

Investigating the Effect of L1 Pragmatic Transfer on the Acquisition of English Language by Saudi Speakers

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Received: March 10, 2017 Accepted: March 29, 2017 Published: August 23, 2017

doi:10.5296/ijl.v9i4.10911 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v9i4.10911>

Abstract

This paper investigates the effect of native language pragmatic transfer on the acquisition of English Language by Saudi adult speakers. Participants in this study were 42 Saudi speakers of English divided into two groups; beginners and advanced speakers according to their levels of proficiency. A multiple-choice questionnaire was designed to examine their pragmatic awareness of various speech acts. The findings in this study showed that beginner speaking English as Foreign Language tend to rely on their native language pragmatics due to the shortage of second language pragmatic knowledge. During Second Language Acquisition, they actively transfer knowledge of their native language to generate the missing competence of L2 acquisition. In addition, no L1 pragmatic transfer is found among the advanced group, which shows that the higher the proficiency level of English, the less L1 pragmatic transfer is found.

Keywords: Pragmatic transfer, Proficiency, Acquisition, L2 competence, L2 learners

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

Most Saudi speakers of English are likely unable to use English language properly with English native speakers. Saudi high school students take at least 9 compulsory courses throughout the school years. After 9 years of English language learning, Saudi speakers are found to use inadequate linguistic expressions in the appropriate context. This communication breakdown will make them frustrated to act or speak again to express what they want to say properly. Several factors contribute to achieving high L2 proficiency; however, this study will focus on the pragmatic factor.

1.2 Explore Importance of the Problem

There has been an inconclusive debate about whether there is a link between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency and about whether that transfer will impact L2 proficiency or not. Understanding the effect of L1 pragmatic transfer in L2 acquisition will help to fill the gap in the Saudi speakers' pragmatic ability and facilitate the improvement of current ineffective teaching methods of English Language to address their needs and deficiencies when interacting with native speakers. In addition, it will also contribute to the development of the students' pragmatic consciousness to fortify their poor exposure to L2 which also needs to be addressed by L2 instructors as well as SLA researchers. This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do Saudi speakers rely on L1 pragmatics when they communicate in English?
2. Do beginners and advanced Saudi speakers transfer pragmatics from L1 to L2 equally?

1.3 Relevant Scholarship

Recent theories of SLA have begun to emphasize the influence of L1 on language acquisition. The researcher will shed light on the three different perspectives of studies examining L2 learners' pragmatic transfer. The necessity of communication with other cultures was behind the increasing desire to learn a second language. Thus, this increasing need for better communication is what initiated the studies of cross-cultural differences. Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization project (CCSPARP) was one of the earliest major research projects investigating pragmatics across cultures. In 1982, it began to analyze the speech acts of request and apology of native speakers and nonnative speakers of western languages by using discourse completion tasks (DCT). Consequently, similar studies continued to be published for number of years (e.g. Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984, 1986). Despite the enormous contributions of this project to the field of pragmatics, many concerns were raised about the validity of the elicitation method in non-Western contexts. In the contrary, later studies started to investigate pragmatics with more focus on the pragmatic transfer of learners of English in comparison to their own languages to examine the relationship between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 acquisition. Accordingly, these studies resulted in three preliminary findings; some considered L1 pragmatic transfer as a facilitating factor in L2 acquisition, others believed that L1 pragmatic transfer hinders the progress of L2 acquisition

that is resulted in low proficiency, and there are also extreme views that disassociate pragmatic transfer from L2 proficiency and find it as an irrelevant factor in the study of L2 acquisition.

In 1993, Takahashi and Beebe conducted a study of Japanese refusals; The result found that transfer was more prevalent among high proficiency learners than low proficiency learners at the discourse level (as cited in Christiansen, 2003). As a result, they assumed that second language proficiency is positively related to pragmatic transfer because low proficiency level learners lack the linguistic ability that enables them to transfer L1 forms. Thus, it was concluded that transferring pragmatic aspects requires learners to possess sufficient L2 resources which is not developed yet for low level of L2 proficiency.

Despite of their findings, Takahashi and Beebe seem to have a misleading premise that a pragmatic transfer is always negative; in this case, the pragmatic transfer of Japanese refusals for Japanese learners is considered positive transfer due to the similarity of refusal strategies in both languages, else, transferring different L1 forms would lead to communication breakdown. On these grounds, there seems to be no compelling reason to argue that L1 transfer facilitates L2 proficiency. In addition, due to their focus on the nature of the relationship between pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency, Takahashi and Beebe came up with contrasting finding in different studies.

On logical grounds, learning the linguistic rules apart from the sociolinguistic rules of conversational discourse would not promise smooth and effective communication. Interestingly, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) have another study that examined the developmental pragmatic competence of 20 native speakers using Japanese and 20 native speakers using English, in comparison with 40 Japanese students speaking English. They found that transfer of Japanese refusal strategies was greater among EFL than ESL learners. On that account, they argue that as learners' proficiency develops, their L1 negative pragmatic transfer decrease.

In another study of cross-linguistic influence in the production of the target language by Blum-Kulka (1982), adult native speakers of Hebrew, English-speaking learners of Hebrew, native English speakers were administered a discourse-completion test to investigate the influence of native language on L2 acquisition. Blum-Kulka's findings lend support to the claim that learners will transfer their native pragmatic knowledge and expect to find equivalent pragmatic guidelines in the target language, which will eventually lead to pragmatic failure. Moreover, Gass & Neu (1996) took a middle-ground position by suggesting that as a function of proficiency, advanced learners are less likely to rely on their native speaker forms for transfer. Therefore, when they are faced with situations which they have little experience, they tend not to rely on their native strategies, (speech acts across cultures, P10).

There are also more extreme views that disassociate sociolinguistic pragmatics from proficiency and find L1 pragmatic transfer as an irrelevant factor in the study of L2 acquisition. Cheng (2005) supports that claim and came up with more confusing results; he conducted an exploratory cross-sectional study of interlanguage pragmatic to examine the

pragmatic influence from L1 Chinese in English expressions of gratitude among Chinese learners of English by using discourse completion task questionnaire. As a result, Cheng argues that even though the results show possible evidence of pragmatic influence from L1 Chinese, however, even advanced learners have difficulty expressing gratitude adequately. On the basis of the available evidence, it seems fair to suggest that this claim does not really deny the connection between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency; nevertheless, it actually proves that L2 proficiency difficulties are not mainly caused by L1 pragmatic transfer.

On the same ground, Christiansen (2003) also investigated the relationship between pragmatic ability and proficiency; her study investigated the relationship between pragmatic ability and proficiency of 16 Japanese learners of English through multiple-choice questionnaire to probe pragmatic awareness of speech acts of requests, apologies and refusal. Similarly, the findings suggest that there was no strong relationship between proficiency and pragmatic ability.

Despite of the previous argument, there seems to be no compelling reason to disassociate pragmatics transfer from L2 proficiency since there are already many theories (i.e. Contrastive Analysis Theory, Language Transfer Theory by Lado) that investigate the link between L1 transfer and L2 acquisition in all related fields including pragmatics (i.e. acquisition theories in L2 pragmatics). Moreover, most of the studies that disassociate the pragmatics transfer from L2 proficiency level were based on a comparison of English as L2 in relation to either Japanese or Chinese Language which in turn suggests that there are still unknown factors that needs further investigation to uncover what might influence these similar findings particularly in these two languages.

There has been an inconclusive debate about whether there is a link between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency and about whether that transfer will impact L2 proficiency or not. This research intends to investigate the effect of L1 pragmatic transfer on the acquisition of English as L2 by Saudi speakers of English for both high and low proficiency levels in an attempt to understand the relationship between L1 pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency. In addition, research in the field pragmatics and its relationship with SLA in relation to the Saudi context is highly needed due to the growing Saudi interest of Learning English as it is spoken in the real world. Understanding the relationship between L1 transfer and L2 proficiency will help to better understand and explain the previous confusing results and fill the gap in the Saudi students' pragmatic production, comprehension, and development of L2 and poor communication with native speakers that results from ineffective methods of teaching and poor exposure to L2 which also need to be addressed.

1.4 Hypotheses and Research Design

In an attempt to answer the previous research questions, the researcher will use a multiple-choice questionnaire to elicit the speech act behavior of expressions of Saudi learners of English at two different proficiency levels to assess their responses and compare those responses in relation to their language proficiency level.

2. Method

The researcher started building the questionnaire by observing and collecting evidence of pragmatic transfer as it occurred in natural discourse and through consulting English native speakers living in Saudi Arabia. On the basis of these observations and discussions, the researcher identified many situations in which various kinds of speech acts typically occurred. The questionnaire consisted of situations; each situation has three possible responses; one, is based on pragmatic transfer from the Arabic language, the other is a native-like utterance that has no pragmatic transfer, and the third is a distractor. After reading the scenario, the participant should choose the letter of the response (A, B, or C) that he/she considered as the most appropriate for the situation described. The following is an example of the scenarios: Situation: Your friend gave you a nice compliment on your new sweater. You would like to say something nice. What would you say?

- A) "Oh thank you, your eyes are beautiful"
- B) "Do you know that Allis is not coming today?"
- C) "Thanks, it better be, it cost me an arm and a leg."

Later, a preliminary pilot study was conducted to develop the final version of the questionnaire (Appendix B).

2.1 Subsections

the methodology that was employed to answer the research questions includes a description of research design, how the instrument was developed, how the subjects were selected, and how the data were collected and analyzed.

2.2 Participant

Participants were selected randomly; two groups of Saudis learning English Language. They were 42 participants divided into two groups according to their English proficiency level. The first group consisted of 21 Saudi female students with low proficiency level; 13 are students of English Language major - level one - 5 are at the preparatory year, and 3 are high school students. The age of the participants ranged from 16–20 years. The second group consisted of 21 advanced speakers of English; 18 Saudi graduate students from different academic majors and 3 undergraduate students who studied in English speaking countries, 4 of the group are professional interpreters. The majority of participants were required to score over 6 in IELTS or 70 in TOEFL in order to enroll in their educational programs. The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 39 years. For the summary of the demographic and background survey information see (Appendix A)

2.3 Sampling Procedures

2.3.1 Pilot Study

After designing the preliminary questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted on 6 English native speakers to ensure the validity of the questionnaire by comparing the listed utterances

with their possible utterances. It consisted of 14 situations where native speakers should provide their possible response or utterance from given choices as well as a blank space for every situation to provide any other suggested response. As a result, there were some suggestions of modifications of the given utterances. Results and suggestions from the pilot study were analyzed and taken into consideration when forming the final questionnaire. Some situations were deleted and some contextual variables were adjusted. As a result, 10 out of 14 scenarios were selected in the final questionnaire (See appendix B).

2.3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected using an online survey through Google Forms in which forms were completed and sent by respondents. The responses were automatically stored in a survey database.

2.3.3 Data Analysis

The first step is coding or categorizing responses into groups or values. Nominal data (i.e. Gender: male/female) can restrict data analysis techniques; therefore, coding can provide a suitable numeric substitution for nominal data (i.e. 1= male, 2= female). Once coded, they can be analyzed in the same way multiple response questions can be. Therefore, the three multiple choice responses were coded as follows: 1 stands for a pragmatic transfer response, 2 stands for a native like utterance with no pragmatic transfer, and 3 stands for the distractor.

Once the data was ready, SPSS was employed to conduct paired sample t-test. It was used to compare L1 and L2 scores among the same group. Afterwards, the two samples t-test was used to compare the two population means. It assesses whether the means of the two groups are statistically different from each other. The t-test's statistical significance indicates whether the difference of the averages of the two groups reflects a real difference in the population from which the groups were sampled. Moreover, it was used to compare the two samples of the Beginners Group and the Advanced Group.

3. Results

3.1 Recruitment

As mentioned earlier, participants were given a questionnaire that consisted of 10 situations. The situations were designed to test whether participants rely on their L1 pragmatics or not. The researcher tries to diagnose the overall performance of the participants based on their language proficiency. They were placed into two groups: Beginners Group and Advanced Group as illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1 shows the responses of both groups, the Beginners and the Advanced, for each situation. The result was given on percentage. It can be seen that the Beginners Group scored higher than the Advanced Group in all situations except the last one. On the other hand, the Advanced Group seem to be fluctuating between L1 and L2.

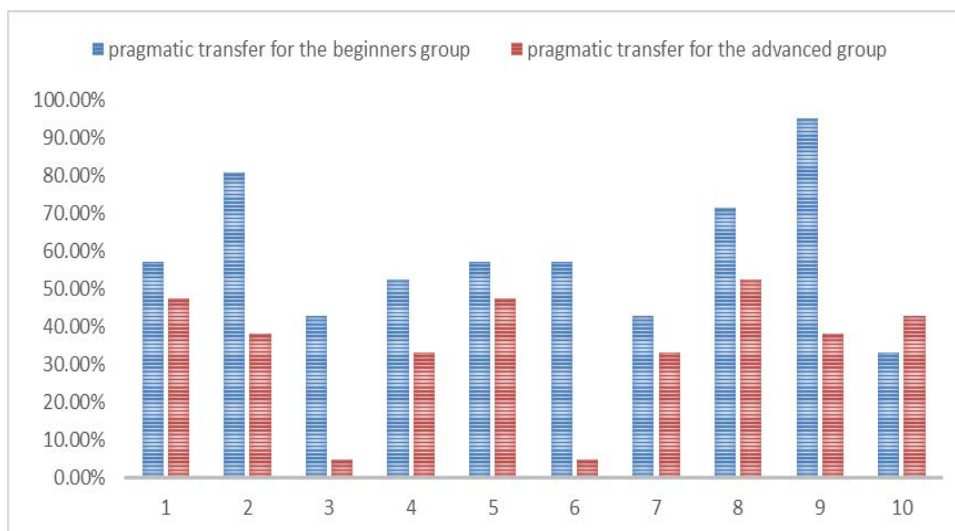


Figure 1. L1 pragmatic transfer among the two groups

3.2 Descriptive Results

To measure the performance of each group on all situations, descriptive statistics were performed. The results were given on means. As shown in table 1.

Table 1. Mean Scores of the responses of the Beginners and the Advanced Group on measuring pragmatics transfer.

Group	Mean	
	L1 Pragmatics	L2 Pragmatics
Beginners Group	11.8095	7.7143
Advanced Group	6.8571	13.1429

Table (1) shows the mean scores of how the Beginners Group and the Advanced Group responded to the given situations (see Appendix B). L1 pragmatics refers to L1 transfer whereas L2 pragmatics shows that L2 participants responded like English native speakers. The descriptive results are consistent with the results presented in figure 1. The Beginners Group scored higher mean on L1 pragmatics than the Advanced Group whereas in L2, the Advanced Group scored the higher mean. This means that the responses of the Beginners Group were affected by L1 which is Arabic.

However, to find if there are significant differences between the performances of the two groups, paired sample t-test was conducted. On the first hand, for the Beginners Group, there was a significant difference in L1 scores of L1 pragmatics (M=11.8) and the score of L2 pragmatics (M=7.7) conditions; $t(20)=11.1$, $p = 0.000$ which is significant because it is below .05. Since the mean of L1 pragmatics is higher and there was a significance difference, it can be concluded that beginners lack the knowledge of English pragmatics and therefore, rely on L1 pragmatics.

On the other hand, in the responses of the Advanced Group, there was a significant difference in the scores of L1 pragmatics ($M=6.8$) and the score of L2 pragmatics ($M=13.1$) conditions; $t(20)=13.2$, $p = 0.000$. There was significant difference as it is below .05. Moreover, the mean of L2 pragmatics is higher and it is significant, which indicates that the advanced speakers rely on L2 pragmatics rather than L1 pragmatics.

In other words, the performance of the Beginners Group revealed an average of 59% of pragmatic transfer. A closer look at their individual responses, represented in the blue bars, indicated their obvious dependence on L1 pragmatics and the absence of L2 pragmatics, for instance, situation number 2 and 9 show over 80% of L1 pragmatic transfer which is an indication of the high degree of pragmatic transfer. Overall, these results provided convincing evidence of the influence of L1 pragmatics in L2 communication among the Beginners Group. In the contrary, the given responses of the Advanced Group revealed an average of 34.29% of pragmatic transfer. A closer look at their performance in each situation, as represented in the red bars, indicated an obvious decrease in L1 pragmatic transfer, as it appears in situation 3 and 6, due to their higher command in English pragmatics. Their overall performance reflected a notable lower degree of pragmatic transfer.

3.3 Findings

From the above results, these findings are drawn:

- 1- The Beginners Group did not fully acquire English pragmatics.
- 2- There is L1 pragmatic influence or what is called pragmatic transfer among the Beginners Group.
- 3- The performance of the Advanced Group indicated a much better acquisition of English pragmatics with minor influence of L1 pragmatics.
- 4- Speakers with higher language proficiency adopted more native like strategies, whereas beginners were more likely to be influenced by their L1 pragmatic behaviors.
- 5- Low L1 pragmatic transfer was found in the advanced group.

4. Discussion

To answer research questions; it was found that the pragmatic transfer appeared in both groups regardless of their proficiency level; however, it was more prevalent among the Beginners Group; therefore, Saudi speakers rely on L1 pragmatics in L2 communication. In addition, the findings showed that the higher L1 transfer was among the Beginners Group; therefore, the level of pragmatic transfer decreases as their proficiency level develops; as a result, higher levels of proficiency have less degree of transfer compared to beginners. L1 pragmatic transfer was more dominant in the responses of the Beginners Group due to the lack of L2 pragmatic competence, therefore, when they are faced with situations where they have little experience, they tend to rely on their previous knowledge of NL strategies or even sometimes prefer to say nothing as it appears in the responses of situation number 7 in the Beginners Group where 23% of responses go to the distracting response “You would say

nothing” due to vocabulary limitations. A beginner who developed better vocabulary might even translate from L1 to L2 because of their lack of L2 pragmatic knowledge (Wannaruk, 2008) which results in cross-cultural misunderstanding (Ming-chung, 1999) especially when they are not closely related. There were situations such as situations number 2 and 9 that scored more than 80 percent of L1 pragmatics which reflects the high rate of L1 pragmatic usage in L2 communication, and that reveals the strong reliance on L1 pragmatics among beginner speakers of English in L2 communication.

In the Advanced Group responses, there was a notable lower degree of pragmatic transfer of 24.7%. More importantly, there were situations that scored more than 95% of L2 pragmatics such as situations 3 and 6 due their higher command of English in L2 communication. Remarkably, the responses of situation number 10 in the Advanced Group were inconsistent; even though their L2 score was higher than L1 score, yet, their L1 pragmatic transfer was of 42.9 % in contrast to 33.3 % of L1 pragmatic transfer the Beginners Group. The probable reason for such result could be attributed to the fact that all the participants were immersed in an academic environment where the standard English is the norm in their daily interactions. Additionally, there is probably more than one factor that could have led to this result. Reading demographic variables and their possible influence on L2 fluency will enable the researcher to generalize beyond the given data. There are two main demographic variables that might affect L2 pragmatic competence and L2 proficiency in general; the number of years of English language learning and English language exposure, whether through direct exposure to an English-speaking community or through indirect exposure to L2 environment by being exposed to realistic L2 materials such as TV, Radio, books, magazines...etc. Although the results didn't show any significant connection between the number of years of studying English language and L2 level of proficiency; yet, this is a clear indication suggesting that the pragmatic or sociolinguistic competence is not acquired alongside grammatical knowledge that is being directly learned.

Nevertheless, most participants who achieved high scores in L2 pragmatics had either high exposure to English Language materials or had stayed in an English-speaking country for a period of time. On the contrary, all participants of the lowest L2 scores reported poor exposure to English language materials that ranged from 3 to 5 hours per week. Therefore, they tend to rely on their previous knowledge of NL strategies.

In fact, exposure to realistic daily life interaction will affect how speakers produce or respond to L2 communication. It contributes to the development of perceptions of what constitutes the appropriate linguistic behavior. In other words, these affective variables will determine the success of L2 learning. Being exposed to realistic L2 communication is believed to enhance speakers' pragmatic competence. Moreover, L2 pragmatic competence requires learners to go beyond the explicit utterance; therefore, this has a critical role in development of speakers' abilities in producing or interpreting L2 pragmatic forms. This development of L2 pragmatics can effectively enable them to adapt more native-like proficiency.

In addition, the findings of this study produced similar results with several previous studies dealing with the same issue. Even though Blum-Kulka (1985) disassociated sociolinguistic

pragmatics from proficiency, nonetheless, her view in a previous study (1982) is very much in line with the current results which argue that learners will transfer their native pragmatic knowledge to L2. Moreover, Wannaruk (2008) also provides further evidence that language proficiency is also a key factor in pragmatic transfer. On the contrary, Takahashi and Beebe's (1993) take an opposite position by arguing that transfer is more prevalent among advanced group than beginners group. In their study, the pragmatic transfer of Japanese refusals for Japanese learners was considered positive transfer due to the similarity of refusal strategies in both languages, otherwise, transferring different L1 forms would cause an obvious communication breakdown.

Although Christiansen's view (2003) rest on the assumption that there is no strong relationship between proficiency and pragmatic ability, however, the current research does not appear to validate such a view since there are already many theories (i.e. Contrastive Analysis Theory, Language Transfer Theory by Lado) that already investigate the existing connection between L1 transfer and L2 acquisition in relation to the related fields including pragmatics (i.e. acquisition theories in L2 pragmatics).

Furthermore, there is overwhelming evidence corroborating the notion of indirect link between L1 pragmatics and L2 acquisition. Jiemin Bu findings (2011) provide further support because –as he states - high proficiency L2 learners are less likely to transfer their NL pragmatic norms due to their more developed control over L2. Along similar lines, another study by Takahashi & Beebe (1987) assures this connection by concluding that as proficiency develops, L1 negative pragmatic transfer decreases. Moreover, Gass & Neu (1996) provide further evidence supporting the current findings by suggesting that advanced speakers are less likely to rely on their native speaker forms. The foregoing discussion implies that higher levels of proficiency have a less degree of transfer compared to beginners.

To sum up, communication is the ultimate goal of language learning. Successful language learning develops beyond linguistic proficiency, it is revealed in the communicative performance of the speaker in which he/she employs these forms to reach smooth communication with L2 speakers. Therefore, developing successful pragmatic competence is essential to reduce L1 pragmatic transfer and reach native like proficiency.

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Appendix A

Summary of the demographic and background survey information:

		Group 1: Beginner level	Group 2: Advanced level
Age	16 -20	21	0
	21 - 29	0	11
	20 - 39	0	10
Gender	male	0	5
	female	21	16
Level of education	High school Diploma	21	0
	undergraduate	0	3
	graduate	0	18
Years of studying English Language		1-14 years	5 - 20 years
How many hours per week do you spend listening or reading in English?	3 - 5 hours	66.70%	14.30%
	6 - 15 hours	14.30%	42.90%
	16 - 20 hours	4.80%	23.80%
	more than 20 hours	14.30%	19%
Total number of participants		21	21

Appendix B

Questionnaire

Dear participant,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud University. I am currently developing a research study as part of my Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics. The task will not take more than 10 minutes. All your responses will be confidential and anonymous. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and highly valuable.

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Questionnaire: part ONE

Demographic Information and Language Background

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: Male Female

3. What is your level of education?

(High school Diploma / Undergraduate / Graduate MA /Graduate PhD)

4. How many years have you studied the English language? ____

Where? _____

5. Have you been to an English speaking country? Yes NO

If yes, please indicate which country _____

6. If you have been in an English speaking country, please indicate for how long?

(0 – 6 months /6 months – 1 year / 2- 4 year / more than 5 years)

7. Approximately, how many hours per week do you spend listening or reading materials (e.g. TV, books, articles, news, E-mails, and others) in English? _____ hours.

Questionnaire: part TWO

There are 10 situations on the following pages. Each situation will have three possible responses. Choose the letter of the response (A, B, or C) that you think is the most appropriate for the situation described.

Example:

Situation: You are unable to go to a scheduled doctor’s appointment so you call the doctor’s office because you need to reschedule. You greet the secretary and ask her to reschedule, saying:

- A) Unfortunately, an issue just came up, I can’t make it to my appointment.
- B) Unfortunately, I can’t make it to my appointment, is there available appointment on the coming Friday?
- C) Today, my mom is sick, can I come tomorrow?

Situation 1: You’re at work, 15 minutes left before the end of your work day, your boss, David came to tell you that something urgent came up and you should stay to finish that

paper work which might take two more hours. However, you want to tell him that you're not okay with that. You would say:

- A) "I 'm really late for my appointment but for your sake, I'll try to finish it."
- B) "Let's call it a day and I'll do it as soon as I arrive tomorrow."
- C) "I had a great time."

Situation 2: Your friend Dan borrowed your car, when he came back, you found the window broken but he kept telling you contradicting stories. Now, you got furious, what you would say to him?

- A) "Tell me the truth; the rope of lying is short."
- B) "It is not your business."
- C) "Stop beating around the bush, either way, you're going to fix it!"

Situation 3: It is lunch break; you're in a fast-food restaurant, you're standing in a long queue to get your lunch. Suddenly, you have realized that you have less than 10 minutes to grab a bite and go back to your office. Moreover, you don't want to upset your boss. What would you do?

- A) Go to the beginning of the queue and ask them if they allow you to go first because you're late.
- B) Leave the restaurant and grab a snack from the closest shop.
- C) Go back to your house.

Situation 4: Your friend Tom is visiting Riyadh for the first time; you are planning to meet up at a local restaurant. He is asking you: what time shall we meet? Your response is:

- A) "I lost my job!"
- B) "Let's meet at any time after 8"
- C) "Let's say at eight."

Situation 5: Your friend is introducing you to his 5-year-old daughter, Jennie. What would you say?

- A) "That's right."
- B) "She is very cute and you kiss her"
- C) "Nice to meet you Jennie."

Situation 6: You are at school. It is lunch break, you feel dizzy, lightheaded and nauseous. You want to tell you friends that you will be absent from the next class:

- A) "I feel much better."

B) "I'm not feeling well, I won't be able to attend the class, can you sign me in on the attendance sheet"

C) "I'm coming down with cold, I don't think I'm gonna make it to the next class."

Situation 7: You are at the public library; you are talking to your friend, and there is some noise around you. The librarian comes up and tells you that you are talking too loudly. What would you say?

A) "Sorry, I didn't realize we were talking so loudly."

B) "OK, but I wasn't the only one talking."

C) "You would say nothing."

Situation 8: You are at a restaurant with a friend, when the waiter brought the bill; your friend searched for his wallet to pay his share (80 \$) but realized that he had left it at home. What would you do?

A) Tell him that the food was not that good.

B) Offer to lend him money and say: you can pay me back later

C) You say: "Come on! My money is yours." And you pay for both of you

Situation 9: Your friend gave you a nice compliment on your new sweater. You would like to say something nice. What would you say?

A) "Oh thank you, your eyes are beautiful"

B) "Do you know that Allis is not coming today?"

C) "Thanks, it better be, it cost me an arm and a leg."

Situation 10: You had a very difficult exam, two weeks later, your friend Jack is asking you: "have you got the result?", how are you going to tell him that you scored A?

A) I took A, I didn't expect it!

B) I had a bad day.

C) I got an A, do you believe it!

Thank you for your collaboration and assistance in this research.

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