Refusal Speech Act Realization in Sarawani Balochi Dialect: A Case Study of Male University Students

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Abstract

Following Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz's (1990) classification, this study examines the relationship between power and gender of the addressees and the type and number of refusal strategies employed by Sarawani Baloch male university students (SBMUS). Fifty SBMUS studying in Azad University of Sarawan were randomly chosen as the participants of the study. Data collection was accomplished through applying a revised version of DCT (Discourse Completion Test). The data collected were then coded and analyzed according to Beebe et al.'s (ibid.) taxonomy, and Chi-square and Correlation test results. The results show that refusal strategies extracted, are, for the most part, similar to those given in Beebe et al.'s work, which, in turn, confirms the universality of applying refusal strategies. However, SBMUS also employ some new strategies not predicted in the given scheme, suggesting the effect of their religion and culture. Research findings also denote the ineffectiveness of power and gender of the addressees on the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Moreover, results indicate that although power of the addressees affects number of refusal strategies used by the participants, their gender does not affect this variable. "Excuse, reason, explanation" dealing with all the addressees, the combination of 3 refusal strategies in reply to those in higher social power, and the combination of 2 strategies in response to those with equal and lower power are the most frequent refusal strategies regarding the type and number of refusal strategies.

1. Introduction

"Politeness is a form of social interaction that is conditioned by the socio-cultural norms of a particular society; it can be expressed through communicative and non-communicative acts" (Félix-Brasdefer, 2006, p. 2159). Regarding a communicative or speech act such as refusal, apology, request, or complain, the investigators' first concern is to arrive at a set of potentially universal realization patterns. As cited in Blum-Kulka et al. (1989, p. 5):

> Speech communities share detectable patterns of speech, and that such "cultural ways of speaking" (cf. Katriel, 1985) provide an important domain for the exploration of speech as a cultural phenomenon. Specific studies of speech acts from this perspective show how clashes between different interactional styles can lead to intercultural miscommunications.

Refusals are those speech acts applied for rejecting others' requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. As Beebe et al. (1990, p. 56) claim "refusals are major cross-cultural "sticking points" for many nonnative speakers, and for that reason they are important for second language educators and others involved in cross-cultural communication." Beebe et al.'s (ibid.) investigation on the speech act of refusal yielded results suggesting the significance of more research to be done on this speech act (and also other speech acts) in cross-cultural communications.

Regarding the universality of speech acts, the importance of this study mostly lies in the fact that the realization of speech act of refusal is investigated in a language variety, not studied yet. Due to such significance, the researchers conducted an investigation to extract and categorize refusal strategies in Sarawani Balochi dialect following Beebe et al.'s (1990) refusal classification

system. The study further aims to examine the effect of power and gender of the addressees on the type and number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.

According to Barjaste Delforooz (2009, p. 22), "the Balochi speaking area covers a vast territory stretching north to south from Mari in Turkmenistan to the Gulf States and west to east from the south-eastern part of Iran to the lower Indus". He then specifies the provinces inhabited by Baloch speakers and adds that the Baloch mostly live "in the Province of Sistan and Balochistan in Iran, the Province of Balochistan in Pakistan, and the Provinces of Nimruz and Hilmand in Afghanistan as well as the United Arab Emirates and Oman".

The Balochi language variety investigated in this study is Sarawani Balochi dialect which is spoken in Sarawan, a city located in the province of Sistan and Balochestan in Iran. The official language of Iran is Persian; however, as Jahani and Corn (2009) state Balochi is not an official language of education in any of the countries where it is spoken.

As for the verification of the meaningful relationship between the type and number of the refusal strategies employed and power and gender of the addressees, the following null hypotheses have been put forward:

1. There is not a meaningful relationship between power of the addressees and type of the refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.
2. There is not a meaningful relationship between gender of the addressees and type of the refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.
3. There is not a meaningful relationship between power of the addressees and number of the refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.
4. There is not a meaningful relationship between gender of the addressees and number of the refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.

2. Review of Related Literature

Austin (1962) maintains that all utterances, whatever their meaning, present particular acts via the particular communicative force of an utterance. Studies on different speech acts provide readers with a more complete realization of speech acts in intra- and cross-cultural interactions.

Phuong (2006) conducted an investigation on refusals employed by Australian native speakers of English (AEs) and Vietnamese learners of English (VEsh). His study results revealed that the frequency of SARs (speech act of refusal) used by AEs was different from that employed by VEs, though they shared some similarities. While AEs used the same number of SARs while interacting with their interlocutors, VEs were more careful about the social status and the social distance of the requesters. Besides, "and related to culture differences, AEs and VEs also differed in the ways they said "NO" to their conversational partners" (ibid.: vii).

Félix-Brasdefer (2006) performed an investigation on refusals in Mexico. His research findings showed that in Mexican community politeness was realized through applying formulaic/semi-formulaic terms employed to negotiate face. In addition, an analysis of the refusal interactions showed that among Mexican speakers, "the negotiation of face was accomplished largely by various indirect attempts at (re)negotiating a successful resolution" (ibid.: 2158). Besides, regarding the emphasis of involvement over independence, as Scollon and Scollon (2001) claim, the findings indicated that face needs were oriented towards the group.

Al-Eryani's (2007) study was a pragma-linguistic investigation into the speech act of refusal as employed by Yemeni learners of English as a foreign language. The English performances of these learners were compared to those

of Yemeni Arabic native speakers and American English native speakers to find out whether the refusal strategies utilized by Yemeni learners of English, matched more with those of Yemeni Arabic native speakers or with those of American English native speakers. Results of his research showed that a similar range of refusal strategies were available to the two language groups. However, cross-cultural variation was also seen in the frequency and content of semantic formulas employed by each language group concerning the contextual variables, including the status of interlocutors (higher, equal, or lower status) and eliciting acts i.e., requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions.

Allami and Naeimi's (2011) research aimed at investigating the issue of production of refusals by Iranian EFL learners. They did this by "exploring the frequency, shift and content of semantic formulas with regard to the effect of learners' language proficiency (lower-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate), status of interlocutors (lower, equal and higher) and the types of eliciting acts (requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions) on realization of the refusal strategies" (ibid.: 385). Their study results revealed that there are variations in the frequency, shift and content of semantic formulas employed in refusals by Iranian and American subjects when dealing with a higher, equal, or lower status person.

Hassani, Mardani and Dastjerdi's (2011) investigation on the differences between Iranian EFL learners' use of English and Persian refusals demonstrated that participants used more indirect strategies in Persian compared with English. Considerable discrepancy was not seen between males and females' refusal strategies. With regard to the social status, their findings revealed that the Persian group employed more indirect strategies when speaking with someone in a higher status.

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Sadeghi and Savojbolaghchilar (2011) compared the refusal strategies utilized by four groups of native and nonnative speakers of English, including American English speakers, Persian/Azeri speakers with little knowledge of English, advanced Iranian learners of English, and Iranians living in the U.S. for around 10 years. They found out that in general, Iranian residents and advanced learners employed different strategies to refuse requests, invitations, offers and suggestions from Iranians who lived abroad and acted more similarly to native speakers living in the U.S.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Participants of the study include fifty male students studying in the first through fourth semesters in different academic fields in Azad University of Sarawan; they were randomly chosen by the researchers. University students were selected because it was thought that ordinary Baloch people might have problems filling out the questionnaires due to inadequate levels of education. These university students were from Sarawan and its suburbs. Their ages ranged from 20 to 30 years with a mean age of 26 years. The participants typically spoke two languages in their daily lives: one their mother tongue, Sarawani Balochi, and the other, Persian, as a standard language. They were mostly living in families with parents having little and/or no education. Most of the participants' fathers were farmers, drivers, or simple workers and almost all of their mothers were housekeepers.

3.2. Instrument and Procedure

Collecting the research data was accomplished through applying a modified version of Discourse Completion Test/Task (DCT). The DCT is some kind of open-ended questionnaires, originally used by Blum-Kulka et al. in 1982. DCTs, like other data collection methods, have their own advantages and disadvantages. Being appropriate for gathering a large amount of data in a short period of time is one of the noticeable advantages of DCTs (Wolfson, Marmor & Jones, 1989). In contrast, one of the most important criticisms directed at the data collected through DCTs is that they do not reflect natural speech. However, within the time constraints of this study, this data collection method seemed appropriate. The DCT provided for this study was prepared with some modifications. Attempts were made to keep the main body of the original DCT provided by Blum-Kulka (1982), that is, the description of the situations. The questionnaire consisted of 5 situations. Since the addressees were supposed to be distinguished between 6 cases of higher (a male and a female professor), equal (a male and a female classmate) and lower (a male and a female library servant) social status, some adjustments were made by the researchers. The DCT prepared for this study was written in Sarawani Balochi using Persian script (since Balochi does not have a standard orthography). Moreover, the students were asked to note down their normal language reactions in each situation in Sarawani Balochi. DCTs were returned to one of the researchers in person.

3.3. Coding Scheme and Data Analysis

According to the taxonomy provided by Beebe et al. (1990), refusals are divided into two main groups: direct refusals and indirect ones. These, in turn,

have their sub-divisions. The main taxonomy together with the examples from Sarawani Balochi is presented in the next part (the Results Section).

The data extracted from the questionnaires were coded according to Beebe et al.'s coding scheme. Then, they were analyzed applying the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16. For all analyses, the alpha level was set at 0.05. Pearson's Chi-square test (X^2) was used to probe whether there is a meaningful relation between power and gender of the addressees and the type and the number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS or not. Besides, Spearman's Correlation test was run to investigate whether the existing relation is reverse or not.

4. Results

As discussed above, refusal strategies found in the linguistic corpus collected were coded following Beebe et al.'s (1990) coding scheme. In this process, while some strategies matched the ones proposed in the given scheme, some new strategies were also observed. Below, a list of refusal strategies found in Sarawani Balochi is presented; new strategies have been shown with stars.

I. Direct

    A. Performative (not observed)

    B. Non-performative

      1. No

      næ

      'no'

      "No!"

      2. Negative willingness/ability

      - næ-bu   *bi-j-ɑ-j-ã*

      'NEG-become.PRES.3SG   SUBJ-EP-come.PRES-EP-1SG'

      "It's not possible for me to come."

-*mon   næ-twɑn-ã̃*

 I   NEG-can.PRES-1SG

 "I can't."

II. Indirect

A. Statement of regret

-*ozr-æ   loʈ-ã̃*

'apology-V.EL   want.PRES-1SG'

"I apologize!"

-*be-bækʃ-ej*

'IMPER-forgive.PRES-2SG'

"Forgive me!"

-*ʃærmændæ-on*

'ashamed-COP.PRES.1SG'

"I'm ashamed."

B. Excuse, reason, explanation

-*kɑr-on   hæs*

'work-PRO.CLIT.1SG   be.PRES.3SG'

"I'm busy."

-*mon   ræ-w-ã̃   dæwɑr*

'I   go.PRES-EP-1SG home'

"I go home."

C. Statement of alternative

-*wæt-e(t)   bo-ro   ʃomɑræ-j-æ*

'self-GEN.PRO.CLIT.2SG IMPER-go.PRES.2SG   number-EP-OM

er-i   be-ge:r

from-PRO.CLIT.3SG   IMPER-take.PRES.2SG'

"Go and take his number yourself!"

- dege   dohter-i   be-d-ej

'other   girl-INDEF   IMPER-give.PRES-2SG'

"Give it to another girl!"

D. Promise of future acceptance

- dege   ʃæp-e

'other   night-INDEF'

"Another night…"

E. Statement of principle

- hetʃ   æmɑnæt-æ   kæbul-æ   næ-kæn-ɑ̃

'nothingsafekeeping-OM   accept-V.EL   NEG-do.PRES-1SG'

"I don't accept any safekeeping."

F.   Attempt to dissuade interlocutor

1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester

- mon   hetʃ   wæʃ-in   æmɑnæt-dɑr   næ-h-o

'I   nothing   good-ATTR   safekeeping-having   NEG-be.PRES-1SG'

"I' m not a good depository at all."

-pænæ-j-e   mon   gɑr-æ   bu

'near-EP-GEN   I   lost-V.EL   become.PRES.3SG'

"It'll be lost with me."

2. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack

sɑr-et   kodʒɑ-j-æt

'sense.PL-GEN.PRO.CLIT.2SG where-EP-be.PAST.3SG'

"Where were you? (Literally, you are absent-minded.)"

I. Acceptance that functions as a refusal

● Unspecific or indefinite reply

næ-dɑn-ɑ̃

'NEG-know.PRES-1SG'

"I don't know."

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J. *Request for information/clarification

pæ   tʃe?
'for   what'
"Why?"

K. *Statement of preference

pæ   pɑd-æ   rɑhæt-ter-ɑ̃
'with   leg-OBL   comfortable-COMP- COP.PRES.1SG'
"I prefer walking."

L. Agreement

heiri
'ok'
"Ok!"

M. *Resorting to third party

gopt-æ   i   hetʃ   kæs-e
'tell.PAST-PP.3SG   this   nothing   person-INDEF

mæ-d-ej
PROHIB-give.PRES-2SG'
"He told me not to give it (his number) to anyone."

N. *Not to accept Namahram[1]'s invitation, request, etc.

mon   wæt-e   dʒænin-ɑn   næ-ræ-w-ɑ̃
'I   self-GEN   woman-PL   NEG-go.PRES-EP-1SG'
"I don't go anywhere with women."

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[1]*Namahram* (not mahram) is a Persianized opposite of the term *mahram* which is an Arabic term being used in Islamic sharia legal terminology. *Mahram* is anyone whom a Muzlim is not allowed to marry, if they are of the opposite sex and have reached puberty. A partial list of what is considered *mahram* can be found in Surah 24, Ayah 31, of the Quran. (http://www.reference.com/browse/Mahram).

O. *Avoid disturbing the speaker

    mozɑhem-e   *tæw*   *næ-b-ɑ̃*

    'disturbing-GEN   you   NEG-become.PRES-1SG'

    "I don't inconvenience you."

P. * Evoking the name of God (God willing)[2]

    enʃælæ.

    'God willing'

    "God willing!"

Q. *Swearing

    hæk-ɑn-e   *wæt-e(t)*

    'right-PL-GEN self-GEN.2SG'

    "(I swear) by your own right!"

R. Avoidance

    1. Nonverbal

    2. Verbal

   - postponement

    bɑndɑ   *ræ-w-ɑ̃*   *ger-ɑ̃*

    'tomorrow   go.PRES-EP-1SG   take.PRES-1SG'

    "Tomorrow, I'll go and take it (for you)."

● Joke

    mon   *tors-ɑ̃*   *tæw*   *wæʃ*

    'I   fear.PRES-1SG   you   well

    rɑnændegi   *balad*   *næ-h-ej'*

    'driving   know   NEG-be.PRES-2SG'

    I fear. You do not know driving well.

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[2] It should be mentioned that the expressions "God willing" and "swearing" were not applied by the subjects as an isolated strategy; rather, they were used together with other strategies such as postponement and promise of future acceptance. However, regarding the importance of religious and cultural factors in the participants' answers, the authors decided to consider these expressions separately in order to highlight such an effect.

-*Adjuncts to Refusals*

1. Statement of empathy (e.g., "I realize you are in a different situation.")

   dɑn-ã   *moʃgel-et*   *hæ*

   'know.PRES-1SG   problem-GEN.PRO.CLIT.2SG   be.PRES.3SG'

   "I know that you have a problem."

2. Pause fillers

   oʤej

   'hey'

   "Hey you!"

3. *Address terms

   - *brɑs*

   'brother'

   "Brother!"

   -*gohar*

   'sister'

   "Sister!"

   - *bibi*

   'Mrs'

   "Mrs!"

   - *Wadʒæ*

   'Mr'

   "Mr!"

4. Gratitude/appreciation

   mennatwɑr-on

   'gratefull-be.PRES.1SG'

   "*Thanks very much.*"

The above-mentioned examples were some instances representing the type of refusal strategies employed. Moreover, some instances related to the

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number of such strategies are illustrated below. These examples comprise 1 (simple) and combinations of 2, 3, 4, and 5 strategies (where each strategy has been given an identification letter):

1. An example for 1 (simple) strategy is the strategy "H" which shows "postponement":

banda   *ja-j-ã*

'tomorrow   IMP.come.PRES-EP-1SG'

"Tomorrow, I'll come."

2. An example for a combination of 2 strategies is "AE" which shows both the strategies "address terms "and " excuse, reason, explanation":

oʤej   *zær-on*   *gon*   *nis*

 A   E

'hey   money-PRO.CLIT.1SG with.PRO.CLIT.1SG   NEG.be.PRES.3SG'

 "Hey, I don't have any money."

3.   "ALE" is an instance for a combination of 3 strategies which comprises the strategies "address terms", "statement of alternative" and "excuse, reason, explanation":

   bibi   *jæk-e*   *degær-æ*   *dimd-ej*   *mon-æ*

   A   L

   'mrs   one-INDEF   other-OBL   IMPER.give.PRES-2SG   I-OBL

   kar   *hæs*

     E

   work   be.PRES.3SG'

"Mrs., give it to someone else. I'm busy."

4.   "CADE" can be referred to as a case for a combination of 4 strategies which consists of the strategies "statement of regret", "address terms", "negative willingness/ability", and "excuse, reason, explanation":

be-bækʃ-ej	*ostɑd*	*næ-bu*
C	A	D
'IMPER-forgive.PRES-2SG	professor	NEG-become.PRES.3SG

ke	*b-ger-ɑn-i*		*pæ-m-iʃi*
CL.LINK	SUBJ-take.PRES-1SG-PRO.CLIT.3SG		for-EMPH-this

ke	*mon*	*golɑiʃ-ɑ̃*	*ræ-w-ɑ̃*	*særɑwɑn*
			E	
CL.LINK	I	have.PRES-1SG	go.PRES-EP-1SG	Sarawan'

"Excuse me sir, I can't take it for you because I'm going to Sarawan."

5. An example for a combination of 5 strategies is "CAUID" which includes the strategies "statement of regret", "address terms", "evoking the name of God (God Willing)", "Promise of future acceptance", and "negative willingness/ ability":

be-bækʃ-ej	*ostɑd*	*enʃælæ*
C	A	U
'IMPER-forgive.PRES-2SG	professor	God willing

dege	*ruz-e*	*mozɑhem-eʃ*	*b-ɑ̃*
			I
other	day-INDEF	disturbing-GEN.2PL	become.PRES-1SG

mæruzi	*næ-twɑn-ɑ̃*
D	
today	NEG-can.PRES-1SG'

"Excuse me sir! God willing, someday, I'll trouble you (come to eat dinner with you). Today I can't."

5. Analysis of Data

This part comprises the analysis of the type and number of refusal strategies employed by the participants, respectively. As to the type of refusal strategies, tables 1, 2, 3, (regarding the power of the addressees) and 5 and 6 (regarding

gender of the addressees) show frequency and the total percentage of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Regarding the number of refusal strategies, tables 8 and 10 show frequency and the total percentage of simple and complex refusal strategies employed, in accordance with power and gender of the addressees, respectively. In addition, tables 4, 7, 9 and 11 specify Chi-square test results for the type and number of refusal strategies used as a function of the power and gender of the addressees in five situations under research.

5.1. Type of Refusal Strategies

Considering the examples given in the previous section, and the data presented in tables 1, 2 and 3, the findings show that in addition to employing most of the refusal strategies in Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification, SBMUS used some new strategies which have not been predicted in the given scheme. These are "request for information or clarification", "statement of preference", "resorting to the third party", "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.", "avoidance of inconveniencing the addressees", "evoking the name of God", "swearing", and "address terms" like *gohar* 'sister' and *bras* 'brother'.

Frequency and total percentage of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS as functions of the power of the addressees in all the situations under study are illustrated in tables 1, 2 and 3. The strategies are arranged from the one with the maximum frequency and percentage to the one with the minimum frequency and percentage of use in all the data according to the power of the addressees. According to these tables, the participants employed more strategies dealing with the addressees with higher power. They applied 1286 strategies in reply to the addressees with higher power (professors), 1058 strategies in reply to the addressees with equal power (classmates), and 1045 strategies in reply to the addressees with lower power (library servants).

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Tables 1, 2 and 3 show that the most frequent strategy used by the participants is "excuse, reason, explanation" with 281 times of occurrence in reply to professors, 252 times of occurrence in reply to classmates and 263 times of occurrence in reply to library servants, respectively. The next two ranks of refusal strategies used dealing with professors are dedicated to the strategies of "statement of regret" and "address terms" with 244 and 222 frequency of use. Additionally, the next two refusal strategies with the highest frequency of use in response to classmates are "negative willingness, ability" with 220 and "statement of regret" with 137 frequencies. As to the library servants, the next two refusal strategies and their order are the same as the ones for classmates; however, the frequencies differ with 216 and 152 times of occurrence, respectively.

Table 1 represents refusal strategies used by the participants, their frequencies and percentage in all the data in response to professors. As this table shows, here the participants' responses include 37.84% of total refusal strategies.
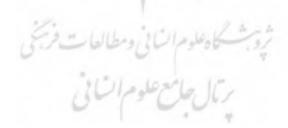
Table 1. Frequency and Total Percentage of the Refusal Strategies Employed By SBMUS Dealing with Professors in 5 Situations under Study

Type of refusal strategies (PROF)	FR	% of total
Excuse, reason, explanation	281	8.29
Statement of regret	244	7.19
Address terms	222	6.55
Negative willingness, ability	201	5.93
Gratitude, appreciation	83	2.44
Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	50	1.47
Agreement	36	1.06
Statement of preference	31	0.91
No	26	0.76
Promise of future acceptance	20	0.59
Resorting to the third party	19	0.56
Avoid disturbing the speaker	14	0.41
Statement of alternative	12	0.35
Postponement	11	0.32
Statement of empathy	11	0.32
God willing	10	0.29
Not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.	5	0.14
Request for information, clarification	5	0.14
Pause fillers	2	0.05
Swearing	2	0.05
Proverb	1	0.02
Total	1286	37.84

Table 2 displays refusal strategies used by the participants, their frequencies and percentage in all the data in response to classmates. As this table shows the participants' responses here include 31.08% of total refusal strategies.

Table 2. Frequency and Total Percentage of the Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS Dealing with Classmates in 5 Situations under Study

Type of refusal strategies (CLM)	FR	% of total
Excuse, reason, explanation	252	7.43
Negative willingness, ability	220	6.49
Statement of regret	137	4.04
Address terms	124	3.65
Gratitude, appreciation	75	2.21
No	34	1.003
Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	32	0.94
Agreement	27	0.79
Statement of preference	26	0.76
Statement of alternative	24	0.70
Resorting to the third party	21	0.61
Promise of future acceptance	19	0.56
Not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.	13	0.38
Postponement	13	0.38
Statement of empathy	10	0.29
Avoid disturbing the speaker	8	0.23
Request for information, clarification	7	0.20
God willing	4	0.11
Criticize the request, requester, etc.	3	0.08
Pause fillers	3	0.08
Statement of principle	2	0.05
Lack of enthusiasm	2	0.05
Joke	2	0.05
Total	1058	31.08

Table 3 displays refusal strategies used by the participants, their frequencies and percentage in all the data in response to library servants. As this table shows the participants' responses here include 31% of total refusal strategies.

Table 3. Frequency and Total Percentage of the Refusal Strategies Employed By SBMUS Dealing with Servants in 5 Situations under Study

Type of refusal strategies (SERV)	FR	% of total
Excuse, reason, explanation	263	7.76
Negative willingness, ability	216	6.37
Statement of regret	152	4.48
Address terms	129	3.80
Gratitude, appreciation	66	1.94
Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	32	0.94
Statement of preference	31	0.91
No	26	0.76
Statement of alternative	26	0.76
Agreement	25	0.73
Promise of future acceptance	15	0.44
Resorting to the third party	15	0.44
Avoid disturbing the speaker	10	0.59
Postponement	9	0.26
Statement of empathy	8	0.23
God willing	7	0.20
Criticize the request, requester, etc.	5	0.14
Request for information, clarification	5	0.14
Pause fillers	2	0.05
Not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.	1	0.02
Swearing	1	0.02
Total	1045	31

As table 4 shows, Chi-square test results indicate that in situation 2 (p=0.482), in situation 3 (p=0.166), in situation 4 (p=0.173) and in situation 5 (p=0.188). So, since p is more than 0.05, there is no meaningful relationship between addressees' power and the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Thus, the first null hypothesis of the study which indicates that the relationship between power of the addressees and the type of refusal strategies

employed by SBMUS is not meaningful for these situations is confirmed. However, Chi-square test results for situation 1(p=0.026) suggest that there is a meaningful relationship between power of the addressees and the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS because p for this situation is less than 0.05. So, the first null hypothesis of the study for this situation is rejected.

Table 4.Chi-squareTest Results for Strategies Employed by SBMUS in 5Situations Related to the First Research Hypothesis of Refusal

	Chi-square test	
Situations	P	Reliability
1	0.026	95%
2	0.482	--
3	0.166	--
4	0.173	--
5	0.188	--

The most frequent refusal strategy employed by SBMUS in reply to both male and female addressees is "excuse, reason, explanation" with 406 and 390 times of occurrence, respectively, as tables 5 and 6 show. The next two ranks are assigned to "negative willingness, ability" with 315 times and "address terms" with 264 times of occurrence in reply to males. However, SBMUS employed "negative willingness, ability" and "statement of regret" with 322 and 272 frequency of use in response to the female addressees. The difference between the total number of strategies in reply to male and female addressees with frequencies 1717 and 1672 is not significant.

Based on the data in table 6, SBMUS have employed a strategy named "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc." in reply to females which is not employed in reply to their male addressees. On the contrary, the strategies "lack of enthusiasm" and "proverb" are merely used in reply to males.

Table 5 presents refusal strategies used by the participants, their frequencies and percentages in all the data in response to male addressees. As this table shows the participants' responses here include 49.27% of the total number of refusal strategies.

Table 5. Frequency and Total Percentage of Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS Dealing with Male Addressees in 5 Situations under Study

Type of refusal Strategies (M)	FR	% of total
Excuse, reason, explanation	406	11.97
Negative willingness, ability	315	9.29
Address terms	264	7.78
Statement of regret	261	7.70
Gratitude, appreciation	111	3.27
Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	57	0.14
Statement of preference	43	1.26
Agreement	43	1.26
No	42	1.23
Statement of alternative	30	0.88
Promise of future acceptance	27	0.79
Resorting to the third party	27	0.79
Avoid disturbing the speaker	19	0.56
Statement of empathy	19	0.56
Postponement	18	0.53
God willing	12	0.35
Request for information, clarification	10	0.29
Criticize the request, requester, etc.	3	0.08
Statement of principle	3	0.08
Lack of enthusiasm	2	0.05
Pause fillers	2	0.05
Swearing	1	0.02
Proverb	1	0.02
Joke	1	0.02
Total	1717	49.27

Table 6 shows refusal strategies used by the participants, their frequencies and percentages in all the data in response to female addressees. According to

this table, the participants' responses here include 49.50% of total refusal strategies.

Table 6. Frequency and Total Percentage of Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS Dealing with Female Addressees in 5 Situations under Study

Type of refusal Strategies (F)	FR	% of total
Excuse, reason, explanation	390	11.50
Negative willingness, ability	322	9.50
Statement of regret	272	8.02
Address terms	211	6.22
Gratitude, appreciation	113	3.33
Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester	57	1.68
Statement of preference	45	1.32
Agreement	45	1.32
No	44	1.29
Statement of alternative	32	0.94
Resorting to the third party	28	0.82
Promise of future acceptance	26	0.76
Not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.	19	0.56
Postponement	15	0.44
Avoid disturbing the speaker	13	0.38
Statement of empathy	10	0.59
God willing	9	0.26
Request for information, clarification	7	0.20
Criticize the request, requester, etc.	5	0.14
Pause fillers	5	0.14
Swearing	2	0.05
Statement of principle	1	0.02
Joke	1	0.02
Total	1672	49.50

Moreover, as table 7shows, Chi-square test results suggest that in situation 2 ($p=0.955$), in situation 3 ($p=0.967$), in situation 4 ($p=0.888$) and in situation 5 ($p=0.303$). Therefore, since p is more than 0.05, there is no meaningful

relationship between addressees' gender and the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Thus, the second null hypothesis of the study, which indicates that the relationship between gender of the addressees and type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS is not meaningful for these situations, is confirmed. However, Chi-square test results for situation 1 (p=0.024) suggest that there is a meaningful relationship between gender of the addressees and type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS, as p for this situation is less than 0.05. So, the second null hypothesis of the study for this situation is rejected.

Table 7.Chi-square Test Results for Strategies Employed by SBMUS in 5 Situations Related to the Second Research Hypothesis of Refusal

	Chi-square test	
Situations	P	Reliability
1	0.024	95%
2	0.955	--
3	0.967	--
4	0.888	--
5	0.303	--

5.2. Number of Refusal Strategies

As table 8 indicates, the most frequent complex strategy employed by SBMUS in reply to professors with higher social power is the combination of three refusal strategies with 162 times of occurrence. As to professors, the next ranks are dedicated to a combination of two strategies with 156, simple strategy 85, the combination of four strategies 79, the combination of five strategies 17 and the combination of six strategies with 1 frequency of use. For classmates and library servants, however, the combination of two refusal strategies with 192

and 198 times of occurrence is the most frequent complex refusal strategy used by the participants. The next ranks for the addressees with equal and lower power belongs to simple strategy with 143, 149, the combination of three strategies with 129, 115, the combination of four strategies 31, 33, and the combination of 5 strategies with 5, 5 times of occurrence.

Table 8. Frequency and the Total Percentage of the Simple and Complex Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS According to the Power of the Addressees in 5 Situations under Study

Number of Refusal Strategies		Power			
		PROF	CLM	SERV	Total
1 strategy	Count	85	143	149	377
	% of Total	5.66	9.53	9.93	25.13
2 strategies	Count	156	192	198	546
	% of Total	10.4	12.8	13.2	36.4
3 strategies	Count	162	129	115	406
	% of Total	10.8	8.6	7.66	27.06
4 strategies	Count	79	31	33	143
	% of Total	5.26	2.06	2.2	9.53
5 strategies	Count	17	5	5	27
	% of Total	1.13	0.33	0.33	1.8
6 strategies	Count	1	0	0	1
	% of Total	0.06	0	0	0.06
Total	Count	500	500	500	1500
	% of Total	33.31	33.32	33.32	99.98

In addition, as table 9 shows, Chi-square test results reveal that in situation 1 (p=0.006), in situation 2 (p=0), in situation 3 (p=0.006) and in situation 4 (p=0.018). Thus, since p is less than 0.05, there is a meaningful relationship between addressees power and the number of refusal strategies employed by

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SBMUS. Thus, the third null hypothesis of the study which indicates that the relationship between power of the addressees and number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS is not meaningful, is rejected for these situations. However, since p for situation 5 is more than 0.05(p=0.053), Chi-square test results for this situation suggest that there is not a meaningful relationship between power of the addressees and the number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. So, the third null hypothesis of the study for this situation is confirmed.

Table 9. Chi-square Test Results for Strategies Employed By SBMUS in 5 Situations Related to the Third Research Hypothesis of Refusal

Situations	Chi-square test		Correlation test
	P	Reliability	Value
1	0.006	99%	-0.225
2	0.000	99%	-0.260
3	0.006	99%	-0.208
4	0.018	95%	-0.110
5	0.053	--	-0.166

According to table 10, a combination of 2 refusal strategies is the most frequent complex strategy employed by SBMUS in dealing with both male and female addressees with 265 and 281 times of occurrence, respectively. The combination of 3 strategies 208 and 198, 1 strategy 184 and 193, the combination of 4 strategies 80 and 63, and the combination of 5 strategies 13 and 14 are the next ranks of strategies in reply to male and female addressees. For females, however, there is also the combination of 6 refusal strategies with a single frequency of occurrence.

Table 10. Frequency and the Total Percentage of the Simple and Complex Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS According to the Gender of the Addressees in 5 Situations under Study

		Gender		
Number of Refusal Strategies		M	F	Total
1 strategy	Count	184	193	377
	% of Total	12.26	12.86	25.13
2 strategies	Count	265	281	546
	% of Total	17.66	18.73	36.4
3 strategies	Count	208	198	406
	% of Total	13.86	13.2	27.06
4 strategies	Count	80	63	143
	% of Total	5.33	4.2	9.53
5 strategies	Count	13	14	27
	% of Total	0.86	0.93	1.8
6 strategies	Count	0	1	1
	% of Total	0	0.06	0.06
Total	Count	750	750	1500
	% of Total	49.97	49.98	99.98

Moreover, as table 11 shows, Chi-square test results indicate that in situation 1 (p=0.541), in situation 2 (p=473), in situation 3 (p=0.965), in situation 4 (p=0.929) and in situation 5 (p=819). So since p is more than 0.05, there is not a meaningful relationship between addressees gender and the number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Thus, the fourth null hypothesis of the study which indicates that the relationship between gender of the addressees and number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS is not meaningful, is confirmed for these situations.

Table 11.Chi-squareTest Results for Refusal Strategies Employed by SBMUS in 5 Situations Related to the Fourth Research Hypothesis

	Chi-square test		Correlation test
Situations	P	Reliability	Value
1	0.541	--	-0.073
2	0.473	--	-0.084
3	0.965	--	-0.019
4	0.929	--	-0.015
5	0.819	--	+0.018

6. Discussion

As noted in the previous sections, in addition to most of the strategies in Beebe et al.'s (1990) classification, SBMUS employed some additional strategies not predicted in this taxonomy. These strategies included "request for information or clarification", "statement of preference", "resorting to the third party", "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.", "avoidance of disturbing the addressees", "evoking the name of God", "swearing", and "address terms" like *bras* "brother" and *gohar* "sister".

The central belief in Islam is that the universe is governed by God; the one who trust in his dominating power in managing everything has a critical role in the Muslims' lives. Hence, employing the strategies such as "swearing" and "evoking the name of God" (God willing) by SBMUS can be said to be a manifestation of this belief. Moreover, the strategy named "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc." also refers to the belief in Islam that those who are Namahram to each other cannot have a close or intimate relationship with each other. In addition, employing address terms like *gohar*

'sister*'* and *bras* 'brother' by SBMUS can manifest the truth that Islam recognizes all Muslims religious "brethren" and sisters.

Furthermore, participants used strategies such as "request for information or clarification", "resorting to the third party", "statement of preference", and "avoidance of disturbing the addressees" in response to the addressees. This result might be a representation of Baloch society of Sarawan in which, for example, people mostly try to consider others' rights in their daily contacts, and not cause them to be inconvenienced.

The respondents in the present study uttered more refusal strategies when interacting with someone with higher social power than with someone with equal or lower power. This finding was supported in other research studies on refusal which applied role play as their data collection method (Félix-Brasdefer, 2002; VonCanon, 2006; Morkus, 2009).

While the participants under study applied direct refusals strategy "negative willingness, ability" such as "I can't", they generally avoided refusing directly, employing direct refusal strategy "performative" such as "I refuse".

Therefore, this strategy was never used by SBMUS in response to their addressees. This result supports the findings of Chen (1996) and Hassani, Mardani and Dastjerdi (2011) who also concluded, in employing refusal strategies, most of the participants avoided applying "performatives".

Furthermore, the direct refusal strategy "no" was not merely applied by SBMUS; instead it tended to be combined with other strategies like "excuse, reason, explanation", "statement of regret", etc. Employing just the strategy "no" for refusing someone's invitation, request, etc. may be considered as an intense threat to the addressees' negative face, and it may be the reason why SBMUS typically avoid using just "no" as a refusal strategy in reply to their addressees.

As it is disclosed through stated examples and also shown in the tables1, 2 and 3 social power cannot be considered as an effective factor in choosing and employing refusal strategies by the participants under study. This is also in line with Chi-square test results which indicate that power of the addressees does not mostly influence the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. The effect can just be seen in the case of situation 1. The participants applied the strategy "excuse, reason and explanation" as the most frequent strategy in reply to all the addressees including professors, classmates and library servants. The next two ranks of the most frequent strategies employed by SBMUS in response to the addressees with higher power differs with the ones in reply to those with equal and lower power. However, in applying other refusal strategies in response to the addressees with higher, equal and lower power, there seems not to be a significant difference.

Besides, the effect of gender of the addressees on the type of refusal strategies used by SBMUS isn't noticeable, as illustrated in tables5 and 6.The most frequent refusal strategy applied by the participants is "excuse, reason, explanation" with 11.97% and 11.50%, and the next one is "negative willingness, ability" with 9.29% and 9.50% in reply to both male and female addressees. As the percentages of their use indicate, there is no significant difference in applying these strategies by the participants. The only difference refer to the strategy "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc. "with a frequency of 19 in reply to female addressees, and the strategy "proverb" and "lack of enthusiasm" with 2 and 1 times of occurrence in reply to male addressees. Applying these strategies by the participants can manifest the effect of rules of Islam religion in which those who are Namahram to each other cannot have a close and intimate relationship with each other. Regarding other strategies, no considerable difference is observed. This result is also confirmed

by Chi-square test results in table 4 which reveal that gender of the addressees has a negligible effect on the type of refusal strategies used by SBMUS.

As to the number of refusal strategies, regarding the power of the addressees, it was showed that SBMUS have used the combination of three refusal strategies as the most frequent complex strategy in reply to their professors. However, with decreasing power of the addressees, the participants tend to apply the combination of 2 refusal strategies as the most frequent complex strategy dealing with classmates and library servants. Although the third rank in reply to professors is dedicated to applying simple strategy, in response to those with equal and lower power, this strategy is located at the second rank. It seems that with increasing power of the addressees, the participants tend to employ less simple strategies and more complex ones. Accordingly, the frequency of 1 strategy (simple) and the combination of 2 strategies increase with decreasing the power of the addressees. The frequencies of combination of 3, 4, 5, and 6 strategies which are more complex increases as the power of the addressees increases. The reason why with increasing the power of the addressees, SBMUS tend to employ more complex strategies and less simple ones, may be that for them, rejecting one's with a higher power invitation, request, etc. necessitates more explanations and justifications than the one with an equal or lower power. Professors are respectable and assigned high ranks in society. These findings are in line with Chi-square test results indicating the effectiveness of power of the addressees on the number of refusal strategies used by the participants under research.

As indicated in table 10 and confirmed by Chi-square test results in table11, differences in the number of refusal strategies in reply to male and female addressees, were not considerable. Therefore, it can be said that gender of the

addressees does not affect the number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS.

Dealing with all the addressees with different social power, the strategy "excuse, reason, explanation" has the highest frequency of use. This Finding confirms the findings of some other studies (Al-Shalawi, 1997; Al-Issa, 1998; Nelson et al., 2002; Kwon, 2003; Morkus, 2009) in the respect that the most frequent refusal strategy used by their participants was offering "excuse, reason, explanation".

The results of this study are not in line with Brown and Levinson's (1987) statement that an on-record strategy may threaten the hearer's negative face. This is confirmed through applying the strategy "negative willingness, ability" as one of the most frequent refusal strategy (the second one) by the participants with 637 times of occurrence in all the data. Nevertheless, the results are consistent with the findings of other studies in other cultures. It shows that directly refusing the others invitations, requests, etc. is not an indication of impolite behavior, but somewhat it may be a way of expressing convenience dealing with the addressees, keeping the conventions of simple life that do not obey the formalities and customs of the advanced societies (Pavlidou, 2000; Wierzbicka, 2003; Félix-Brasdefer, 2006).

As noted, the effect of the power of the addressees on the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS is too trifling to be considered. This result rejects the results of other studies (Félix-Brasdefer, 2003; Al-Eryani, 2007; Li, 2008 (in the case of DCTs results); Hassani, Mardani & Dastjerdi, 2011; Allami & Naemi, 2011). Results of these studies reveal the effect of social status of the interlocutors on the refusal strategies employed by the participants. Besides, as to the number of refusal strategies used by the participants, the research findings are not in accordance with the findings of the study conducted by

Phuong (2006) in the case of AEs (Australian Native Speakers of English) that share the same number of speech acts of refusals when they communicate with the interlocutors of different social status. However, the results of this study confirm Phuong's (ibid.) results in the case of VEs (Vietnamese Learners of English) who were reported to be more sensitive to the social status and social distance of the requesters.

Regarding the effectiveness of gender of the addressees on the type and number of refusal strategies, the results are in line with findings of Hassani, Mardani and Dastjerdi (2011) who concluded that gender of interlocutors does not affect the type of refusal strategies employed by the participants.

The study results also support the fact that there are more similarities than differences in the findings of this study with the refusal strategies found in Beebe et al. (1990) and other studies investigating refusals in other cultures (Greek and German by Pavlidou, 2000; Mexican culture by Félix-Brasdefer, 2006; Yemeni culture by Al-Eryani, 2007; and Persian by Hassani, Mardani & Dastjerdi, 2011). Additionally, cross-cultural variations in employing these strategies cannot be ignored, as it is also stated by other researchers like Al-Eryani (2007). Moreover, it may also manifest, in some ways, Ochs' (1996, p. 425) Universal Culture Principle which indicates that "there are certain commonalities across the world's language communities [,] and communities of practice in the linguistic means used to constituent certain situation meanings" (cited in Hasani, Mardani & Dastjerdi, 2011). The principle offered by Ochs (ibid.) as Hasani et al. (ibid.: 43) also assert suggests that people employ "certain similar linguistic means to achieve certain similar social ends".

7. Conclusions

The present study aimed to explore the effect of power (social dominance) and gender of addressees on the type and number of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. Results of the analyses of the data collected through applying a revised version of DCT confirm previous findings in Beebe et al.'s (ibid.) coding scheme, suggesting the universality of refusal strategies. However, this study also came up with some new strategies at work in the expression of refusal formulas, which have not been predicted in the given scheme. In this regard, strategies: "request for information or clarification", "statement of preference", "resorting to the third party", "not to accept Namahram's invitation, request, etc.", "avoidance of disturbing the addressees", "evoking the name of God", "swearing", and "special address terms" reflect the influence of religious and social factors governing the use of refusal strategies in Baloch society of Sarawan.

Findings also reveal that power and gender of the addressees mostly does not have any effect on the type of refusal strategies employed by SBMUS. In addition, the results show that although power of the addressees does affect the number of refusal strategies used by these students, their gender does not have any effect on choosing these strategies. As it seems, the context and the situation in which a refusal occurs is also an important factor in employing the refusal strategies by SBMUS. The most frequent refusal strategies regarding the type and number of refusal strategies were "excuse, reason, explanation" in reply to all the addressees, the combination of 3 refusal strategies in reply to those with higher social status, and the combination of 2 strategies in response to those with equal and lower status. Culture is considerably an effective factor

in using speech acts by the speakers in different societies and language communities, as specified by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989).
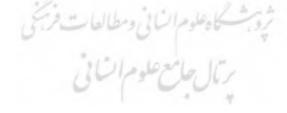
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Appendices

A. List of abbreviation

1	1st person
2	2nd person
3	3rd person
ATTR	attributive
CLM	classmate
CL.LINK	complementizer link
COP	copula
DIM	dimunitive
EMPH	emphatic
F	female
IMP	imperfective tense
IMPER	imperative
INDEF	indefinite article
M	male
NEG	negative
OBL	oblique
OM	object marker
PAST	past stem
PRES	present stem
PRO.CLIT	pronominal clitic
PROF	professor
PROHIB	prohibition
SERV	servant
SG	singular
V.EL	verbal element

B. Refusal Situations

1. One of the following addressees invites you to eat dinner with him/ her. How do you reject his/ her invitation?

    a. Male professor

    b. Female professor

    c. Male classmate

    d. Female classmate

    e. Male servant

    f. Female servant

2. One of the following addressees asks you to give him/ her, your intimate friend's mobile number. How do you reject his/ her request?

3. One of the following addressees asks you to keep safekeeping for him/ her. How do you reject his/ her request?

4. One of the following addressees asks you to buy something for him/ her from the market. How do you reject his/ her request?

5. One of the following addressees offers you to give you a ride to the university. How do you reject his/ her offer?