N.S.	4	1	N.S.	4	1	N.S.
6. Negative ability	3	4	N.S.	6	3	N.S.	5	5	N.S.
7. No	**8**	**2**	**0.039**	6	4	N.S.	3	2	N.S.
8. Pause filler	3	1	N.S.	0	2	N.S.	3	3	N.S.
9. Alternative	1	0	N.S.	1	0	N.S.	0	3	N.S.
10. Hedging	1	0	N.S.	0	1	N.S.	1	1	N.S.
11. Performative	0	0	-	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
12. Let the interlocutor off the hook	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
13. Repetition	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
14. Expression of surprise*	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
15. Request for more information*	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
Total	**72**	**74**		**68**	**71**		**70**	**79**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
           *new strategy found

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between the TEs and CEs in the use of 'No', $t(45.758) = 2.121$, $p = 0.039$. The result suggests that TEs ($M = 0.27$, $SD = 0.45$) state 'No' directly more frequently than CEs ($M = 0.07$, $SD = 0.25$).

4.3.3.2 Offer of a Teaching Assistantship

TEs used 9 strategies whereas CEs used 10 strategies when refusing the position of a teaching assistant from the Dean. It was revealed that both groups used 'Explanation', 'Positive feeling', and 'Regret' as the most, the second most, and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. 'Explanation' was used by CEs (f=27) more frequently than TEs (f=25). Examples of explanations commonly given by both groups are demonstrated below:

> *But this semester I have planned to finish writing my proposal. (TE6)*
> *I think I've got a very tight schedule in this term. (TE18)*
> *But I'm busy with my proposal defense this term. (CE15)*
> *I have 3 courses this term and many exams. (CE24)*

Similarly, 'Positive feeling' was employed by CEs (f=16) more frequently than by TEs (f=13). To express positive opinions, TEs stated, for instance, "*I'm interested in teaching*" and "*That's quite a good opportunity*". In a similar way, CEs said *"I really would like to"* and *"Actually, I'm very interested in it, Ajarn. It can help me get some teaching experience of teaching foreign students"*. Consistent with 'Explanation' and 'Positive feeling', 'Regret' was also used by CEs (f=11) more frequently than by TEs (f=8).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

4.3.3.3 Offer of a Research Assistantship

TEs used 9 strategies while CEs used 10 strategies when refusing an advisor's offer of a research assistantship. Similar to the previous situation, both groups showed their preference for 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Positive feeling'. 'Explanation' was the most favored strategy for both TEs (f=26) and CEs (f=28). Below are examples of typical explanations given by both groups:

> *But I'm really worried about the QE and I don't think I can manage time for that. (TE3)*
>
> *But this year I plan to attention on thesis only. (TE3)*
>
> *I'm having too many courses to attend this term. (CE11)*
>
> *I am working on another research project. (CE27)*

Concerning 'Regret' and 'Positive feeling', TEs used 'Regret' (e.g. *"This is too bad"* and *"Sorry"*) (f=13) and 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"It's good opportunity"* and *"I really want to be your assistant"*) (f=9) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively. On the other hand, CEs used 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"That's great. I really want to join the team"* and *"I really would like to help"*) (f=14) and 'Regret' (e.g. *"What a pity it is"* and *"I'm sorry"*) (f=13) as the second most and the third most frequent strategy, respectively.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

4.3.4 Suggestions

Table 4.12 illustrates a comparison of refusal strategies between TEs and CEs in refusing a suggestion to take a course from a new friend (=power, +distance), a suggestion to narrow down a research topic from a classmate (=power, -distance), and a suggestion to present research work at an international conference in Singapore from

an advisor (+power, -distance) . The strategies are listed in descending order of frequency based on the total frequency of each refusal strategy used by TEs and CEs for all suggestions.

4.3.4.1 Suggestion to Take a Course

When refusing a new friend's suggestion to take a course, TEs used 11 strategies while CEs used 13 strategies. Both groups employed 'Explanation' as the most frequent strategy. CEs (f=22), however, gave explanations more frequently than TEs (f=21). Some examples of explanations used by both groups are shown below:

> *I've got full schedule this semester. (TE7)*
>
> *But I interested in the other course. That should help me for my LAB work. (TT3)*
>
> *But I am bad at writing and I'm afraid that I can't pass the final exam about the course. (CE2)*
>
> *But I think it's too difficult. (CE25)*

'Postponement' was employed by TEs (f=8) as the second most frequent strategy. They stated, for example, *"Let me think"* and *"Can I ask my advisor before?"* CEs, on the contrary, preferred 'Positive feeling' (f=10), such as *"You're right. It's quite interesting"* and *"It seems a good idea"*. 'Positive feeling' was the third most frequently employed strategy for TEs (f=6), for instance, *"Yeah, I think so"* and *"Yeah it is very useful for me"*. Meanwhile, as many as three strategies were used by CEs, although with relative low frequency (f=4). These strategies included 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thank you for your recommendation anyway"*), 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"For me, I will not take it"*), and 'Regret' (e.g. *"Sorry"*).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

Table 4.12 Refusal Strategies Used by TEs and CEs for Suggestions

Refusal Strategies	Course from new friend (=power, +distance)			Topic from classmate (=power, -distance)			International Conference from advisor (+power, -distance)		
	TE	**CE**	**Sig.**	**TE**	**CE**	**Sig.**	**TE**	**CE**	**Sig.**
	count	count		count	count		count	count	
1. Explanation	21	22	N.S.	18	15	N.S.	27	29	N.S.
2. Positive feeling	6	10	N.S.	5	7	N.S.	9	13	N.S.
3. Gratitude	2	4	N.S.	10	7	N.S.	6	9	N.S.
4. Negative ability	5	4	N.S.	7	3	N.S.	8	6	N.S.
5. Regret	5	4	N.S.	1	0	N.S.	7	13	N.S.
6. Pause filler	5	3	N.S.	5	4	N.S.	1	1	N.S.
7. Postponement	8	3	N.S.	2	7	N.S.	0	0	-
8. Self-defense	0	0	-	10	7	N.S.	0	0	-
9. No	3	3	N.S.	1	3	N.S.	2	2	N.S.
10. Future acceptance	4	3	N.S.	0	0	-	**4**	**0**	**0.043**
11. Expression of surprise*	0	1	N.S.	4	2	N.S.	0	1	N.S.
12. Hedging	3	3	N.S.	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-
13. Alternative	1	0	N.S.	0	0	-	2	0	N.S.
14. Insistence*	0	0	-	0	3	N.S.	0	0	-
15. Statement of principle	0	0	-	0	2	N.S.	0	0	-
16. Request for more information*	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	1	0	N.S.
17. Statement of acknowledgement*	0	0	-	1	1	N.S.	0	0	-
18. Performative	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
19. Let the interlocutor off the hook	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
20. Topic switch	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-	0	0	-
21. Repetition	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.
22. Asking for approval*	0	0	-	0	1	N.S.	0	0	-
Total	**63**	**62**		**65**	**64**		**67**	**75**	

Note: N.S. = no significant difference
       *new strategy found

4.3.4.2 Suggestion to Narrow down a Research Topic

When refusing a classmate's suggestion to narrow down a research topic, TEs used 12 strategies and CEs used 15 strategies. 'Explanation' was used by both groups as the most frequent strategy. TEs (f=18), however, used this strategy more frequently than CEs (f=15). Some explanations commonly used by both groups are illustrated by the following examples:

> *But in my view, if I narrow it too much, my topic will not be helpful for other generation of Thai learners. (TE4)*
>
> *Because I'm interested in this topic. (TE20)*
>
> *But I still think that only a broad topic can cover what I really want to express. (CE5)*
>
> *I'm afraid I have no time to change my topic. (CE20)*

Two strategies were used by TEs as the second most frequent strategies. These strategies consisted of 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thank you for your suggestion"*) (f=10) and 'Self-Defense' (e.g. *"I think it's appropriate"* and *"but I think my topic is good"*) (f=10). Meanwhile, CEs preferred as many as four strategies, namely 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"Maybe you're right"* and *"That's good"*)(f=7), 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thanks"*) (f=7), 'Postponement' (e.g. *"I will think about it"* and *"Anyway, I will take your suggestion into consideration"*) (f=7), and 'Self-defense' (e.g. *"I think it is reasonable"* and *"I think the topic is O.K."*) (f=7). Concerning the third most frequently used strategy, TEs favored 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"I don't think so"* and *"but I can't change it anymore"*) (f=7) whereas CEs preferred 'Pause filler' (f=4).

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test yielded no significant difference between TEs and CEs.

4.3.4.3 Suggestion to Present Research in Singapore

When refusing an advisor's suggestion to present research work in Singapore, TEs used 10 strategies while CEs used 9 strategies. 'Explanation' was used by TEs (f=27) and CEs (f=29) as the most frequent strategy. Some of examples of explanations generally given by both groups are as follows:

> *I need to spend time to preparing my final presentation and I plan to finish it in the early of June. It could be rush for me if I participate in this conference in Singapore. (TT6)*
>
> *In June next year, I'm already register in another session of presentation in near our country. (TT22)*
>
> *I have registered the conference organized in Bangkok. (CE4)*
>
> *I have booked a ticket back home. (CE20)*

'Positive feeling' was the next most frequently used strategy for TEs (f=9). They stated, for instance, "*That's very interesting*" and "*I would really love to take this opportunity*". Meanwhile, CEs preferred not only 'Positive feeling' (e.g. "*It's really a good chance for me*" and "*I would like to go*") (f=13), but also 'Regret' (f=13). For the third most frequent strategy, TEs used 'Negative ability' (f=8), such as *"I'm afraid I can't make it at that time"* and *"Maybe I can't go"*. CEs, on the contrary, favored 'Gratitude' (f=9), such as *"Thank you for telling me this"*.

An analysis of an independent-samples t-test showed a significant difference between TEs and CEs in the use of 'Future acceptance', $t(29.000) = 2.112$, $p = 0.043$. The result indicates that TEs ($M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.35$) use 'Future acceptance' while CEs never use this strategy.

The results from a comparison between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs have shown that there are more similarities than differences in the use of refusal strategies between each pair. The top three frequently used strategies for each

group in refusing invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions are summarized in Appendix N.

4.4 Summary

To summarize, this chapter presents the findings from a comparison of strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs in refusing invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions. It was revealed that there were more similarities than differences in the use of refusal strategies between each pair. However, more significant differences were found between TTs and TEs as well as CCs and CEs than between TEs and CEs. These findings will be further discussed in the following chapter.
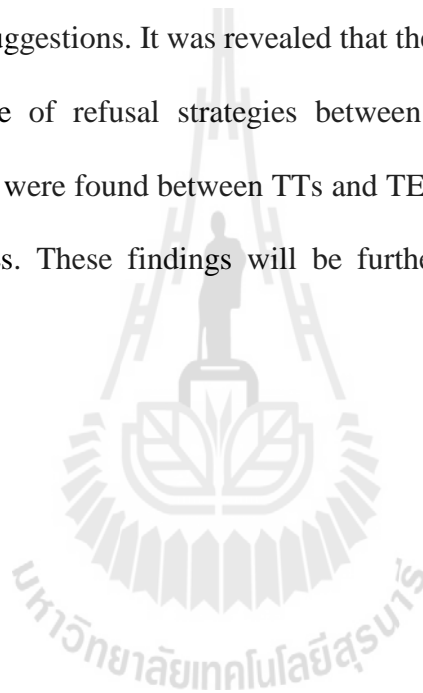
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter reviews and interprets the findings of the present study. The discussion is divided into three major sections: 1) similarities in the use of refusal strategies, 2) differences in the use of refusal strategies, and 3) factors influencing the use of refusal strategies.

5.1 Similarities in the Use of Refusal Strategies

This section discusses the similarities in the use of refusal strategies. According to a comparison of strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs, it was reported that there were more similarities than differences between each pair. However, based on the combined frequencies of each group in all situations using the data in Table 4.1-4.8, 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were the top two most frequently employed strategies for each group. Therefore, these two strategies will be discussed in detail as follows:

5.1.1 Excuse, Reason, Explanation

Consistent with most of the previous research studies on refusals (e.g. Sairhun, 1999; Wannaruk 2005, 2008; Han, 2006; Farnia & Wu, 2012; Hassani, Mardani, & Dastjerdi, 2011; Guo, 2012; Boonkongsaen, 2013; Shishavan & Sharifian, 2013; Lin, 2014), it was reported that 'Explanation' was employed most by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs. This finding supports Hassani et al. (2011) who point out that 'Explanation'

should be considered a universal politeness strategy in realizing a speech act of refusal. Nevertheless, the content of explanations provided by each group can be either similar or different in terms of specificity and persuasiveness as discussed according to eliciting acts below:

5.1.1.1 Invitations

In refusing invitations, most explanations given by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs were acceptable, such as citing previous appointments or engagements. Specifically, when rejecting an advisor's invitation to lunch or the Director's invitation to a welcome party, all groups tended to refer to plans with or sickness of their family members as shown in the following examples:

> *พอดีนัดแม่ไว้แล้ว*
> *[phodi nat mae wai laew]*
> *"I already have an appointment with my mother." (TT13)*
>
> 我已经跟爷爷奶奶约好了要一起出去看医生。
> *[wǒ yǐ jīng gēn yé ye nǎi nai yuē hǎo le yào yì qǐ chū qù kàn yī shēng]*
> *"I have promised my grandfather and grandmother to see a doctor with them." (CC15)*
>
> *My son is sick. (TE1)*
>
> *But I told my parents that I would visit them in the afternoon and so I have to get prepared at the lunchtime. (CE11)*

These findings accord well not only with those of Sairhun (1999) which found that Thai native speakers and Thai EFL learners typically referred to their family members, but also those of Lin (2014) which reported that Chinese native speakers and Chinese EFL learners often cited family matters as well as health problems when giving specific reasons in their refusals.

5.1.1.2 Requests

Explanations given by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs in refusing a request to complete a questionnaire from a master's student were rather short and vague, stating that they were busy or in a hurry, although some may specify the exact time, person, or plan. Based on the follow-up interviews, most subjects felt little pressure in rejecting this request since a master's student was a complete stranger to them. As a result, they did not elaborate much on their reasons. On the other hand, when declining a roommate's request to proofread a term paper or the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses, all groups typically referred to important business or previous engagements, whether personal, school-related, or work-related. Interestingly, all groups were also found to downgrade their ability, particularly when refusing a roommate's request to proofread a term paper as shown in the examples below:

เราไม่เก่งภาษาหรอก
[rao mai keng phasa rok]
"I'm not good at the language." (TT21)

我对这个不是很了解。
[wǒ duì zhè gè bú shì hěn liǎo jiě]
"I don't really understand this." (CC2)

Because I don't have the accurate knowledge enough to prove it. (TE27)

I don't think my English is good for proofreading. (CE9)

5.1.1.3 Offers

When refusing the Dean's offer of a teaching assistantship or an advisor's offer of a research assistantship, all groups frequently cited their busy study schedule or commitment to another project. Similar reasons were given by native Thai speakers and Thai EFL learners in Wannaruk's (2005, 2008) studies when they turned down an advisor's offer of a teaching assistantship. Consistent with requests, some

participants even stated that they were not capable enough to do the jobs as demonstrated in the following examples:

หนูคิดว่าหนูความสามารถไม่ถึงค่ะ
[nu khit wa nu khwamsamat mai thueng kha]
"I think I'm not capable enough." (TT3)

我对这方面不太熟悉。
[wǒ duì zhè fāng miàn bù tài shú xī]
"I'm not familiar with this field." (CC28)

But I totally have no idea about this topic so it might not be useful for you to have me in a team. (TE17)

But I have to say that I'm not so confident about myself in doing research. (CE5)

As for a classmate's offer of a book of abstracts, all groups were likely to refer to a number of books or school work that they had.

5.1.1.4 Suggestions

In line with Wannaruk (2008), TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs usually referred to research objectives as well as relevant information in refusing a classmate's suggestion to narrow down a research topic. Also, when refusing an advisor's suggestion to present their work in Singapore, all groups frequently cited their unfinished research. CEs also frequently referred to plans to go back to China. In contrast, none of the groups attempted to elaborate on their reasons for rejecting a new friend's suggestion to take a course. They often used their own preference for another course as grounds for their refusals. Similar explanations were given by Iraqi native speakers of Arabic in the study of Abdul Sattar, Che Lah, and Raja Suleiman (2010). That is, the subjects stated that they did not want to take the course or they had already taken the course.

It was observed that in a situation in which the participants in all groups had to refuse an advisor, most of them were reported to feel great pressure, which led them to provide longer and more specific explanations than in a situation in which they felt little or no pressure at all, like refusing an unfamiliar graduate student.

5.1.2 Statement of Regret

'Regret' was used by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs as the second most frequent strategy. It was typically found at the beginning or at the end of their utterances, particularly in refusing invitations and requests. This finding supports that of Sairhun (1999) which revealed that 'Regret' seemed to be an essential component of refusals and was employed by both Thai and American participants in her study in refusing every request. Consistent with Prachanant (2006), a small repertoire of fixed phrases and expressions to show regret were found in this study. These phrases can be divided into three types as follows:

5.1.2.1 Expressing Apology

This type of 'Regret' was employed by all groups as illustrated in the following examples:

TTs:	โทษ [thot] "sorry", ขอโทษ [khothot] "sorry", and ขอประทานโทษ [khoprathanthot] "sorry"
CCs:	抱歉 [bào qiàn] "sorry", 不好意思 [bù hǎo yì sī] "sorry", and 对不起 [duì bù qǐ] "sorry"
TEs:	"Sorry", "Sorry for that.", "I'm sorry.", "I'm sorry about that.", and "I'm very apologized to you."
CEs:	"Sorry", "Sorry about that.", "I am/feel sorry.", "I'm sorry for that.", "I'm sorry to tell you that…", and "I apologize for…"

Interestingly, it was found that all groups sometimes used these phrases and expressions along with *intensifiers* to increase the degree of sincerity in their regret.

These findings are in line with those of different studies, such as Makthavornvattana (1988), Sairhun (1999), Kwon (2003), Prachanant (2006), and Kittisiriprasert (2011).

Examples of *intensifiers* adopted by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs are shown below:

TTs: จริงๆ *[ching ching] "really"*, ต้อง *[tong] "must/have to"*, มาก *[mak] "much"*, and มากๆ *[mak mak] "very much"*

CCs: 很 *[hěn] "very"*, 真 *[zhēn] "really"*, 实在 *[shí zài] "really"*, and 非常 *[fēi cháng] "extremely"*

TEs: *so, really, very, very much, terribly,* and *have to*

CEs: *so, really, very, terribly,* and *awfully*

Apart from *intensifiers*, a few respondents employed 'Regret' twice, typically at the beginning and at the end of their responses probably to upgrade an apologetic tone as shown in the following examples:

> <u>不好意思</u>, 这学期我已经接手了三个年级的课程, 备课任务有点重, <u>在不好意思了</u>。
> *[<u>bù hǎo yì sī</u>, zhè xué qī wǒ yǐ jīng jiē shǒu le sān gè nián jí de kè chéng, bèi kè rèn wu yǒu diǎn zhòng, <u>shí zài bù hǎo yì sī le</u>]*
> *"<u>Sorry</u>. This semester I have taken on the teaching task of three grades. The workload for preparing for the classes is a little heavy. <u>I'm really sorry</u>."* (CC24)

> *"I'd really like to help you, but <u>I'm so sorry</u> because I have to finish my paper this term and I'm afraid that I might not have enough time for you. <u>I'm very sorry again</u>."* (TE8)

5.1.2.2 Showing Pity

This type of 'Regret' was adopted by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs to convey a sense of regret and disappointment over their being unable to accept the invitations, requests, offers, or suggestions. Hong (2011) also reported that native speakers of Chinese used the expressions of pity as one of the supportive moves in their refusals. Examples of this type of 'Regret' are illustrated in the following page:

TTs: *เสียดาย [siadai] "It's a pity."* and *เสียใจ [siachai] "It's a pity."*

CCs: *可惜 [kě xī] "It's a pity./unfortunately"* and *不巧 [bù qiǎo] "It's a pity./unfortunately"*

TEs: *"That's too bad."*

CEs: *"What a pity."*, *"It's a pity."*, and *"It's bad."*

5.1.2.3 Asking for Forgiveness

Only one participant from the TE group employed this type of 'Regret' in refusing a classmate's suggestion about a research topic, using the phrase *"Forgive me."* This type of 'Regret' was also adopted by American native English speakers to ask for forgiveness and empathy for not being able to comply with the requests (Sairhun, 1999). The TE participant's use of this type of regret might be explained by the finding of the same study, which reported that Americans native English speakers expressed regret by offering apologies when refusing some suggestions in order to show gratitude and appreciation towards the interlocutors for their useful suggestions. Another possibility is that the TE participant might have limited English proficiency. As a result, the participant might choose an inappropriate expression in response to the suggestion.

To summarize, TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs were noticeably similar in their use of 'Explanation' and 'Regret'. However, the content used by each group was either similar or different as presented above. The next section will discuss the differences in the use of refusal strategies.

5.2 Differences in the Use of Refusal Strategies

Based on a comparison of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs, significant differences between TTs and TEs were found in the use of 'No', 'Pause filler', 'Negative ability', 'Future acceptance', 'Positive feeling', 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Insistence'. As for CCs and CEs, significant differences were found in the use of 'Positive feeling', 'Gratitude', 'Alternative', 'No', 'Future acceptance', 'Explanation', and 'Postponement'. Meanwhile, significant differences between TEs and CEs were found in the use of 'Regret', 'Gratitude', 'Negative ability', 'Positive feeling', 'Alternative', 'No', and 'Future acceptance'. These differences will be discussed in detail below:

5.2.1 No

As revealed in a number of previous studies (e.g. Tanck, 2004; Wannaruk, 2005, 2008; Nguyen, 2006; Hassani et al., 2011; Sahragard & Javanmard, 2011; Lin 2014), all groups of participants in this study rarely adopted such a direct strategy as 'No' in all situations so as to avoid threatening the face of the interlocutors and to maintain a harmonious relationship (Kittisiriprasert, 2011). According to the interviews, most participants in this study thought that a speech act of refusal was already face-threatening in nature (Brown & Levinson, 1987); therefore, making refusals by a direct 'No' would be even more impolite and could hurt their interlocutors' feelings, as also reported by Wannaruk (2008) and Tian (2014). As a result, for a situation in which they chose to say *no*, they typically employed mitigating strategies, such as 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Gratitude' to soften the negative effects of their refusals (Kwon, 2003).

Interestingly, 'No' was adopted more frequently in L2 by both Thai and Chinese subjects in the present study than in L1. In other words, TEs tended to adopt a direct

'No' frequently in refusing a graduate student's invitation to a thesis defense, a master's degree student's request to complete a questionnaire, the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses, a classmate's offer of a book of abstracts, and the Dean's offer of a teaching assistantship. Meanwhile, TTs hardly said 'No' in these situations. In addition, TEs were found to state 'No' more frequently than CEs when refusing a classmate's offer of a book of abstracts.

It was observed that TEs used 'No' more often with interlocutors of equal status, which is in agreement with Wannaruk (2008) who reported that 'No' was employed by native speakers of Thai, Thai EFL learners, and American native speakers of English more frequently in refusing interlocutors of equal or lower status. The use of 'No' by TEs in the aforementioned situations was illustrated below:

Invitation to a Thesis Defense

No, I have to go to Bangkok this afternoon. (TE9)

No, I'm busy all day today. (TE12)

No, I cannot come to see you because this afternoon I have some lecture. (TE24)

Request to Complete a Questionnaire

No, I'm busy. (TE9)

No, I'm sorry. I'm going to study now. (TE21)

No, I'm sorry. I'm in business now. (TE28)

Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

No, I think I can't come. I have some work to do. (TE9)

No, I can't. My mother told I should be come back home. (TE22)

No, I not have time for orientation because I do something in that time. (TE24)

Offer of a Book of Abstracts

No, thank you. That's very kind of you. (TE2)

No, I don't want to look. (TE19)

No, I don't. Now I have the journals that should read for all of them. If I want to read, I will tell you later. (TE27)

Offer of a Teaching Assistantship

No, I'm not. (TE12)

No, I don't think I can because I not like this. (TE24)

No, I'm not. This term I have a lot of things to do with my project that my advisor gives the plan to me already. (TE27)

Meanwhile, CEs were reported to say 'No' directly only in refusing the Dean's offer of a teaching assistantship whereas CCs never used this strategy. This finding agrees with Guo's study (2012) in which Chinese subjects were likely to avoid saying 'No' in their native language, particularly in refusing invitations, regardless of the status of the interlocutors. The following responses show how CEs used 'No' in refusing the Dean's offer in the present study:

No, thank you! Because I'd to read more for my research. (CE9)

No, thanks. (CE17)

No, I'm very sorry. I need more time to study. (CE20)

The use of this direct strategy to the Dean possibly resulted from their limited English proficiency. As suggested by Hong (2011), American learners of Chinese were likely to use direct strategies when they refused in Chinese and one of the presumable reasons was their lack of linguistic proficiency.

5.2.2 Negative Willingness/Ability

'Negative ability' is a means to show the inability, unwillingness, or negative opinion to comply with the proposed invitations, request, offers, or suggestions (Shishavan & Sharifian, 2013). Although being categorized as a direct strategy (Beebe et al., 1990), 'Negative ability' did not show the intention to refuse as clearly as 'No' (Wannaruk, 2008). This might be the reason why 'Negative ability' was employed by

the participants in this study more frequently than was 'No'. In addition, some lexical or phrasal mitigators (Félix-Brasdefer, 2004) like modals or subjectivizers can be utilized to soften the degree of directness (Lin, 2014). Examples of mitigators employed by all groups in the present study are provided below:

TTs: เกรงว่า *[kreng wa]* *"I'm afraid…"*, คง/อาจจะ *[kong/atcha]* *"maybe/probably"*, and คิดว่า *[khitwa]* *"I think…"*

CCs: 恐怕 *[kǒng pà]* *"I'm afraid…"* and 可能 *[kě néng]* *"maybe/probably"*

TEs: *"I'm afraid…"*, *"I think…"*, *"I don't think…"*, and *maybe*

CEs: *"I'm afraid…"*, *"I think…"*, *"I don't think…"*, and *maybe*

Nevertheless, it was found that 'Negative ability' was employed more frequently by TEs than by TTs in refusing several situations, including a roommate's request to proofread a term paper, the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses, a classmate's suggestion about a research topic, and an advisor's suggestion to present research work. Furthermore, TEs used 'Negative ability' more frequently than CEs in refusing the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses. Examples below illustrate the use of this strategy by TEs:

Request to Proofread a Term Paper

I'm sorry. I have to finish my work tonight so I don't think that I can do it for you. (TE3)

I'm afraid I cannot. I don't have time. (TE12)

Oh sorry, I have to work on this paper until late at night. So, I don't think I can finish reading your report by tonight. (TE17)

Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

Thank you for your information. I am afraid that I can't join this orientation. I have set my plan to participate in a conference in Bangkok on that day. (TE6)

I'm afraid I can't. I have to go camping with my students. (TE14)

Sorry, <u>I can't going next Tuesday</u> because I have to talk about the project with my advisor. (TE19)

Suggestion to Narrow Down a Research Topic

<u>I don't think so</u> as my advisor has approved it. (TE1)

<u>I don't think so.</u> It's quite understanding. (TE7)

Umm, <u>for me I think that I can't narrow it down</u>. (TE18)

Suggestion to Present Research in Singapore

Umm, <u>I don't think so.</u> I need to spend time to preparing my final presentation and I plan to finish it in the early of June, It could be rush for me if I participate in this conference in Singapore. (TE5)

<u>I'm afraid I can't Ajarn</u> because I have to come back to work exactly at that time. (TE10)

<u>Maybe I can't go.</u> (TE20)

5.2.3 Statement of Positive Opinion/Feeling or Agreement

In contrast to 'Negative ability', 'Positive feeling' is employed to indicate interest, willingness, or positive opinions to accept the invitations, requests, offers, or suggestions; however, there are causes or reasons that prevent them to do so (Sairhun, 1999). In the present study, 'Positive feeling' was typically found at the initial position along with 'Explanation' as a main refusal. These results are consistent with not only Félix-Brasdefer (2004) who found that showing agreement, willingness, and positive opinion were among the most common strategies to begin refusals, but also Shishavan and Sharifian (2013) who reported that 'Positive feeling' was adopted by the Persian subjects as one of the most popular supportive moves before they refused in either Persian or English.

In this study, TTs stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently than TEs in refusing a classmate's offer of a book of abstracts as shown in the examples in the following page:

สนใจๆ แต่ตอนนี้ยังอ่านหนังสือที่กองไว้ไม่เสร็จเลยว่ะ

[sonchai sonchai tae tonni yang an nangsue thi kong wai mai set loei wa]

"I am interested, but now I haven't finished reading the piled-up books." (TT2)

ได้ๆ แต่ขอเคลียร์งานนี้แปปนึง

[dai dai tae kho khlia ngan ni paep nueng]

"Yes, but let me clear up this work for a while."(TT7)

สนใจสิแต่ตอนนี้เราติดอ่านเปเปอร์อยู่เลย

[sonchai si tae tonni rao tit an pepoe yu loei]

"I'm interested, but now I'm still reading the paper." (TT11)

Meanwhile, CEs often used 'Positive feeling' with unfamiliar interlocutors of any status types. Specifically, CEs stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently than CCs in refusing a graduate student's invitation to a thesis defense, the Director's invitation to a welcome party, a master's degree student's request to complete a questionnaire, the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses, the Dean's offer of a teaching assistantship, and an advisor's suggestion to present research work. CCs' infrequent use of 'Positive feeling' may be explained by Liao and Bresnahan (1996, as cited in Kwon, 2003) who claimed that Chinese people tried not to show their positive feelings before they refused in order to avoid being forced to agree to it.

When comparing the two cultures, it was found that CEs stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently than TEs in refusing the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses. CEs' frequent use of 'Positive feeling' is in agreement with Lin (2014) who reported that Chinese EFL learners preferred to state positive feelings or agreement and even more often than native speakers of Chinese and native speakers of English. On the contrary, TEs' infrequent use of 'Positive feeling' might be explained by the lack of opportunities in real-life situations to practice the use of phrases and expressions showing positive feelings or opinions in English, although they are

normally taught in the English language classroom. The following examples demonstrate the use of 'Positive feeling' by CEs in the situations above:

Invitation to a Thesis Defense

I really want to do so, but it's a pity that there is a lesson for me in this afternoon. (CE5)

Yes, thanks. But I'm afraid I can't come since I have some other things to do. (CE6)

That's a good idea, but maybe I can't understand. (CE23)

Invitation to a Welcome Party for International Students

Oh, that's good. I would really like to go, but I'll not be free that time. I have had an appointment with a friend. (CE8)

I would like to go really, but I'm afraid that I have to visit my friend in the hospital. (CE14)

It's a good idea, but we have class in the evening. (CE23)

Invitation to Complete a Questionnaire

I'd like to, but right now I don't think I have time to do so. (CE7)

Well, I would be very glad to help you. But I'm extremely busy in this period of time. I'm very sorry for that. (CE8)

Well, I'd love to, but I need to go to hospital this morning to have a medical examination. (CE9)

Request to Demonstrate Online Registration for Courses

It's my pleasure to do so, but I have arranged to do something others beforehand on the very day. (CE5)

I'm very sorry, Aj. I'll not be here next week. Actually, I will be very glad to help if I have time. (CE8)

I would like to, but I have to do my part-time job on that day. (CE30)

Offers of a Teaching Assistant

Even though it's a good chance for me, I still can't do it this term. Maybe next term is better for me. (CE5)

Of course, but I have to spend more time on my research. (CE13)

Yes, I'm interested about it, but this term I have 3 courses. I'm afraid I have no time. (CE25)

Suggestion to Present Research in Singapore

> *Thank you, <u>it's a very good opportunity</u>, but my work is not completed so I am afraid I couldn't attend this conference. (CE1)*

> *<u>I would like to go</u> and thank you very much for inviting me, but I will be in China at that time. Sorry. (CE18)*

> *<u>Yes, Aj. I do think it's a good opportunity</u>, but I have no time to go there because I have some important things to deal with for my university at that time. I'm very sorry Aj. (CE8)*

Interestingly, in an attempt to express positive feelings or opinions, some participants in this study employed simpler expressions, for example, *"I'd like to, but..."*, *"I want to, but…"*, or *"Yes, but…"*.

5.2.4 Statement of Alternative

In an attempt to compromise and smooth conversational interaction (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008), the participants in the present study offered alternatives at the end of their responses, especially when they turned down requests and offers. These alternatives ranged from a different means to a different person.

It was reported that CCs frequently suggested alternatives when rejecting a master's degree student's request to complete a questionnaire, a roommate's request to proofread a term paper, the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses, and a new friend's suggestion to take a course. Meanwhile, CEs hardly used this strategy. These findings are in agreement with those of Guo (2012) which revealed that native speakers of Chinese usually employed statement of alternatives more than American native English speakers. The following examples are alternatives given by CCs in the situations above:

Request to Complete a Questionnaire

不好意思, 我有一份重要资料要为老板整理, 已经来不及了, <u>你再问一下别人吧</u>。

[bù hǎo yì sī, wǒ yǒu yī fèn zhòng yào zī liào yào wèi lǎo bǎn zhěng lǐ, yǐ jīng lái bu jí le, nǐ zài wèn yí xià bié rén ba]

"I'm sorry. I have some very important materials to sort out for my advisor. I'm almost running out of time. <u>Could you please ask someone else for help?</u>" (CC9)

对不起, 我现在很急, <u>要不你问下其他人吧</u>。

[duì bu qǐ, wǒ xiàn zài hěn jí, yào bu nǐ wèn xià qí tā rén ba]

"I'm sorry. I am in a hurry. <u>How about you asking someone else?</u>" (CC23)

Request to Proofread a Term Paper

我对这个不是很了解, <u>你能叫别人看看吗?</u>

[wǒ duì zhè ge bú shì hěn liǎo jiě, nǐ néng jiào bié rén kàn kan ma?]

"I'm not familiar with this topic. <u>Can you ask someone else for help?</u>" (CC2)

抱歉, 我急着出去, <u>我建议你找某某, 他的文笔和专业性都很强</u>。

[bào qiàn, wǒ jí zhe chū qù, wǒ jiàn yì nǐ zhǎo mǒu mǒu, tā de wén bǐ hé zhuān yè xìng dōu hěn qiáng]

"Sorry, I'm in a hurry to go out. <u>I recommend that you ask XXX. He is excellent in both writing and expertise.</u>" (CC7)

Request to Demonstrate Online Register for Courses

不好意思, 下周二我们有个课题需要去某某县进行调查搜集资料, 所以不能跟新生见面了, <u>不过我可以做一份演示介绍, 发给处长</u>, 您看这样可以吗?

[bù hǎo yì sī, xià zhōu èr wǒ men yǒu gè kè tí xū yào qù mǒu mǒu xiàn jin xíng diào chá sōu jí zī liào, suǒ yǐ bù néng gēn xīn shēng jiàn miàn le, bú guò wǒ kě yǐ zuò yī fèn yǎn shì jiè shào, fā gěi chù zhǎng, nín kàn zhè yang kě yǐ ma]

"Sorry. Next Tuesday we have to go to XXX country to collect some materials for a project so we cannot meet the new students, <u>but I can write a presentation and email it to you (the Dean)</u>. What do you think of this idea?" (CC26)

最近真的很忙, <u>您看找一下别人可以吗?</u>

[zuì jìn zhēn de hěn máng, nín kàn zhǎo yí xià bié rén kě yǐ ma]

"I'm very busy recently. <u>Would you please find another person?</u>" (CC30)

Suggestion to Take a Course

我觉得这门课需要很好的基础, <u>我们还是下学期再选吧</u>。

[wǒ jué de zhè mén kè xū yào hěn hǎo de jī chǔ, wǒ men hái shì xià xué qī zài xuǎn ba]

"I think this course demands a good foundation. <u>We'd better select it next semester.</u>" (CC11)

这门课确实很不错, <u>但是这门课比较适合最后一年来修, 不适合本学期</u>

[zhè mén kè què shí hěn bú cuò, dàn shì zhè mén kè bǐ jiào shì hé zuì hòu yì nián lái xiū, bù shì hé běn xué qī]

"This course is really not bad, <u>but it works better in the final academic year,</u>
<u>*instead of this semester.*</u>*" (CC23)*

Meanwhile, TEs frequently offered alternatives while CEs never used this strategy when rejecting the Dean's request to demonstrate online registration for courses. A similar finding was reported by Wannaruk (2008) who found that alternatives were among the top three frequently used strategies for native speakers of Thai, American native speakers of English, and Thai EFL learners when they declined a request from a higher status person like a mother. Examples of alternatives offered by TEs are shown below:

That's very kind of you to tell me the information. I can't come on that day.
<u>*Can I help you for something else?*</u> *(TE2)*

Uh, I'm not much confidence to speak in front of big public. <u>I'll ask someone</u>
<u>*else to do this instead.*</u> *(TE17)*

5.2.5 Gratitude/Appreciation

TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs showed 'Gratitude', particularly when they declined offers and suggestions to express appreciation toward the interlocutors. The content of 'Gratitude' used by all groups was very similar as illustrated below:

TTs: *ขอบใจ [khopchai] "Thank you.", ขอบคุณ [khopkhun] "Thank you." ,*
and *ขอบพระคุณ [khopphrakhun] "Thank you."*

CCs: *感谢 [gǎn xiè] "Thank you."* and *谢谢 [xiè xiè] "Thank you."*

TEs: *"Thanks."* and *"Thank you." That's very kind of you.*"

CEs: *"Thanks.", "Thank you.", "I'm very appreciated…",* and *"That's so
kind of you.*"

It was observed that 'Gratitude' was usually employed by CCs, TEs, and CEs as a starter and often followed by 'Explanation', as also reported by Sairhun (1999) and

Wannaruk (2008). Meanwhile, TTs surprisingly expressed 'Gratitude' at the end of their responses as demonstrated in the following examples:

> โอ้ พอดีเราได้มาละ <u>ขอบใจนะ</u>
> [o phodi rao dai ma la <u>khopchai na</u>]
> "Oh, I've got it already. <u>Thank you.</u>" (TT21)

> หนูสนใจมากเลยค่ะอาจารย์ แต่เทอมนี้หนูเร่งวิทยานิพนธ์ หนูกลัวไม่จบ <u>หนูขอบคุณอาจารย์</u>
> <u>มากเลยนะคะ</u>
> [nu sonchai mak loei kha achan tae toem ni nu reng witthaya niphon
> nu klua mai chop <u>nu khopkhun achan mak loei na kha</u>]
> "I'm very interested, professor, but this semester I'm trying to finish my thesis. I'm afraid I won't graduate on time. <u>Thank you so much, professor.</u>"
> (TT2)

To show that they were truly thankful for the proposed invitations, requests, offers, or suggestions, all groups sometimes used 'Gratitude' with *intensifiers*, as also reported in 'Regret', as well as *phrases* like ที่นึกถึงหนู *[thi nuekthueng nu]* *"for thinking of me."*(TT7), 的邀请 *[de yāo qǐng]* *"for the invitation"* (CC5), *"for your kindness"* (TE7), and *"for giving me this chance"* (CE14). Adding *intensifiers* and *phrases* to 'Gratitude' was also found in Sairhun's (1999) study.

Additionally, a few participants employed 'Gratitude' twice, at the beginning and at the end of their refusals. It is possible that the one at the end was used to emphasize their genuine appreciation toward the interlocutors as well as to politely close the conversation as demonstrated in the example below:

> <u>ขอบใจนะ</u> แต่ว่างานของเราจะศึกษากว้างๆ ไว้ก่อนแล้วค่อยปรับงานให้จำเพาะลงน่ะจ่ะ
> <u>ขอบใจมากๆ นะ</u>
> <u>khopchai na</u> taewa ngan khong rao cha sueksa kwang kwang wai kon laeo
> khoi prap ngan hai champho long na cha <u>khopchai mak mak na</u> (TT14)
> "<u>Thank you</u>, but I will study my work in a broad scope first and make it more specific later. <u>Thank you very much.</u>"

In the present study, CEs tended to express 'Gratitude' to interlocutors of a higher status or an unfamiliar interlocutor of equal status. In other words, CEs adopted 'Gratitude' more frequently than CCs in refusing a graduate student's invitation to a thesis defense, an advisor's invitation to lunch, and an advisor's offer of a research assistantship. CEs also used this strategy more frequently than TEs in refusing an advisor's invitation to lunch. These findings accord well with those of Guo (2012) which reported that native speakers of Chinese were more likely to express gratitude to unfamiliar interlocutors or interlocutors of higher status than to close friends. The examples below show how CEs expressed 'Gratitude' in these situations:

Invitation to a Thesis Defense

Thank you for your inviting, but I have academic reading class this afternoon. (CE2)

Thank you for inviting, but I am sorry I can't manage it this afternoon. (CE7)

Invitation to Lunch

It's very kind of you to invite, But it's a pity. I have promised to meet Aj. so-so. (CE7)

Thank you, sir. But I might go to Immigration for visa extension. (CE9)

Offer of Research Assistantship

Oh, thank you to give me this chance. I really want to join with you, but I have to go back home during that time. (CE14)

Thank you very much! but I haven't finished my research so I have no time. (CE22)

As reported in several previous studies (e.g. Nelson et al., 2002; Kwon, 2003; Guo, 2012), native English speakers were likely to express gratitude more frequently than non-native English speakers when they refused. Therefore, CEs' frequent use of 'Gratitude' might be a result of their attempt to replicate the appreciative tone of native English speakers by means of 'Gratitude' (Kwon, 2003).

5.2.6 Excuse, Reason, Explanation

TTs were found to provide 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs in refusing offers from interlocutors of higher status, including the Dean's offer of a teaching assistantship and an advisor's offer of a research assistantship as shown in the following examples:

Offer of a Teaching Assistantship

ขอโทษทีค่ะ คือเทอมนี้หนูไม่ค่อยสะดวกเนื่องจากภาระงานค่อนข้างเยอะค่ะ

[khothot thi kha khue thoem ni nu maikhoi saduak nueangchak phara ngan khonkhang yoe kha]
"I'm sorry. This semester it's not that convenient for me because I have quite a lot of work." (TT6)

พอดีผมกำลังทำธีสิสอยู่ครับ เก็บข้อมูลยัง ไม่เสร็จเลย

[phodi phom kamlang tham thesis yu khrap kep khomun yang mai set loei]
"I'm now working on a thesis. I have not yet finished collecting the data." (TT21)

Offer of a Research Assistantship

สนใจค่ะอาจารย์ แต่เทอมนี้หนูมีเรียนวิชาหลักๆ สามตัวหนูกลัวว่าจะช่วยงานอาจารย์ได้ไม่เต็มที่ค่ะ

[sonchai kha achan tae thoem ni nu mi rian wicha lak lak sam tua nu klua wa cha chuai ngan achan dai mai temthi kha]
"I'm interested, professor, but this semester I have to study three main courses. I'm afraid I cannot help you to the best of my ability." (TT5)

แต่อาจารย์ค่ะเทคนิคที่อาจารย์ใช้หนูไม่เคยทำมาก่อน หนูพอรู้จักคนที่ทำงานด้านนี้ หนูแนะนำเขามาสมัคร ได้ไหมค่ะ

[tae achan kha theknik thi achan chai nu mai khoei tham ma kon nu pho ruchak khon thi thamngan dan ni nu naenam khao ma samak dai mai kha]
"But professor, I have never used the technic you are using before. I happen to know someone working in this area. Can I suggest he/she applies for this position? (TT14)

Meanwhile, CCs used 'Explanation' more frequently than CEs in rejecting a classmate's suggestion about a research topic as shown in the following page:

我觉得如果缩小范围, 会影响我的研究吧。
[wǒ jué de rú guǒ suō xiǎo fàn wéi, huì yǐng xiǎng wǒ de yán jiū ba]
"I think narrowing down the topic will affect my research." (CC21)

题目大一点, 内容会更丰富。
[tí mù dà yì diăn, nèi róng huì gèng fēng fù]
"The broader the topic is, the more I can write about it." (CC29)

5.2.7 Promise of Future Acceptance

'Future acceptance' is the employment of promise to delay acceptance (Wannaruk, 2008). This strategy was typically seen at the end of refusals made by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs in order to give the interlocutors the impression that their proposed acts were not taken for granted. The content of 'Future acceptance' found in the present study can be categorized into two main groups: 1) *Changing the time*: The proposed acts would be accepted at a later time and 2) *Setting a condition*: The proposed acts would be accepted if a given condition was fulfilled.

In the present study, TTs employed this strategy more frequently than TEs in refusing a roommate's request to proofread a term paper as demonstrated in the following examples:

แกโทษทีว่ะ ฉันต้องส่งงานพรุ่งนี้ว่ะ เดี๋ยวถ้าฉันทำเสร็จแล้วถ้าแกยังไม่ได้ส่งอาจารย์ ฉันจะไป ตรวจให้นะเว้ย

[kae thot thi wa chan tong song ngan phrungni wa diao tha chan tham set laeo tha kae yang mai dai song achan chan cha pai truat hai na woei]
"I'm sorry. I have to submit my work tomorrow. *If I finish it and you haven't submitted your work to the professor, I will help proofread it.*" (TT2)

เหรอ เธอรีบไหม ถ้าไม่รีบเดี๋ยวเราดูให้

[roe thoe rip mai tha mai rip diao rao du hai]
"I see. Is it urgent? *If not, I will help proofread it later.*" (TT9)

Meanwhile, CCs adopted 'Future acceptance' more frequently than CEs in refusing an advisor's offer of a research assistantship as shown in the examples below:

最近可能不行, 您也知道的, 最近我手上有很多事。下次行吗？
[zuì jìn kě néng bù xíng, nín yě zhī dào de, zuì jìn wǒ shǒu shàng yǒu hěn duō shì xià cì xíng ma]
"Maybe not recently. As you know, I have a lot of things in hand. *How about next time?*" (CC23)

我对这方面不太熟悉, 平时更关注的是某某方面, 所以可能帮不上什么忙, <u>下次老师要是研究某某方面的话, 我一定会当您的助手</u>。

[wǒ duì zhè fāng miàn bù tài shú xī, píng shí gèng gūan zhù de shì mǒu mǒu fang miàn, suǒ yǐ kě néng bang bù shàng shén me máng, <u>xià cì lǎo shī yào shi yán jiū mǒu mǒu fāng miàn de huà, wǒ yí dìng huì dāng nín de zhù shǒu</u>]

"I am not quite familiar with this aspect. Usually, I focus more on XXX field. So probably I cannot help this time. <u>Next time if you study XXX, I will surely be your assistant.</u>" (CC28)

TEs were reported to use 'Future acceptance' more frequently than CEs in refusing an advisor's suggestion to present research work in Singapore. Some examples are as follows:

Thank you for your concern. Actually I really want to go, but my work is not finished yet. <u>Hopefully next time I will get ready to present my work</u>. (TE5)

Sorry my advisor. I don't have experience and can you suggest that? <u>And I will present my work next time.</u> (TE23)

5.2.8 Statement of Regret

TEs expressed 'Regret' more frequently than TTs in refusing an advisor's offer of a research assistantship as demonstrated as follows:

<u>I'm so sorry</u>. I'm so busy this term. Let me finish my work first. Then I will contact you later. Thank you for asking. (TE4)

Oh, <u>this is too bad</u>. I'm already committed to the other project. (TE11)

Oh, <u>that's a pity my teacher</u>. This semester I quite work hard and have a lot of things to do. (TE27)

CEs used 'Regret' more frequently than TEs in refusing a graduate student's invitation to a thesis defense as shown in the following examples:

I really want to do so, but <u>it's a pity</u> that there is a lesson for me in this afternoon. (CE5)

I really want to, but I have a meeting with my supervisor. <u>I'm sorry</u>. (CE15)

<u>Sorry</u>. I have a class. (CE28)

5.2.9 Pause Filler

The frequency of 'Pause filler' used by all groups in this study in all situations was quite low. However, TEs often adopted 'Pause filler' in refusing the Director's invitation to a welcome party and a roommate's request to proofread a term paper at the initial position whereas TTs never used this strategy. According to the follow-up interviews, TEs had similar opinions about 'Pause filler' serving as a sign of hesitation and a pause to think in order that they would not have to reject the proposed acts too directly and abruptly. The responses below demonstrate the use of 'Pause fillers' by TEs:

Invitation to a Welcome Party for International Students

Well, I'm afraid I can't, sir. I have an errand to run on that day. (TE15)

Oh! Sorry. In Friday night, I'm not free. (TE22)

Request to Proofread a Term Paper

Oh! I'm sorry. I've got to go now. (TE7)

Hmm I have to go to meet my advisor right now. Sorry. (TE18)

Although the results showed that TT never used pause fillers, it does not mean that these linguistic features do not exist in the Thai language. Panichkul (2003) found that Thai pause fillers commonly used by educated subjects of standard Thai when they narrated stories about themselves, tourist places, and the country economy included อื้อ *[ue],* เอ่อ *[oe],* อ่า *[a], and* อ่อ *[o].* It can be seen that these pause fillers in Thai seem to be only sounds in the throat, which might be not as obvious in speech as pause fillers in English like *well.* Another possibility was the limitation of the research instrument as Wannaruk (2008) argued that other mitigating devices, such as tone of voice could have been observed if other research instruments like an oral role-play had been employed.

5.2.10 Postponement

CEs used 'Postponement' more frequently than CCs in refusing a classmate's suggestion about a research topic. The participants usually employed this strategy at the end of their refusals in order to convey the message that the ideas proposed by the interlocutors were not completely rejected. They just needed time to seek relevant information or advice from an expert in the field, such as an advisor to justify the proposed ideas. Some examples of the use of 'Postponement' by CEs are shown as follows:

> *Well, I think it is a general concept that many people know, right? Anyway, I will take your suggestions into consideration. (CE10)*
>
> *Sure, I'll think about it. (CE22)*
>
> *Maybe, I can ask my teacher. (CE16)*

5.2.11 Insistence

TTs used 'Insistence' more frequently than TEs in refusing a classmate's suggestion about a research topic to indicate whether or not they agreed with the suggestions, they had already made a firm decision to continue working on their original topic. Some examples of 'Insistence' used by TTs are shown below:

> ฉันว่าไม่นะ ฉันว่าฉันจะลองทำดูก่อน
> *[chan wa mai na chan wa cha long tham dukon]*
> *"I think it's not broad. I think I will try working on it first." (TT17)*
>
> เราก็คิดแบบนั้นเหมือนกัน แต่ลองเสนอแบบนี้ไปก่อน
> *[rao ko khi baep nan muean kan tae long sanoe baep ni pai kon]*
> *"I think so too, but I will try proposing like this first. (TT19)*

In conclusion, this section discusses significant differences between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs in the use of 'No', 'Negative ability', 'Positive feeling', 'Alternative', 'Gratitude', 'Explanation', 'Future acceptance', 'Regret',

'Pause filler', 'Postponement', and 'Insistence'. The next section will present possible factors motivating the use of refusal strategies by all groups.

5.3 Factors Influencing the Use of Refusal Strategies

Based on the findings of the present study and the follow-up interviews, five major factors were found to contribute to the similarities and differences in the use of refusal strategies by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs. These factors include the status of the interlocutor, L1 culture, the nature of the situation, L2 proficiency, and classroom instruction, which will be discussed in detail below:

5.3.1 Status of the Interlocutor

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the social distance (D) of the speaker and the hearer, the social power (P) of the speaker and the hearer, and the absolute ranking (R) of impositions in a particular culture are three main sociological factors influencing the employment of strategies in realizing a particular speech act. In order to determine the status of the interlocutors in the present study, the social power (P) and the social distance (R) of the speaker and the hearer were taken into account. These two factors were found to influence both the choice and the content of refusal strategies used by all groups as discussed below:

5.3.1.1 Frequency Shift in the Use of Refusal Strategies

Based on the frequency shift across three different situations in the same eliciting acts (i.e. invitations, requests, offers, and suggestions) as presented in Table 4.1-4.8, it was found that the status of the interlocutors influenced the choice of refusal strategies made by TTs, CCs, TEs, CEs, as also reported in many earlier studies on

refusals, such as Beebe et al. (1990), Sairhun (1999), Kwon (2003), Wannaruk (2005, 2008), Boonkongsaen (2013), and Lin (2014).

TTs seemed to be sensitive to the interlocutors who had power over them noticeably in refusing offers. TTs tended to express 'Regret' and provide 'Explanation' frequently when declining offers from interlocutors of higher status (the Dean and an advisor) rather than from a person of equal status (a classmate). This frequency shift in the use of 'Regret' and 'Explanation' was also reflected in the TE group data. While the role of the social status on the use of 'Positive feeling' by TTs was not obvious, TEs stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently to interlocutors of higher status, but with those of equal status, both groups favored 'Gratitude' and 'Future acceptance'.

Social distance also influenced strategy use by TTs and TEs. In declining invitations, both TTs and TEs stated 'Positive feeling' more frequently to unfamiliar interlocutors of any status types (a graduate student and the Dean) than to a more familiar person (an advisor). As for requests, TTs expressed 'Regret' more frequently to an unfamiliar interlocutor (a master's student) than to more familiar ones (a roommate and the Dean). It should be noted that although a master's student and the Dean was categorized as unfamiliar, the social distance between a master's student and the speaker was greater than that between the Dean and the speaker since a master's student was a stranger. On the other hand, both TTs and TEs offered 'Alternative' more frequently to more familiar interlocutors. TEs tended to state 'Negative ability' more frequently with unfamiliar interlocutors.

CCs also showed their sensitivity to the interlocutors with more power, which seemed to be transferred to the performance of refusals in English. That is, CCs and CEs expressed 'Regret' frequently in refusing offers and suggestions from

interlocutors of higher status (the Dean and/or an advisor). Both CCs and CEs also gave 'Explanation' more frequently when refusing a higher status person's (an advisor) suggestion. Only CEs stated 'Positive feeling' frequently when refusing a higher status person's (the Dean) request. Similarly, both CCs and CEs tended to use 'Gratitude' and 'Future acceptance' frequently for an equal status person's (a classmate) offer.

Interestingly, social distance seemed to influence the use of strategies by CCs more clearly than that by CEs. CCs were likely to state 'Negative ability' much less frequently to a more familiar interlocutor (an advisor) rather than unfamiliar ones of either equal or higher status (a graduate student and the Director) in refusing invitations. This frequency shift pattern seemed to be mirrored in the CE group data. On the contrary, CC expressed 'Regret' more frequently to unfamiliar interlocutors of any status type (a master's student and the Dean) than to a more familiar one (a roommate) when refusing requests.

5.3.1.2 Content of Refusal Strategies

Apart from the frequency shift, all groups of participants in this study displayed their great sensitivity to a higher status person in their content of 'Explanation'. As reported previously, TTs and CCs typically referred to plans with or sickness of their family members as grounds for refusals, particularly for refusing invitations from interlocutors of higher status. These reasons were also frequently given by TEs and CEs in the same situations. Based on the follow-up interviews, the participants had a similar opinion, namely, that family was the first priority for most people in their society. Therefore, referring to family members was considered persuasive and appropriate and helped decrease the degree of offense as well as save the face of a higher status person with a refusal.

These findings accord well with those of Kwon (2003) which found that native speakers of Korean and Korean learners of English often cited their plans with or sickness of parents when declining requests and invitations from a higher status person. Similarly, Lin (2014) also reported that when refusing a higher status person, the Chinese subjects found it necessary to provide specific and convincing excuses, such as family matters or health problems to maintain a good relationship. The same content was also employed by Chinese EFL learners in Lin's (2014) study when they made specific excuses.

5.3.2 L1 Culture

Since a number of previous studies on different speech acts (e.g. Beebe et al., 1990; Kwon, 2003; Keshavarz et al., 2006; Wannaruk, 2005, 2008; Prachanant, 2006; Hong, 2011) revealed that language learners often transferred their native cultural values to the production of the target language, it can be said that L1 culture is one of the major defining factors affecting the choice and the content of strategies in realizing a particular speech act in another language, which was also found in the present study.

As mentioned previously, TEs and CEs showed their sensitivity to a higher status person, which seemed to result from the transfer of cultural norms and values of their native language as found in the data of TTs and CCs. A Thai's sensitivity to interlocutors with power over them can be explained by Knutson's (1994) claim that "Thai society is arranged in a hierarchy such that almost every relationship is defined in terms of superiority or inferiority" (p. 10). The nature of a social-ranking sensitive society in Thailand (Wannaruk, 2008; Boonkongsaen, 2013) can be observed in the behavior of Thai people. For instance, in a situation in which apology is not necessarily offered in other cultures like walking past a person of higher status who is seated, Thai

people tend to apologize (Intachakra, 2004, as cited in Boonkongsaen, 2013). Respect for teachers as a high-ranking person in Thai higher education can also be seen in the classroom where behavior such as arguing with teachers or simply asking them questions is considered inappropriate and challenging (Knutson, 1994).

Chinese people's respect for a higher status person can also be influenced by the social hierarchy of Chinese society, which may be explained by the Confucian principle of *wu lun* or the five hierarchical relationships (Wang, Wang, Ruona, & Rojewski, 2005). Specifically, the five relationships include those between 1) ruler-subject, 2) father-son, 3) elder brother-younger brother, and 4) husband-wife, which indicate the human relationships in terms of superiority and subordination and those between 5) friends, which reflect the human relationships in terms of mutuality De-Bettignies & Tan, 2007). Based on *wu lun,* "subordinates have a lifetime commitment to superiors. To the same degree, the subordinates' welfare will be taken care of by the superiors by assumption" (Wang et al., 2005, p. 315). Wei and Li (2005) provided a clear example of Chinese people's sensitivity to a higher status person. That is, Chinese people find it important to give face to high-ranking people in social interactions to show recognition of their dignity and prestige and they do so by talking about their superiors' talents, leadership, and success in public. Deep respect for a higher status person can also be observed in the relationship between teachers and students in the Chinese educational system. In other words, Chinese students have been taught to respect and obey the teachers who have absolute academic and social power over them and consequently they cannot challenge, contradict, and criticize them (Hong, 2011).

Furthermore, the frequent use of family members as grounds in refusing a higher status person by TEs and CEs may be explained by the cultural values and norms of their L1 since these reasons were also employed frequently by TTs and CCs. In addition, previous studies, such as Sairhun (1999) and Lin (2014) revealed that native speakers of English in their studies rarely referred to their family members when refusing. In traditional Chinese culture, the family is given more importance than an individual's well-being or personal rights (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Thus, offering assistance and support for its members, especially elderly parents and relatives is considered the duty and obligation of Chinese people even in modern society (Chow, 2006). This practice can be tracked back to the value of filial piety, which derives from the philosophy of Confucius (Kwon, 2003; Chow, 2006). Providing care and support for family members has also been instilled into the minds of Thai people and is also regarded as one of their duties even in today's society. This practice mirrors the Thai core value of showing gratitude towards those who have provided them with benefits or favor (Klausner, 1993, as cited in Knutson, 1994).

In addition to sensitivity to a higher status person and the use of family members as reasons, TEs and CEs sometimes gave modest explanations particularly when refusing requests (e.g. proofreading a term paper) and offers (e.g. working as a research assistant). In other words, both groups often referred to their lack of knowledge and skills to perform the proposed acts. These reasons were likely to reflect the values of Thai culture as well as Chinese culture since TTs and CCs both offered similar explanations. Cedar (2006) and Wannaruk (2008) maintain that the use of modesty by the Thai participants mirrored Thai characteristics of being modest and humble. This explanation is in agreement with Chen and Boonkongsaen (2012) who held that

modesty in speech was highly valued in some Asian countries, including Thailand and China. The use of modest explanations also accords well with Leech's modesty maxim, which holds that one should maximize dispraise of others and minimize praise of self (O'Keeffe et al., 2011) in order to remain polite over the course of a conversation.

5.3.3 Nature of the Situation

The nature of the situation is undoubtedly one of the factors affecting the selection of refusal strategies as Hong (2011) pointed out that contextual factors, for example, when having dinner during one of the most celebrated events in China like New Year had an influence on the differences in L1 and L2 refusals. In the present study, the influence of the nature of the situation is obvious in the use of 'Expressing good wishes', labeled as 'Greeting' in some previous studies. For example, Hong (2011) found the use of New Year's greetings and speeches of good luck as communicative rituals by native speakers of Chinese following their refusals to an invitation to dinner on New Year's Eve. Furthermore, Farnia and Wu (2012) reported the use of birthday greetings in their subjects' refusals to an invitation to a birthday party as well as the expression of congratulations in their refusals to an invitation to a party to celebrate an advisor's academic promotion. Finally, Kittisiriprasert (2011) found the expression of congratulations in the subjects' refusals to an invitation to a wedding.

In this study, 'Expressing good wishes' was adopted by TTs, CCs, TEs, and CEs, typically at the beginning and/or the end of the responses when they turned down an invitation to a thesis defense which is considered one of the most crucial procedures for graduate students as it signals closure on their studies. To give their fellow graduate student support and confidence, the participants employed the different content of

'Expressing good wishes' which could be divided into three groups as follows: 1) extending congratulations, such as ดีใจด้วยนะ *[dichai duai na]* *"I'm happy for you."* (TT9) and *"Congratulations in advance."* (CE11); 2) giving speeches of good luck and success, such as 祝你们答辩顺利。*[zhù nǐ men dá biàn shùn lì]* *"I wish you success in the defense."* (CC7) and *Good luck!* (TE5); and 3) offering encouragement, such as เรา เอาใจช่วยเธอนะ สู้ๆ *[rao aochaichuai thoe na su su]* *"You have my support. Hang in there."* (TT4) and 加油！*[jiā yóu]* *"Hang in there!"* (CC23).

However, only TTs and CCs employed 'Expressing good wishes' in rejecting an invitation to lunch with an advisor and other advisees at the end of their refusals. TTs, for example, stated ทานเผื่อหนูด้วยนะคะ *[than phuea nu duai na kha]* *"Enjoy the food for me."* and in a similar way, CCs said 祝你们午餐愉快。*[zhù nǐ men wǔ cān yú kuài]* *"I wish you a pleasant lunch."* The participants adopted 'Expressing good wishes' in this situation probably to show their care and consideration for the interlocutors as well as to politely close the conversation.

5.3.4 L2 Proficiency

A number of early studies on interlanguage pragmatics revealed that language proficiency is one of the crucial factors causing pragmatic transfer. Wannaruk (2008), for example, reported that Thai EFL learners with lower proficiency were likely to translate from Thai into English when making refusals. Meanwhile, Prachanant (2006) reported that there were differences in the content of responses to complaints by Thai English learners of high and low proficiency. In other words, the utterances made by learners with high proficiency seemed verbose whereas those made by learners with low proficiency seemed short and abrupt. This implies that proficiency in the target

language affects the choice and content of strategies in realizing speech acts by learners of that language.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, each member of the Thai group (TE) and the Chinese group (CE) responding in English in the present study were classified into two groups: English majors and non-English majors. It was assumed that English major students had higher English proficiency than non-English major students. Similar to Prachanant (2006), it was found that TEs as well as CEs in non-English majors were likely to give short and vague explanations. Some of them sometimes relied on word-for-word translation from their native language into English to accomplish their communicative intention. Meanwhile, TEs and CEs in English majors seemed to provide longer, clearer, more elaborate reasons. The following examples are reasons given by TEs and CEs, both English majors and non-English majors, in refusing an advisor's offer of a research assistantship:

> *But I have to focus on my work. My university asks me to finish studying within this trimester. (TE2: English)*

> *But I think I wouldn't be able to pay full attention on your project. I still have to go upcountry to collect my data from time to time. (TE15: English)*

> *Because I need to go back to China for 3 months and deal with some family affairs. (CE3: English)*

> *I have many problems with my thesis. Thus I need to spend much more time on it. (CE2: English)*

> *I don't like to join because I have to join with my friends. (TE19: Non-English)*

> *At this time, I must hurry to close my project. (TE28: Non-English)*

> *But I have to work and study. (CE: Non-English)*

> *Last time you gave a working for me but I do not complete it. (CE: Non-English)*

Based on the follow-up interviews, both TEs and CEs said that their low proficiency in English had a direct effect on the production of their refusals. That is, they had limited linguistic means to express what they wanted to say. They also lacked knowledge of how to appropriately and politely refuse in the English language. As a result, they just offered an apology and came up with a reason which was often short and vague. They further stated that they would be able to provide longer and more convincing explanations in their native language and use more strategies to soften the face-threatening effects of the refusals.

5.3.5 Classroom Instruction

Several early studies on refusals (e.g. Kwon, 2003; Wannaruk, 2008; Boonkongsaen, 2013) revealed the effects of classroom instruction on the employment of strategies. Boonkongsaen (2013), for instance, claimed that the frequent use of 'Regret' followed by 'Explanation' in making refusals in English by Thai and Filipino subjects might be related to classroom instruction since this pattern is normally introduced in the English language classroom.

In this study, classroom instruction was likely to influence the frequent use of 'Negative ability' by TEs. Thai English language learners may feel familiar with phrases, such as *"I can't"*, *"I'm afraid I can't"*, *"I don't think I can"*, or *"I don't think so"* since these phrases are often introduced in the English language classroom in Thailand as ways to indicate inability, unwillingness or disagreement. Kwon (2003) also maintained that the introduction of phrases like *"I don't think I can"* or *"I can't"* in the English language classroom in Korea influenced the frequent use of Negative ability by Korean learners of English, apart from the learners' perception of Westerners,

specifically Americans as more assertive and clear, which led them to adopt the direct tone in their refusals in order to sound more native-like.

Similarly, CEs' frequent use of 'Positive feeling' might also be explained by the effects of classroom instruction which often introduced phrases, such as *"I'd love to, but…"* or *"That's a good idea, but…"* as common prerefusals to the proposed invitations, requests, offers, or suggestions. Kwon (2003) and Wannaruk (2005) also claimed that the overuse of similar expressions to show positive feelings by English language learners in their studies possibly resulted from the effects of classroom instruction.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discusses the similarities and differences in the choice and content of refusal strategies between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. These similarities and differences were likely to be influenced by five possible factors, including the status of the interlocutor, the nature of the situation, L1 culture, L2 Proficiency, and classroom instruction. The next chapter will summarize the major findings of the present study.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the present study. Based on these findings, the pedagogical implications are offered and some suggestions for further research are also provided.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The present study has been motivated by the widespread use of English as an International Language (EIL) in cross-cultural communication between non-native English speakers in Thai and Chinese higher education as well as the face-threatening nature of a speech act of refusal. It primarily investigated and compared the use of refusal strategies in English by Thai and Chinese graduate students in an academic setting.

The participants consisted of 120 graduate students: 30 Thai graduate students responding in Thai (TTs), 30 Chinese graduate students responding in Chinese (CCs), 30 Thai graduate students responding in English (TEs), and Chinese graduate students responding in English (CEs). A DCT and a follow-up interview were employed in this study. The DCT included 12 situations which were categorized into three invitations, three requests, three offers, and three suggestions.

The responses by all groups were coded based on the classification of refusals developed by Beebe et al. (1990). The coded data were analyzed in terms of frequency.

The independent-samples t-test was performed to find significant differences between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. The similarities and differences in the content were also investigated.

6.1.1 Similarities in the Use of Refusal Strategies

It was found that there were more similarities than differences between TTs and TEs, CCs and CEs, and TEs and CEs. Based on the combined frequencies in all situations, 'Explanation' and 'Regret' were the most and the second most frequently used strategy for each group and hence for each pair of the two groups that were compared. Concerning 'Explanation', most explanations given by all groups were clear and acceptable. However, in refusing a higher status person's invitations, all groups often referred to plans with or sickness of family members (e.g. *"My son is sick."*). When it came to requests and offers, some participants were found to downgrade their ability. (e.g. *"I don't think my English is good for proofreading."*). As for 'Regret', all groups employed this strategy to express apology (e.g. *"I'm sorry."*) or to show pity (e.g. *"It's a pity."*). One TE also used 'Regret' to ask for forgiveness (e.g. *"Forgive me."*). In order to upgrade the tone of apology, 'Regret' was expressed twice and/or along with intensifiers (e.g. *very* or *really*).

6.1.2 Differences in the Use of Refusal Strategies

Significant differences between TTs and TEs were found in the use of 'No', 'Pause filler', 'Negative ability', 'Future acceptance', 'Positive feeling', 'Explanation', 'Regret', and 'Insistence'. As for CCs and CEs, significant differences were found in the use of 'Positive feeling', 'Gratitude', 'Alternative', 'No', 'Future acceptance', 'Explanation', and 'Postponement'. Meanwhile, significant differences between TEs and CEs were found in the use of 'Regret', 'Gratitude', 'Negative ability', 'Positive

feeling', 'Alternative', 'No', and 'Future acceptance'. These strategies are briefly discussed as follows:

Regarding direct strategies, 'No' was hardly used by any of the groups. However, both Thai and Chinese subjects said 'No' in L2 more frequently than in L1. TEs also said 'No' more frequently than CEs in refusing a classmate's offer. It was observed that TEs tended to say 'No' directly to an equal status person. For 'Negative ability' (e.g. *"Maybe I can't go."* or *"I don't think so."*), this strategy was used frequently by TEs to show their inability or unwillingness to comply with the proposed acts. All groups were found to soften the direct tone of this strategy by adopting some mitigators (e.g. *maybe* or *"I'm afraid…"*).

'Positive feeling' was employed to show agreement or willingness to accept the proposed acts. This strategy was typically employed at the beginning, followed by 'Explanation' as a main refusal. It was found that CEs stated 'Positive feeling' (e.g. *"I'd love to."* or *"That's a good idea."*) more frequently than CCs particularly when rejecting unfamiliar interlocutors of any status type as did TEs when refusing the Dean's request.

'Alternative' was typically used at the end of refusals to suggest a different person (e.g. 你再问一下别人吧。*[nǐ zài wèn yí xià bié rén ba]* *"Could you please ask someone else for help?"*) or a different means (e.g. *"Can I help you for something else?"*). CCs offered 'Alternative' more frequently than CEs in refusing all requests and a new friend's suggestion. Meanwhile, TEs used this strategy more frequently than CEs in refusing the Dean's request.

'Gratitude' was used especially in refusing offers and suggestions. While CCs, TEs, and CEs typically used 'Gratitude' as a starter, TT used this strategy at the end of

their responses to show their appreciation and to politely close the conversation. To emphasize their genuine gratitude toward the interlocutors, some participants added intensifiers (e.g. *very much*) or phrases (e.g. *for your offer*) to 'Gratitude'. It was the CE group that frequently expressed 'Gratitude' (e.g. *"Thank you."*), particularly when refusing a higher status person and an unfamiliar equal status person.

Both Thai and Chinese subjects gave explanations in L1 more frequently than in L2. To be specific, TTs provided 'Explanation' more frequently than TEs in refusing offers from a higher status person. As for 'Future acceptance', this strategy was used by all groups to delay their acceptance by changing the time (e.g. *"Next time?"*) or setting a condition for acceptance (e.g. *Hopefully, next time I will get ready to present my work.*). 'Future acceptance' was used in L1 more frequently by both Thai and Chinese subjects than in L2. TEs also employed 'Future acceptance' more frequently than CEs in refusing an advisor's suggestion.

TEs expressed 'Regret' more frequently than TTs in rejecting an advisor's offer whereas CEs used 'Regret' more frequently than TEs in refusing a graduate student's invitation. Furthermore, 'Pause filler' was used more frequently by TEs whereas TTs never used this strategy in refusing the Director's invitation and a roommate's request. Meanwhile, when refusing a classmate's suggestion, CEs employed 'Postponement' more frequently than CCs whereas TTs used 'Insistence' more frequently than TEs.

6.1.3 Factors Influencing the Use of Refusal Strategies

Possible factors contributing to strategy use by all groups included the status of the interlocutor, L1 culture, the nature of the situation, L2 proficiency, and classroom instruction.

The status of the interlocutor which was determined by the social power (P) and the social distance (D) between the speaker and the hearer affected the choice of refusal strategies employed by all groups. For example, all groups tended to use 'Regret' and 'Explanation' more frequently with a higher status person. This factor also affected the content of explanation. In other words, all groups tended to cite their family members as grounds for refusals to a person of higher status.

L1 culture played a crucial role in influencing the use of refusal strategies. As mentioned previously, all groups displayed their sensitivity to a higher status person in the use of refusal strategies, which reflected the social hierarchy of both Thai and Chinese society. Furthermore, the value of filial piety in Chinese culture and the value of showing gratitude in Thai culture may lead to the frequent use of family members as the most persuasive explanations. Finally, all groups downgraded their ability in their explanations, showing that modesty is highly valued in both Thai and Chinese cultures.

The nature of the situation obviously influenced the use of 'Expressing good wishes'. When refusing a graduate student's invitation to a thesis defense, all groups employed this strategy to extend congratulations (e.g. *"Congratulations in advance."*), to give speeches of good luck and success (e.g. *"Good luck."*), and/or to offer encouragement (e.g. 加油！*[jiā yóu] "Hang in there!")*. Meanwhile, only TTs and CCs employed 'Expressing good wishes' (e.g. 祝你们午餐愉快。*[zhù nǐ men wǔ cān yú kuài] "I wish you a pleasant lunch."*) after refusing an advisor's invitation to lunch.

L2 proficiency was found to affect the use of refusal strategies by TEs and CEs. It was reported that TEs and CEs with non-English major seemed to give short, and vague explanations. Meanwhile, TEs and CEs with English majors were able to provide longer, clearer, and more elaborate reasons.

Classroom instruction seemed to influence the frequent use of 'Negative ability' by TEs since phrases, such as *"I can't."*, *"I'm afraid I can't"*, *"I don't think I can."*, or *"I don't think so."* are normally introduced in the English language classroom in Thailand. In the same way, classroom instruction influenced the frequent use of 'Positive feeling' by CEs since phrases, such as *"I'd love to, but…"* or *"That's a good idea, but…"* are often taught in the English language classroom in China.

6.2 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of the present study have provided implications for the learning and the teaching of English as follows:

Firstly, in the use of English as an international language (EIL) (McKay, 2002; Llurda, 2004; Sasaki et al., 2006) with the number of non-native speakers exceeding that of native speakers (Graddol, 2000), the norms in its use no longer depends on native speakers (Shishavan & Sharifian, 2013). Instead, non-native speakers, with different levels of English proficiency, use English to meet their own communicative needs based on their own sense of appropriateness (McKay, 2002). With this in mind, teachers should not only equip students with sufficient vocabulary and grammar and general sociolinguistic rules in the English language in the classroom (Kwon, 2003; Wannaruk, 2008), but they should also remind their students that this knowledge can serve as a means for them to express themselves and to communicate with others using English in a way that is considered polite and appropriate in different situations in their own cultural context.

Secondly, it is undeniable that cross-cultural communication in today's world often occurs between non-native speakers of English (Yano, 2003) and it is likely that

English used by non-native speakers will reflect their own cultural norms and values (Boonkongsaen, 2013; Shishavan & Sharifian, 2013). However, what is considered appropriate and polite in one culture may not be appropriate and polite in another (Al-Eryani, 2007; Wannaruk, 2008). It is possible that differences in the use of English will create misunderstandings and breakdowns in cross-cultural encounters. Therefore, not only how English is used by native English speakers, but also how it is used by non-native English speakers should be exposed to students in the classroom.

However, it is not possible to teach everything. Instead, teachers should place special emphasis on the differences in the choices, patterns, and expressions between two or more cultural groups in the classroom (Duan, 2008). In so doing, teachers may employ both implicit and explicit instruction in the classroom. For example, teachers may provide audiovisual media (Kwon, 2003; Wannaruk, 2008) featuring how a particular culture realizes different speech acts in English. Then, the teacher may lead a discussion by asking the students to reflect on how they typically perform those speech acts so as to give a clearer picture of the differences between the two cultures (Duan, 2008). In so doing, teachers can help raise their students' awareness of cultural and pragmatic differences (Kwon, 2003). With this awareness, learners will become more careful about judging others who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds

Finally, although it was reported that there were more similarities than differences in the use of refusal strategies in English between Thai and Chinese graduate students in this study, some misunderstandings would be expected. Therefore, these differences should be the focus in the learning and teaching of English for cross-cultural communication to Thai students, especially those who wish to further their

higher education in China and Chinese students, especially those who wish to further their higher education in Thailand.

Specifically, Thai learners should be aware that Chinese graduate students frequently expressed 'Regret' in refusing another graduate student's invitation, 'Gratitude' in refusing an advisor's invitation, and 'Positive feeling' in refusing the Dean's request. In a similar way, Chinese learners should be aware that Thai graduate students were likely to employ direct strategies, that is, 'No' in refusing a classmate's offer and 'Negative ability' in refusing the Dean's request. In addition, Thai graduate students frequently offered 'Alternative' in refusing the Dean's request and 'Future acceptance' in refusing an advisor's suggestion.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Research

To enhance an understanding of the performance of speech acts by non-native speakers in English, the following suggestions may serve as guidelines for further studies:

Firstly, the present study focuses on refusal strategies in English by Thai and Chinese speakers, specifically in an academic setting. To gain better insight into the similarities and differences in making refusals between these two cultural groups, future studies may examine how these two groups realize a speech act of refusal in other settings, such as a business setting. Additionally, they may investigate their performance of other types of speech acts, for example, suggestion, complaint, or compliment.

Secondly, future studies may improve the design of the present study. For example, they may include native English speakers as the participants in order to

compare their norms with those of non-native English speakers. Additionally, to examine the obvious role of L2 proficiency, an English language proficiency test should be administered to divide the participants into different levels of proficiency (e.g. lower and higher proficiency). Future studies should also be cautious about classifying the relationship between the speaker and the hearer in the design of the research instruments since the participants may have different views of a close or a distant relationship (Li, 2008). For instance, a classmate can be viewed as either close or distant. Lastly, the effects of other factors, such as age, the length of stay in the target language community, and the gender of the interlocutors on the performance of speech acts should be investigated.

Thirdly, due to the limitations of the DCTs as previously reviewed in Chapter 2, future research may employ other research instruments to gain better insight into the speech and non-verbal behaviors in conversations. Role-plays, for example, can be used to examine not only the choice and content of strategies, but also turn-taking behavior and negotiation of meaning (Golato, 2003; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011). Another method would be to observe and collect data from actual conversations in a speech community (Hinkel, 1997). Not only speech, but other components of interactions, such as laughter, silence, eye contact, and gesture could be observed (Golato, 2003).

Finally, as cross-cultural encounters in English between non-native speakers have increased, it is worth investigating how other groups of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds use English in different situations. Due to the establishment of the ASEAN Community (AC) by 2015 where multiple opportunities for cross-cultural communication in English will arise, future studies may investigate the similarities and differences in the performance of different speech acts in English by two or more

ASEAN member states (i.e. Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) in order to predict potential problems that may occur, which will help create better understanding in their cross-cultural encounters.
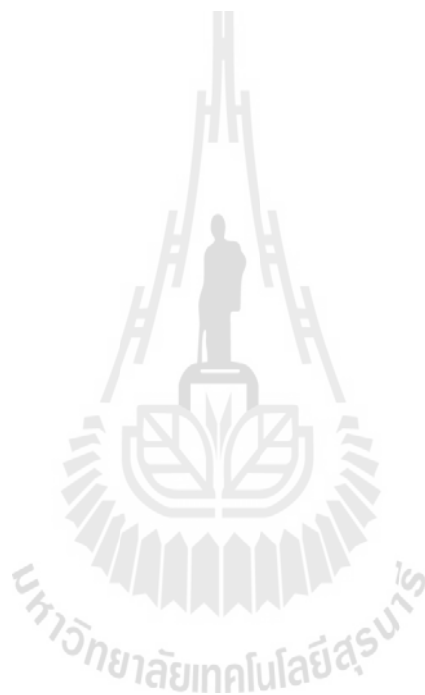
REFERENCES

Abdul Sattar, H. Q., Che Lah, S., & Raja Suleiman, R. R. (2010). A study on strategies used in Iraqi Arabic to refuse suggestions. *The International Journal of Language Society and Culture, 30*, 81-95.

Abdul Sattar, H. Q., Che Lah, S., & Raja Suleiman, R. R. (2011). Refusal strategies in English by Malay university students. *Journal of Language Studies, 11*(3), 69-81.

Al-Eryani, A. A. (2007). Refusal strategies by Yemeni EFL learners. *The Asian EFL Journal, 9*(2), 19-34.

Al-Kahtani, S. (2005). Refusals realizations in three different cultures: A speech act theoretically-based cross-cultural study. *Journal of King Saud University, 18*, 35-57.

Allami, H. & Naeimi, A. (2011). A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*, 385-406.

Al-Shboul, Y., Maros, M., & Yasin, M. S. (2012). An intercultural study of refusal strategies in English between Jordanian EFL and Malay ESL postgraduatestudents. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 18*(3), 29-39.

Altbach, P. G. & Teichler, U. (2001). Internationalization and exchanges in a globalized university [Abstract]. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 5*(1), 5-25.

Amarien, N. (1997). Interlanguage pragmatics: A study of the refusal strategies of Indonesian speakers speaking English. *TRFLIN Journal, 8*(1).

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Bacelar Da Silva, A. J. (2003). The effects of instruction on pragmatic development: Teaching polite refusals in English. *Second Language Studies, 22*(1), 55-106.

Barr, G. T. (2004). International negotiations and cross-cultural communication – A study in Thailand (Unpublished master's thesis). Burnaby, BC, Canada.

Barron, A. (2003). *Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics: Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Anderson & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). New York: Newbury House.

Bhumiratana, S. & Commins, T. (2012). Challenges and opportunities for higher education in Asia in the era of globalization: Case of Thailand. *Asian Journal on Education and Learning, 3*(2), 21-27.

Billmyer, K. & Varghese, M. (2000). Investigating instrument-based pragmatic variability: Effects of enhancing discourse completion tests, *Applied Linguistics, 21*(4), 517-552.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning how to say what you mean in a second language: A study of speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language. *Applied Linguistics, 3*, 29-59.

Blum-Kulka, S. & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied Linguistics, 5*(3), 196-213.

Boonkongsaen, N. (2013). Filipinos and Thais saying "no" in English. *Manusya Journal of Humanities, 16*(1), 23-40.

Bornmann, G. (2001). "Where you go?": Teaching Thai students about speech acts. *Thai TESOL Bulletin, 14*(2), 16-28. Retrieve from http://www.academia.edu/ 1530146/_Where_you_go_Teaching_Thai_studentsabout_speech_acts

Bradford, A. (2012). Challenges in adopting English-taught degree programs. *International Higher Education, 69*, 8-10.

Brown, P. & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language use.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards, & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 2-27). London: Longman.

Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*, 1-47.

Cedar, P. (2006). Thai and American Responses to Compliments in English. *The Linguistic Journal, 1*(2), 6-28.

Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics, 6*(2). 5-35.

Chaidaroon, S. S. (2003). When shyness is not incompetence: A case of Thai communication competence. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, *12*(4), 294-307

Chapman, S. (2000). *Philosophy for linguists: an introduction*. London: Routledge.

Chen, J. & Boonkongsaen, N. (2012). Compliment response strategies by Thai and Chinese EFL teachers: A contrastive study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(9), 1860-1867.

China Scholarship Council. (2012). *Statistics of international students in China in 2011*. Retrieved from http://www.csc.edu.cn/laihua/newsdetailen.aspx?cid= 122&id=1399

Chow, N. (2006). The practice of filial piety and its impact on long-term care policies for elderly people in Asian Chinese communities. *Asian Journal of Gerontology & Geriatrics, 1*(1), 31-35

Clyne, M. & Sharifian, F. (2008). English as an international language: Challenges and possibilities. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 31*(3), 28.1-28.16.

Cohen, A. D. (1996). Developing the ability to perform speech acts. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18*(2), 253-267.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(2), 185-209.

Cruse, D. A. (2000). *Meaning in language: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cutting, J. (2002). *Pragmatics and discourse: A resource book for students*. London: Routledge.

De Bettignies, H. C. & Tan, C. K. (2007). Values and management education in China. *International Management Review, 3*(1), 17-37.

Dombi, J. (2011). English as a lingua franca in intercultural communication. *Bulletin of the Transylvania University of Brasov, 4*(53), 183-186.

Duan, L. (2010). *The effects of explicit and implicit instruction on appropriacy of English refusal by Chinese EFL students* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhonratchasima, Thailand.

Eslami, Z. R. (2010). Refusals: How to develop appropriate refusal strategies. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Speech act performance: Theoretical, empirical and methodological issues* (pp. 217-236). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Fahey, M. P. (2005). Speech acts as intercultural danger zones: A cross-cultural comparison of the speech act of apologizing in Irish and Chilean soap operas. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, (8). Retrieved from http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr8/palma.htm

Farnia, M. & Abdul Sattar, H. Q. (2010). Intercultural communication: Malay and Thai university students' refusals to request. *Journal of Belgrade English Language and Literature Studies, 2*, 113-132.

Farnia, M. & Wu, X. (2012). An intercultural communication study of Chinese and Malaysian university students' refusal to invitation. *International Journal of English Linguistics, 2*(1), 162-176.

Felix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2004). Interlanguage refusals: Linguistic politeness and length of residence in the target community. *Language Learning, 54*(4), 587-653.

Felix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2008). Perceptions of refusals to invitations: Exploring the minds of foreign language learners. *Language Awareness, 17*(3), 195-211.

Félix-Brasdefer, J. C. (2010). Data collection methods in speech act performance: DCTs, role plays, and verbal reports. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Speech act performance: Theoretical, empirical and methodological issues* (pp. 41-56). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Gass, S. M. & Houck, N. (1999). *Interlanguage refusals: A cross-cultural study of Japanese-English*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Geyang, Z. (2007). A pilot study on refusal to suggestions in English by Japanese and Chinese EFL learners. *Bull. Grad. School Educ. Hiroshima Univ, 56*, 155-163.

Golato, A. (2003). Studying compliment responses: A comparison of DCTs and recordings of naturally occurring talk. *Applied Linguistics, 24*(1), 90-121.

Graddol, D. (2000). *The future of English?: A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st Century*. London: The British Council.

Grice, H. P. (2008). Logic and Conversation. In I. Hutchby (Ed.), *Sage benchmarks in social research methods: Methods in language and social interaction* (Vol. 1, pp. 24-40). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Gumperz, J.J. (1987). Foreword. In P. Brown & S. T. Levinson, *Some politeness: Some universals in language usage* (pp. xiii-xiv). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guo, Y. (2012). Chinese and American refusal strategy: A cross-cultural approach. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(2), 247-256.

Han, D. (2006). On the classification of speech act refusals in Chinese: Evidence and motivating factors. *CELEA Journal, 29*(3), 64-71.

Hassani, R., Mardani, M., & Dastjerdi, H. V. (2011). A comparative study of refusals: Gender distinction and social status in focus. *The International Journal-Language Society and Culture*, *32*, 37-46.

Hinkel, E. (1997). Appropriateness of advice: DCT and Multiple Choice Data. *Applied Linguistics, 18*(1), 1-26.

Hong, W. (2011). Refusals in Chinese: How do L1 and L2 differ?. *Foreign Language Annals*, *44*(1), 122–136.

Hymes, D. H. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-293). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Kasper, G. & Dahl, M. (1991). Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *13*, 215-247.

Kasper, G. & Schmidt, R. (1996). Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *18*, 149-169.

Keshavarz, M. H., Eslami, Z. R., & Ghahraman, V. (2006). Pragmatic transfer and Iranian EFL refusals: A cross-cultural perspective of Persian and English. In K., Bardovi-Harlig, J. C., Félix-Brasdefer, & A. S., Omar (Eds), *pragmatic and language learning* (pp. 359-402). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2007). *World Englishes: Implications for international communication and English language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kittisiriprasert, T. (2011). *English refusal strategies used by Silpakorn University postgraduate students* (Master's independent study, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand). Retrieved from http://www.thapra.lib.su.ac.th/thesis/showthesis_th.asp?id=0000006895

Knight, J. (2012). Five truths about internationalization. *International Higher Education, 69*, 4-5.

Knutson, T. J. (1994). Comparison of Thai and U.S. American cultural values: "Mai pen rai" versus "just do it". *ABAC Journal, 14*, 1-38. Retrieved from http://www.library.au.edu/ABAC-Journal/v14-n3-1.pdf

Kuchuk, A. (2012). *Politeness in intercultural communication: Some insights into the pragmatics of English as an international language* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, Arizona, U.S.A). Retrieved from http://arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/bitstream/10150/238633/1/azu_etd_12262_sip1_m.pdf

Kuriscak, L. M. (2010). The effect of individual-level variables on speech act performance. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Speech act performance: Theoretical, empirical and methodological issues* (pp. 23-39). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kwon, J. (2003). *Pragmatic transfer and proficiency in refusals of Korean EFL learners* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Boston University, Boston, MA, U.S.A.

Li, L. (2008). *Requests and refusals in English and Chinese* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds, Leeds, England). Retrieved from http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/811/1/uk_bl_ethos_490969.pdf

Lin, M. (2014). An interlanguage pragmatic study on Chinese EFL learners' refusal: Perception and performance. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 5*(3), 642-653.

Llurda, E. (2004) . Non-native-speaker teachers and English as an international language. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 14(3*), 314-323.

LoCastro, V. (2003) . *An introduction to pragmatics: Social action for language teachers.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C.C. (2002). Content analysis in mass communication: Assessment and reporting of intercoder reliability. *Human Communication Research, 28*(4), 587-604.

Ma, Y. (2008) . The study of Chinese speech act. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 17*(1), 209-217.

MacKey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Makthavornvattana, T. (1998) . *The speech act of apologizing in Thai*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Martínez-Flor, A. & Usó-Juan, E. (2010). Pragmatics and speech act performance. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Speech act performance: Theoretical, empirical and methodological issues* (pp. 3-20). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Martínez-Flor, A. & Usó-Juan, E. (2011) . Research methodologies in pragmatics: Eliciting refusals to requests. *ELIA, 11*, 47-87.

McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McKay, S. L. (2003). Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy: Re-examining common ELT assumptions. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 13*(1), 1-22.

McKay, S. L. & Bokhorst-Heng, W. D. (2008). *International English in its sociolinguistic contexts: Towards a socially sensitive EIL pedagogy*. London: Routledge.

Mihalicek, V. & Wilson, C. (Eds.). (2011). *Language files: Materials for an introduction to language and linguistics* (11th ed.). Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.

Ministry of Education. (2009). *List for English-taught programmes in Chinese higher education institutes*. Retrieved from http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/s3917/201007/91578.html

Ministry of Education. (2010). *International student enrollments exceeded 230,000 in 2009*. Retrieved from http://www.moe.gov.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_2862/201008/97180.html

Ministry of Education. (2011). *Over 260,000 international students studying in China in 2010*. Retrieved from http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/*html files/*moe/moe_2809/201103/115886.html

Misso, V. & Maadad, N. (2011). The English language and cultural appropriateness. *Sosiohumanika, 4*(1), 111-128.

Nelson, G. L., Carson, J., Al Batal, M. & Bakary, W. E. (2002). Cross-cultural pragmatics: Strategy use in Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals. *Applied Linguistics, 23*(2), 163-189.

Nguyen, T. M. P. (2006). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Refusals of requests by Australian native speakers of English and Vietnamese learners of English* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Queensland, Queensland, Australia.

Niezgoda, K. & Röver, C. (2001). Pragmatic and grammatical awareness: A function of the learning environment?. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics and language teaching* (pp. 63-79). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nurani, L. M. (2009). Methodological issue in pragmatic research: Is discourse completion test a reliable data collection instrument?, *Jurnal Sosioteknologu Edisi, 17*(8), 667-678.

Office of the Higher Education Commission. (2008). *Foreign students in Thai higher education institutions 2008*. Retrieved from http://inter.mua.go.th/ main2/article.php?id=30

Office of the Higher Education Commission. (2009). *International programs in higher education institutions*. Retrieved from http://inter.mua.go.th/main2/ article.php?id=6

Office of the Higher Education Commission. (2010). *Foreign students in Thai higher education institutions 2009.* Retrieved from http://inter.mua.go.th/ main2/article.php?id=96

Office of the Higher Education Commission. (2011). *Foreign students in Thai higher education institutions 2010*. Retrieved from http://inter.mua.go.th/ main 2/article.php?id=201

Office of the Higher Education Commission. (2013). *Foreign students in Thai higher education institutions 2011*. Retrieved from http://inter.mua.go.th/ main 2/article.php?id=337

O'Keeffe, A., Clancy, B., & Adolphs, S. (2011*). Introducing pragmatics in use*. London: Routledge.

Panichkul, S. (2003). *An acoustic study of Thai pause fillers in relation to their syntactic positions in monologues* (Master's thesis, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand). Abstract retrieved from Thai thesis database.

Pearson, L. (2010). Preface. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Speech act performance: Theoretical, empirical and methodological issues* (pp. xiii-xiv). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Peccei, J. S. (1999). *Pragmatics*. London: Routledge.

Prachanant, N. (2006). *Pragmatic transfer in responses to complaints by Thai EFL learners in Thai hotel business* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhonratchasima, Thailand.

Sadock, J. (2006). Speech acts. In L. R. Horn & G. Ward (Eds.), *The handbook of pragmatics* (pp. 53-73). Oxford: Blackwell.

Sahragard, R. & Javanmardi, F. (2011). English speech act realization of "refusals" among Iranian EFL learners. *Cross-Cultural Communication, 7*(2), 181-198.

Sairhun, T. (1999). *English refusal strategies in Thai learners of English as a foreign language: A study of pragmatic transfer* (Unpublished master's thesis). Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Sasaki, M., Suzuki, T. & Yoneda, M. (2006). English as an international language in non-native settings in an era of globalization. *Comparative Sociology, 5*, 381-404.

Schauer, G. A. (2009). *Interlanguage pragmatic development: The study abroad context*. London: Continuum.

Schauer, G. A. & Adolphs, S. (2006). Expressions of gratitude in corpus and DCT data: Vocabulary, formulaic sequences, and pedagogy. *System, 34*, 119-134.

Searle, J. (2008). What is a speech act?. In I. Hutchby (Ed.), *Sage benchmarks in social research methods: Methods in language and social interaction* (Vol. 1, pp. 8-23). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Seidlhofer, B. (2003). *A concept of international English and related issues: From 'real English' to 'realistic English'?*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Source/SeidlhoferEN .pdf

Shishavan, H. B. & Sharifian, F. (2013). Refusal strategies in L1 and L2: A study of Persian-speaking learners of English. *Multilingua, 32*(6), 801-836.

Sinhaneti, K. (2009, August). *A recent trend in higher education in Thailand: Some observations*. Paper presented at SEAMEO RETRAC 12th Governing Boards Meeting and International Conference, Vietnam. Retrieved from http://www. vnseameo.org/InternationalConference/resource.php

Sinthukiow, S. & Modehiran, P. (2013). The use of refusals among Thai bank employees: An implication for workplace English training programs. Online Journal of Education, *8*(1), 2740-2750. Retrieve from http://www.edu.chula.ac.th/ojed/doc/V81/v81d0212.pdf

Study in China. (2013). *Statistics report for foreign students in China in 2012*. Retrieved from http://www.admissions.cn/news/364282.shtml

Tanck, S. (2004). *Speech act sets of refusal and complaint: A comparison of native and non-native English speakers' production*. TESOL Working Papers, *4*(2), 1-22. Retrieved from http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/handle/1961/5233

Tian, X. (2014). Investigating L2 refusals: A case study of Chinese native speakers' L2 pragmatic competence. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 4*(1), 212-216.

Thomas, J. (2006). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. In K. Bolton & B. B. Kachru (Eds.). *World Englishes: Critical concepts in linguistics* (Vol. 4, pp. 22-48). London and New York: Routledge.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Service. (2008). *Promoting cultural sensitivity: A practical guide for tuberculosis program that provides services to persons from China*. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/ guidestoolkits/EthnographicGuides/China/chapters/china.pdf

Usó-Juan, E. & Martínez-Flor, A. (2008). Teaching intercultural communicative competence through the four skills. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses, 21*, 157-170.

Verschueren, J. (1999). *Understanding pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wang, J., Wang, G. G., Ruona, W. E. A., & Rojewski, J. W. (2005). Confucian values and the implications for international HRD. *Human Resource Development International. 8*(3), 311-326

Wannaruk, A. (2005, October). *Pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals*. Paper presented at the 13th Annual KOTESOL International Conference, Seoul, Korea.

Wannaruk, A. (2008). Pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals. *RELC, 39*(3), 318-337.

Wei, X. & Li, Q. (2013). The Confucian value of harmony and its influence on Chinese social interaction. *Cross-Cultural Communication, 9*(1), 60-66.

Yaghoobi, B. (2002). *A cross-linguistic study of requestive speech acts in email communication* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds, Leeds, England). Retrieved from http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/833/

Yano, Y. (2003). Communicative competence and English as an international language. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 12*(3), 75-83.

Yano, Y. (2006). Cross-cultural Communication and English as an international language. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 15*(3).

Yuan, Y. (2001). An inquiry into empirical pragmatics data-gathering methods: Written DCTs, oral DCTs, filed notes, and natural conversations. *Journal of pragmatics, 33*, 271-292.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
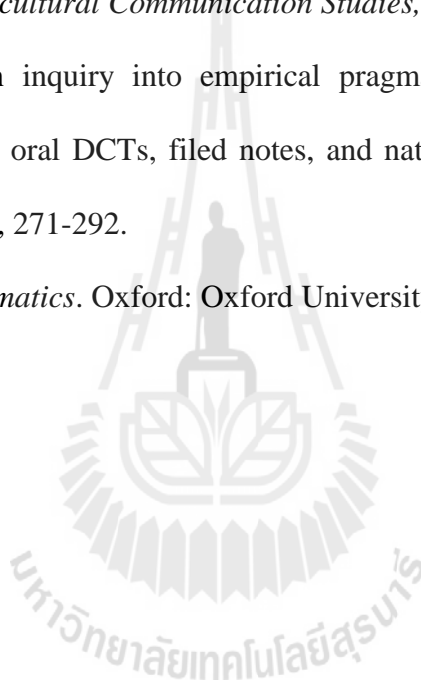
CURRICULUM VITAE

Rotubon Weerachairattana was born in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand on February 14, 1987. She received a BA in English with first-class honors in 2008 from Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. Since 2011, she has enrolled in the MA program in English Language Studies at the School of Foreign Languages, Institutes of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand. Her research interests are pragmatics and applied linguistics.