Teaching Speech Acts to EFL College-Level Omani Learners: Requests and Refusals

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Abstract

In the Sultanate of Oman, English is highly required by the educational institutions and the job market. However, research has revealed that university graduates suffer from lack of communication skills that deter them from interacting effectively with English speakers and cause them to be perceived as rude and disrespectful. To deal with this problem, research states that teaching speech acts, which are performing actions by producing them as utterances, such as giving compliments, requesting, refusing, apologizing, inviting, and promising, to name a few (Yule 48; Ishihara and Cohen 57; Cutting 16; Al-Eryani 20), holds a promise in its outcomes. It enhances Omani EFL learners' communication abilities, saves them from being viewed as rude, and helps them better prepare for the job market needs. However, there are challenges to be considered before undertaking speech acts teaching into the Omani EFL context: lack of sample authentic materials that are conducive to speech acts teaching, adhering to traditional and teacher-centered pedagogical philosophies, and absence of communication skills courses at the university level. In this paper, I address how teaching speech acts is a solution to the demands of developing EFL Omani learners' communication skills. Therefore, I familiarize teachers with the speech acts' theoretical background, and I reason why speech act should be taught, through communicative and explicit instruction. I end this essay with a pedagogical application for teaching two types of speech acts: requests and refusals. The lesson plan unit aims at raising students' awareness that speech acts are performed differently across cultures, i.e. Arab and American cultures in this context. It illustrates how learners will be able to (1) identify the speech acts, (2) realize their softeners, polite and impolite, and direct/indirect, and (3) perform them in different academic, workplace, and informal contexts.

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Introduction

The Sultanate of Oman is an Arab country that is located in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula. Because Oman is considered an "unofficial British protectorate," (Barbara Soukup 37-38), for the last forty-three years, it has become a country that attracts many international English speaking workers, who have been contributing to the country's modern advancements in all fields. Thus, English has played a crucial role in Oman's educational system, industrial development, and modernization. It is now regarded as the only official foreign language (Al-Issa 199) and is taught from grade one to graduate school in Oman (Al Mahrouqi 125). There is a high demand for English communication skills, especially in the job market (Al-Issa 199-200). At higher education institutions and in professional organizations, personnel are required to demonstrate high English language communication and proficiency skills in order to participate in international discourse and have access to better job opportunities (Al-Issa and Al-Balushi 14).

While many Omanis recognize the importance of being highly proficient in English, research indicates that secondary and tertiary schools' graduates demonstrate below satisfactory communication skills that deter them from interacting effectively with expatriates in the job market (Al-Mahrouqi 124). Accordingly, both native-English speaking (NES) and non-native English speaking (NNS) teachers may also be facing challenges understanding the intentions behind their Omani students' utterances, which may result in the teachers assuming that the students are disrespectful. However, this does not seem true as the Omani people are "consistently polite within their own culture" (Umale 20). In fact, the Omani learners of English realize that the ability to communicate well in English saves them from being viewed as rude when they translate Arabic expressions directly from their first language (L1) to the

target language, which can cause meaning to be lost in translation (Umale 34).

Another explanation for these students' verbal behavior is that they have not had adequate training in foreign language communication skills. In fact, while a great deal of teaching in many English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs adequately prepare students to use grammatically sound language across the four skill areas, few second language (L2) programs devote sufficient amount of instruction to pragmatics (Ishihara and Cohen x) and effective communication skills. The prominent EFL programs in Oman are no exception. For instance, at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), which is the largest and only government owned university, there are no courses allocated for teaching pragmatics or communication skills (Al-Mahrouqi 128).

Moreover, using traditional teaching approaches is more prevalent than communicative language teaching methodology in the Omani English Language Teaching (ELT) context (Al-Issa 200). Teachers continue to employ teacher-centered methods (e.g., the grammar translation method) while communicative teaching is rarely addressed in the curriculum (Al-Mahrouqi 125-127). I argue that teachers do not always receive sufficient in-service training on teaching communication skills, nor do they have access to sample materials. Hence, they do not know how to teach communication skills. To support my argument, professional development for in-service training workshops that assist teachers to develop practical teaching techniques are poorly funded and not quality assured in Oman; graduating teachers from SQU generally suffer from a lack of language proficiency and methodological competence (Al-Issa 208- 209). Additionally, in many schools, the English language teaching resources are unsatisfactory; instructors lack appropriate technological language learning resources and materials (Al-Issa 200).

Furthermore, Rahma Al-Mahrouqi states that there is a lack of research on communication skills teaching in Oman (125). Al-Mahrouqi investigated the causes behind the lack of communicative language and the methods of teaching English communication skills in Omani schools. She interviewed fifty-eight university students from a variety of majors, twenty-five of whom were non-English majors, but were taking their courses in English. She discovered that these skills "were either not taught at all or taught indirectly…despite the repeated calls for communicative language teaching" by educators in Oman (Al-Mahrouqi 124-125). All the participants expressed a need for learning communicative skills. They were insecure about initiating conversations or making requests without being misunderstood as having faulty personalities or perceived as being rude. A few of the respondents stated that communication skills help them make more friends and solve social problems. On that account, it is necessary to devote a course for teaching pragmatics, specifically speech acts (Al-Mahrouqi 125-127). In addition, in order for teachers to incorporate pragmatic instruction comfortably into their teaching, they need to be supplemented with sample materials that are conducive to pragmatic teaching and depict authentic language usage (Ishihara and Cohen x).

Considering all the factors above, this paper discusses research and modules on using speech acts among native speakers of English. It seeks to orient teachers with the scope and means of speech acts. It also presents how teaching speech acts is a solution to develop students' communication skills. After providing background on the status of English, and the situation of teaching communication skills and pragmatics in Oman, this essay necessitates briefly defining pragmatics because it is the branch of linguistics that extensively studies the speech act discipline (Ishihara and Cohen x). Then, it defines speech acts and discusses its

different classifications. Then, this paper presents evidence as to why speech acts should be taught and discusses the speech act event's variables. It also elaborates on certain types of speech acts in English and attempts to compare them to their Arabic counterparts; it describes the strategies used to perform the speech acts of requests and refusals in real language contexts, either in the native speaking or the non-native speaking context. Mentioning the field of instructional pragmatics, this essay proposes using ESA (Engage, Study, and Activate) method for implementing speech acts in the Omani EFL context as well as discusses strategies for learning and teaching speech acts.

More significantly, this essay proposes effective approaches with activities designed to practically introduce the speech acts in an authentic context. Primarily, it aims to design a model unit plan of self-explanatory lesson plans for teachers and user-friendly handouts for students. It considers the connection between language forms and functions. Teachers may use the lessons in their classes and as templates to create more lessons. The lesson plan unit is conducive to teaching speech acts to intermediate or higher intermediate college-level EFL Omani learners. It may be used with EFL Omani learners in the intensive English transition programs or with students who are training to be English teachers.

1. Defining Pragmatics

Linguists have not reached a consensus in defining the term *pragmatics* (Stephen C. Levinson 5; Noriko Ishirara and Andrew D. Cohen 1). It has been viewed as the study of how language is used in communication and of how the communicative functions are employed in language (Nicholas Allott 1). The term focuses on the rules for the relevant use of language in the appropriate situation (Al-Mahrouqi 128-129), and it takes into account form, meaning, and context (Geffory Leech 4-5). Additionally, pragmatics studies the "relationship between

linguistic forms and the users of those forms" (Yule 4). It is the only field that requires analyzing the purposes behind speakers' actions and the intended meanings of those performed actions. However, pragmatics may be "a frustrating area of study because it requires us to make sense of people and what they have in mind" (Yule 4). Only the communicators involved in a conversation can truly know all the implications behind their explicit utterances (Allott 1).

Pragmatics focuses on the meanings of utterances whereas grammar "deals with abstract entities such as sentences" (in syntax) (Leech14). For example, the words *would you please be quiet?* are called a sentence or a question if they are described grammatically but called an utterance when described pragmatically for the particular situation to indicate performance, which is a request in this case. Besides the utterance being a function, it can be a product of a verbal act (a speech act or an illocutionary act). Thus, for describing the utterance that is labeled as an action, one may use the term *speech* or *illocutionary act,* as used by Austin (qtd. in Leech 14). Hence, the word "utterance," not sentence, will be used throughout this paper when discussing speech acts.

2. Speech Acts

2.1. Definition and Classifications

Speech acts indicate the functions of language. They are about performing actions by producing them as utterances, such as giving compliments, responding to compliments, refusing, requesting, apologizing, inviting, and promising, to name a few (Yule 48; Ishihara and Cohen 57; Cutting 16; Al-Eryani 20). According to John Austin's Speech Act Theory in 1962, the speech act performance contains three connected acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. A locutionary act is about being able to produce the explicit meaning and

linguistic statement of the language, with its sounds, words, and well-formedness. If one says, "I will sleep" in Arabic to an English speaker who does not understand Arabic, s/he fails to produce a locutionary act in English because the speaker used a language the hearer does not understand. Then, the speakers' actions, as related to the words they are saying, are known to be an illocutionary act or force (Allot 5; Cutting 16; Yule 48). Pragmatically, the distinction between a prediction and a promise, for example, is called an illocutionary force difference (Allott 5) in which the performance of the utterance conveys a different communicative purpose. Finally, the perloctutionary act represents the effect of the uttered function on the interlocutor. In other words, it is the result of the discourse (Yule 4; Cutting 16). Having the hearer understand and react properly to the intended speech resembles a success in the perlocutionary stage (Yule 48-49; Cutting 16). However, the most essential act of the three discussed above is the illocutionary act to the extent that the term is used interchangeably with the term speech act (Yule 49; Allott 5); it is the point where the speaker's implications could differ from their explicit statements. For example, the statement *I will see you later* is locutionarily successful because it is a well-formed English sentence. However, it may mean something different in the illocutionary stage depending on the context, the speakers, and the way it is uttered; it may be inferred as a prediction, a promise, a warning, or a simple phrase of parting.

On the other hand, John Searle classified speech acts in different sets than Austin's. Searle's classifications resemble the functions of the illocutionary act, which are declarations, representatives, commissives, directives, and expressives. Declarative speech acts alter the situation into another one once they are declared (Cutting 15). When a priest says during a wedding ceremony, "I hereby pronounce you man and wife," the two individuals become

married (Cutting 15). Then, the representative acts exemplify the speaker's beliefs or perspective such as describing a religious belief or a school of thought. Next, the commissive speech acts devote the speaker to a future task, an obligation s/he needs to fulfill such as promising, offering, threatening, vowing, and volunteering. Moreover, in the directive speech acts, hearers are required to react to the action by doing something in return. For instance, hearers are compelled to respond to a command, a request, an invitation, or a suggestion, and so forth. Finally, the expressive speech acts are used to represent the speakers' feelings through, for example, apologizing, praising, congratulating, deploring, and regretting (Cutting 15).

2.2. Why Should Speech Acts be Taught?

2.2.1. Questioning the Universality of Speech Acts

Empirical studies have found that although speakers across cultures universally share similar speech acts, they "verbalize and conceptualize" them differently for the same speech situation when they come from dissimilar cultural backgrounds and employ discrete communication styles. In other words, the same speech act could be found in two cultures but used for different speech situations (Al-Eryani 20). For instance, Deborah Tannen found that when New Yorkers want to express their listenership, and that they are attentive, they would remark with *Wow!* or *No kidding!* while Californians might feel terrified and confused if they heard a New Yorker say these phrases (192). New Yorkers who thought that they were "appreciative listeners" misinterpreted Californians' silence as being shy and reluctant to carry on the conversation (Tannen192).

2.2.2. Differences and Communication Styles across Cultures

Arab and American communicators vary in their communication styles. This variation

necessitates the teaching of speech acts to Foreign Language (FL) learners. There are two principal approaches to life and communication styles that could be used to help explicate the distinction between Arab and American cultures: individualistic versus communitarian cultures and direct versus indirect dimension. Culturally, western societies (e.g., British and American) are characteristically individualistic, and people are encouraged to express their opinion even if those opinions are unpopular (Steven Brown and Jodi Eisterhold 8). Americans and Brits "take pride in being unique," and they are very goal-oriented (Jaishree Umale 20). As opposed to the individualistic American way of life, the Arab's life is described as collective (communitarian), according to Nydell and Yousef (qtd. in Feghali 351-352). People from communitarian cultures are more obliged to the society and its customs than those from an individualistic cultures. Family background and social status significantly influence ones' personal standing more than accomplishments, as asserted by Nydell 1987 (qtd. in Ellen Feghali 352). Above and beyond, people's relationships with their families and neighbors affect their behaviors and choices in life (Brown and Eisterhold 8-9).The Omani culture may be considered communitarian because family is the center of Omanis' life. The society is systemically hierarchical with solid tribal ties. Being extremely polite, especially in public, is essential as it reveals the upbringing the speaker has had and represents the family's and tribe's reputation (Umale 20).

Another aspect that has been used to distinguish Arab and American speakers' communication styles is the direct/indirect dimension (Nelson et al. 40). This dimension denotes "the extent speakers reveal their intentions through explicit communication" (Gudykunst & Tingo-ToomIn 100). On the direct end of the spectrum, speakers' intentions are explicitly expressed in their words; however, on the indirect end of the dimension,

speakers' intentions and needs are not explicitly expressed in their words; therefore, they are to be inferred from the situation (100). Searle also distinguishes between direct and indirect speech acts. The former expresses the literal meaning of the uttered words because it establishes direct association between form and function (qtd. in Cutting 19). Thus, when one says, "pass me the salt," s/he is explicitly ordering or requesting (19). On the contrary, an indirect speech act demonstrates that an implied meaning is negotiated in the conversation. Hence, there is not a direct relation between the form of the utterance and its function (Cutting 19).

Interestingly, the majority of communicative acts incorporate some degree of indirectness because it is largely connected to politeness (Tannen 193; Cutting 20). Hall designed a model for high-vs. low context cultures that correspond to the directness versus indirectness dimension. According to Hall, people from high-context cultures (e.g., Arabs) are characteristically less direct in their communication while those from low-context cultures (e.g., Americans) are more direct in their speech. Hall's model has been used by scholars and has been proven through scientific research; however, the means and levels of indirectness differ across cultures. For instance, Americans, a culturally heterogeneous group, are more tailored to overlook and even discard indirectness since words must echo the intention (Tannen 193). In contrast, Arabs avoid directness to escape embarrassment, to save face, and to show harmony (Katriel 111-112; Zaharna 243).

The same is true about Omanis, who tend to be less direct and less explicit about what they say; "what is not said is sometimes more important than what is said" to them. Accordingly, understanding meaning of the same utterance would take different paths within the two cultures. Both, Americans and Omanis, use different speech acts for similar situations,

which definitely causes pragmatic errors (Umale 20). Nonetheless, Nelson et al. have come to question the direct versus indirect dimension. They claim that it is a dangerous generalization that disregards the socioeconomic situation, gender, age, and status of the speaker. Therefore, they investigated similarities and differences between twenty-five Arab Egyptian and thirty American English speakers' communication style, specifically the directness of refusal speech acts, which was through a 12-item Discourse Completion Test, considering participants' status, gender, and the speech situation. Nelson et al. focused on the frequency and use of indirectness across the two groups in the study. The participants were asked, in oral interview forms, to respond to three requests, three invitations, three offers, and three suggestions that represent various levels of status: higher, equal, and lower (44-45). While Katriel states, as quoted in Nelson et al., that a lower-status Arab utilizes indirect strategies to address a higher-status person, Nelson's data revealed that male Egyptians tended to utilize fewer indirect strategies, and that they were more direct than Americans. However, both groups maintained comparable frequency strategies (51-57). Nelson et al. strongly questioned the generalization of Katriel's statement that "indirect communication style is in the blood of every Arabic person" (Katriel 111). Nevertheless, the Nelson et al. study cannot claim that Arabs are not completely indirect because it only focused on Arab refusals. Arabs might be indirect in other performances (e.g., request or apology), and other Arab participants rather than the Egyptians may be indirect as well. However, Nelson et al. highlight the need to consider the speech situation and other important factors before generalizing about certain groups (51-54).

2.2.3. Escaping Negative Pragmatic Transfer

Since Arab and American speakers' cultures and communication styles are distinct, and pragmatics and cultures are intertwined (Leech 12), Arab learners of English need to

acquire pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence, as defined by Fraser, is the ability or

the extent to which the interlocutor comprehends the intended illocutionary force produced by

the speaker (qtd. in Al-Eryani 20). There are two main components of pragmatic competence:

pragma-linguistic knowledge and socio-pragmatic knowledge. Leech defines *pragma-*

lingustic as "the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying

particular linguistic act" (11) while he defines *socio-pragmatics* as "the sociological interface

of pragmatics" (10). In other words, the former means the learners' ability to employ the

relevant linguistic forms to produce this speech act while the latter refers to the learners'

ability to utilize the proper speech act for the context (Al-Eryani 20). For instance, when a

speaker says, *He is Muhammed* instead of *This is Muhammed* to introduce himself on the

phone, he fails to accomplish the appropriate language pragma-linguistic aspect of the speech

act. However, if guests ask their host about his balance in the bank, the guests have made a

socio-pragmatic error that is inappropriate in this particular context (Nelson et al. 163).

Interestingly, describing a pragmatic situation is dependent on both its socio-pragmatic

and pragma-linguistic factors. The socio-pragmatic norms are related to the particular social

conditions in which the situation occurs (Leech 10-11) because learning pragmatics is a social

phenomenon where "L2 speakers construct and negotiate their identities as they become

socialized in the L2 community" (Ishihara and Cohen x). However, pragma-linguistic

knowledge is also an inseparable aspect of pragmatics (Leech 10-11). While Chomsky

separated grammar from pragmatics, Leech argues that they complement each other. There is

an inherent bond between grammatical meaning and illocutionary force of an utterance. As

the meaning in pragmatics "is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language," grammar

plays a role in shaping that meaning (Leech 4-6). One way for L2 learners to acquire

pragmatic competence is through learning speech acts.

In the light of the above discussion, teaching speech acts, and therefore acquiring pragmatic competence, will assist learners in avoiding negative pragmatic transfer. Negative pragmatic transfer is the incorrect use of the first language (L1)'s (e.g., Arabic for Omanis) speech act strategies and socio-cultural norms when communicating in the (L2) (e.g., English) (Beebe et al. 56). Due to the pragmatic transfer, Second Language (SL), or FL learners tend to heavily rely on their L1's pragmatic and linguistic repertoire when communicating in the target language (Scarcella 338). Hence, SL/FL learners need to be aware of the conversational norms employed by native speakers and across cultures to avoid a pragmatic transfer that might lead to communication breakdown.

2.3. Variables of the Speech Act Event

Before performing a speech act, speakers should also be aware of the specific aspects of pragmatic speech situations that determine the type, level, and grammatical forms of the performed speech act, which are contained in the form of a speech event. A speech event "is an activity in which participants interact via language in some conventional way to arrive at some outcome" (Yule 57). It is a process of interaction, in which the speech act is the central utterance. However, it involves other preceding and succeeding utterances that construct the whole speech act. Every speech event must have at least one speaker/writer and hearer/reader, who are called the addressee and addresser (Leech13). One of the two participants is assumed to be a native-English speaker; however, Ishihara and Cohen propose to not to limit the scope of the pragmatic interaction between native versus non-native speaker-hearer participants, especially with the expansion of English as an international language. Non-native speakers may largely interact in English with each other without sharing a native language. Also,

pragmatic correctness is more often determined by native speaker experts, not merely by any

native speaker (Ishihara and Cohen x). Native speakers' knowledge of speech acts is generally

unconscious, and they often need to consciously and explicitly learn appropriateness in

different contexts (Tatsuki and Houck 1). For example, a three year old English native

speaker, who does not have the same understanding of all the rules, would likely say, "Give

me water" while a six year old native speaker might ask, "Could you give me water, please?"

The six years old is unlikely to be consciously thinking about it but may have learned it

through interaction or through corrective feedback from his/her parents.

Additionally, speakers' characteristics and cultural backgrounds as well as the nature

and setting of the discourse are central factors that impact the speaker's choices to produce the

speech act for the given scenario. For instance, age, gender, and language aptitude (i.e., a

heightened ability to deal with cultural varieties and differences) of the speaker determine the

level of speech act. For instance, young learners tend to be better strategic learners than older

learners although some young learners might take longer to strategize than others (Cohen

235). Personality and the style that the conversationalist prefers also contribute in shaping the

final product (i.e., speech event) of the speech act (e.g., direct or indirect). People with certain

personalities prefer to express themselves indirectly while others tend to be more explicit and

have difficulty inferring indirect and implicit messages (Cohen 235-236). Finally, the context

of the speech event often necessitates the speaker to select particular speech act strategies. For

example, a request for a pay raise is a difficult task that requires careful planning and studying

of the consequences.

Furthermore, students need to recognize that the nature of the situation and the status,

age, and role of the participants determine the forms of the conveyed scenario. For example,

apologizing to an employer for missing a meeting is more serious than apologizing for eating a close friend's chocolate without asking permission. Requesting to borrow a car from an older person is different from requesting to borrow a bike from a child. The distance between the speaker and the interlocutor is another factor that would affect the final product; making a request to a stranger tends to be softer and more polite than making a request to a family member (Cohen 230-231). Also, the utterance may be supplemented with body language like gestures (e.g., winks, pointing, shrugging, frowns) and other formal/informal non-verbal actions that are tremendously important for understanding the meanings behind the act (Austin 76). In short, a successful speech act necessitates knowing the background of the listener (e.g., status, gender, age), cultural knowledge of the speech community in which the speech event occurs (e.g., distance, the level of imposition of the act, cultural sensitivity), and awareness of the language used in the L2 speech community (Cohen 238).

Common pragmatic mishaps among Omani EFL students are often salient when they initiate requests and refusals. They tend to employ direct requests with *I want* (e.g., Teacher, I want my marks or Teacher, I want my books) (Conor Quinn 11). From my own experience as an EFL teacher of Omani learners, I have frequently observed my students expressing requests in the forms of commands (*e.g*., We want to go home or Enough teaching today. We are exhausted) that are being interpreted as rude by my fellow native and proficient non-native speaking teachers. In regard to refusals among Omanis, Umale investigated similarities and differences between the British (western culture) and the Omani (Arab culture) ways of refusing requests in different socio-cultural settings and the roles of status in those refusals. He distributed a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), in which a respondent is given a situation to place a response in the form of a speech act. Participants were given situations requiring

refusals to ten Omani and ten British speakers of different status. Findings illustrated that Omanis used more direct strategies than the British to refuse requests and offers. Applying L1 speech behaviors into the L2, the Omani speakers answers sounded "rude, tactless, abrupt, gushing, and obsequious" and caused the Omanis to fall under pragma-linguistic failure. The Omanis refusals were inclined to be very lengthy and obsequious starting with, for example, "*I feel proud to accept your invitation*," and ending with vague non-specific reasons (e.g., I have something to do tomorrow) (Umale 24). In light of the above discussion and considering Arab learners' concerns about appearing polite and saving face in public, this essay seeks to discuss directive speech acts: asking phase (i.e., making requests) and responding phase (i.e., making refusals).

3. Directive Speech Acts:

3.1. The Speech Act of Requests

3.1.1. Definition and Components

The speech act of request is the most largely researched act in cross-cultural pragmatics because it is a common performance of everyday communication, especially by language learners (Uso-Juan 242). According to John Searle's classification of speech acts, requests are directive speech acts. Speakers (requesters) initially perform requests to get the interlocutors (requestees) do some actions in favor of the speakers (Uso-Juan 238). On this account, they are called pre-event acts for they are made to cause or influence an event (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 206; Uso-Juan 238). Yule also considers requests to be speech events for they are not conveyed through a single utterance but rather through subsequent steps in an interactive conversation (57). Moreover, requests are known as face-threatening acts, in that they embody a threat to the speaker's and hearer's anticipations about public self-

image (Yule 61). A face-threatening act can affect the speakers' positive face (the need to be included in and respected by the group) or negative face (the need to be independent and not be forced to do things one does not approve of) (Yule 61-62). According to Brown and Levinson, face-threatening acts are usually complemented with softeners to mitigate the message in the request (qtd. in Abdolrezapour and Eslami-Rasekh 147; Uso-Juan 238).

3.1.2. Linguistic Components of the Request Speech Act

The speech act of request is characterized by the following linguistic components: address term(s), head act, and the modification devices to the speech act (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 201). However, the two main components of a request are the *head act* (defined as the main utterance that has the function of requesting and can stand by itself), and the *modification devices* (defined as the adjuncts to the speech act that could occur before or after the head act or are contained within it) (Uso-Juan 238). The modification devices are implemented to soften and mitigate the impact of the request. They are divided into two categories: external and internal modifiers. External modifiers either precede or follow the head act while the internal devices are included in the head act (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 201; Esther Uso-Juan 240). For instance, *would you mind* in *Would you mind opening the door, please?* is an internal modifier for the head act *opening the window* while *please* is an external modifier. However, studies have demonstrated that new language learners tend to use direct request strategies; they underuse internal modifiers and overuse external modifiers compared to NSs. Therefore, their requests sound rude, forceful, and verbose (Uso-Juan 242). In view of that, making a request requires a proper understanding of its (a) linguistic components, (b) the functions of directness/indirectness used in requesting, and (c) the mitigating modification devices that follow or precede the request (Eslami and McLoed 19).

Additionally, demonstrating social learner strategies, where the learner selects who to ask and how to request, is essential when making a request. However, teachers need to consider that some learners often revert to what is known as *affective strategy*; avoiding the performance of an act due to anxiety or other certain factors (e.g., checking a map instead of asking a stranger) (Choen 229). Alcon et al., as found in *The presentation and practice of the communicative act of requesting in textbooks: Focusing on Modifiers* by Esther Usó-Juan 240-241, represent a taxonomy of external and internal modification devices of requests (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 1)").

3.1.3. Direct and Indirect Requests

The utterance produced by the requester can range along a spectrum of (in) directness. A direct utterance expresses that what is meant is said in words and can be clearly understood without any inferences. An indirect request tends to contain an illocutionary act that is not overtly stated in the utterance; in that, "one illocutionary act is performed by way to perform another." For instance, saying, *can you reach the salt?* is a kind of question, but it also indicates a request (Searle 30). It is interesting to note that speakers across cultures prefer indirect requests over direct ones in order to increase the degree of politeness, reduce the imposition in the request, and save face (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 201). Additionally, the two conversationalists could understand the indirectness of the request if they share factual, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Thus, being aware of the indirectness implied in the speech act is crucial; otherwise, there is a high possibility of misunderstanding between the speaker and the listener when using an indirect request (Eslami and McLoed 19). Jon Searle categorizes some expressions that are primarily used for indirect requesting; (e.g., "(see Appendix C, table 2)").

Furthermore, Blum-Kulka, Olshtain, and Trsoborg draw from literature a taxonomy of request strategies that represent the request head act. The taxonomy is highly recommended for use in instructional settings. They categorize requests into four groups, which represent the directness and indirectness spectrum: (1) direct, (2) conventionally indirect (hearer-based), (3) conventionally indirect (speaker-based), and (4) nonconventionally indirect hints (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 201; qtd. in Usó-Juan 239). In the direct forms of requesting, the speaker explicitly states his/her request through performatives "explicit requesting verbs" (I *am asking* you to speak louder), the imperative aspect (speak louder), and modal verbs of obligation (*you must/have to* speak louder). The conventionally indirect forms of requests include everyday expressions and phrases that are supposed to sound polite. They are classified into hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented forms. The former addresses the interlocutor in the expressions (e.g., using **you** or **your** in could **you** lend me **your** car) and targets requests that reflect willingness or permission (e.g., using **could/would** phrases – *could you/would you lend me your car?),* and suggestory formula (e.g., How about lending me **your** car?).The latter uses the nouns or pronouns that refer to the requester (e.g., **I** or **we**) in utterances that reflect the requesters' needs and wishes (e.g., I would like/need to borrow your car). Hearer-oriented request forms, according to Trosborg, sound more polite than the speaker-oriented counterparts because, in the former, the hearer is given more power to accept or refuse the request (239). Finally, indirect hints mandate extrapolation by the interlocutor in order to ascertain the request from the speaker (240). Indirect hints are classified by Kulka et al. as strong hints _ stating the problem in straightforward manner (e.g., *Your room is a mess*), and mild hints- stating the problem implicitly (e.g., *It's already eleven o'clock* is a request to go to bed) (qtd. in Elsami and Mcleod 20); (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 3)").

3.1.4. Adopted Requesting Module

A request is composed of two phases: the request phase and the response phase, which are both formed in a conversational unit consisting of three stages: opening the interaction, making the request and obtaining the response, and closing the interaction (Kayfetz and Smith 27).

3.1.4.1. Opening the Interaction

This stage requires the requester to introduce him/herself .Then, s/he makes sure the interlocutor has the time to listen to the request before introducing the topic. However, if the interlocutor signals that s/he is busy, the requester should not proceed with the request; otherwise, s/he may be mistaken as impolite. On the other hand, the requester could ask for an appointment to make or initiate the request at a more convenient time for the interlocutor (Kayfetz and Smith 28). For examples, ((e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 4)").

3.1.4.2. Making the Request and Obtaining the Response

There are a number of phrases one could employ to express a request. These phrases vary in the level of politeness, directness, and formality (Jones and Baeyer 16). The speaker would pick a definite phrase depending on various variables, such as the situation of the request (e.g., pleasant, urgent, or miserable), and the social status and roles of the contributors. For instance, excessive politeness is not practical in emergency situations. Additionally, it is necessary that the tone of the requester's voice matches the request; otherwise, the requester could be considered rude even though s/he uses very polite forms (17). Jones and Bayer list some suitable ways of requesting, which are arranged according to the level of politeness; ((e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 4)").

3.1.4.3. Closing the Interaction

After making the request, the requester should wait to listen for the response from the interlocutor. When the response is given in the form of, an acceptance, an apology or a refusal, the requester should thank the interlocutor by conveying gratefulness for the listener's time and willingness to help (Kayfetz and Smith 29-31); For examples, ("(see Appendix D, table 4)").

3.1.5. Teachability of Requests

Research has shown that performing requests is socio-pragmatically problematic for language learners. Thus, it is essential to expose learners, through learner-oriented instructional methods, to real life usage of the speech act of request. Summaries of interventional studies have noted that (1) requests and request modifiers are teachable speech act features, (2) explicit teaching seems to effectively surpass implicit teaching of requests, yet implicit teaching is useful for learning them, and (3) input tasks and problem-solving tasks are effective for "processing pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic features of requests" (Uso-Juan 246).

3.2. Directive Speech Acts: The Speech Act of Refusal

3.2.1. Definition and Complexity of Refusals

Refusals involve disagreeing, denying a request, declining an invitation, or rejecting advice (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 164; Nelson et al. 43; Sattar et al. 60; Eslami 217). They are negotiated negative responding acts to invitations, suggestions, requests, and offers (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 163). Refusals are one of the most problematic speech acts for they are face threatening acts to the speaker and the listener (Umale 18; Emma Archer 181; Yule 61; Eslami 217). They are also complicated acts that require a high level of

pragmatic competence because (a) refusals are prone to be indirect by nature and thus sometimes need to be interpreted (Sattar et al.60; Yule 61; Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 164), (b) they require two speakers, and the interlocutor needs to be involved in the process directly and continuously (Archer 181), and (c) "the possibility of offending someone is inherent in the act [of refusal] itself," according to Beebe & Takahashi (qtd. in Nelson et al.42).

3.2.2. Refusal Strategies: Face-Saving Acts

In order to mitigate the intrinsic threat of the refusal, speakers utilize various polite refusal strategies, which are called face-saving acts (Yule 61). Refusal strategies are "idea units" that "often consist of a single independent clause" (Nelson et al. 46). If the interlocutor is concerned about saving the speakers' positive face, s/he may engage a couple of strategies (i.e., units) to soften the refusal. In support of the previous statement, Nelson et al.'s study of refusals among Egyptian Arab and American speakers revealed that Americans used up to nineteen different refusal strategies in their interviews, and Egyptians utilized up to eleven different strategies in their responses (47). Refusals are also classified as direct and indirect: direct refusals tend to be short and succinct (e.g., No, I can't), but they are usually softened (e.g., Unfortunately, I don't think I'll be able to come). However, the majority of refusals are indirect by nature and epitomize willingness to save the speaker's face. (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 164); (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 1)") for indirect refusals strategies.

The most widespread taxonomy for refusal strategies was developed by Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz's in 1990. Their classification was based on the results of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) administered to Japanese speakers of English. The classification demonstrates two aspects of refusals: (1) the type of idea units (semantic

formulas) that are used to produce a refusal, which can be direct or indirect, and (2) adjuncts, which complement the refusal but cannot be used alone to convey it (Dialent141). In other words, the adjuncts are pre-refusals and post-refusals, respectively, as named by Felix-Brasdefer (Dialent 142); (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 1)") for classification of refusal strategies with examples.

3.2.3. Refusals among Arab and Omani Speakers of English

Choosing to perform one particular face-saving act over another depends on the socio-cultural factors surrounding the speech situation (Umale 61). Accordingly, if the speakers impose their cultural and linguistic backgrounds that are different from the interlocutors' when refusing, they might be misunderstood as impolite. Arabic speakers tend to use more indirect strategies in their refusals than American native speakers of English. In support of the previous statement, Abdullah Al-Eryani conducted a study comparing twenty Yemeni EFL learners' refusal strategies to native Yemeni Arab speakers who do not speak English and to American Native English Speakers (NES). Participants were asked to respond to six situations in DCTs that require refusals. Research findings concluded that Yemeni EFL learners' refusals were more similar to the native Yemeni Arabic speakers' than the Americans' refusals. Additionally, although all groups employed various types of refusals, the order of Yemeni speakers' refusals and level of indirectness were different from Americans'. Yemenis were more indirect as they first gave explanations (reasons) while Americans "expressed regret" and were more direct in refusing (Al-Eryani 19).

Moreover, Nelson et al. found that native Egyptian Arabic speakers use less refusal strategies than native speakers of American English. For instance, Egyptian speakers are inclined to utilize fewer strategies when refusing an invitation from a status equal. They

would, for example, give a direct refusal (e.g., *No, I can't*), express a regret (e.g., *sorry or never mind*), suggest willingness for a future time (e.g., *make it another day*), or give an excuse right away (e.g., *I am busy on Monday*) (Nelson et al. 172). However, giving reasons, especially to people of lower status, is the most common refusal strategy Egyptian Arab speakers employ for refusals (Nelson et al. 174). Considering refusals in the Omani context, Umale's research on the similarities and differences of refusals between Omani and British speakers concludes that although both groups used indirect refusal strategies to refuse a request from higher status speakers, Omanis, unlike the British, still maintained indirect strategies when refusing requests from lower status speakers (Umale 18-19). Additionally, the Omanis maintained the semantic formulas (refusal units) of their native language (Arabic); coming from a very indirect culture, they started with a strategy that showed concern for the interlocutor's feeling most of the time (e.g., *I am very glad with your invitation*). Then, they unclearly demonstrated reasons (e.g., *I have something to do tomorrow*), showed willingness (e.g., *I wish I could come*), and ended with a promise (e.g., *I promise to join your coming invitation*) (Umale 30-33). On the other hand, the British speakers maintained the subsequent order in most of their indirect refusals: expressing regret and then giving clear reasons (Umale 30). Omanis gave long answers with lots of reasons and polite words, which caused them to be misunderstood by the British as gushing and indulgent (Umale 34).

In the light of the above discussion, Omanis can avoid politeness errors through systematic pragmatic instruction of the speech act of refusal. It is necessary that Omani EFL students recognize that politeness markers in English are different from the ones employed in Arabic (Umale 34). Ultimately, it is crucial to present the norms for refusal in English to learn how native speakers perceive them.

3.2.4. Structures of American Refusals to Requests, Invitations, and Offers

As *carla.unm.edu* indicates, Americans frequently use excuses to express a refusal for a request. When refusing a request by a subordinate or a person of higher status, the American interlocutors first show a positive interest in the request (e.g., that sounds like a great idea) or would use gap fillers (e.g., uhh/well/oh/uhm). Then, they demonstrate regret, such as *I am sorry* or *unfortunately*. Towards the end, they would state an excuse (e.g., I have a commitment at that time). However, if the requester is of equal status to the person who is refusing, Americans do not usually express a positive attitude about the request, but they immediately apologize and then provide an excuse ("carla.unm.edu*"*).

When refusing an invitation in English, native speakers employ direct or indirect strategies depending on the socio-cultural factors surrounding the situation (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 167). One refusal structure that is common among North Americans includes three moves: opening, refusing, and closing. In the opening move, the person who is refusing may start with pause fillers (e.g., *well, oh, umm, uh*) and greet and thank the requester. Then, the refuser utilizes refusal strategies in the refusing move (e.g., *apology, reasons, and suggestions*). Finally, s/he closes the refusal with adjuncts and sending wishes. Nonnative speakers often use softened direct refusals, refusals that lack alternatives, fewer expressions to reduce the threat in the refusal, and an abrupt ending to the refusal (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 168; Archer 188). Felix-Barsdefer also explains that American refusers employ a *let the interlocutor off the hook* strategy (e.g., *never mind* or *don't worry about it*) when they decline an offer from a person who wants to pay for a broken vase, for instance ("carla.unm.edu*"*).

4. Adopted Method for Teaching Speech Acts: ESA

Engage, Study, and Activate (ESA) was derived from the Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) procedure. PPP was established to set language in situational contexts. In the presentation stage, students are introduced to the situation through stimuli (e.g., pictures, videos) that are relevant to the topic. The teacher also introduces the form and models the sentences. Then, the students start practicing through precise reproduction drilling techniques. However, the practice is placed in context rather being produced as merely repetitive drills. In the production stage, which is also called *immediate creativity,* the students generate their own new sentences in context using chunks and forms they studied in the presentation stage (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 64-65). For instance, students can write a conversation of a student requesting an extension for submitting her term paper from the teacher. However, educators in the 1990s claimed that PPP is excessively teacher-centered. It also restricts the students to following a conventional learning framework, which goes from "no knowledge, through highly restricted sentence-based utterance and on to immediate production" (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 66).

Accordingly, ESA, developed by Jeremy Harmer in 2007, became an eclectic method in which learners focus on grammatical forms and using language through communicative tasks and task-based procedures. It enables the students to use all that they know about the language albeit in a controlled practice. Nonetheless, ESA's eclecticism is not random but rather principled; although the students need to be exposed to language and use it communicatively, there still needs to be particular components for most sequenced teaching regardless of the allocated teaching time. In this model, the components are **Engage**, **Study**, and **Activate** respectively (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 51-52).

4.1. Engage

The Engage element of ESA is predominantly about emotionally involving the students in the lesson in order for them to experience an effective learning environment (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 52; Harmer, "The Practice of English" 66).The teacher should bring engaging activities such as games (considering learners' age), music, discussions, stimulating pictures, dramatic stories, amusing anecdotes, videos, and so forth to the classroom (Harmer 52). Students may also make predictions about the topic and associate the lesson to their own personal experiences in order to activate their background knowledge (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 52).

4.2. Study

Unlike the presentation and practice stages of PPP, the ESA study element does not merely focus on language construction and repetition (Harmer, "How to Teach English 52). In this move, students discover the construction of language forms and learn how to use their patterns accurately (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 54). It is based on "meaning-focused" tasks (Harmer," The Practice of English" 66). In that, the students learn the form, and how it can be used through noticing activities in communicative tasks, which are used to activate learners' background knowledge that is connected to real life and the outside world (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 66). These tasks raise students' desire to communicate, to focus on the content rather than the form, and to use variety of language (Harmer, "How to Teach English"70). Primarily, students may be exposed to discovery activities in model sentences, and then they work to discover the corresponding grammatical rules. They may also read a text and highlight the language they need to focus on later. Studying and practicing fixed phrases of language like inviting (e.g., ***would you like to*** *come to the cinema*) is a typical language area that

can be taught through the study stage (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 53

4.3. Activate

While the study stage focuses on language construction (i.e., accuracy and vocabulary use), the activate element concentrates on its communicative use. Students are encouraged to use and practice language as "freely and communicatively as they can as in Communicative Language Learning (CLT)" (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 53).They focus more on the message and the performance of a "rehearsal for the real world task" through debates or role-plays, and they are encouraged to work in groups, make presentations, and practice their language in an entertaining way (Harmer, "How to Teach English"53-55).

4.4. ESA's Model Sequences

ESA does not necessitate adhering to the Engage, Study, and Activate order respectively. This order could be altered depending on the lesson's objectives. If the lesson is task-based, the activate stage may precede the study stage. However, if the lesson is focused on grammar, it is preferable to start with the study stage (Harmer, "How to Teach English" 54). Changing the sequences of ESA along the course breaks the routine and helps keep students' motivated to learn. There are three model lesson sequences for ESA: (1) straight arrow procedure, (2) boomerang procedure, and (3) patchwork lessons (Harmer, "How to Teach English"54). Straight arrow model goes in a straight line: engage, study, and activate. Corresponding to PPP, this ESA procedure is effective for teaching the forms and structure of the sentences (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 67). Then, boomerang follows the EAS order, making it a more task-based approach. The students are first engaged in the lesson. Then, they are asked to do a productive or/and a communicative task such as writing, playing a game, or doing a role-play. Through their performance on the task, the teacher is able to learn about their needs. Thus, s/he focuses on the

parts in which students performed poorly in the study stage (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 67). Unlike the straight arrow lesson and boomerang, patchwork may follow multiple orders, such as EASA, EASASA, and ESAASA. For instance, the teacher first engages the students in the task, activates them, and then helps them study it. After that, the teacher could return to the activate part and then move on to engaging the students prior to making them study additional aspects of the lesson (Harmer, "The Practice of English" 67).Therefore, ESA works for teaching speech acts because it has been developed for teaching communicative skills. However, it accepts incorporating some explicit teaching in the study stage.

5. Strategies for Learning and Performing Speech Acts

When speech acts sound equivocal to learners, learners may utilize a number of strategies that would help them initially learn and perform speech acts. L2 Learners need to develop their meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies that would better assist them in learning L2, either independently or with an instructor. The metacognitive strategies are divided into three modes: (1) *planning* (choosing the appropriate pragmatic strategies, how to structure the discourse, and the time to employ them), (2) *monitoring* (examining their function throughout the process of implementing the act), and (3) *evaluating* (assessing the effectiveness of the selected strategies to deliver the act) (Cohen 234). For instance, if students are required to request an extension for a deadline, they first need to operate their meta-cognitive skills through planning how to do it, monitoring, and evaluating the process. Then, they will utter the speech act by relying on their cognitive skills to ascertain the suitable language materials (e.g., vocabulary, verb forms, and sentence structure). The use of both tactics may be concurrent. For example, the learner will monitor the process of his/her selection of the forms while constructing the appropriate speech act for the event (Cohen 228). Most importantly, monitoring is an essential meta-cognitive

strategy as it helps the learners avoid pragmatic failure; speakers need to monitor the pertinence

of various aspects when delivering the speech act: (1) the level of directness of the speech act

depending on the situation, (2) the certain titles to address the interlocutor, (3) the timing to carry

the speech act, (4) the structure of the used language, and (5) the cultural relevance for the

chosen strategies in the planning stage. For instance, should the learner address the university

chancellor by first name or with a title? How direct or indirect should the speaker be in refusing

the university chancellor's dinner invitation to honored students? Should s/he refuse formally or

informally by saying, for instance, *No way, man*? (Cohen 235).

Furthermore, Kasper summarizes from previous literature that in order for pragmatic

knowledge to be acquired in the EFL context, a number of conditions need to be provided for the

learners: appropriate input that has to be noticed through, for instance, explicit teaching,

conscious raising strategies, and communicative practice (148). Therefore, repetition of the

forms is a way to help students notice, promote fluency, and internalize what they have learned.

There will be pre-teaching of vocabulary and guiding questions to engage the students, to check

their background knowledge, and to incorporate their ideas into the topic. Students will be able

to detect the language (i.e., the vocabulary, forms, and structure) used to successfully perform

the speech act.

Students may also collect information about how a particular speech is performed in a

culture. For students, they may be exposed to a speech event in which they can write or discuss

the relevant speech act in their first language. This can be done through a DCT, where the

students are exposed to a situation to which they need to write or perform a speech act. Then,

they investigate the cultural means for performing the exact speech act in the L2 context. After

that, they study the strategies used to perform a particular speech and decide which of these

strategies work for the given event. For instance, they discuss with the teacher whether expressing regret or giving reasons works best for a refusal to an invitation in a particular context. Simultaneously, teachers should provide real exemplars of authentic dialogs to the students (Cohen 230-231).

After students have learned and recognized aspects of speech acts, they move to pragmatically practice these speech situations. It is useful that the students compile a notebook of the strategies and forms for performing the speech situations they have learned. Then, they can choose the suitable forms for the given scenarios. For practicing the speech acts, students may create dialogs and perform role-plays (Cohen 232). Finally, students should reflect on their performances and get feedback from each other or from competent L2 speakers (Cohen 234).

6. Assessing Pragmatic Ability

Assessing learners' pragmatic competence is crucial in language instruction, yet it is complex for several reasons. Native speakers of the target language have not formed a consensus about the pragmatic norms in their language, as these norms "are dynamic and vary across individuals" (Ishihara 209). Thus, what is unacceptable to some native speakers is perfectly appropriate to others. Such a fact influences the reliability of the pragmatic assessment. Besides, language learners sometimes deviate from the pragmatic use in the target language to maintain their identity, values, and personal beliefs (Ishihara 209). Another questioned aspect that might also influence the validity of the assessment is authenticity of the imagined pragmatic situation that students need to perform in order to demonstrate their pragmatic competence. Students sometimes have to perform actions they have never experienced in their real life (Ishihara 209).

When assessing the learners' ability of performing the speech acts, teachers' need to measure the learners' comprehension and production of the speech act. Learners' comprehension

is assessed through asking them to share their perspective on someone's pragmatic performance in a particular context. Given that, learners can watch video clips or read scripts of pragmatic situations to reflect on the appropriateness of the targeted pragmatic interaction. This can be achieved through giving short answers, completing rating scales, or giving open-ended comments. The learners' differing reflections may lead to a stimulating class discussion. On measuring the speech act production, students' performance in and out of the classroom can be evaluated. Given options of multiple role-play situations with time to warm up and rehearse, students can either record themselves performing role-plays outside of the classroom or perform them in class. Presumably, the evaluation is processed through assessment and self-assessment rubrics that focus on appropriate selection and use of the speech act; students' responses to a given situation in a role-play are usually assessed in (1) their ability to employ the relevant speech act, (2) the pertinence of the amount of speech and given details, and (3) the relevancy of the "level of formality, the directness, and the level of politeness" (Cohen 267-271).

7. Pedagogical Application for Making the Speech Acts of Request and Refusal: Unit Plan

7.1. Goals

Once teachers realize that their students in the EFL program lack some communication skills, they should develop a lesson plan unit for teaching the speech acts that meet the students' needs. This following lesson plan unit is a model to help teachers create their own lesson plans on speech acts that they can use to instruct their students. The audience of the unit is EFL students who need to communicate more effectively with their peers, teachers, co-workers, employers, other proficient nonnative speakers, and NES, for example.

The purpose of this unit is to help students become more aware of how differently speech acts could be performed across cultures, i.e. Arab and American cultures in this context. It is also

aimed at enhancing EFL students' communicative skills through raising and developing the appropriateness and politeness of learners' use of speech acts (requests and refusals in this paper) in the target language. Consequently, students' speaking accuracy and fluency in requesting and refusing will improve.

Hence, the lessons' activities will inform learners about how to request and refuse in English for different situations through applying ESA method procedures. Learners will be introduced to the speech acts by studying and internalizing them. Finally, they will produce them in different contexts. They will also have opportunities to reflect and give feedback on their performances.

7.2. Class and Student Description

I used to teach EFL college level students in a foundation program at a private college in Oman. When the students first joined the program, they had little or no language skills although they had studied English for almost twelve years in the public schools. The students' native language was Arabic, and their communicative skills were considerably below satisfactory as their level of proficiency is low-intermediate. Thus, they relied heavily on their native language when they communicated in English. When employing the speech acts of requests or refusals, my students sounded rude and forceful to proficient speakers and NEs.

Based on my teaching experience, this lesson plan unit is tailored for high intermediate to advanced university-bound EFL Omani students in the speaking and listening course, where there is an ample focus on students' oral production. By this level, students are expected to express themselves effectively, interacting well with others and exchanging ideas. They have been given opportunities to speak in the class, their vocabulary repertoire is more developed, and their amount of exposure to language should be high; the students know how to form sentences

and write paragraphs. They should also be able to solve grammar issues because they have received instruction on basic grammar rules; tenses (past, present, future with all their forms); modal auxiliaries (e.g., will, would, can, could, should); and the verb *to be* with its forms and uses (are, is, am). Additionally, they are more comfortable in conversing with their peers for they are being taught to be able to use English in conversations that mimic real world contexts. Although they have had little focus and awareness about the cross-cultural differences in speech acts of requesting and refusing, they had recently worked on greeting and thanking.

The EFL teachers come from different nationalities including American, British, Indian, and mostly Omanis. The teacher for this unit plan teaches the forms largely explicitly, yet s/he gives the students a more active role in learning and allows for ample communicative language use.

This EFL class has between eighteen and nineteen years old of mixed gender Omani students. They are not encouraged to use the native language (Arabic) in the classrooms unless it is urgently needed to explicate some complicated words or expressions. These EFLs had not been in mixed gender school settings until they were in college, so their culture and preferences should be considered when designing group activities.

In this paper, I am going to adapt and design speech act activities for a ten hour lesson plan unit to be taught in the EFL listening and speaking Omani class for two consecutive weeks. The unit is divided into two lesson packets: requests and refusals. Each packet is taught throughout five lessons (sixty minutes each lesson, five times a week). The two packets include the lesson plans' objectives, required materials, procedures, and evaluation. One extra eleventh hour is added to this unit for assessing students' performance in requesting and refusing.

7.3. Aids and Materials

The class is equipped with a projector in order to display videos, images, or PowerPoint as well as a whiteboard, flash-cards, and flip-charts. Also, the chair arrangement is changed frequently; students sit in equal groups or in pairs. Girls rarely mix with the boys' groups because both parties do not feel comfortable working with each other in projects; however, they agree to read dialogs together in class.

Including authentic tasks is vitally important when teaching speech acts because authentic materials are meaningful, and they present engaging activities that mimic real-world context (O'Malley and Pierce 5). Hence, authentic caricature, drawn especially for the Omani context by my classmates David Recine at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and Eman Al-Kalbani at the Ministry of Education-Oman, will be supplemented as scaffolding for the in class-activities, for exercises, and for homework. The unit plan also uses authentic conversations, written especially for the purpose of this paper by a native-speaking language instructor of English, Melissa Bodola who has lived and taught in Oman for four years in the foundation program at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU). The scripts with the caricature are made available in handouts for student use. In addition, students need more scaffolding (e.g., vocabulary and sentence forms) to develop and understand the complexity of requesting and refusing, and to help shift between their direct/indirect requests as well as soften their speech, i.e., make it more polite. Thus, learners will be provided with handouts of pertinent vocabulary of strategies and phrases. The author of this paper has designed all pre-reading and post-reading questions, and activities and handouts.

7.4. Evaluation

Homework assignments and in-class activities (e.g., cloze-type, open-ended comments, discourse completion tasks, role-plays, and real life conversations) for assessing students' comprehension and performance will be used throughout or at the end of the sessions. Moreover, the students will be asked to perform speech acts and will be given a final oral quiz in order to assess whether they have recognized the use of speech acts in various contexts.

7.5. Packet One: Making Requests (Day(s) 1-5)

Aims:

The lesson unit packet is aimed at (1) raising students' awareness about the speech act of request, (2) identifying requests, (3) realizing softeners, polite and impolite, and direct/indirect requests, and (4) performing requests after internalizing them; (e.g., "(see Appendix E, chart 1), which demonstrates the objectives of the request lessons, the method implemented to achieve these objectives, and an adopted module to exemplify one pattern of requesting. During these five-hour sessions, students will learn how to structure requests. They will learn about different forms of requesting, and practice making requests in different academic, workplace, and informal settings. After the five lessons, students should be able to communicate polite requests, directly and indirectly in appropriate given contexts.

Day One (1): Learning and Raising Awareness about Requests

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate that there are different ways to ask for the same thing.

- Students will differentiate between bad and good requests from their own prior background in given contexts.

- Students will express basic polite requests with *modal auxiliaries* and *request softeners* *(please, excuse me)* in different contexts.

Materials: Two boxes, paper, a whiteboard, markers, Handout One (1).

Procedures: AESA: Patchwork

Introduction: 5 minutes

First, the teacher greets the students and takes attendance. Then, s/he asks the students if they know what the word *request* means and ensures that they understand its meaning. The teacher begins the lesson by explaining to the students that in our daily routine we employ language to request, refuse, and apologize, but these actions are perceived differently across cultures depending on the situation and relationships between the speakers (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 168). The teacher will also tell the students that they are going to learn about and practice how to ask for things (request) in English in particular contexts.

Activate: Learning about Students' Background Knowledge in Requesting (10 minutes)

The teacher starts with the activate procedure of ESA to activate students' prior knowledge about how to make requests. The teacher divides the students into five groups. The students are given a situation for which they need to form requests. The teacher will give the students time to individually form as many ways to request as they can think of for the given situation. Then, s/he puts two boxes on the table; one box is for the requests the students think are bad, and the other box is for the ones they think are good. The teacher writes on the board the following situation for which the students need to form requests.

It's the beginning of the school year. You need to collect your course books from your assigned teacher. You walk to the teacher's office to get your books. How are you going to ask her to give you your books? Write as many ways to ask her as you can think of.

The students will have two minutes to write their requests down and one minute to categorize them as good or bad ones. They should also think of reasons why they sorted them in this way. The teacher will pick good and the bad requests from the boxes and write them on the board. At this stage, the students will negotiate their reasoning in groups while the teacher is writing the divided requests on the board in the format below.

Good	Bad
Why?	Why?

Based on the students' answers and explanations as to why they think some of the requests are better than the others, the teacher should elicit and highlight the polite softeners, modification devices, and modals, as words that help make a nice request. S/he writes them on the board. If the students say, "Can you give me my books, please?" the teacher should highlight *can* and *please* as phrases that help make the request sound more polite. The teacher should also highlight that asking in the imperative sounds more like a command than a request.

Engage: **Reading a Dialog and Post-Reading Discussion (15 minutes)**

As the instructor is working on increasing the students' noticing and awareness, s/he distributes handout one to the students; (see Appendix A, Handout 1|). It contains a written conversation between three people, post-reading questions, common request phrases, and the

homework assignment. The teacher first asks the students to read the conversation in pairs while s/he is circulating around the class for help. Then, s/he asks them about the place and speakers of the conversation, Omar and Anessa. They are a couple ordering food from a server at a restaurant around dinnertime.

After that, the instructor models the conversation with a student while the other students listen. The conversation comes with some post-reading discussion questions the students need to answer when they are done reading. Following that, the teacher discusses the answers to the questions with the students and elicits from them all utterances of requesting used in the conversation, which are going to be listed on the board.

Study: Explicit Instruction (20 minutes)

The teacher introduces students to the study stage by first pre-teaching some important vocabulary words which are going to be used throughout this packet as well as the refusal packet. The words are: *polite*, *impolite*, *direct*, and *indirect***.** After the teacher has written the request forms used in the conversation on the board, s/he explicitly explains how the request form is constructed. The teacher emphasizes the different patterns of the polite request forms; using modals such as *can*, *could*, or *would* with *excuse me* or *please*, for instance, makes the requests polite. The teacher uses drilling, repetition, and examples to make sure that the students understand the patterns of the requests. For example, the teacher explains that *–ing* is added to the verb when it comes after *would you mind*. Examples of the forms are brought from the conversation at the restaurant. The two tables below present the request used in the conversation and the patterns for the request forms.

- Omar: <u>Could we</u> move over to a quieter place<u>, please</u>?

- Server: <u>Do you mind </u>sitting near the register?

- Omar: <u>Do you think you could</u> bring us the dessert menu, <u>please</u>?

- Aneesa: <u>Could you </u>tell me what the special dessert for today is?

- Aneesa: <u>Could you </u>tell me about the spices? I am allergic to cinnamon

- Server: <u>Would you like to</u> try a pecan pie?

- Aneesa: <u>Can we</u> have a couple of minutes to think?

Could/ Can + (Subject or subject pronounced)+ (base form of the verb)+ complete thought?

Would + Subject+ base form+ infinitive (to +verb) + complete thought?

Do you mind+ (verb+ing)+ complete thought?

Do you think you could+ (base form of the verb) + complete thought?

Activate: Making Simple Requests (10 minutes)

Students will work in pairs to ask each other politely about lending items in the class. The pairs will be divided into student A and student B. Student A has a flash card of the items and useful request phrases to help him/her request while student B has a flash card of possible ways to answer the request. Then, they swap the cards between them. Each two pairs will have ten minutes to write down three requests, which are accepted. Then, they will practice their requests

together and in front of their classmates. Meanwhile, the teacher circulates around the pairs for checking their performances; (see Appendix A, handout 1, activity 2). This activity is inspired by Holmes (1-17); and Canadian Language Benchmarks (1-9).

Assessment and Homework:

The teacher will revise the students' formed requests and write feedback on the construction. In this section, the teacher should only consider whether the students used modal verbs (can, could, would), and (please, possibly, excuse me) when they requested things from their classmates. For homework, students are going to individually rearrange scrambled forms of requests. The students are also given two pictures, for which they need to form requests using the rearranged forms; (see Appendix A, handout (1), assessment and homework).

Day Two (2): Direct and Indirect Requests and Request Situation Characteristics

Objectives:

- Students will differentiate between direct and indirect requests.
- Students will identify different variables of a request situation that shape the type of request.
- Students will be identify requests in different request situations

Materials: whiteboard, Handout Two (2)

Procedures: ESA: Straight Arrow

Engage: Role-Playing a Conversation and Discussing Post-Reading Questions (20 minutes)

The teacher distributes handout two (2) to students. For the engaging task, the teacher divides the class into groups of five and asks them to role-play a conversation in their groups. The conversation is about three students in the university cafeteria at their language center. They are standing really close to each other in a line, and their female teacher comes in, but there is nowhere for her to stand

and order. She is in a rush to her class and wants to buy a bottle of water, but they are blocking her way. All the groups role-play the conversation. Then, the teacher asks a group to act it out in front of the class. After that, the students discuss post-reading questions with their groups and the teacher to be more engaged in the topic; (see Handout (1), activity (2)). Each group is asked to answer the questions and discuss some of them with the rest of the class.

Study: Identifying Aspects of a Request Situation (20 minutes)

The students are going to learn about different types of direct and indirect requests. The teacher elicits the types of direct and indirect requests from the students' answers in the engaging stage. Then, s/he explicitly explains that the imperative (e.g., carry ten books) is a direct request and elicits more from the students. Then, s/he points at the indirect requests with the students and highlights how different they are from their direct counterparts. The teacher should also emphasize that indirect requests sound more polite if the situation requires politeness. If the interlocutor is very rude and s/he intends to do something dangerous and unacceptable despite advice and prior notice, a direct request in the imperative is usually used. Following that, the teacher accentuates the fact that a type of request, either direct or indirect and polite or impolite, is selected according to particular characteristics that surround the request situation.

Activate: Identifying Levels of Formality and Aspects of Request Characteristics (20mins)

The teacher divides the students into four groups and numbers them from one to four. Then, s/he gives the students four conversations that occur in multiple contexts of formality and politeness. In groups, the students are going to read and order the conversations from most formal to most informal settings. After that, each group will work more on the conversation that holds the number corresponding to the group's number. The conversations are placed inside a table with dotted lines,

making it easy for the teacher to cut and distribute them to students. Students work on completing this activity during class time or do it as a homework assignment.

Assessment and Homework

Activity three in the handout assesses whether the students can identify the level of formality of a request conversation and forms, and whether they can recognize the aspects of a request situation. The homework assignment is adapted from Eslami and Mcleod (27). Individually, the students will watch their favorite movies, T.V shows, or dramas in order to identify three requests. They can also read an article online or in printed magazines to find requests. Then, they should identify the request characteristics: the type of request (direct or indirect), setting, social status, distance between the requester and interlocutor, and level of formality in the situation.

Day Three (3): R**ecognizing Politeness and Increasing the Degree of Politeness**

Objectives:

- Students will rank requests from least to most polite in provided contexts.

- Students will increase the politeness of their requests in conversations through adding softeners and modification devices in communicative contexts.

Materials: flip chart, Handout Three (3)

Procedures: ESA: Straight Arrow

Engage: **Recognizing Politeness Degree (10 minutes)**

After greeting the students and taking the roll, the teacher collects the homework and distributes Handout Three (3) to the students. First, students look at a sequence of four pictures that resemble the politeness degree in the same request from plain informal to softened polite requests. After the students discuss the pictures and answer the questions in pairs, the teacher discusses them with the whole class as well. The sequence of the pictures demonstrates to

students how politeness in one request can be increased through adding softeners; (see Appendix A, Handout (3), Activity (1)).

Study: Learning How to Soften Requests (25 minutes)

The teacher writes all four requests written on the picture in a flip chart. Then, s/he elicits answers from students about what made each request more polite than the previous one. Based on the students' answers, the teacher asks students to underline the words that softened the requests, which are *can, could, do you think, and perhaps*, from the pictures. Then, s/he explicitly emphasizes that to increase the politeness degree in requests, one should use *can, could,* or *would* respectively as using *would* sounds more polite than *can*. Next, the instructor draws two columns on another page of the flip chart for polite and impolite requests. S/he writes polite request strategies with examples. S/he emphasizes that the more a person uses softeners (e.g., modal verbs), hesitation markers (perhaps, possibly, probably), openers (e.g., do you think, would you mind), and *please* and *excuse me*, the politer the requests tends to be. On the other column, the teacher elicits answers from the students about requests, students think, seem impolite. Then, s/he adds that using obligations, performatives, and imperatives resemble an impolite request. Following that, the teacher starts adding and eliciting examples of polite and impolite requests to the two categories; for examples of modification devices, and strategies of polite/ impolite and direct/ and indirect requests in English, (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 2)") and (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 3)"). The teacher should distribute these tables to students because the focus on this stage is on the forms of the requests.

Activate: Identifying and Role-Playing Polite and Impolite Requests (25 minutes)

The activate part is divided into two activities: first, students are given a written dialog between two roommates (neat and messy). In pairs, students underline all forms of request used

in the dialog. Then, they classify them into polite and impolite and explain their reasoning for such a classification. The students practice and role-play the dialog in pairs while the teacher circulates through the room for assistance. After that, each pair should write a short conversation using polite and impolite requests by showing an increase in the degree of politeness. Finally, the students check their conversations with the teacher and go home to role-play and record them. This way, the students get more opportunities to produce and perform what they have learned. The teacher should focus on the usage of the forms and the tone when s/he is evaluating the recording.

Assessment and Homework:

The teacher asks the students to hand in their answers for activity 3 in order to check if the students have been able to make requests and show gradation. The teacher should focus on whether the students have used, for example, softeners, hesitation markers, openers, and *please* and *excuse me* in their requests or not. Then, the students are given four pictures for homework. They should choose two pictures and write four request forms for the same situation to demonstrate the politeness degree from least polite to more polite. Students should also write the factors that make them decide on the level of politeness for the speech situation. For instance, they should specify the social status for the speakers in the conversation, the place of the conversation, etc. Finally, they should record their requests and email them to the teacher, which will help the teacher to assess the students' understanding of raising the politeness degree and will preserve students' recordings as a record for progress and future reference.

Day Four (4): Appropriateness in Requests

Objectives:

- Students will identify inappropriate requests in given situations.

- Students will categorize requests into polite, impolite, and inappropriate requests with settings provided.

- Students will produce appropriate requests for given situations in context

  Materials: Handout Four (4), whiteboard

  Procedures: ESAA: Boomerang

  Engage: Recognizing Appropriateness and Inappropriateness in Requesting (15 minutes)

    After greeting the students and taking attendance, the teacher collects the homework of the previous class from the students. S/he should take five minutes to review the homework and discuss the answers with the students. Then, s/he distributes Handout Four (4) to each student, divides the students into four groups, and numbers the groups from one to four. There are four pictures in activity 1 in the handout. Each group studies and talks about the picture that corresponds to the group's number. In groups, the students answer the questions about the picture and determine how inappropriate the revealed request is. Then, they share their answers with the rest of the class.

  Study: Learning about Inappropriate Requests (15 minutes)

    The teacher discusses with students that a request is inappropriate when it is (1) too direct and it lacks softeners (e.g., *show me my grades*), (2) it is inappropriately polite for the situation (e.g., *emergency situation*), (4) or it is impolite and cannot be asked firsthand (e.g., *asking a stranger for personal information*). In this way, students consider the social distance (family, close friend, colleague, acquaintance, and stranger) between the speakers. Then, the teacher elicits answers from the students about inappropriate requests in the four pictures and writes them on the board. S/he discusses the factors

behind the inappropriateness of these requests with the students and categorizes them into modifiable requests and irrelevant requests, which should not be produced. Requests in pictures 1 and 2 should not be asked while the ones in pictures 3 and 4 can be modified in order to sound appropriate for the situation or to be more polite. For instance, having looked at picture 3, one knows that employing a long polite request in an emergency situation is inappropriate. Hence, students are going to learn about appropriateness of a request depending on the situation. In this situation, it suffices to say *I need to leave now. My mother has passed out!* The teacher works with the students on modifying all the requests in the pictures.

Activate: Categorizing Requests into Polite, Impolite, and Inappropriate (15 minutes)

The activate procedure includes two sections: (1) classifying and modifying requests, and (2) role playing an inappropriate request. First, in pairs, the students are provided with a card of requests in order to categorize them into polite, impolite, and inappropriate ones. Following that, the students are going to modify the impolite requests to polite ones or the inappropriate requests that can be adjusted to sound appropriate; (see Handout (4), Activity (3-A)). Meanwhile, the teacher circulates through the pairs and offers assistance. Afterwards, they share their answers in class.

Activate: Role-Playing and Modifying an Inappropriate Request (15 minutes)

In the second activate section, the teacher divides the students into groups and asks them to think of an irrelevant request that they encountered or imposed in real life. Learners should consider particular points before role-playing it; (see Handout (4), Activity (3-B)).

Assessment and Homework:

Each student is presented with four pictures for which s/he needs to match the type of inappropriate request to the picture, to identify the request situation and the social distance between the speakers, and to modify the request to sound more polite or appropriate for the situation, is possible.

Day Five (5): Request Module in a Formal Setting

Objectives:

- Students will identify the steps for a request module in a formal situation.

- Students will perform a request following the request module they have learned.

- Students will identify request strategies used in a formal request.

Materials: white board, flip charts, Handout Five (5)

Procedure: EASA: Patchwork

Engage: Recognizing the Request Module (10 minutes)

After greeting the students and taking roll, the teacher discusses the homework with them and collects it for assessment. Then, s/he distributes Handout Five (5) to each one. Working in pairs, the students act out the conversation in activity one (1) while the teacher circulates through the pairs for assistance and encouragement. The teacher tells the students that they are going to learn about one module of requesting in a formal setting. It will be helpful for them to learn it because they can follow it when they request different things, especially requesting something from a person of a higher status in a formal setting.

Activate: Discussing Questions about the Conversation (10 minutes)

In this stage, the students discuss questions related to the conversation. Their answers are based on their background knowledge and understanding of the topics taught in the previous

lessons. The teacher does not have to discuss all the answers of the questions with the students as this stage is just for the students to share their opinions.

Study: Learning about the Request Module Moves (20 minutes)

The teacher lists on the board the steps in the request module, which are used in the conversation; these steps, as mentioned in the literature review, are (1) opening the interaction, (2) making the request and obtaining the response, and (3) closing the interaction. After the teacher introduces the three steps, s/he asks the students about what they think each step includes and elicits answers from students of examples from the conversation that resemble these steps. Following that, the students write the steps and the examples in their handouts. For example phrases for each step in the request module, (e.g., "(see Appendix D, table 4)"). The teacher should share the table with the students by handing out copies or sharing it on the computer.

Activate: Working on a Jigsaw to Order the Three Request Moves   (20 minutes)

The teacher divides the students into five groups. Then, s/he explains to them that they will work on a jigsaw of a conversation, which is happening between a student and a professor at the university. The student is requesting an extension of the presentation date. The teacher makes five copies of the conversation in the table below, cuts it into six pieces and gives them to each group in order to put the scrambled pieces into the correct order. When the group is done, someone should say *bingo*.

Mahmoud: Prof. Melissa, this is Ali from your speaking class. Ahmed said you were holding office hours now.
Prof: Yes, that's true! Please, come on in.
Mahmoud: Ok, I will be brief.

Prof: Go ahead.

Mahmoud: So, I have been preparing for our presentation next week.

Prof: Ok, so how is it going?

Mahmoud: Oh, to be honest, I am experiencing some challenges.

Prof: Did not you follow the class plan and make your outline?

Mahmoud: Yes, well, I did all of that, but I am not ready to speak in front of all of the class yet. You see, I feel I don't have enough time to practice saying all of the words.

Prof: Ah, but whose responsibility is it to practice, and why did you wait so long to ask for help?

Mahmoud: it's my first time to do a presentation, and I didn't judge my time correctly. Just for this presentation please, could I have an extension?

Prof: Because it is the first time, I will honor your request. Now, I want to see your outline and the words you want to practice.

Mahmoud: Thank you for supporting me. I promise I will not do this again.

When the students are finished with ordering the conversation, they should answer some questions found in Handout Five, Activity 3.

Assessment and Homework:

The teacher assesses the students' recognition of the steps of the request module in a formal context through having them order the steps in the jigsaw exercise. Then, s/he assesses the students' ability to perform this request module through the homework assignment. For

homework, students work in pairs to create a conversation in which the request module procedures are used. Then, they have to videotape themselves performing the conversation. They have to submit the script of the conversation along with the video. The teacher should assess the students' ability (1) to use polite requests in this formal setting, (2) to obtain the request module moves with clear examples, (3) to keep the conversation formal and polite. The more polite the phrases used in the conversation are, the better the conversation is conveyed. The teacher should make it clear to the learners that they will be graded in achieving the previous points and submitting the script and video on time.

7.6. Packet Two: Making Refusals (Day(s) 1-5)

The goals of the refusal lesson plans are similar to those in the request lesson plans; they are aimed at helping raise learners' awareness about refusal strategies and assisting them in learning how to structure refusals for different contexts. Therefore, the refusal packet focuses on a four category model that is adopted from Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig (169-170): (1) raising awareness about refusals across-cultures, (2) learning the structure of refusals, (3) identifying refusal strategies and recognizing their softeners, and (4) performing refusals. In other words, throughout this packet, learners should have opportunities for conscious learning and interaction, noticing, identifying, internalizing, and producing refusal strategies in English; (See Appendix F, Chart 2).

Day One (1): Raising Awareness about Refusing in English.

Objectives:

- Students will identify refusal strategies in conversations.

- Students will differentiate refusal strategies from other statements and utterances.

- Students will demonstrate that there are various ways to refuse for the same situation.

Materials: YouTube video clip: "Three Ways to Say No Nicely," Handout One (1), yellow sticky notes, whiteboard

Procedures: EESA: Patchwork

Engage: Sharing Different Ways to Refuse in the Same Situation (15 minutes)

The teacher tells the students that they are starting the second packet of speech acts, making refusals. The teacher pairs the students up and gives each student Handout One (1). Then, s/he gives the learners a scenario for which they need to refuse. S/he also distributes yellow sticky notes for each two students. Students are free to write as many refusal expressions as they can in their sticky notes. Then, they post their notes on the wall. After that, they go over all the posted answers by their classmates and choose the most appealing refusal to them. Students are not allowed to choose their own refusals. Following that, each pair justifies why they think it is the best refusal to the school principal's request. The teacher should not choose the best answer or impose his/her opinion at this stage because this task is part of the process of raising students' awareness that there are various ways to refuse in the same situation. This activity is time for students to give feedback and share background knowledge.

Engage: Learning That There are Different Ways to Say No (15 minutes)

In the other engaging task, students are given a think-pair-share activity about a YouTube video entitled "Three Ways to Say No Nicely." The video takes three minutes and forty-nine seconds. In pairs, the students first do some discussion questions before watching the video. Then, they watch the video to answer some follow-up questions about it. The video introduces different strategies to refuse, it is used to raise students' awareness that there are multiple ways to refuse. It also gives the students the opportunity to share their experiences about the difficulty of refusing and about the people to whom they usually say no. The speaker on the video

suggested different ways to say *No* nicely, which included *compliment plus No*, *empathy plus No, putting oneself into others shoes*, *choosing to say No*, and *guilt-free yes*.

Study: Studying Refusal Strategies   (15 minutes)

At this stage, the teacher lists some strategies one could use to refuse. S/he elicits answers from the students starting with direct strategies, such as *No, I cannot* and *No, leave my book*. The teacher also emphasizes that there are direct and indirect, and polite and impolite refusal strategies. The person who is refusing chooses the right strategies based on considering the refusal characteristics. Examples of refusal strategies are found in Appendix E.

Activate: Recognizing Polite and Impolite Refusals (15 minutes)

The students have two conversations for the same request situation. However, the refusal strategies are distinct, which the students have to identify. The students also discuss how the two refusals are different and will talk about and write their preferences; (See Appendix B, Handout (1), Activity 3).

Assessment and Homework:

The homework in Handout One (1) assesses if the students can identify refusal strategies and expressions and differentiate them from other utterances. They have to choose four refusal strategies from a box to match them with a given picture for a situation.

Day Two (2): Learning about Different Refusal Strategies

Objectives:

- Students will identify different refusal strategies in context.

- Students will make predictions about pictures targeting refusals.

- Students will describe a refusal event in the form of conversation.

Materials: whiteboard, Handout Two (2), flip charts

Procedures: EESA**:** Patchwork

Engage: Predicting the Story   (10 minutes)

The teacher divides the students into five stations. The teacher shows the students the picture they are to describe, predict the events and the speakers of its situation, and predict the refusal that represent it. The teacher elicits answers from the students through asking them some *Wh*-questions (e.g., what can you see in the picture? Where are the speakers? What are the speakers talking about? Who do you think is the requester, and who is going to refuse? Can you make a scenario about this situation including refusals?). The students will write their own short refusal dialog about the picture.

Engage: A Strip Story (10 minutes)

A strip story is an excellent game to keep the students engaged, sequence events, and practice speech acts (Eric Prochaska 1). After the students have shared their predictions and have written their own original dialogs about the picture, each group is provided with cut strips of the real conversation. The students order the strips to make the conversation. Then, they compare their dialogs and the refusals they used with the dialog given by the teacher which will help them to notice how they could improve their refusal strategies or even make a refusal. The teacher needs to ensure that each student has one strip or two strips only in order to avoid confusing the learners. Following that, s/he gives each two students a copy of the dialog and asks them to practice reading it and find its refusal strategies. The table below displays the dialog.

Salah: Hi Ghanim, are you busy right now?
Abdullah: Not really, but I have a class in an hour.
Salah: Can you help me record my story on Wednesday for the speaking class?

Abdullah: You said Wednesday?

Salah: Yes!

Abdullah: Gee! I am not sure I can do it. I realize you need a partner to record the story with you, but I have a soccer tournament on Wednesday!

Salah: Oh! Bummer!

Abdullah: I know! Why don't you ask Ali? I know he is looking for someone to record the story with him. Also, he is usually free on Wednesdays. I am sorry I can't help you.

Salah: Oh! It's really okay. I will ask Ali to do it with me then. Thanks Abdullah.

Abdullah: No problem. Good luck with your project!

Salah: Thanks! Good luck at the soccer tournament, too!

Abdullah: You can come watch it on Wednesday if you wish? I can get you a ticket.

Salah: Oh! Unfortunately, I can't make it. I will have to record the story on Wednesday. Thanks for the offer though.

Abdullah: yeah! I forgot about that. You are welcome. Anytime.

Study: Learning about Refusal Strategies (25 minutes)

In this stage, the teacher explains how the person who was refusing to record the story developed his refusal by emphasizing some phrases that help make the entire refusal. Given that, the students will learn that a refusal for one situation may constitute more than one refusal

strategy. The refusal strategies used in the previous conversation are as follows: request for clarification (*You said Wednesday?),* hedging (*I am not sure I can do it*), showing empathy (*I realize you need a partner*), giving reasons (*but I have a soccer tournament on Wednesday*!), giving alternatives (*Why don't you ask Ali? I know he is looking for someone to record the story with him. Also, he is usually free on Wednesdays*), expression of regret (*I'm sorry I can't help you*). The students can follow this order to make their own refusals, or they can shift the order as long as they express regret and give excuses. On the board or on a flip chart, the teacher lists some refusal strategies that the students will be exposed to in context in the activate section. The teacher writes the strategies with examples from Appendix B. The strategies introduced in this lesson are (1) *direct short refusal- not softened*, (2) *direct refusal- softened,*(3) *giving a reason* or *explanation, (4) offering an alternative*, (5) *letting the interlocutor off the hook*, (6) *consideration of the speaker's (e.g., requester) feelings- empathy,*(7) *statement of regret,*(8) *wish,*(9) *pause fillers*, and (10) *avoidance- request for additional information*. The rest of the strategies are going to be explained in lesson three.

Activate: Practicing Conversations and Identifying Request Strategies (15 minutes)

studying the ideas in "I'm Sorry- Can I think About It? The Negotiation of Refusals in Academic and Nonacademic Contexts" by Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harilg, I have adopted the exercise on page 174 as an activity to assist the students who are following this lesson in recognizing refusal strategies. The students work in five stations; each station takes one conversation to work on, and each two students in the same station practice reading the conversation. Then, they all answer the questions together as a group. Students need to find examples for the refusal strategies provided in the table (Appendix B, Handout 2, Activity 3). They also have to find the setting and the social status and distance of the speakers. Answers on

the table about the examples are provided for the teacher in Handout 2. The teacher should ensure that s/he removes them from the students' handouts prior to distribution.

Assessment and Homework:

The students are going to individually write about a real refusal experience that happened to them, including how they dealt with it and how they managed to refuse without offending their interlocutors. They should also draw a picture that will help the reader better imagine the situation of the story. Next, they work in pairs to write a conversation about a provided picture in the homework, record it, and then send it to the teacher's email. The students are assessed if they employed the refusal strategies they have learned appropriately. Order is not important at present because they will learn to order their refusal strategies according to the type of refusal in the subsequent lessons.

Day Three (3): Direct and Indirect Refusals

Objectives:

- Students will identify more refusal strategies in given contexts.

- Students will distinguish between direct and indirect refusals in conversations.

- Students will create direct and indirect refusals for the appropriate situations.

- Students will rank refusals from least to most polite in provided contexts.

Materials: Handout Three (3), pictures, conversations

Procedures: ASEA: Patchwork

Engage: Identifying Refusal Characteristics (10 minutes)

In groups, students are provided with four pictures for which they need to guess whether the refusals are going to be rude or not by studying the facial expressions of the respondents (the

people who refuse), identifying their social status and relationships to each other; (see Appendix B, Handout 3, activity 1).

Activate: Writing a Refusal Dialog (10 minutes)

The students' background knowledge will be activated by making pairs of students write direct and indirect refusals about the pictures they just discussed in the previous activity. However, students are not penalized for mixing refusals and are not being evaluated at this stage.

Study: Learning about More Refusal Strategies (15 minutes)

The teacher writes examples of refusal strategies on a table on the board and asks students for more examples as well. Later, the teacher elicits from students more examples for these refusal strategies from the dialogs.

You said Wednesday?	Avoidance- Repetition of part of the request
Do you want to go help me in the garage? Give me some time to think about it!	Avoidance- postponement
Can you tell more about the changes you will make?	Avoidance- request for clarification

Engage: Matching Pictures with Their Corresponding Conversations (10 minutes)

In pairs, students read all the conversations and match them with the pictures; (see Appendix B, Handout 3, activity 4).

Activate: Discussing Questions about the Conversations (15 minutes)

In this procedure, the teacher assigns each pair of students one conversation to answer

questions about it in Activity 4 of Handout 3. Following that, students will share their answers with the teacher and the rest of the class.

Assessment and Homework:

For homework, the students are going to individually write conversations for provided scenarios. They need to include as many appropriate refusal strategies for the situation as they could. Then, they rank them from most to least appropriate strategies. Moreover, learners are given three pictures of refusal strategies that show the politeness degree of a refusal. The pictures need to be ordered from least to most polite refusals. Then, they have to identify the refusal strategies used in each picture; (See Appendix B, Handout 3, Homework).

Day Four (4): Refusal Models (Refusing Requests and Refusing Offers)

Objectives:

- Students will refuse requests given by a person in a position of either higher or lower authority to them, through using the three moves of refusing requests.

- Students refuse requests to persons of equal status to them in conversations.

- Students refuse offers using *letting the interlocutor off the hook* strategy to refuse offers in given situations.

- Students negotiate their refusals and give reasons for their denials through conversations.

- Students will soften their refusals (communicate their refusals in a polite and refined manner) in contexts.

- Students will role-play their refusals in conversations.

Materials: Handout Four (4), whiteboard

Procedures: ESA: Straight Arrow

Engage: Discovering the Refusal Model to Requests (10 minutes)

In this class, the students are going to learn particular refusal model for refusing requests from equal and lower/higher status requesters, and for refusing offers. During this stage, the teacher divides the students into groups of four and gives them Handout Four (4). The students read two refusal dialogs and act them out in pairs within the original group of four. Following this interactive engagement, the students are requested to discuss the post-reading questions pertaining to the dialogs. The questions are designed to facilitate the students in predicting and distinguishing the steps in the model used to refuse requests, depending on the relationship between the speakers and their social status.

Study: Learning about Refusing a Request Moves (10 minutes)

The teacher discusses the post-dialog questions with the groups and encourages them to share their ideas about how the refusal model was constructed. The teacher elicits answers from the students about the refusal model and compares them to what s/he has. S/he then points out the three moves used to refuse a request with the students and draws a table on the board to demonstrate the steps in an organized manner. The students copy the steps with the examples from the dialog. At that point, s/he asks them to highlight the phrases one can use to decline a request. After that, students identify the paradigm of the refusal that was followed to decline the request. The teacher should seize an opportunity during this discussion to discuss the different steps used to refuse the request with the students to enforce the process. The teacher should stress the fact that the individual refusing the request has to provide reasons as to why the request is turned down.

When refusing a request to a lower or higher status requester, North Americans maintain the three moves shown in the table below. However, when the requester and the respondent (the

person who refuses the request) are of equal status, North Americans usually skip step one, which is demonstrating a positive interest in the request or using gap fillers. However, it does not necessarily mean that this step is uncommon between equal status requesters and respondents.

Refusing a request coming from an individual with a lower or higher status		
Step 1: Positive interest in the request or gap fillers	Step 2: regret	Step 3: excuses
Ex: That sounds great! It sounds lots of fun/amazing	Ex: Unfortunately. I am sorry	Ex: I need to study on that day

Activate: Practicing a Refusal-to- Request Model (15 minutes)

After the students have learned the different strategies and steps to form the refusal model for requests in the appropriate contexts, they have the opportunity to practice them in created conversations. However, they have to first do a gap fill exercise to ensure that they have internalized the correct structure. The students individually fill in the blanks of a conversation with the refusal model steps to requests. Then, they work in pairs to create and role-play their own dialogs by applying these steps and considering the relationship between the speakers.

Part B: Refusing Offers

Engage: Reading and Discussing Questions about a Conversation (7 minutes)

The students are provided with a conversation (Appendix B, Handout (4), Part B, Activity (4)) and are asked to read and discuss the questions.

Study: learning about refusing offers strategy (8 minutes)

The teacher discusses with the students their opinions about the refusal strategy to reject

an offer. The teacher explains that the strategy is called *letting the interlocutor off the hook*. Then, s/he proceeds to ask the students to support it with examples from the dialog. The examples for it are *It's okay*, *That's a cheap cabinet door*, *We have had it for many years*, *We knew the lock was going to break anytime*, and *Don't worry about it*. The instructor should ask students about what it means when the interlocutor is *let off the hook*, and provide them with examples in order to help them understand its meaning. By *letting the interlocutor off the hook*, the person who refuses allows the interlocutor to "escape a difficult situation" ("thefreedictionary.com").

Activate: Writing a Script and Role-Playing It (10 minutes)

At this stage, pairs of students have to role-play a situation where they need to use the *letting the interlocutor off the hook* strategy to refuse an offer. They will have five minutes to write the script and another five minutes to act it out.

Assessment and Homework:

The students' ability to complete and perform the tasks outlined in the sections of this lesson ensures that they have comprehended the strategies' use structurally and pragmatically. Despite the feedback generated from the execution of the activities, the homework section will better inform the teacher that the students can form the relevant refusal strategies for the appropriate context. The teacher should be mindful of the excuses provided by Omani students. If the students provide excuses that are too general or stray from the context of the situation, s/he must elicit more appropriate responses from the students.

The homework section has two parts: In the first part, each student works on improving a refusal to a request tailored to the context of a conversation between an employee and employer. The students should be aware of applying the proper strategies in the context because the

requester is of a higher status than the person who is refusing the request. In the second part, pairs of students are to create a dialog about a given situation, act out their conversation, record it, and finally send it to their teacher's email for evaluation.

Day Five (5): Model for Declining Invitations   (60 minutes)

Objectives:

- Students will turn down invitations in formal and informal contexts.

- Students will use the declining invitation model with examples in conversations.

- Students will perform refusal for invitations in conversations.

- Students will demonstrate understating of the invitation refusal moves through receptive practice.

Materials: flip chart, whiteboard, Handout Five (5)

Procedures: AESAA**:** Patchwork

Activate: Creating a Refusal Dialog to an Invitation in a Formal Setting   (10 minutes)

The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge pertaining to the social etiquette of refusing invitations. S/he gives them a situation for which they need to create a refusal dialog for turning down an invitation in a formal context.

Engage: Reading a Conversation and Discussing Post-Reading Questions (10 minutes)

The students read a conversation that involves a model, commonly used by North Americans, for declining an invitation. Then, they discuss the post-reading questions about the conversation in their groups.

Study: Learning about Different Moves Involved in Declining an Invitation (15 minutes)

The teacher tells the students that there are three moves used by Munira in the conversation to decline the invitation. The teacher then proceeds to ask the students to guess and

distinguish between the three moves. In the opening move, the individual refusing the request

greets and thanks the requester and/or gives positive statements (e.g., *It sounds lots of fun. I

would love to come*). S/he could also use vocalizations words (e.g., *oh!, well, umm, uh*). Then,

the person refusing the request utilizes refusal strategies in the refusing move (e.g., apology,

reasons, and suggestions). Finally, s/he closes the refusal with appropriate greetings of thanks

and sending wishes. The teacher should consider that nonnative speakers use softened direct

refusals, refusals that lack alternatives, fewer expressions to reduce the threat in the refusal, and

they abruptly end the refusal (Archer 188; Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 168). The table

below includes the answers for activity 3 (see Appendix B, Handout 5) with more examples for

the teacher to share with the students. The teacher draws the table on a flip chart, elicits answers

from the students to complete it, and provides examples from the table below.

Opening	Actual refusal			Closing
Vocalizations, Thanking, and/or Positive statement	Apology	Reasons	Suggestions (alternatives)	Sending wishes or thanking
(oh! well, uh, umm) Thank you for thinking of me Thanks so much for your invitation That sounds lots of fun	I am sorry I can't make it. I am afraid I can't make it. I am sorry. Unfortunately, I can't	I will be out of the country on that day. I am going to visit my uncle in	But, I have a gift for the baby and I would love to give it to her before I take off to Turkey. I am wondering if we can meet sometime this	Great then! Thanks for inviting me though. It's going to be fun.

| I would be delighted.

It sounds great.	make it.	Turkey.	week.	

Activate: Receptive Practice   (10minutes)

Student should individually read a conversation in activity 4 of Handout 4 that contains a model of refusing an invitation. They have to fill in the blanks with the appropriate examples of refusal strategies from box **A** by following the refusal model sequence. Then, they drag the examples under the name of the refusal strategy in box **B**.

Activate: Productive Practice (15 minutes)

At this stage, the students work in pairs to create a dialog in which an invitation is declined by using the model for declining invitation in three moves. Each speaker must have at least three opportunities to talk in the dialog**.** They have ten minutes to build the dialog and five minutes to share it with the rest of the class. Some students will not have the chance to perform their dialogs in class. Therefore, each pair will videotape their dialogs and send them to the teacher's email after class as a homework assignment. Learners are also given a self-assessment list (see Appendix B, Handout (5), Activity 5) that will help them anticipate what needs to be included in their dialogs.

Assessment and Homework:

Students will be assessed based on their answers in class for the exercises in the handout. They will also be assessed on the videos of their dialogs according to the criteria reflected in the self-assessment sheet. Additionally, students will submit the other parts of the homework to the teacher. They have to take a video of the conversation they created and send it to the teacher's email. Students are also given two conversations that are scrambled. First, they will individually

order the two conversations. Then, they will answer the questions about them. This homework aims at targeting and checking students' comprehension of the sequence of refusal techniques, and the types of refusal strategies used in each move. The two conversations are adopted from *Communication Skills in American English* by Bruce Tillit and Mary Bruder (23-24), and they are in two different levels of formality.

7.7. Performing Request-Refusal Phase: Day (6)

Objectives

- Students will create dialogs of request and refusals for given scenarios or pictures
- Students will role-play or converse their dialogs in front of the teacher

Materials: pictures and scenarios in Handout Six, and flashcards

At the beginning of this class, the teacher reflects on the students' performances in their videos and audios done for homework. The teacher comments on the level of formality, politeness, and directness used by the students, and s/he discusses whether it suits the situation. S/he also discusses the tone of the respondent (the person who is refusing) and how it conveyed the situation. Moreover, the instructor discusses the use of correct forms of engagement in the relevant context.

In this class, the students will solidify what they have learned in the two packets: making requests and refusals. They will work in pairs to create dialogs that contain requests and refusals for pictures or provided scenarios. They will also role-play and converse these dialogs in front of the teacher. Handout six (6) contains cards of pictures and scenarios. The teacher will number each pair of students. Then, each student pair picks a card with the number that corresponds to the group's number. The card contains a scenario or a picture. The students have ten minutes to create a dialog and be ready to perform it in front of the teacher.

8. Conclusion and Discussion

In Oman, English is not only considered the hegemonic language of communication in various domains (Al-Issa199), but it is also extremely sought after by the Omani people (Al-Issa and Al-Balushi 141). However, research has revealed that the Omani students at the higher education institutions demonstrate lack of communication abilities; despite the pessimistic impression non-Omani interlocutors may have had from interacting with Omani learners as being rude and forceful, Omani students intend to be respectful. However, their unsatisfactory English communication skills do not save them from being misunderstood as being disrespectful. In addition, the majority of English classes in Oman rarely focus on communicative skills teaching although the Ministry of Education emphasizes it. Teachers maintain their traditional teacher-centered methods, and English communication skills courses at the university level are being glossed over. To deal with this situation, Al-Mahrouqi states that the curricula in Oman "must involve students actively in their studies and in genuine communicative tasks" (129). However, this paper has argued that teachers might not integrate communicative teaching because they do not know how, and/or they lack sample materials that help them envision how to incorporate communicative skills' sessions into their classes. To enhance Omani learners' communication skills, this paper has proposed teaching pragmatics, specifically speech acts. Teaching speech acts reveals satisfactory outcomes about the students' communication skills in Oman; thus, the students will be better qualified to meet the job market needs (Al-Mahrqoui 125).

Therefore, this essay successfully familiarized teachers with speech acts' theoretical background. It reasoned why speech act teaching should be considered in the language classroom. Then, it presented a pedagogical application for teaching two types of speech acts: requests and refusals. Second, a description on how teachers use the materials to teach the speech

act to their students adds lots of perception to both teachers and students about pragmatic development and lead pragmatic instruction be more effective (Jiang 52). Accordingly, I developed a unit plan with practical handouts for teachers and students. In the lesson plans of this unit, I have modeled how teachers could introduce speech acts and help students learn and perform them. As found in section 5, I chose ESA (Engage, Study, and Activate) method to guide my instruction because ESA is very flexible and adaptable with its three models. ESA involves communicative and explicit teaching strategies. The communicative techniques are used for engaging the students and performing the speech act while the explicit techniques are used to emphasize the learned forms and phrases. Additionally, I have targeted raising students' awareness about the speech act, identifying and realizing it, and finally internalizing and performing the speech act. The unit plan comes into two packets: (1) making requests and (2) making refusals. Each packet includes five lessons, which are accomplished in sixty-minutes of instruction. Each lesson is accompanied with user-friendly student handouts that include engaging activities and authentic conversations and caricature that pertain to the students' experiences and needs.

From what has been discussed so far in this paper, there are many implications for English Language (EL) programs, communication, and speaking teachers in Oman. It is recommended that EL programs include the information of this paper in their workshops, conducted for new non-Arab teachers who have no or little knowledge about Arabic or students' misuse of English language functions. The information will familiarize the new teachers with Arab and Omani learners' communication styles, and language use. Material designers can also use the presented framework of the unit plan as basis for designing more lesson plans for teaching speech acts.

I that using the unit plan holds promise in its outcomes to teachers and students. However, I recommend adapting it to better suit the needs of the different students' levels. Teachers may follow the format of this unit plan to develop their own lessons when they teach more speech acts. Additionally, students do not have to use all the forms they have learned if they convey the same meaning. Furthermore, having more than twenty-five students when teaching these lesson plans is not advised because learners need sufficient time to practice the forms in context. Finally, for the scope and purpose of this paper, only two types of speech acts (request and refusals) were covered. However, future research needs to discuss some more speech acts' features that may be found distinguishable in the Omani context.

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Appendix A: Making Requests' Handouts for Students (One-Five)

Handout One (1): Learning and Raising Awareness about Requests

Activity 1: Work in Pairs.

A: Read the conversation in pairs and discuss the post-reading questions with your partner.

Omar and Anessa happen to be a couple. In this conversation, they are having dinner at the Turkish palace restaurant.

At the restaurant (INFORMAL)

Omar: Aneesa

Omar: So darling! How did you find this restaurant?

Aneesa: Well Omar, I looked on a map.

Omar: Oh! I mean did you like the food and service?

Aneesa: Yes, but I didn't try the dessert yet! And I really want to sit in a different area now. It has gotten too loud in here!

Omar is calling waiter: Excuse me, my wife and I are feeling a bit crammed at this table**. Could we move over to a quieter place, please?**

Waiter: Well, this section is all fully booked**. Do you mind** sitting near the register?

Omar: Oh! Okay sure.

Waiter: Great! It will just take a minute to collect your things and clean the other table.

Omar: **Do you think you could** bring us the dessert menu please? Darling? Which do you prefer?

Aneesa: I would like to have an apple pie.

Waiter: oh! Sorry we don't have that one.

Aneesa: **Could you** tell me what's the special dessert for the day?

Waiter: The dessert of the day is pumpkin pie. It is November the local farms have great pumpkin

Aneesa: awesome then. But could you tell me about the spices because I am allergic to cinnamon.

Waiter: Then maybe you wouldn't want to try our pumpkin pie. Would you like to try the pecan pie? I recommend adding our homemade ice cream for an extra dollar!

Aneesa: mmmm, pecan pie. This is the right time of year for pecan pie. **Can we have a couple of minutes to think?**

Server: Sure.

Omar: great!

B: Post-reading: Discuss the following questions about the conversation.

- Is the relationship between Omar and Aneesa formal or informal?
- What is the relationship between Omar and Aneesa and the waiter?
- Find all the requesting sentences. Then, double underline the phrases or words used in the sentences to request.

Activity 2: Work in Pairs.

One student holds card A and the other one holds card B. Student A should proceed to request at least three items from student B using the items and useful phrases on card A. Student B gives possible answers for "yes" from card B. Then, the two students exchange roles.

Card A:	
Items and things to request:	Useful phrases to help you request:
*stapler * class notes *Eraser * a pen * opening the door * closing the window * a ruler * printing paper	Could you lend me_____, please? Do you mind _____, please? Excuse me, can I use_____? Do you think you could _____? Would you mind _____?

Card B: possible answers
- Sure
- No problem
- Go a head
- Yes, of course

Homework: Work individually

A: Put the scrambled request forms (part A) into the correct order. Then, use the rearranged

forms from part A to make requests for the pictures in part B.

you/could /please/ (base verb)	you/ would/do/ verb+ing/ mind	you/ can/ (verb) /possibly
I/can/ excuse me/(base verb) please	could/(verb)/ you	It is (if I verb) okay

B: Look at the two pictures and answer the questions about them:

- Where do you think the people in picture 1 are?
_____
- Who is requesting and who is listening?
Requester: _____
Listener:_____
- Are the requester and listener of similar age?
_____
- What does the requester want to ask for?
_____
- Form at least three requests.
_____
_____
_____
- Form an impolite request for this picture
1. _____

- **Create a situation**: Where do you think the people in picture 2 are?
_____
- Who is the requester and who is the listener?
Requester: _____
Listener:_____
- Are the requester and listener of similar age?
_____
- What does the requester want to ask for?
_____
- Form at least three polite requests.
_____
_____
_____
- Form an impolite request for this picture
_____
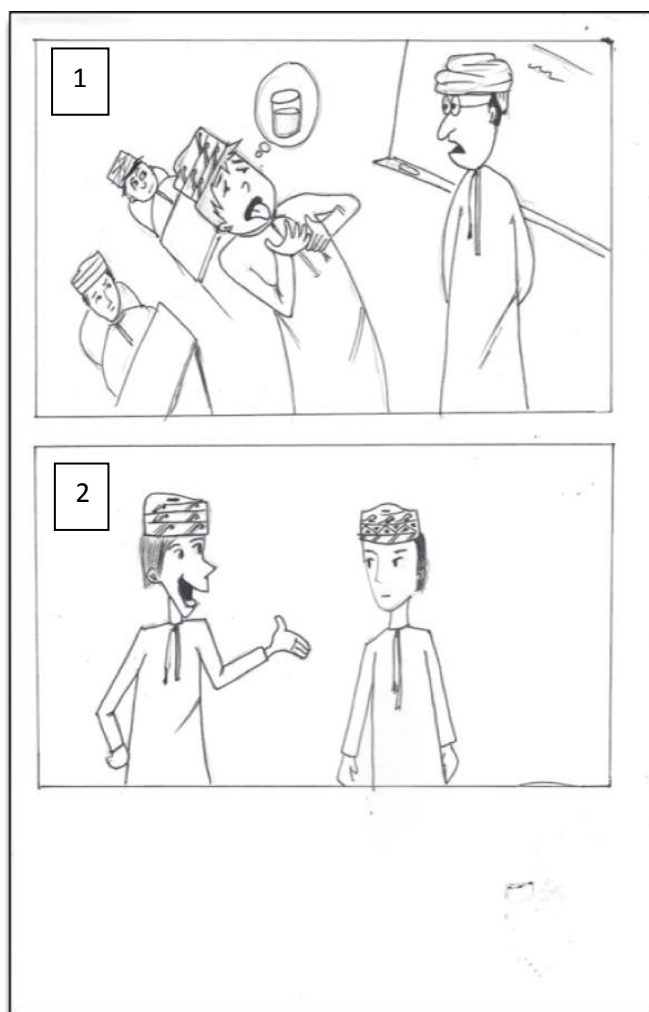
Handout Two (2): **Learning about Direct and Indirect Requests and Request Situation Characteristics**

Activity 1: Work in a Group

Directions: Enjoy role-playing the conversation with your group. Divide roles according to these five roles you need to fulfill: a teacher, three students, and a café man. Ali, Ahmed and Mohammed are in the university cafe in their language center. They are all students and friends with one another. They are standing really close to each other in a queue as their female teacher enters the cafeteria. Unfortunately, there is nowhere to her to stand and order. She is in a rush to her class and wants to buy a bottle of water, but they are blocking her way.

Teacher: I really have to go to class now [the boys are not moving. They look at her, but they don't understand]

Teacher: isn't there anyone who understands me? I am a teacher and I am very late. I have six hours to teach and I just need a bottle of water.

Ali: oh! That is our teacher.

Ahmed: oh! Teacher no class today! Ha ha

Teacher: Students, did you understand what I said?

All of them: No.

Teacher: Is it okay for you if I go first?

Ali and Mohammed: No problem. [One student is rude.]

Ahmed: why? Teacher, I am late. Hungry! No problem you are late.

Teacher: sure, it is. We need to be on time to class.

All: okay! It doesn't matter!

Teacher: don't you want to pass!!

All: Oh! No problem! [Carelessly]. Oh! Teacher, what do you need? We want to help.

Teacher: My books are really heavy and I am a bit tired today.

All: So, how can we help you?

Teacher: I mean,I would like to ask you to help me with my books please? Could you possibly help carry thirty reading books to the class.

Ali: Ok, each of us will carry ten. Mohamed, you carry ten books. Ahmed, I am asking you to carry ten more as well. Can we help you with anything else, Ms. Rahma?

Teacher: Okay, can you ask for a bottle of water for me and show me how to use polite English.

Ali: Hey! Give me water! [Ali snaps.]

Ahmed: Yes, we want water for our teacher!

Mohammed: make it fast! She is late.

Teacher: Oh, no! All of you guys! Do you remember the polite words to request? How about using these words to request water from the café man?

Ali: let me think, you mean like *please*, *thank you*?

Teacher: what else?

Ali: *Can*, *could*, *may*, *would*, *possibly*?

Mohammed: Ok, Mohei Al Deen, could I please have a bottle of water for my teacher? Thank you very much.

Mohammed: Could you possibly make it fast because she is late?

Mohei Al Deen: Yes, you may. You're welcome.

[All the boys offer to pay but the teacher apologizes and says that she needs to pay.]

Post-Reading Questions:

1. Underline all forms of request in the conversation.

2. Categorize requests into direct and indirect

Direct Requests	Indirect Requests

3. Which types of requests in your category (direct or indirect) are similar to the ones you frequently use in your first language? Which ones do you think are more polite?

4. What are the request words and phrases the teacher asks the students to use?

5. Was Ali polite or impolite when he asked his friends to help him carry the books? Explain your answer.

6. Do you think snapping to the café man was a good attitude? How does your culture consider it?

7. How did the students make their impolite requests sound polite? Give two examples.

8. Identify the characteristics of this request situation. Think about it with your group.

Activity 2:

Directions: Work in groups.

A: Read the four conversations below and consider the following:

1. Order the conversations according to the level of formality (formal 1 - semi-formal 2 – informal 3 - more informal 4)

2. What does the speaker in each conversation want to request for?

3. Choose the conversation that corresponds to your group's number.

B: Read the conversation that corresponds to your group's number again. Then, fill in the chart below with the correct information for the aspects of a request situation.

Genders of the speaker and listener:	Approximate ages:
Social distance:	Setting (place):
Directness level:	Level of formality:
List two adjectives that describe the people in the picture	
List all forms of requests used in your conversation.	

Conversation: _____

Phone call: Ring ring ring

M: Hello, erm, you know. So, there is a lot of traffic out here, and it's 7:55 am.

S: Are you calling me while driving?

M: Yeah! Well, something happened and I spilled tea on my clothes. Okay, I am late. Can you get some markers and notebooks for the students because I didn't have time to plan my lesson?

S: But class starts in five minutes!

M: Oh! I am in Bawshar. I think I might miss class.

S: So what do you want me to do about that?

M: Of course, you know what to do, just put our classes together, people do it all the time, don't worry!

S: But shouldn't we tell our coordinator, or do we only do this in an emergency?

M: I am asking you to do this as a friend. You know I have covered for you before.

S: Yes, but that was different. My daughter was sick!

M: But you have to do this. I have nobody else I can ask!!

S: I really feel uncomfortable putting kids in this position. Having forty students in one class is not good for learning.

M: I would like to ask you to just please forget about following all the rules for just one day. I will be there in twenty minutes, and I will bring my students to my class.

S: Are you sure this is the best way?

M: Ok! If it is such a hassle, please just give them an exercise. That should keep them busy until I arrive. Can you take the work books from my office?

S: Would you mind giving me the password for the door then?

M: Sure. Are you willing to promise not to use password again!

S: No worries. You can trust me.

M: Ok, Thank you. I am glad we managed to get to a good solution without getting the authorities involved. The password is 9892.

M: Sounds great. See you in ten minutes.

S: See you!

Conversation: _____

Knock, knock, knock

Employee: Salam Alykum (peace be upon you)

Boss: Wa alykum A'salam (peace be upon you). Good to see you. Please have a seat.

Employee: I need to talk to you about something. It's a little bit sensitive. I noticed that some people here are on a higher pay scale even though they have fewer qualifications than me!

Boss: Well, we follow the procedures. There must be a reason that that person is getting that pay. There must be something you don't understand, but trust there must be a reason.

Employee: I don't want anyone to get any lower. But, I wonder if my salary increment could be considered.

Boss: Actually you can only ask for raise after you have been working here for three years.

Employee: Do you think you could possibly look at my qualifications to make sure I am getting the correct salary?

Boss: Unfortunately, even if we find that you are more qualified, we can't change your contract for two more years!

Employee: I would like to ask you to put yourself in my position. You must understand this is unfair! Do you think you could possibly reexamine the rule?

Boss: I understand that you are frustrated but a rule is a rule, and I don't have the authority to change it.

Employee: Please, could you give the name of the person in HR who decides upon these rules since there was a mistake in my original pay grade, surely somebody will listen to me.

Boss: All right, here is the information [the boss passes the employee a piece of paper] I honestly wish you good luck.

Employee: Thank you with your help with this matter. I understand you did as much as you can to honor my request.

Boss: You're welcome.

Conversation: _____

Huda: Hey, can I drink some water?

Muna: sure! Do you like it warm or cool?

Huda: Mmm, I actually prefer it to be cold with some ice in it.

Muna: Ok! You will find a glass of water in the fridge. The ice cubes are in the freezer.

Huda: Great! Thanks.

Muna: No problem! Can you get me one too?

Huda: sure.

Conversation: _____

At the restaurant (INFORMAL)

Omar: Aneesa

Omar: So darling! How did you find this restaurant?

Aneesa: Well Omar, I looked on a map.

Omar: Oh! I mean did you like the food and service?

Aneesa: Yes, but I didn't try the dessert yet! And I really want to sit in a different area now.

It has gotten too loud in here!

Omar is calling waiter: Excuse me, my wife and I are feeling a bit crammed at this table.

Could we move over to a quieter place, please?

Waiter: Well, this section is all fully booked. Do you mind sitting near the register?

Omar: Oh! Okay sure.

Waiter: Great! It will just take a minute to collect your things and clean the other table.

Omar: Do you think you could bring us the dessert menu please? Darling? Which do you prefer?

Aneesa: Well, I wouldn't mind having an apple pie.

Waiter: oh! Sorry we don't have that one.

Aneesa: Could you tell me what's the special dessert for the day?

Waiter: The dessert of the day is pumpkin pie. It is November the local farms have great pumpkin.

Aneesa: awesome then. But could you tell me about the spices because I am allergic to cinnamon.

Waiter: Then maybe you wouldn't want to try our pumpkin pie. Would you like to try the pecan pie? I recommend adding our homemade ice cream for an extra dollar!

Aneesa: mmmm, pecan pie. This is the right time of year for pecan pie. Can we have a couple of minutes to think?

Server: Sure.

Omar: great!

Homework:

Watch your favorite T.V program, movie, radio or comedy and gather three requests. You may also search for them in the local magazines and newspapers, which are written in English, online magazines, websites, or books. Consider the following about the request:

Website:_____

Title of the video: _____ Name of teacher: _____

Did you share this video through social media? Yes_____ No_____

How do you rate the request? Good _____ Bad_____

Source of the request: _____

Direct or indirect: _____

Speaker: _____ - listener:_____

Speaker's social distance: _____

Speaker's and listner's social status: _____

Setting: (time and place) _____

Situation (what's the request about): _____

Level of formality of the request (explain why) :_____

Level of formality of the situation (explain why) _____

Homework Assignment is adapted from Zohreh R. Eslami and Kent D. Mcleod p.27 It's 8 O'clock in the morning-Are you Watching Television? Teaching Indirect Requests.

Handout Three (3): Recognizing Politeness and Increasing the Degree of Politeness

Activity 1: Look at the sequence of pictures and answer the questions with your partner.

1. Who and where are these people in the picture?
_____
_____

2. What is happening here? Describe the characters' actions.
_____
_____
_____

3. Could this really happen? Did it ever happen to you or someone you know?
_____
_____
_____

4. List the requests from least polite to more polite.
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Activity 2: Work with your teacher. Copy the answers from the flip chart on your handout.

Flip chart 1: increasing the politeness degree

Impolite	Polite	More polite	Much more polite

Flip Chart 2:

Polite requests	**Impolite requests**

Activity 3: Work in Pairs - A Messy roommate

Stephanie and Melissa are roommates. Stephanie tends to be messy and sloppy while Melissa is

neat and organized. **Read the conversation in pairs and consider the following:**

1. Practice the conversation with your partner.

2. Underline all forms of request used in the conversation.

3. Classify the forms of requests into polite and impolite and explain your reasoning for

    such a classification.

4. Rank the forms from least polite to more polite and explain the reasoning for your order.

Melissa: Hey! Get your lazy self in here and clean these dishes. They have been sitting in the

sink for three weeks now! Gross!!

Stephanie: Ah! If it bothered you, why didn't you clean them?

Melissa: I need a clean frying pan to fry my eggs. Can't you understand?

Stephanie: So, wash one!

Melissa: You don't have time to help little bit, do you?

Stephanie: I don't have time for cleaning. I am too busy with my homework.

Melissa: Have you got five minutes by any chance?

Stephanie: Seriously! I don't have five minutes to even shower!

Melissa: Couldn't you think about your health and hygiene first? Isn't it important?

Stephanie: Whatever!

Melissa: And ah! Something else, I wonder if you could give me some money, so I could buy

soap to wash the dishes, paper towels, toilet paper, you know?

Stephanie: Why would I pay for things for you?

Melissa: Well, you need it; I will be cleaning your dishes.

Stephanie: Ah, you don't have to buy toilet paper. You can just bring it from the cafeteria in your purse!

Melissa: Come on! I am not that cheap; I don't steal toilet paper! And if you're not going to help me wash these dishes, could you just possibly leave? I need to listen to this recording for my English class.

Stephanie: What! You would rather study than spend time with your friend? So, if you are not going to talk to me, I am just going to watch TV (Stephanie turns on the TV on high volume)

Melissa: Ugh! geez! Do you think you could possibly turn down the T.V.? I wonder if you could possibly be polite.

Stephanie: (she turns up the volume even louder). What?! I cannot hear you!

Melissa: (Melissa says even louder). I said I wonder if it was possible for you to turn down the T.V. (Melissa says to herself, "well, you can try all the polite words in the world, but it just doesn't work. It was ineffective! I should just accept my roommate. My next solution is to go buy earplugs.")

Homework: Work individually

Look at the four pictures and choose two pictures.

- Who do you think the speakers are?
- What is the situation?
- What are the speakers doing?
- Write four requests showing the increase in the politeness degree from request one to four. Underline the phrases that will help you increase the politeness degree in your requests.
- Record the requests and send them to the teacher's email (email :_____)
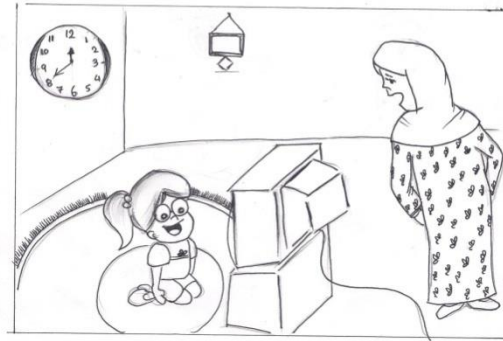
Handout Four (4): Appropriateness in Requests

Activity 1

- Look at the picture that corresponds with your group's number and discuss the questions with your group.

1. Who are the speakers in the picture?
2. Where are they?
3. What do the requesters want from the listeners?
4. Do you agree with the requests? Why?
5. How do you interpret the listeners' reaction to the request?
6. If you were the requesters in the picture, would you present these requests? Why?

3. I AM ASILA AL MAWALI, THE NEW STUDENT IN YOUR READING CLASS. I JUST NEED A FEW SECONDS OF YOUR TIME. I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SKIPPING THE CLASS WHICH STARTS IN TWO MINUTES. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO MISS THE CLASS AND GO HOME AS MY BROTHER CALLED THAT MY MOM JUST PASSED OUT. I HAVE TO DRIVE HER TO THE HOSPITAL. SHE IS DIABETIC, AND--

4. TEACHER, WHAT'S YOUR PHONE NUMBER?

MY OFFICE NUMBER IS...

NO, NOT THAT. GIVE ME YOUR PERSONAL CELL PHONE NUMBER.

Activity 2: Study

Work with your teacher.

A: Fill in the two boxes with inappropriate but adjustable requests and inappropriate un-adjustable requests from the pictures in activity 1.

Inappropriate adjustable requests	Inappropriate unadjustable requests

B: Modify the structure of the adjustable requests.

_____

_____

_____

Activity 3: Work in Pairs

1. **A:** Categorize the following requests into polite, impolite, and inappropriate (An inappropriate request is the one you should not ultimately place firsthand or that is too polite for emergency situations)

- I was wondering if you could possibly rescue me. I am sinking in the river. I can't swim.
- Give me your phone number (said to a stranger)
- Can you please close the window?
- Lend me your car for a day.
- May I have a stapler?
- Ms.Rahma, I want a stapler
- Do you think you could possibly turn off the gas, please? The house is getting burned.
- Ms.Rahma, can you tell me about your religion?
- Ms.Natalia, I want to call my brother now to say hello for a second.
- Ms.Rahma, invite me to your wedding
- Do you think you have the time to possibly help me? I will really appreciate it because I am drowning, and I don't know how to swim!

Polite requests	Impolite	Inappropriate

1. B: If some of the requests should be changed to be suitable, how can you modify them?

Choose four requests (from the impolite and inappropriate categories). Then, change them to

make them sound more polite or appropriate to the situation.

2: Work in Groups: find an example of an inappropriate request that happened to you or you

encountered in the class or in your life outside of the classroom. Then, present or role-play the

inappropriate request situation to the other groups in the class. Consider the following questions:

- What type of irrelevant request was it?

- What factors make it inappropriate?

- Could it have been made appropriate or, should it not have been asked firsthand?

- If could have been modified, how would you modify it?

Homework: Work individually. Look at the three picture.

1. Match each type of inappropriate request to the pictures below.

 (a) A long polite request for an emergency situation   (b) An impolite request

 (c) A polite request but cannot be asked in first encounters because it asks for private

    information

2. Find the request situation and the social distance between the speakers

3. If the request can be modified, modify it to be more polite or to suit the request situation
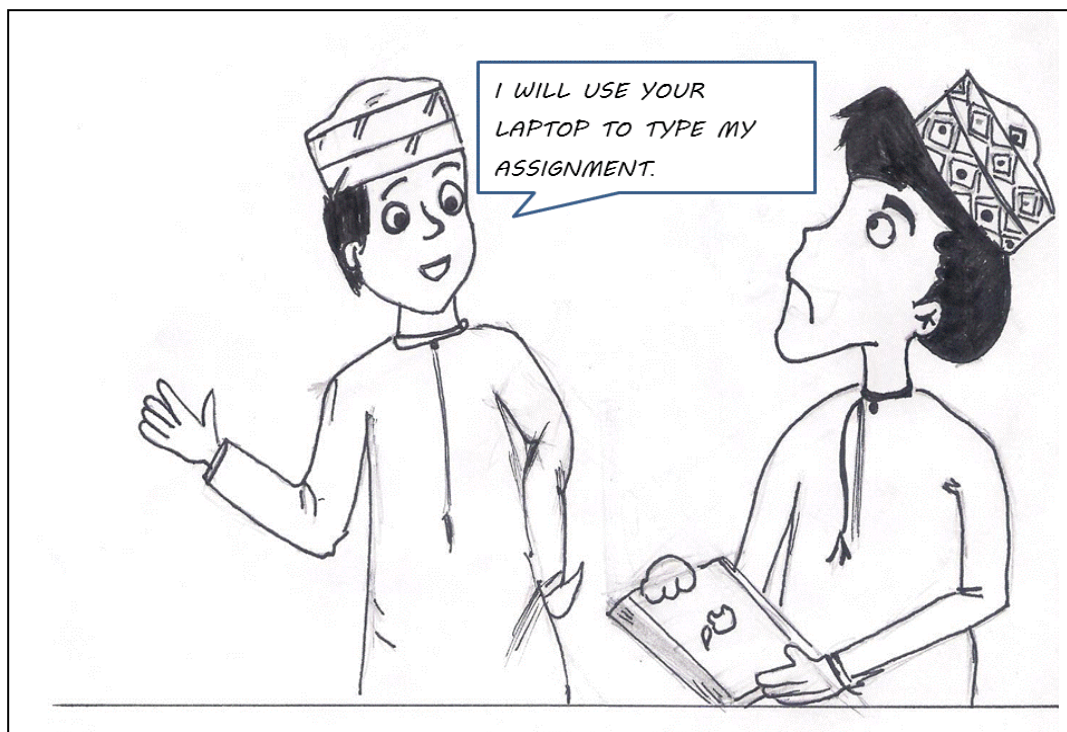
Handout Five (5): A Request Model in a Formal Setting

Activity 1: Work in Pairs- Act it Out!

The professor is an American who lives in Oman. She has taught English for four years now. Her student, Ahmed, has received a C grade in the exam. He is mainly requesting her to give him another chance in order to increase his grades

- Act out the conversation with your partner. One person can be the teacher, and the other one is the student.

Student: Good afternoon Prof. Johnson. My name is Ahmed. I am a student in your speaking class. This will just take a few minutes.

Professor: Sure, go ahead.

Ahmed: Would it be possible for you to show me my grades?

Professor: All right. Here is your grade. You got a C. It's not too bad.

Ahmed: Oh! (sounding dejected)

Professor: It's a passing mark!

Ahmed: I thought I did well on the test professor.

Professor: Well, you missed an entire section on polite expressions college students should use.

Ahmed: Oh! Let me show you. I know quite a few of them. I can express myself politely. Just give me a chance. Do you want me to list them for you?

Professor: Ok, let's start with what you would say to convince me to change your grade.

Ahmed: Well, first, I need to show you that I deserve a higher mark by listing the expression such as, "Would you mind showing me my marks?" Then, I should give you a reason for making a mistake at that time, and thank you for considering my request.

Professor: Yes, that is a good example of a polite expression, which is why I showed you your marks. So now, do you think you could give me more examples?

Ahmed: Of course. "I would like to ask you to reconsider my marks, please?" or "Could you possibly reconsider my marks? I think I was confused in the test, and I misread the question, but trust me, I know the right answers.|"

Professor: You've started to prove it to me now. You do know many polite expressions.

Ahmed: Ok Prof. Johnson. I really care about improving my marks, and I want to show you by

giving the best presentation I can.

Professor: I will consider your request and look at your exam papers. Perhaps, I will even change your marks.

Ahmed: Thank you for your help and meeting with me today.

Activity 2: Work in Pairs.

Answer the following questions about the conversation

- This is a request model procedure, what steps did the student follow in conveying the whole message?
- What polite request phrases did the student use to convince the teacher to reconsider his grades?
- How do your classmates and the college students that you know request for higher grades? Share your experience and stories with your partner.

Study: Work with your teacher

- Copy and share the steps employed to make the request module in the conversation with examples.

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Activity 3: Work in a Group

A: Work in the jigsaw puzzle with your partners. Put the sentences into the correct order to make a conversation between two speakers in a formal setting.

Hint: follow the request model steps to help you reorder the conversation.

B: Find the following information from the conversation

Speaker (requester): _____   Receiver of the request : _____

What is the setting? _____

What is the requester asking for?

Is a polite or impolite request situation?

List the steps for the request model with examples from the conversation

Homework (Video-Taping)

Work in Pairs:

A: Write a dialog between two speakers in a formal setting following the request model procedure. Fill in the role-play card to help you brainstorm your ideas.

Request Situation: _____

Speaker (requester): _____

Listener (the person receiving the request): _____

Request model steps with examples:
_____
_____
_____
_____

B: Type the script of your role-play and submit it to the teacher.

D: Video-tape the dialog and send it to the teacher's email (teacher's email address: _____)

Appendix B: Making Refusals' Handouts for Students (One-Five)

Handout One (1): Raising Awareness about Refusing in English

Activity 1: Work in Pairs

Write as many refusals as you can to this request on the yellow sticky notes that are on your table. Then, post the notes on the wall. Go around the class and choose the best refusal, in your opinion, from the other groups.

Asila is a teacher, and Munira is her school principal. Munira invites Asial to the end of school dinner party. Asila is busy with her sister's wedding on the same night. How can Asila refuse the invitation? (Remember: Munira is Asila's boss)

Activity 2: Work in a Pairs

Follow the directions:

A) Share your ideas with your partner by answering the following questions. Then, share your answers with the rest of the class.

Questions:

1. Have you ever said *Yes* to someone when you really wanted to say *No*? If so, why?

2. Have you ever had to say *no* to something? If yes, where?

3. Can you think of phrases (expressions) to turn someone down (say no)?

B) Watch a video clip entitled "Three Ways to Say No" about making refusals. Then, discuss the answers of the questions about the video in your group. The teacher will show you the video in class. The link to the video is provided for you.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3gdbiOEXKY

Follow-up Questions about the video clip: Question-and-Answer Session

- Do you agree with the saying, "if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all?" Why?

- To whom do you find it hard to say *no*?

- What are the different ways the speaker made suggestions to us in order to say *no* nicely?

- What is the strategy that you should not follow when you refuse? Give examples.

Activity 3: Work with your teacher

Directions: Read the two conversations between two students about the same situation. Answer the questions below using your background knowledge

Conversation 1.A	Conversation 1.B
Neat roommate: do you think you could possibly clean after yourself? The room is too dirty? **Messy roommate**: oh! I am really sorry about the mess. I am aware of the terrible mess I have made here. But, I am afraid I don't have time to clean it now because I have a deadline in two hours. **Neat roommate**: I see **Messy roommate**: is it okay if I clean it when I am done with my paper? **Neat roommate**: sure. All the best with your assignment **Messy roommate**: thanks!	**Neat roommate:** Could you clean up after yourself please? The room is too dirty. **Messy roommate:** Clean? Who do you think you are? **Neat roommate:** I am the neat organized roommate who tolerates a sloppy person like you. **Messy roommate**: Oh! You are so full of yourself.

Follow-up questions: Work in Pairs

Discuss the following questions about conversations A and B

- Underline the refusal phrases in A and B.
- Are there any differences between the two refusals from A and B?
- Think of and write a third way (C) to refuse cleaning the room.

Homework

Look at the pictures. Fill in the blanks with appropriate refusal expressions from the box. Use more than one refusal strategy for each blank.

Can I use your laptop?	No.
Yes, of course. I love computer games.	I am sorry. I can't give it to you.
Can we play computer games tomorrow? I am busy using my laptop today.	I am actually busy right now.
It is a nice idea to play computer games with you, but I am sorry that I don't have the time to do that. I have a test tomorrow.	I am happy to meet you today.

1._____

2._____

3._____

4. _____

Handout Two (2): Learning about Different Refusal Strategies

Activity 1: Work in Pairs (Pair up with a student in your group)

Look at the Picture: • Describe the picture and predict the events. • Describe the elements in the situation (e.g., the speakers 'age, gender, social status, and setting) • Who are the requester, who is the refuser, and what is the refusal? • Predict what is happening in this situation and write a dialog between the two speakers, one is requesting and the other one is refusing.	

Activity 2: Work in a Group

- You are given strips including parts of the real dialog for the picture in Activity 1.

- Order the strips into the correct order to make the dialog. Ordering the strips will help you find out the real story between these two speakers.

- Have your group leader read the organized strips to the teacher and rest of the class

- Compare your own dialog with the real conversation.

- Practice the real dialog with a partner in your group. You can practice it with more than one partner in the same group.

Activity 3: Work in a Group

Your teacher will ask you to take a conversation from the five ones below.

- Read the conversation with a partner in your group, and find the situation characteristics (e.g., setting, social status of the speakers, social distance between them- level of formality of context)

- Determine what refusal strategies are used in the following conversation.

- Fill in the boxes with refusals from the conversations below that best label the refusal strategies.

Example	Strategy
"No, I can't."	Direct short refusal- not softened
"Unfortunately, I can't help you on Wednesday."	Direct refusal- softened
"I have a class at that time." "I already have twenty teaching hours and eight office hours. My students come to the office hours and I don't want to give up that time. "	Giving a reason or explanation
"And I kind of thought of taking a second language like French."	Offering an alternative
"That's okay. That's a cheap cabinet door. We have had it for many years. We knew the lock was going to break anytime. Don't worry about it."	Letting the interlocutor off the hook

"It's really all right. It's really all right."	
"I feel terrible about that."	Consideration of the speaker's (e.g., requester) feelings- empathy
"I am sorry."	Statement of regret
"I would really like to help, but..." "I really wish I could help you more, but..."	Wish
"Oh! Shoot!"	Pause fillers
"What time does the class start?"	Avoidance- request for additional information
"You said four hours a week?"	Avoidance- request for clarification

Conversation 1:

Salah: Hi Ghanim, are you busy right now?

Ghanim: Not really, but I have a class in an hour.

Salah: Can you help me record my story on Wednesday for the speaking class?

Ghanim: No, I can't. I am busy on Wednesday.

Salah: Oh! Bummer.

Ghanim: Yeah, unfortunately, I can't help you on Wednesday.

Conversation 2:

Advisor: You could probably take History of English for this semester. It is an informative

selective course.

Student: What time does the class start?

Advisor: It is on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11 am to 1 pm.

Student: Shoot! I have a class at that time. And I kind of thought of taking a second language

course like French.

Conversation 3:

You are locked out of your car. You ask the locksmith to come open the car door for you. He opens

the door but breaks the key instead. He can easily replace your key.

Locksmith: Shoot! I broke the key! I am terribly sorry.

Car Owner: That's okay. That's a cheap cabinet door. We have had it for many years. We knew the

lock was going to break anytime.

Locksmith: Isn't this your brother's car. Shouldn't we tell him?

Car Owner: Don't worry about it. He will be fine.

Locksmith: Are you sure? I should get him a new one or at least pay for it.

Car Owner: It's really all right. It's really all right.

Locksmith: Thanks. If you get a new lock, please let me know. I will install it.

Car Owner: Sounds like a plan to me.

Conversation 4: (The teacher is American, and the student is a lower-level Omani student)

Student: Good morning Mrs. Johnson. I am coming to discuss my exam grades with you.

Teacher: Good morning. Sure, have a seat.

Student: Could you possibly help me with my grades?

Teacher: Ok! I can help you calculate your grades.

Student: No, I mean my grades are bad and low. If I fail, I will not get my scholarship again, and

my father will not like it.

Teacher: I can't break for a student. If I break it for one, I need to break it for all of them. And I won't change students' marks for no reason.

Student: But I will lose my scholarship!

Teacher: I am sorry. I feel terrible about that, but you knew the rules from the beginning of the semester and you did not do your work or come to classes.

Student: Oh, I know, and I am sorry about it. This is my last chance!

Teacher: [sigh] I can offer you an extra research project but I don't know how many marks you will get. If you had asked me earlier, I could have helped you with your presentations and essays.

Student: I promise I will always come to class and do my work. I will do my best in the research project.

Teacher: I really wish I could help you more but we cannot lower our standards for education. We really care that our students learn a lot, so they could get back to the world.

Student: No problem. I understand. Insha'Allah, I will make it.

Conversation 5: (Head of Department and Teacher) The Admin requests the teacher to cover for another teacher

HOD: We need you to choose four hours a week as cover for other teachers!

Employee: Mmm, you said four hours a week?

HOD: Yes.

Employee: I would really like to help but I can't. I already have twenty teaching hours and eight office hours. My students come to the office hours and I don't want to give up that time.

HOD: But this is our policy and all the teachers must do this.

Employee: I am sorry, but you also asked me to do extra-curricular activities with the students, which adds more hours.

HOD: There must be some hours in your timetable that are free. I don't think the students will come to your 8 o'clock office hours.

Employee: I am sorry. I really can't teach at 8 o'clock because I teach from ten until six every day. I plan to take care of my health, and I also commute one hour to work every day.

HOD: Ah! It seems you are overloaded. We could probably compromise if you could possibly offer two hours a week instead of four hours.

Employee: I can live with it if I can have six office hours instead of eight.

HOD: It sounds acceptable. Thank you.

Employee: You're welcome.

Homework

1. Work individually

Everybody Has a Story: Tell us about your refusal story. Write your story down, and draw a picture about it. Don't forget to use the refusal strategies you have learned.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Work in Pairs

Look at the Picture and do the following:	
- Determine the speakers and the refusal situation. - Write a request-refusal conversation between the two speakers. (Use at least 5 refusal strategies) - Record your conversation and send it to the teacher's email (email: _____)	
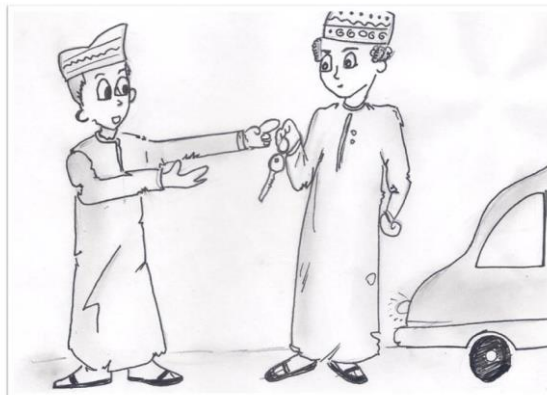
Handout Three (3): Direct and Indirect refusals

Activity 1: Look at the pictures and discuss the questions in your group.

a. Describe the facial expressions of the speakers**.**   **b.** Where do you think they are?

c. Who are they?   **d.** Which refuser (the person who is making the refusal) among these four pictures do you like and which one don't you like? Why?   **e.** Can you think of situations where a forceful rude refusal is needed?

1	2
3	4

Activity 2: Work in Pairs

Write direct and indirect refusals that describe the situations pertaining to the pictures in

activity 1.

Consider the facial expressions of the speakers.

Write as many direct and indirect refusals as you can for all pictures.

Activity 3: Work with your teacher

Fill in the boxes with examples of refusal strategies that you discussed with your teacher.

	Avoidance- Repetition of part of the request
	Avoidance- postponement
	Avoidance- request for clarification
	Statement of gratitude and appreciation

Activity 4: Work in Pairs

- Read over all the conversations with your partner. Match the conversations with the
  pictures in activity 1. Then, share your answers with your teacher.
- Your teacher will assign you one conversation to work on with your partner.
- Determine the situation of the refusal, the speakers, and the social distance of the
  speakers.
- Determine whether the requester and the person refusing sound rude or polite. Does the
  person who is refusing need to be forceful or sound impolite? Why?

- Identify refusal strategies used by the person who is refusing with examples. Then, divide them into direct and indirect

---

Conversation 1:

Huda: Hi Muna, are you busy right now?

Muna: Not really, but I have a class in an hour.

Huda: Can you help me record my story on Wednesday for the speaking class?

Muna: You said Wednesday?

Huda: Yes!

Muna: Gee! I am not sure I can do it. I realize you need a partner to record the story with you, but I have a choir concert practice on Wednesday!

Huda: Oh! Bummer!

Muna: I know! Why don't you ask Nada? I know she is looking for someone to record the story with her. Also, she is usually free on Wednesdays. I am sorry I can't help you.

Huda: Oh! It's really okay. I will ask Ali to do it with me then. Thanks, Muna!

Muna: No problem. Good luck with your project!

Huda: Thanks! Good luck at the practice, too!

Muna: You can come watch it on Wednesday if you wish? I can get you a ticket.

Huda: Oh! Unfortunately, I can't make it. I will have to record the story on Wednesday. Thanks for the offer though.

Muna: Yeah! I forgot about that. You are welcome. Anytime.

Conversation 2:

Mother: Can you help me clean the living room?

Child: No. I am allergic to dust. Mom, can I go to the party with my friend?

Mom: No, you can't.

Child: But . . .

Mom: No means no. You didn't do your chores.

Child: I promise I will do them later.

Child (asking her dad): Dad! Can I go to the party with my friend, please?

Dad: Do you want to go help me in the garage? I am having fun organizing the boxes!

Child: Dad, you know, I am sorry, but I think the garage is too dirty! I am allergic to dust.

Dad: Ok, you can help me in the garden.

Child: But Dad I told you I have allergies, and I want to go to the party.

Dad: Did you ask your mom? What did she say?

Child: She did not exactly give me a complete answer. So I want to ask you.

Dad: Actually I prefer you listen to your mother and you refuse politely next time!

Child: But Dad!!

Dad: No buts, please don't argue. It is too late. Why don't you invite your friends here someday?

Child: Okay, Dad!

Conversation 3:

Salim: Hey Khalid. How are you today?

Khalid: [Khalid looks busy] Pretty good, but busy.

Salim: Can I have a minute of your time? I will be brief.

Khalid: Go ahead.

Salim: I need your PowerPoint about Abraham's elephants destroying the sacred house (Mecca)

for my presentation.

Khalid: Why don't you make it on your own?

Salim: I am really busy travelling with my family this weekend.

Khalid: So, why don't you do it on Monday?

Salim: I will be under a lot of stress because there is not much time.

Khalid: I am really sorry. I wish I could help you, but I could fail my class if I give you my work.

Salim: Come on! Everybody does it.

Khalid: Give me some time to think about it. No, actually, did you say my whole PowerPoint?

Salim: Yeah! I will make some changes to it. Like I will change it to my name.

Khalid: That's not changes! Can you tell me more about the changes you will make? Are you going to make any real changes?

Salim: Oh yeah! Sure, I told you… your name.

Khalid: My…name!!!! Only that? Sorry, you don't have a good reason, and I can't just give you my work. It's not good for me or for you.

Salim: Why not?

Khalid: Just no! Isn't that a good enough answer for you? It's against my principles to do that!

Salim: Oh! Okay! I did not realize your principles are more important than helping your friend.

Khalid: That's not called helping! I just refuse to do this. I am sorry. I am busy now.

Conversation 4:

Neat roommate: Could you clean up after yourself please? The room is too dirty.

Messy roommate: Clean? Who do you think you are?

Neat roommate: I am the neat organized roommate who tolerates a sloppy person like you.

Messy roommate: Oh! You are so full of yourself.

Neat roommate: Then, you should probably clean up after yourself and wash the dishes. They

have been sitting there for years!

Messy roommate: Seriously?! I won't do it. I am too busy to act like a housemaid.

Neat roommate: It's about the principle of being clean. Our health and mood can suffer if things are not clean around us. This is making me feel sick!

Messy roommate: I am sorry! I wish I could do it now, but I prefer to finish my assignment now. I promise I will do it when my work is finished!!!

Neat roommate: One can't be clear inside their mind unless the surroundings are decent. People can't live like this; be healthy and clean! You drive me crazy!

Homework:

A: Make a conversation- work alone

Write a conversation for the following situations. Include as many appropriate refusal strategies for the situation as you can. Then, rank them from the most to the least appropriate strategies.

Situation: Your boss asks you to attend his brother's wedding, which will be two hours away from your house, but you don't like driving for long distances.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Situation: You are in the class taking a quiz. Suddenly, your classmate, who is sitting right behind you, whispers and asks for help in one of the questions; he wants to cheat from your paper.

_____

_____

_____

B: Look at the three pictures below.

- Rank the refusals in the pictures from most polite to least polite refusals (from 1 to 3).

- Identify the refusal strategies used in each picture.

| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Handout Four (4): Refusal Models- Refusing Requests and Refusing Offers

Part A: Refusing Requests by North Americans

Activity 1: Pair and Group Work

- Read the two dialogs. Dialog 1 is happening between 2 close friends: one friend is busy studying for her final exam. The other one wants to go shopping at Muscat City Center. Dialog two is occurring between two speakers in the same situation as Dialog 1, but they are classmates, and acquaintances.
- Act the following conversations out with a person in your group.

Dialog 1	Dialog 2
Huda: Hey Muna. Do you want to go shopping with me at the Muscat City Center?	**Huda:** Hello Muna. Would you like to go shopping with me at the Muscat City Center?
Muna: I am afraid I can't go. I need to study for my final exam. It's in two days.	**Muna:** That sounds lots of fun, but I am afraid I can't go. I need to study for my final exam. It's in two days. I am really sorry that I can't make it.
Huda: Oh! I didn't know that. I really wanted you to go with me. Maybe you need a break?	**Huda:** Oh! I didn't know that. I really wanted you to go with me. Maybe you need a break?
Muna: Oh ! I just had a break three hours ago. If you had asked me earlier, I could have been able to. We can go when I am done with my finals.	**Muna:** Unfortunately, I just had a break three hours ago. If you had asked me earlier, I would have perhaps gone with you. But, I promise to go with you after my final. How does that sound?
Huda: Great! I will wait for you then. I can go after your finals.	**Huda:** Great! I will wait for you then. I can go after your finals.
Muna: Good. Thanks.	**Muna:** Good. Thank you.
Huda: Sure! Study hard.	

	Huda: Sure! Study hard.

1. **Follow-up Questions:**

Spot the differences between the two dialogs.

- Why do you think there is a difference between the two dialogs in the made refusals?
- How does the requester negotiate the request, and how does the other person negotiate her refusal?
- Do the requests and refusals in these dialogs sound polite?
- Can you list the steps that the person making the refusal has maintained to decline the request in dialogs 1 and 2?

Activity 2: Work with your teacher

Discuss the steps to refuse a request with your teacher. Copy the steps in your table and provide

examples from the previous dialogs. The teacher will aid you with more examples.

Step 1: Positive interest in the request or gap filler	Step 2: Regret	Step 3: Excuses
Examples:	Examples:	Examples:

Activity 3: work alone.

Receptive Practice: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate refusal strategies by employing the

moves North Americans follow when they refuse a request.

Refusing a request to an equal status requester	Refusing a request to a higher status requester
Student 1: hey! Wanna join me to go to the cafeteria? **Student2:** _____ _____ **Student 1**: No problem. Do you want me to get me coffee or tea? **Student 2**: No thanks. I am good. **Student 1**: Ok. See you later.	**Manager:** we are watching soft ball at 4:00 pm today. Would you like to join us? **Secretary**: _____ _____ **Manager:** You can still join us at 5:00. We will still be there. **Secretary:**_____ **Manager:** That's ok. Say Happy Birthday to Janet for me, please.

Student 1: See you!	**Secretary:** I will. _____

Activity 4: Work in Pairs

Productive Practice: Create your own refusal to a request and role-play it to the rest of the class. Follow the refusal moves for declining a request. Highlight the moves in your script and consider the following points.

- What is the relationship of the requester to the respondent (the person who is refusing the request)?
- What is the refusal situation?
- You will give a short presentation about your dialog and then perform it.

Part B: Refusing Offers by North Americans

Activity 4: Work in Pairs.

Read the conversation and discuss the following questions about it. You are locked out of your brother's car. You ask the locksmith to come open the car door for you. He opens the door but breaks the key instead. He can easily replace your key.

Locksmith: Shoot! I broke the key! I am terribly sorry.
Car Owner: That's okay. That's a cheap car door. We have had it for many years. We knew the lock was going to break anytime.
Locksmith: Isn't this your brother's car. Shouldn't we tell him?
Car Owner: Don't worry about it. He will be fine.
Locksmith: Are you sure. I should get him a new one or at least pay for it.
Car Owner: It's really alright. It's really alright.
Locksmith: Thanks. If you get a new lock, please let me know. I will install it.
Car Owner: Sounds like a plan to me.

Discussion Questions:

- Why did the man not allow the locksmith to replace or pay for the key?

- What would you say if you were the car owner (the man)?

- How did the man negotiate refusing the locksmith's offer?

- What refusal strategies has the man used to refuse the locksmith's offer to pay for the

  key?

Activity 5: Work with your teacher

- Write the strategy used to refuse an offer. Include examples, and think of more examples from your own and discuss them with the teacher.

Activity 6: Work in Pairs

- Role-play the following situation with your partner.

You are visiting a school friend at her house. She ushers you to the living room and invites you to sit on her cozy couch. She forgets her sunglasses on the couch. You sit on them and break them. You start apologizing and you want to repay her or replace them, but she refuses. **You have five minutes to write down your dialog and another five minutes to act it out.**

Homework

Dialog 1: Work alone

It's pretty hot today in Oman. You also have a terrible headache, and you really need to rest and stay indoors to cool down. Your boss calls and asks you if you could go with him for a walk by the beach at 4:00 pm.

- Will you choose the following refusal? Why?

- If you are not going to refuse this way, how can you improve it?

The boss: Good morning. How are you today?

You: Good morning Mr. Johnson. I am good thank you.

The boss: Would you like to go for a walk this evening by the beach. We can discuss the coming project while taking a walk.

You: No, I can't. I have a headache and it's too hot. Sorry!

Dialog 2: Work with your partner

Create a dialog for the situation below. Then, record the dialog and send it to the teacher's email.

Consider the following:

- Negotiate the refusal

- Speak clearly and ensure you are easily understood

- Use proper intonation to express your emotions (speaker A sounds sorry and speaker B sounds fine with the situation)

Flew with the Wind ☹

You borrowed your friend's old camping tent. While camping, a strong wind and heavy rains hit your campsite. As a result, the tent flew away! You feel so bad and you offer your friend some money or suggest replacing the tent. Your friend thinks it is an old tent and s/he wanted to replace it anyway, so there is no need for you to get another one or give money.

Handout Five (5): Model for Declining Invitations

Activity 1: Work in Pairs

John's boss invites him to the grand opening of his new mall, but John is already invited to his friend's wedding. How do you think John is going to decline the invitation? Create a dialog in the box next to the picture.

Activity 2: Work in Group

Read the conversation below with a person in your group. Discuss the follow-up questions with the entire group and share your answers with the teacher. Munira and Rahma are colleagues at work. Rahma invites Munira to attend her child's baby shower party. Usually, baby showers are written invitations, but Rahma calls today.

Munira: Hello Rahma- How are you doing?

Rahma: Hi Munira- I am good. Did you get my voicemail?

Munira: Yes, I did. Thanks. I hope you are having a great time arranging your baby shower party. Sorry I did not answer your call because I was in class when you called. I have a very overwhelming schedule this semester.

Rahma: Yeah. No problem. So will you be able to make it?

Munira: Did you say next week?

Rahma: Yeah.

Munira: Uh! Thank you so much for your invitation. It really sounds lots of fun, but unfortunately, I won't be able to make it.

Rahma: Oh no! You are kidding me!

Munira: I know. I will be out of the country on that day. I am going to visit my uncle in Turkey. I have already bought the tickets

Rahma: Fun! When are you leaving?

Munira: On the day of the baby shower.

Rahma: And there is no way you can make it?!

Munira: I really wish I could, but I will be busy packing. But, I have a gift for the baby and I would love to give it to her before I take off to Turkey. I am wondering if we can meet sometime this week.

Rahma: Oh! That's very nice of you. Yeah, we can meet tomorrow at noon if that works for you?

Munira: Great then!

Rahma: I am sorry you can't make it to the baby shower but have a good time with your uncle.

Munira: Alright- I am sorry too. Thanks for inviting me though. It's going to be fun.

Rahma: Yeah.

Follow-up Questions:

- Did Munira start the refusal right away?
- How did Munira negotiate the refusal? Underline the refusal strategies used in the conversation.
- Identify some expressions Munira used to refuse the invitation.
- Was Munira direct or indirect in her refusal? Why?
- What is the level of formality in this conversation?
- How did Munira compromise to soften the refusal situation?
- Can you list the steps used to decline the invitation?

Activity 3: Work with your teacher

There are three refusal moves used by Munira to decline the invitation. Can you guess what they are and find their examples?

Opening		Actual refusal			Closing
Vocalizations, Thanking, and/or Positive statement		**Apology**	**Reasons**	**Suggestions (alternatives)**	**Sending wishes or thanking**

Activity 4: Gap Fill

1. **Fill in the blanks with the appropriate refusal strategies for the context from box A.**

Box A	
I am writing my lesson plans now.	I am so sorry.
I promise I will come next weekend for dinner	Thank you. Enjoy your dinner.
Oh, I would love to come	Thank you so much for the invitation though

Melissa is an English teacher. It is the weekend, and she is preparing for her classes. Melissa's mother-in-law invites her to dinner, but Melissa is extremely busy writing her lesson plans for the week.

Mother-in-law calls: (ring ring…) Hello! Where have you been? Did you see my missed call?

Melissa: Sorry (mom)? You know, I was taking a shower and then I had to help my friend.

Mother-in-law: Good! I haven't seen you for many days. Would you like to come for dinner today? I have made your favorite meal.

Melissa:_____, but_____. Then I have a meeting with one of my friends late in the afternoon. _____.

Mother-in-law: That's okay. You need to finish your work.

Melissa:_____. And_____. I really love homemade food.

Mother-in-law: Sure! Anytime. I'm going to go eat now!! Enjoy writing your lesson plans.

Melissa: _____

2. **Drag the examples from Box A to their refusal strategies in Box B.**

Box B:					
Opening		**Actual refusal**			**Closing**
Thanking	**Positive statement**	**Apology**	**Reasons**	**Suggestions (alternatives)**	**Sending wishes or thanking**

Activity 5: Create a scenario and act it out!

1. Now you have learned examples of common strategies to turn down an invitation in some

   possible situations, you and your partner will create a dialog in which an invitation is

   declined. Please consider the following:

   - What is the inviter's relationship to the person who is going to refuse?

- Each speaker must have at least three turns to talk in the dialog.

- Apply the three move strategy to rejecting an invitation (opening, refusing, and closing)

  - Email an audio file of your dialog to your teacher as a homework assignment.

    Check the self-assessment list before sending your audio file to the teacher.

	Yes	No
The dialog is clearly recorded		
The refusal contains an opening, actual refusal, and closing		
Each speaker takes at least three turns		
The refusal is negotiated		
The refusal suits the situational context and the relationship between the speakers		
The refuser's tone of voice expresses empathy and apology		
The refuser gives reasons, alternatives, an apology, and thanks		
The two speakers adhere to the appropriate level of formality that coincides with the situation (hint: if the speakers are two close friends, the refusals can be direct)		

2. **You have two refusal dialogs to an invitation. They are not in the correct order.**

- Order the two dialogs in the empty boxes on the left.

- What is the level of formality for each dialog?

- What is the relationship between the speakers?

- What types of refusal strategies used in terms of directness in each dialog?

- Write the three refusal moves used in each dialog with examples.

Dialog One: this dialog is between Gretchen (a Ph.D candidate) and Dr.Hampton (a professor). Gretcchen (G) knocks on Dr.Hampton's door (H)	
(Opening)	G: Dr.Hampton, Alan and I wanted to have a few people over for a dinner party to celebrate finishing my dissertation. We would like to invite you especially, since you are the chair of the department. Would you be able to come next Saturday at 1:00 pm? H: I'd be delighted Gretchen. But, did you say Saturday?
	G: Oh! I see. H: I am really sorry about that. I wish I could attend, but I am already committed. I am sure your party is going to be fun. You deserve it after all the hard work.
(Actual refusal)	G: Thank you. It's sad you won't be able to make it to the party. H: I know. We can probably arrange for dinner when I return from DC. What do you think of that? G: It sounds like a great idea. Let's plan it when you come back.
	G: Good morning, Dr. Hampton. May I come in? Good morning Gretchen. Of course. How can I be of help?
(closing)	G: Yes, if that works for you and Mrs. Hampton. H: Oh! Thank you for inviting Mrs. Hampton and me to this special event, but unfortunately I won't be available on that day. I am attending a conference in Washington DC.

Dialog Two: Tom is calling his friend Don asking him to go bowling with him and their other friend Jerry.	
(Opening)	Tom: Oh, hi, Don. Good. How have you been?
	Don: Good. Listen, Jerry and I wanted to go bowling tomorrow night. Do you wanna join us?
(Actual refusal)	Tom: Hello. Don: Hello, Tom? This is Don. How are you?
	Don: Don't worry about it. Maybe next time. Good luck on your exam. Tom: Thanks. See you. Don: Bye.
(closing)	Don: Oh! Come on, Tom. It'll be fun. Coming with us will make you relax. Then, you will study better. Tom: I really can't. I've got a chemistry exam on Monday and a book report due on Tuesday on American literature that I am getting really nervous about. I don't think I'd enjoy it much. But thanks a lot for thinking of me. Sorry I can't go.
	Tom: Well, it sounds like fun, but actually I've really got a lot of homework to do just now.

Appendix C: Performing Request-Refusal Phase - Handout (Six)

Work in Pairs

<u>**Cards of Pictures:**</u>

Create a conversation for the picture and/or about the scenario that corresponds to your group's number. Consider the following.

- You have ten minutes to create and practice your dialog or role-play.
- You have five minutes to read it or act it out in pairs.
- Consider the points written by your teacher in your card when creating your dialog.

Create a request refusal dialog. Both the requester and the person who is refusing are being polite in a formal context.	1
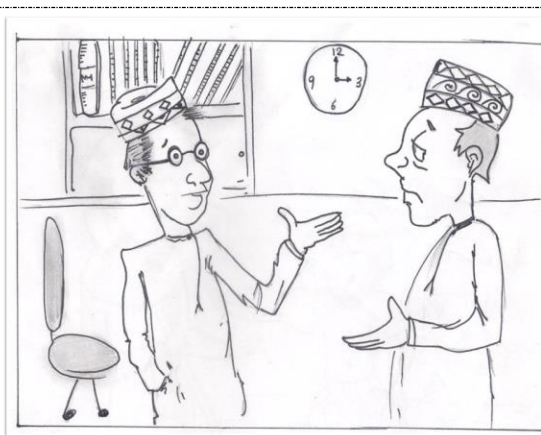
Create a request for this semi-formal situation. The woman asks the girl to nanny her baby while she is at work today. The girl agrees.	2

The Omani woman asks the American girl to drink coffee and eat some more food, but the girl is too full. Thus, the American girl refuses. Both speakers are being very nice and polite. They negotiate their requests and refusals.	3	
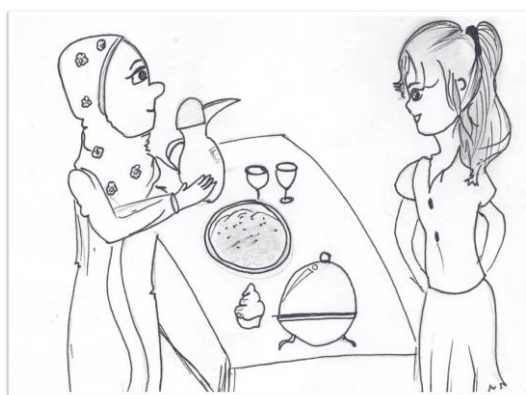
Nader asks Ali if he wants some ice cream, but Ali impolitely refuses. Ali's reaction shocks Nader, but Nader understands that Ali does not know how to refuse politely. So, Nader teaches Ali to refuse politely.	4	
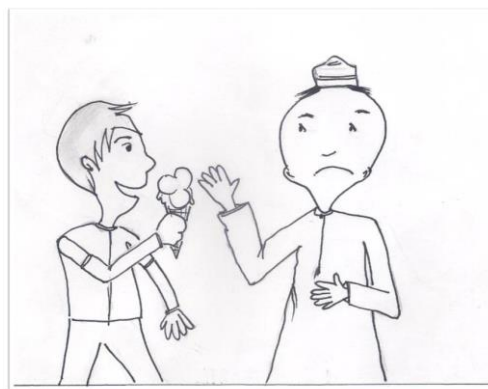
Cards of Scenarios

1.Make a request that is refused by your classmate: You were sick yesterday and did not attend your class. You ask your classmate to give you her/his notebook. The classmate refuses to give you the notes because there is a test tomorrow and s/he needs to study from the notebook. Your classmate refuses politely and you understand. Therefore, you ask her/him to make you a copy and s/he agrees.

2.Decline a request: Your friend wants to borrow your car. He borrowed it many times before and had two car accidents with it. Also, he does not help fill up the gas at all. You need to be direct with him, but you still give reasons.

3. Make a very polite request that is accepted: You request from your teacher to give you extra assignments because you did poorly in the quiz. (Follow the request model)

4. Make a request: Your roommate is too loud and noisy, and she parties every night. Today, you are going to talk to her about all of this.

5. Make a request: you are a mother and you have asked your child to pick up her clothes from the floor many times, but she does not listen. Today, you are going to be firm about it. How are you going to pose your request? You can provide more than one.

6. Make requests: you are in trained First Aid Basic Life Support. You see a person falling down in front of you. You ask an assistant to get the first aid kit and call the emergency number. How are you going to request?
What are the inappropriate requests for this situation?

7. Refuse an invitation. You are an international student, and your nice and friendly host mother invites you over to a hockey game. You are very busy with your finals. You need to be polite when you refuse (use the refusal model).

Appendix D: Tables (1-5)

Table 1

Taxonomy of External and Internal Modification Devices of Requests

Modification Devices			
Type	**Sub-type**		**Examples**
Internal Modification			
	Openers		**"Do you think** you could open the window?" **"Would you mind** opening the window?"
	Softeners	Understatement	"Could you open the window **for a moment**?"
		Downtoner	"Could you **possibly** open the window?"
		Hedge	"Could you **kind of** open the window?"
	Intensifiers		"You **really** must open the window." **"I'm sure** you wouldn't mind opening the window."
	Fillers	Hesitators	"I **er, erm, er**- I wonder if you could open the window."
		Cajolers	**"You know, you see, I mean"**, could you open the window?

	Appealers	"Ok? Right? Yeah"
	Attention getters	"Excuse me; Hello.. look.. Tom? Ms. Man's father…"
External Modifiers		**Examples**
	Perpetrators	"**May I ask you a favor?** Could you open the window?"
	Grounders	"**It seems it is quite hot here**. Could you open the window?"
	Disarmers	"I hate bothering you but could you open the window"
	Expanders	"Would you mind opening the window?.. **Once again, could you open the window?**"
	Promise of reward	"Could you open the window? **If you open it, I promise to bring you to the cinema.**"
	Please	"would you mind opening the window, **please**?"

<Adopted from Alcon et al., 2005: 17 in Esther Uso-Juan 240>

Appendix D

Table 2

Indirect Requests: Utterances Used for Indirect Requesting

Group	Examples
Sentences targeting hearers ability to perform the task	"Can/could you reach the salt?" "Can/could you pass the salt?" "Could you be a little bit quiet?" "Are you able to carry this heavy bag to the kitchen?" "Have you got change for a dollar?"
Sentences targeting speakers' wish or want that the hearer will do	"I would like you to come now." "I want you to type this for me, Jon." "I would/should appreciate it if you would/could extend my leave." "I'd rather you didn't invite her to the party." "I'd be very much obliged if you would release me earlier from work today." "I hope you'll turn in the paper on time." "I wish you wouldn't tell the boss I left early yesterday."
Sentences targeting hearers' doing the act	"Will you stop biting your nails?" "Would you kindly get off my hair?" "Won't you stop biting your nails?" "Aren't you going to eat lunch yet?"
Sentences targeting hearers' desire or willingness to do the act	"Would you be willing to give me a ride home?" "Do you want to type the article?" "Would you mind chopping up the vegetables for the salad?" "Would be convenient for you to throw the party next Friday?"

	"Would it be too much (trouble) for you to edit my paper?"
Sentences targeting reasons for doing the act	"You ought to be more polite to your mother." "It might help if you just tell her you don't like it." "It would be better for you (for us) if you drove home now than in the dark."
Sentences embedding another one of the above elements inside; additionally, utterances embedding an explicit directive illocutionary verb inside one of these contexts	"**Would you mind awfully if I asked you if you could** lend me your car for a week?" "Would it be too much if I suggested that you could possibly edit my poem?" "I hope you won't mind if I ask you if you could cancel the class today." "I would appreciate it if you could give me a second chance to do the presentation.|"

<Adopted from Jon Searle, Expression and Meaning 36-39>

Appendix D

Table 3

Requests Strategies: A socio-pragmatic Approach

Direct	Examples
Obligations	"You must/have to lend me your car."
Performatives Direct	"I would like to ask you to lend me your car."
Imperatives	"Lend me your car (please)?"
Conventionally Indirect (hear-based)	**Examples**
Ability	"Can/could you lend me your car?"
Willingness	"Would you lend me your bike?"
Permission	"May I borrow your bike?"
Suggestory formulae	"How about going with me to the movies?"
Conventionally Indirect (speaker-based)	
Wishes	"I would like to borrow your bike."
Desires/ needs	"I want/need to borrow bike."
Indirect Hints	"I have to study for the exam."

< Adopted from **Trosborg and Alcon et al. in Uso-Juan 239-241>**

Appendix D

Table 4

Request Module Procedures

Opening the Interaction:

Introducing yourself

"I am Aseela Al Balushi, a student in your speaking class."   "My name is Aseela Al Balushi, and

I am a lawyer at the ----- company."

Requesting the Listener's Time

"I just need a few minutes of your time."   "This will just take a few minutes."

"I won't take up too much time." "I know you are very busy, so I will try to be brief."

"May I have a word with you?"

Introducing the Topic.

"I need to talk to you about" "What I would like to talk to you about"

"The reason I asked to meet with you is to discuss" "I would like to discuss"

"I would like your support for"

<Adopted from Kayfetz and Smith 30-31>

Table 4- Continued

Making the Request and Obtaining the Response

"I would like to request"
"I request that you"
"With your permission, I would like to"
"Would it be possible for me to"

Closing the Interaction

"Thank you for your help"
"Thank you for meeting with me today"
"I appreciate your willingness to help"

<Adopted from Kayfetz and Smith 30-31>

Appendix D

Table 5

Request Strategies Ordered According to the Level of Politeness

Suitable ways of requesting, which are arranged according to the level of politeness. Table 5 lists them from least to most polite.

Rude:
 * "Give me a dollar."
   "Hey, I need some change."
   "Hey, I am out of change."

** "You don't have a quarter, do you?"
   "Have you got a quarter, by any chance?"
   "Can I borrow a quarter?"

*** "You couldn't lend me a dollar, could you?"
    "Do you think you could lend me a dollar?"
    "I wonder if you could lend me a dollar?"

**** "Would you mind lending me a dollar?"
     "If you could lend me five dollars, I would be very grateful."

***** "Could you possibly lend me your typewriter?"
      "Do you think you could possibly lend me your typewriter?"
      "I wonder if you could possibly lend me your typewriter."

****** "I hope you don't mind my asking, but I wonder if it might be at all possible for you to lend me your car."

<Adopted from Jones and Bayer 17>

Appendix E: Tables (1-2)

Table 1

Indirect Refusal Strategies

Refusal Strategy	Example
1. Reason or explanation	"But the thing is that I have a meeting at 5:00pm."
2. Alternatives	"Well, I'd kind of thought of taking another class." "Why don't we go out for dinner next week?"
3. Expression of regret or apology	"I'm really sorry." "I apologize."
Avoidance	
(a) Postponement	"Can I think about it?"
(b) Hedging	"I don't know."
(c) Request for clarification	"Did you say Saturday?"
(d) Request for additional information	"Can you tell me more about the gathering?"
(e) Partial repeats of previous utterance	A: "I am having a party on Monday and I would love it if you could come." B: "*Monday*?" [partial repeat in italics]
Indefinite response	"Maybe." "That's a possibility."

< Adopted from Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 164>

Appendix E

Table 2

Classification of Refusal Strategies (72-73)

Refusals	Examples	
(a) Semantic formulas		
(1) Direct Strategies		
Performatives"verbs"	"I refuse."	
Nonperformatives	"No, I can't." "No."	
(2) Indirect Strategies	Examples	
Expression of Regret or apology	"I'm really sorry… I apologize… I feel terrible."	
Wish	"I wish I could help you."	
Excuses, reason, explanation	"I have theater tickets that night." "But I have to work late."	
Alternative	"Maybe I can come later for a drink." "I'd prefer to go tomorrow." "Why don't you ask someone else?"	
Set condition for future or past acceptance	"If you had asked me earlier, I would have…"	
Promise of future acceptance	"I'll do it next time." "I promise I will."	
Statement of principle	"I never do business with friends." "I never cheat in the exam."	
Statement of philosophy	"One can't be too careful."	
Attempt to dissuade interlocutor	Threatening or stating negative consequences to the requester	"It won't be any fun tonight." "I will feel sicker if I go."
	Guilt trip	"Waitress to customers: I

|		
		can't make a living off people who just order coffee."
	Statement of negative feeling or opinion	"I don't feel excited about it"
	Insult/attack	"Who do you think you are?" "That's a terrible idea."
	Empathy, or assistance by holding or dropping the request	
	Let the interlocutor off the hook	"Don't worry about it." "That's okay." "You don't have to."
Acceptance that functions as a refusal	Unspecific reply with lack of enthusiasm	"Maybe." "That's a possibility."
Avoidance	Nonverbal	
	Verbal	a. Topic switch
		b. Joke
		c. Repetition of part of the request "Monday?"
		d. Postponement "I'll think about it"
		e. Hedging "Gee.. I don't know.. I am not sure."

< Adopted from Beebe and Takahashi 72-73; Dialent 141-145>

(b) Adjucents	Examples
Statement of positive opinion	" I would love to." "That's a good idea."
Statement of empathy	"I realize you are in a difficult situation."
Pause fillers	"uhh... well… oh.. uhm"
Gratitude/appreciation	"Thank you."

< Adopted from Beebe and Takahashi 72-73; Dialent 141-145>

Appendix F: Charts

Chart 1
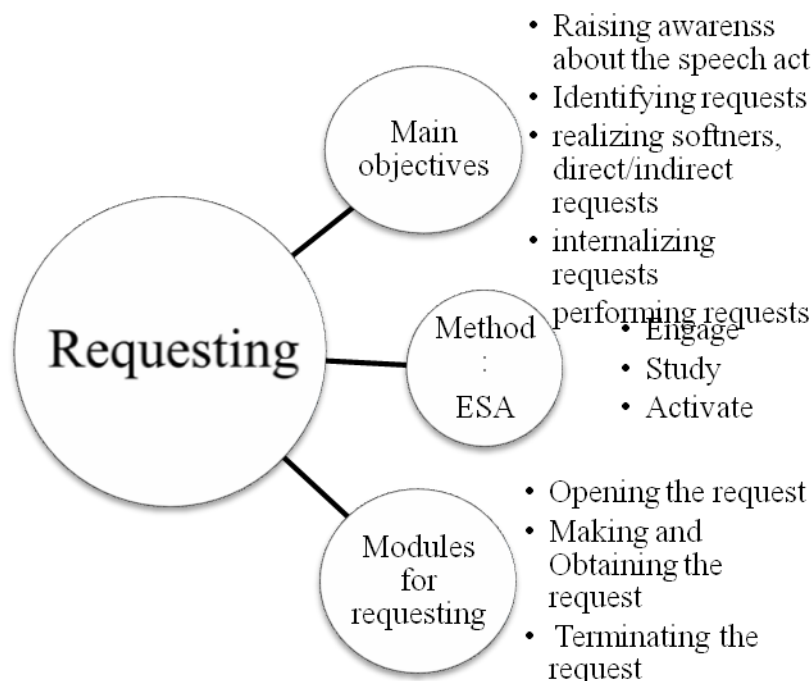
As illustrated in Chart (1), I have developed a technique to teach the speech acts of request. This technique: main objectives, teaching method, and modules for the request and refusal strategies. The ESA method procedures are employed to achieve the main objectives. The request module strategies will be utilized through ESA method in order to achieve some of the main objectives: identifying, realizing, and performing particular ways for requesting. The structure of the main objectives is adapted from (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 163-180) while the adapted method and models have been already explained in the literature review.

Appendix F

Chart 2
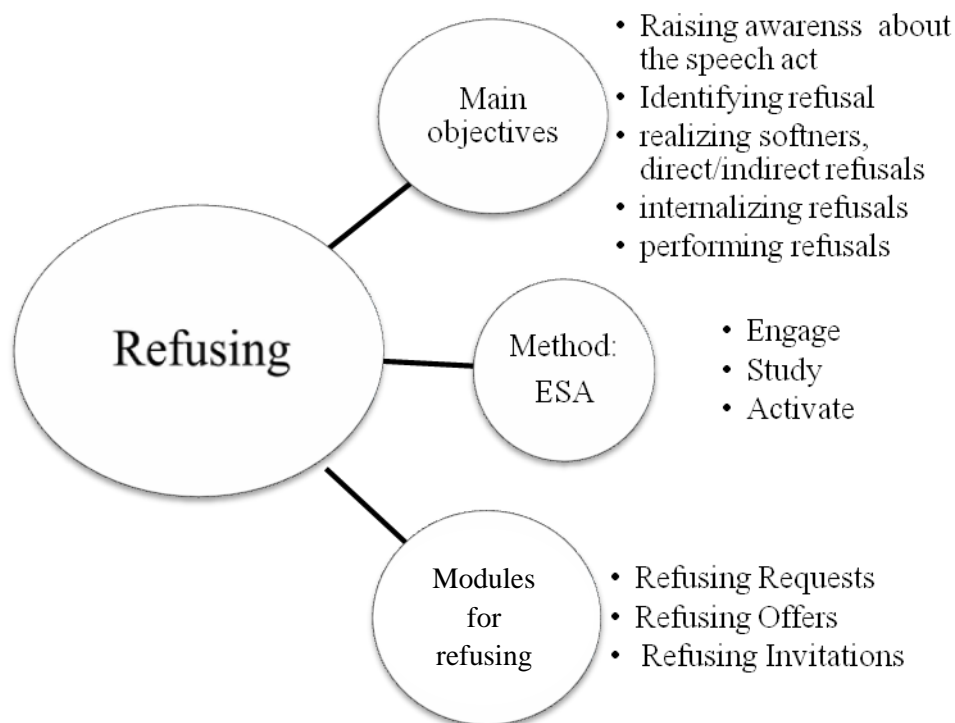
As illustrated in Figure (2), I have developed a technique to teach the speech acts of

refusal. This technique is contained of main objectives, teaching method, and modules for the

refusal strategies. The ESA method procedures are employed to achieve the main objectives.

The refusal module strategies will be utilized through ESA method in order to achieve some of

the main objectives: identifying, realizing, and performing particular ways for refusing. The

structure of the main objectives is adopted from (Felix-Brasdefer and Bardovi-Harlig 163-180)

while the adopted method and modules have been already explained in the literature review.