

# A Study on the Use of Suggestion Strategies among Yemeni Learners of English

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**Abstract:** The current study attempts to investigate the use of suggestion strategies among Yemeni learners of English at private universities. The participants of the study were 41 undergraduate students from English Department in the three private universities. The data were collected using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). They were analyzed according to the models proposed by Martinez Flor. (2005), whose analytical framework classified suggestion strategies into three types: direct, conventionalized forms, and indirect. The results of the current study revealed that the Yemeni learners of English at private universities almost tend to use the same types of suggestion strategies in the six situations with slight differences in their percentages. The results showed that there are three types of suggesting strategies used by the students namely; direct suggestion 56.5%, conventionalized form 24.4%, and indirect suggestion 19.1%. Moreover, the results indicated that there are no significant statistical differences in the use of suggestion strategies according to the participants of the three universities. However, the results of the study showed that there is a slight difference in favor of Al-Nasser University in situation one and for the National University in situation four.

**Keywords:** suggestion, strategies, learners, private, discourse completion test

## 1. Introduction

Pragmatic competence can be regarded as one of the pillars of language competence along with the organizational competence which entails grammatical and textual knowledge (Bachman, 1990). The notion of pragmatic competence includes knowledge and skills that language learners need to operate in a particular cultural and social context and the knowledge of linguistic elements that help realize a particular speech act. Speech acts, which can be defined as doing actions by means of utterances, are the crucial components of pragmatic competence (Schmidt & Richards, 1980). Typical examples of speech acts would be claiming, requesting, suggestion, promising, refusing and apologizing. Language users and learners need to be equipped with sociopragmatic and sociolinguistic competence to effectively utilize speech acts for communicative purposes (Leech, 1983). Sociopragmatic competence entails the knowledge of what speech act is appropriate in a specific situation and when to perform it, while sociolinguistic competence involves the knowledge of linguistic features to conduct a particular speech act. In other words, a language user needs to know what speech acts is appropriate in the context at hand, what strategies are needed for conducting the

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speech act of interest, and what lexical and grammatical properties are needed for realizing the speech act.

Speech act consists of three related acts, they are; locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. Yule (1996) classified illocutionary act into five acts. They are declaration, representatives, expressives, commissives, and directives. Directives are the kinds of illocutionary act in which the speaker use an utterance to get someone else to do something.

One of the primary and essential acts of directive is suggesting act. People sometimes give suggestions to the others when they get confused or misbehave. Suggestion is a language act by which one person guides the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors of another. Flor (2005) states that when the speaker makes a suggestion, the listener is persuaded to do something because the speaker thinks it will be in their best interests.. Suggestion is a common speech act which is frequently used in people's daily interaction. The current study aims to identify the use of suggestion strategies as used by Yemeni learners English at Private University.

### **1.1. Theoretical framework**

#### **1.2. Speech Act of Suggestions**

Kratzer (1991) states that A suggestion is an expression that the speaker freely makes. The decision to accept or reject the suggestion is left up to the listener. This means that when the speaker makes a specific proposal to the listener, he or she does not put any sort of obligation on the listener to accept it; instead, the listener is free to accept or reject it.

Thomas (1995) says according to Searle's definition of speech acts, suggestions fall under the category of directives, which are acts in which the speaker seeks to persuade the listener to commit to a specific future course of action. Therefore, when creating directive speech actions, it is important to consider both the speaker and the hearer.

Thus, a suggestion is an utterance in which the speaker wants the hearer to do something that will be beneficial to the hearer. Therefore, the speaker is doing the hearer a favour because it is not obvious to both the speaker and the hearer that the hearer will do the act without the suggestion being made. According to Rintell (1979), suggestions are requests made to the listener to take a specific action that would be advantageous to them. Despite this, since the speaker is somehow intruding into the hearer's reality, proposals are seen as face-threatening activities. As a result, suggestions are seen as an imposition on the listener since they offend his or her defensive nature.

Barenjee and Carrel (1988), state that several concerns should be kept in mind while making suggestions: the urgency of the recommendation, the level of discomfort in the circumstance, and the social distance and power imbalance between the speaker and the hearer. Thus, the speaker should try to mitigate the effect of offence on the hearer by some politeness strategies.

Tsui (1994, p.65) and Adolphs (2008, p.45) mention that "suggestions belong to Searle's category of advisements or advises, a sub-category of directives, in which the speaker assigns a course of action for the benefit of the hearer." Moreover, Martinez-Flor (2005) states that suggestions can be seen as parts of a superior speech act that also includes the act of giving advice. This assumption is based on the idea that while counsel is only in the hearer's best interest, inclusive-we proposals may imply advantages for both the speaker and the listener.

## 2. Previous Studies

In the field of EFL, there have been some efforts to study and investigate speech acts in general and the speech act of suggestion and its strategies in particular, the researcher present some of these studies.

Alzebaree and Yavuz (2018) conducted study about Suggestion and refusal strategies in English by Kurdish undergraduate students. The results of the study revealed differences in the overall strategies and strategy patterns between the responses of Kurdish EFL undergraduate students and Native speakers of English groups. Although participants from both groups were observed using various strategies when making suggestions and refusals, the KEFLUS utilized direct and explicit strategies more often than did the NSE participants. The NSE group utilized strategies that were more polite and implicit. In addition, Gu. (2014) conducted study about a corpus-based study on the performance of the suggestion speech act by Chinese EFL learner. Results showed that (1) Chinese learners used significantly more modal verbs, explicit performatives and conditional structures than native English speakers, whereas native English speakers used more Wh-questions and Let's structures than Chinese learners, and (2) in terms of suggestion strategies, the Chinese EFL learners resembled native English speakers in the use of direct suggestion strategies, but the Chinese EFL learners used significantly more conventionalized indirect suggestion strategies than native English speakers.

Yildizi (2020) conducted study about a study on the use of suggestion strategies among Turkish EFL learners. The results of the qualitative content analysis demonstrated that the most commonly used suggestion type was "conventionalized" whereas "direct strategies" remained scarce. Moreover, it was found that the participants mostly used "possibility" and "should" as suggestion strategies. Overall, the findings suggested that the participants tried to render their suggestions as less face-threatening as possible by lessening the degree of imposition placed on the hearer while being as cooperative as possible, a tendency which can be deduced from the frequent use of "we can" structure.

Farnia, Sohrabie, and Sattar. (2014) conducted study about pragmatic Analysis of Speech Act of Suggestion among Iranian Native Speakers of Farsi. Results obtained in the present study deviated from the norm that has been shown by previous studies and which indicated that direct strategies are less used when making a suggestion in a high context culture such as Iran. The respondents of this study chose to use more direct strategies than other strategy types (i.e. conventionalized forms and indirect strategies). They tried to redress the face-threatening act of suggestion by using mitigation devices such as justifying the reason of using direct strategies (i.e. imperative and negative impetrative) or through the use of openers as a way to avoid jumping into offering a suggestion. This is in line with the fact that Iranian values face saving in every day interaction. The following research questions will be addressed:

- 1-What are the types of suggestion strategies that are used by Yemeni learners of English at private universities?
- 2- What are the most frequent suggestion strategies that are used by Yemeni learners of English at private universities?
- 3- To what extent are suggestion strategies different/ similar at three private universities?

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Participants

The study was conducted at three universities: Al Nasser University, Azal University for Human Development and National University (Yemen). The participants of the study consist of 41 undergrad students from the Department of English at three private universities. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was used to collect data from the participants. The DCT situations consist of a number of short situational descriptions "6 situations". The situations in the DCT were designed to be as real situations. The participants were advised to read each situation carefully, and try to put themselves in the situations, as if they are living the situations in real life. The situations in the DCT were designed to reflect real life situations. The situations were designed according to Martinez Flor (2005).

#### 3.2. Instruments and data collection

The collected data were classified into different categories and were quantitatively and statistically computed and analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The employed strategies were then counted and their percentages were taken. The strategies resorted to by participants were compared in order to shed light on similarities or differences between the study groups. The focus of analysis was on the average number of strategies used per response, and the total frequency of the different types of strategies employed by the participants. For the differences between the responses of the three universities, p-value was performed to determine any statistically significant differences in the frequency of strategies and formulas. In this study, the probability level for statistical significance is set at  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ .

### 4. Results

The current study aims to identify the types of suggestion strategies and pinpoint the most frequent apology strategies that are used by Yemeni EFL learners. The collected data of the DCT are analyzed in detail and explained in tables to identify the suggestion strategies.

To answer the first and second questions: What are the types of suggestion strategies that are used by Yemeni learners of English at private universities? What are the most frequent suggestion strategies that are used by Yemeni learners of English at private universities? Tables 1, 2 and 3 show the suggestion strategies used by participants of Azal University for Human Development, Al-Nasser University and National University

#### 4.1. The Suggestion Strategies Used by participants of Azal University for Human Development

**Table 1.** Types of Suggestion Strategies Used by Participants of Azal University

Suggestion Strategies		Situation1		Situation2		Situation3		Situation4		Situation5		Situation6	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Direct strategies	Per formative verb	9	69.2	4	30.8	2	15.4	4	30.8	3	23.1	0	0
	Noun of suggestion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Imperatives	0	0	0	0	2	15.4	1	7.7			1	7.7
	Negative imperative	1	7.7	0	0	1	7.7	4	30.8	2	15.4	8	61.5

<b>Conventionalized forms</b>	Interrogative forms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Possibility	1	7.7	1	7.7	2	15.4	2	15.4	4	30.8	1	7.7
	Should	0	0	0	0	1	7.7	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Need	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Indirect strategies</b>	Conditional	2	15.4	1	7.7	2	15.4	1	7.7	1	7.7	1	7.7
	Impersonal	0	0	6	46.2	3	23.1	0	0	3	23.1	2	15.4
	Hints	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Inclusive we	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Obligation	0	0	1	7.7	0	0	1	7.7	0	0	0	0

Based on the table (1), it can be noticed that the participants used three types of suggestions (*direct strategies, conventionalized form strategies, and indirect strategies*). The participants used three types of direct strategies such as *performative verb strategy, Imperative strategy, and Negative Imperative strategy*. While they used three types of *conventionalized strategies* which are *Possibility strategy, should strategy, Conditional strategy*. Also, they used two types of indirect strategies that are *Impersonal strategy and Obligation strategy*.

It can be observed that in direct strategies the participant used *performative verb strategy* with 22 (24.4%). They used *performative verb strategy* in all situations except situation six. While the participants used *negative imperative strategy* with 16 (17.8%) in all situations except two, and they used *imperatives strategy* with 4 (4.4%) in situations three, four, and six.

It can be noticed that the participants in *conventionalized form strategies* used the *possibility strategy* with 11 (12.2%) in all situations. However, they used *should strategy* with 1 (1.1%) in situation three. Also, the participants used *conditional strategy* with 8 (8.9%) in all situations.

It is clear that the participants in *indirect Strategies* used *impersonal strategy* with 14 (15.6%) in all situations except one and four, and *obligation strategy* with 2 (2.2%) only in situations two and four.

In situation one, 9 (69.2%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of "*performative verb*" While the strategy of "*conditional Strategy*" is the second most used strategy which is employed by 2 (15.4%) of the participants. In this situation, also, 1 (7.7%) of the participants choose the strategy of "*Negative Imperative/possibility*".

As it is clear in Table (1) above, in situation two, the most used strategy by the participants is "*Impersonal*" which is used by 6 (46.2%) of the participants. The second strategy is "performative verb" that is used by 4 (30.8%) of participants. The third three strategies that are used equally by one participant (7.7 %) for each strategy are "*Possibility*", "*Conditional*" and "*Obligation*".

In situation three, it can be observed that 3(23.1%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of "*impersonal*" that is the most used strategy in this situation. Four strategies that are employed equally by 2 participants (15.4%) for each strategy are "*performative verb*", "*imperatives*", "*possibility*", and "*conditional*". Furthermore, two strategies are also used equally by 1 participant (7.7%) for each strategy is "*negative imperative*" and "*should*".

As it is in Table (1) above, in situation four the most used strategy by the participants which are "*performative verb*" and "*negative imperative*" with 4 (30.8%). The second strategy is "*possibility*" with 2 participants (15.4%). The third three strategies that are used equally by one participant with (7.7%) for each strategy are "*imperatives*", "*conditional*", and "*obligation*".

In situation five, It can be observed that 4 (30.8%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of "*possibility*" that is the most used strategy in this situation. The second two strategies that are used equally by three participants (23.1%) for each strategy are "*performative verb*", and "*impersonal*". 2

(15.4%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of "negative imperative". Also, one participant (7.7%) chooses to suggest by the strategy of "conditional".

Based on the data in Table (1), in situation six, 8 (61.5%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of "negative imperative" While the strategy of "impersonal" is the second most used strategy which is employed by 2 (15.4%) of the participants. Three strategies that are employed equally by one participant (7.7%) for each strategy are "imperatives", "possibility", and "conditional".

According to the direct strategies, it can be observed that the participants of Azal university EFL learners prefer to use *performative verb strategies* more than others, followed by *negative imperative* and *imperatives strategies*.

It can be noticed that in conventionalized forms strategies, the participants used *possibility* strategies more than others, followed by *conditional* and *should strategies*.

In indirect strategies, *impersonal strategies* are the most used strategy by participants, followed by *obligation strategies*.

#### 4.2. The Suggestion Strategies Used participants of Al-Nasser University

Table 2. Types of Suggestion Strategies Used by Participants of Al-Nasser University

Suggestion Strategies	Situation 1		Situation 2		Situation 3		Situation 4		Situation 5		Situation6		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>Direct strategies</b>	Per formative verb	2	14.3	3	14.3	8	36.4	3	14.3	1	4.3	1	4.3	15	61.5
	Noun of suggestion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Imperatives	1	4.3	2	8.6	0	0	1	4.3	1	4.3	0	0	5	20.8
	Negative imperative	1	4.3	3	12.9	0	0	7	28.6	9	36.4	0	0	10	40.8
<b>Conventionalized forms</b>	Interrogative forms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Possibility	5	20.8	3	12.9	2	8.6	1	4.3	2	8.6	1	4.3	12	48.1
	Should	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4.3	0	0	0	0	1	4.3
	Need	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Indirect strategies</b>	Conditional	3	12.9	1	4.3	2	8.6	0	0	1	4.3	0	0	7	28.6
	Impersonal	1	4.3	1	4.3	2	8.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	16.3
	Hints	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Inclusive we	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8.6	2	8.6
	Obligation	1	4.3	1	4.3	0	0	1	4.3	0	0	0	0	3	12.9

Based on the table (2), it can be noticed that the participants used three types of suggestion (*direct strategies, conventionalized form strategy, and indirect strategy*). The participants used three types of direct strategies such as *performative verb strategy, Imperative strategy, and Negative Imperative strategy*. While they used three types of *conventionalized strategies which are Possibility strategy, should strategy, Conditional strategy*. Also, they used three types of Indirect strategies that are *Impersonal strategy, inclusive we strategy, and Obligation strategy*.

It can be observed that in direct strategy the participants used *negative imperative strategy* with 30 (33.3%). They used *negative imperative strategy* in all situations except situation three. While the participants used *performative verb strategy* with 18 (20.0%) in all situations. and they used *Imperatives strategy* with 5 (5.6%) in all situations except three and six.

It can be noticed that the participants in *conventionalized Form strategy* used the *possibility strategy* with 14 (15.6%) in all situations. However, they used *conditional strategy* with 7 (7.8%) in all situations except four and six. Also, the participants used *should strategy* with 1 (1.1%) only in situation four.

It is clear that the participants in *Indirect Strategies* used *impersonal strategy* with 4 (4.4%) in situations one, two, and three. Also, they used *obligation strategy* with 3 (3.3%) in situation one, two, and four, and they used *inclusive we strategy* with 2 (2.2%) only in situation six.

In situation one, it can be observed that 5 (35.7%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of "*possibility*" that is the most used strategy in this situation While the strategy of "*conditional*" is the second most used strategy which is employed by 3 (21.4) of the participants. Also, the participants used "*performative verb*" with 2 (14.3%). The fourth four strategies employed by 1 participant with (7.1%) for each strategy are "*imperatives*", "*impersonal*", and "*obligation*". As it is clear in Table (2) above, in situation two, the first three strategies that are used equally by 3 participants (21.4%) for each strategy are "*performative verb*", "*negative imperative*" and "*possibility*". The second strategy that is used in situation two by 2 participants (14.3%) is "*imperatives*". Three strategies which are also used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are "*conditional*", "*impersonal*", and "*obligation*".

In situation three, it can be observed that 8 (57.1%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of "*performative verb*" that is the most used strategy in this situation. Three strategies that are employed equally by 2 participants (14.3%) for each strategy are "*possibility*", "*conditional*", and "*impersonal*".

As it is clear in Table (2) above, in situation four, the most used strategy by the participants is "*negative imperative*" which is used by 7 (50.0%) of the participants. In this situation, also, 3 (21.4%) of the participants choose the strategy of "*performative verb*". In addition, four strategies are "*imperatives*", "*possibility*", "*should*", and "*obligation*" that are used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy.

In situation five, it can be observed that 9 (64.3%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of "*negative imperative*" that is the most used strategy in this situation. 2 (14.3%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of "*possibility*". Also, three strategies that are used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are "*performative verb*", "*imperatives*", and "*conditional*".

As seen in Table (2) above, in situation six 10 (71.4) of the participants choose the strategy of "*negative imperative*" which is the most used strategy in situation six. The second most used strategy is "*inclusive we*" which used by 2 participants (14.3%). Two strategies that are used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are "*performative verb*", and "*possibility*".

According to the direct strategies in Table (2), it can be observed that the participants of Al-Nasser university EFL learners prefer to use *negative imperative strategy* more than other strategies, followed by *performative verb strategy*, and *imperatives strategy*. It can be noticed that in conventionalized forms strategies, *possibility strategy* is the most frequent used strategy, followed by *conditional strategy* and *should strategy*. In indirect strategies, the participants used *impersonal strategy* more than others, followed by *obligation strategy* and *inclusive we strategy*.

### 4.3. The Suggestion Strategies Used by participants of National University

Table 3. Types of suggestion Strategies Used by Participants of National University

Suggestion Strategies	Situation1		Situation2		Situation3		Situation4		Situation5		Situation6		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>Direct strategies</b>	Per formative verb	9	64.3	6	42.9	6	42.9	1	7.1	4	28.6	3	21.4
	Noun of suggestion	0	0	1	7.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Imperatives	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Negative imperative	2	14.3	0	0	0	0	3	21.4	4	28.6	5	35.7
<b>Conventionalized forms</b>	Interrogative forms	1	7.1	0	0	0	0	1	7.1	1	7.1	0	0
	Possibility	2	14.3	2	14.3	0	0	3	21.4	2	14.3	0	0
	Should	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Need	0	0	1	7.1	3	21.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Indirect strategies</b>	Conditional	0	0	0	0	1	7.1	0	0	0	0	1	7.1
	Impersonal	0	0	4	28.6	1	7.1	4	28.6	2	14.3	4	28.6
	Hints	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Inclusive we	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7.1
	Obligation	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	14.3	1	7.1	0	0

Based on the table (3), it can be noticed that the participants used three types of suggestion (*direct strategies*, *conventionalized form strategies*, and *indirect strategies*). The participants used three types of *direct strategies* such as *performative verb strategy*, *noun of suggestion strategy*, and *negative Imperative strategy*. While they used four types of *conventionalized strategies* which are *interrogative forms strategy*, *possibility strategy*, *need strategy*, and *Conditional strategy*. Also, they used three types of Indirect strategies that are *Impersonal strategy*, *inclusive we strategy*, and *Obligation strategy*.

It can be observed that in *direct strategies* the participants used *performative verb strategy* with 29 (32.2%). They used *performative verb strategy* in all situations. While the participants used *negative imperative strategy* with 14 (15.6%) in all situations except two and three, and they used *noun of suggestion strategy* with 1 (1.1%) only situation two.

It can be noticed that the participants in *conventionalized Form strategies* used the *possibility strategy* with 9 (10.0%) in all situations except three and six. However, they used *need strategy* with 4 (4.4%) only in situations two and three. Also, the participants used *interrogative forms strategy* with 3 (3.3%) only in situation one, four, and five, and *conditional strategy* with 2 (2.2%) only in situations three and six.

It is clear that the participants in *Indirect Strategies* used *impersonal strategy* with 15 (16.7%) in all situations except one. Also, they used *obligation strategy* with 3 (3.3%) in situation four, and five, and they used *inclusive we strategy* with 1 (1.1%) only in situation six.

In situation one, 9 (64.3%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of *"performative verb"*. Two strategies that are employed equally by two participants (14.3%) for each strategy are *"negative imperative"*, and *"possibility"* While the strategy of *"interrogative forms"* is the third most used strategy which is employed by 1 (7.1%) of the participants.

As it is clear in Table (3) above, in situation two, the most used strategy by the participants is *"performative verb"* which is used by 6 (42.9%) of the participants. The second strategy is that *"impersonal"* used by 4 (28.6%) of participants. Also, 2 participants (14.3%) choose to suggest by the strategy of *"possibility"* and *"noun of suggestion"* with 1 (7.1%).

In situation three, it can be observed that 6 (42.9%) of the participants suggest by using the strategy of *"performative verb"* that is the most used strategy in this situation. While the strategy of *"need"* is the second most used strategy which is employed by 3 (21.4%) of the participants. Two strategies that are employed equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are *"conditional"*, and *"impersonal"*.

As it is in Table (3) above, in situation four the most used strategy by the participants which is *"impersonal"* with 4 (28.6%). Two strategies that are employed equally by 3 participants (21.4%) for each strategy are *"negative imperative"*, and *"possibility"*. The third strategy is *"obligation"* with 2 participants (14.3%). The fourth two strategies that are used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are *"performative verb"*, and *"interrogative forms"*.

In situation five, it can be observed that the first two strategies that are used equally by 4 participants (28.6%) for each strategy are *"performative verb"*, and *"negative imperative"*. The second two strategies that are employed by 2 participants (14.3) for each strategy are *"possibility"* and *"impersonal"*. The third two strategies that are used equally by 1 participant (7.1%) for each strategy are *"interrogative forms"*, and *"obligation"*.

Based on the data in Table (3), in situation six, 5 (35.7%) of the participants prefer to suggest by using the strategy of *"negative imperative"*. While the strategy of *"impersonal"* is the second most used strategy which is employed by 4 (28.6%) of the participants. Also, 3 participants used the strategy of *"impersonal"* with (21.4%). Two strategies that are employed equally by one participant (7.1%) for each strategy are *"conditional"* and *"inclusive we"*.

According to the direct strategies, it can be observed that the participants of National University EFL learners prefer to use *performative verb strategies* more than others, followed by *negative imperative* and *noun of suggestion*.

It can be noticed that in conventionalized forms strategies, the participants used *possibility strategies* more than others, followed by *need*, *interrogative forms* and *conditional strategies*. In indirect strategies, *impersonal strategies* are the most strategy used by participants, followed by *obligation* and *inclusive we strategies*.

#### **4.4. Statistical Differences in the Use of Suggestion Strategies by participants of the Three Universities**

To answer the third question: To what extent are suggestion strategies different/ similar at three private universities? Tables 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 show the suggestion strategies used by participants of Azal University for Human Development, Al-Nasser University and National University

In order to know the statistical differences between the participants of the three universities in using suggestion strategies, One Way Anova Test was conducted.

**Table 4.** One Way Anova Test Results of the Three Universities

Situation	Universities	
	F	Sig
Situation 1	6.807	.003*
Situation 2	2.048	.143
Situation 3	.555	.578
Situation 4	5.906	.006*
Situation 5	2.795	.074
Situation 6	.987	.382

Table 4 above shows that the value of F was not a function in the most of the situations, and this means that there are no significant and statistically significant differences in the use suggestion strategies according to three universities, while statistically significant differences were observed in situation one and situation four only. In details, the value of F was a function in the first situation (6.807) and fourth situation (5.906) only, and this means that there are substantial and statistically significant differences according to the universities in situations one and four.

To find out and make sure the differences according to the universities participants, the researchers conducted the Duncan test to find these differences as shown in the table 5 below. From the results, it can be noticed that the differences were in favor of Al-Nasser University with an average of (1.857) in situation 1, and the National University was the lowest with an average of (1.21).

**Table 5.** Duncan Test Results of the Three Universities for situation 1

Universities	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
National University	14	1.2143	
Azal University for Human Development	13	1.2308	
AL-Nasser University	14		1.8571
Sig.		.935	1.000

In addition, Table 6 below shows that the differences were in favor of National University with an average of (2142) in situation four, and Al-Nasser University was the least with an average of (1.286).

**Table 6 .** Duncan Test Results of the Three Universities for situation 4

University	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
National University	14	1.2857	
Azal University for Human Development	13	1.3846	
AL-Nasser University	14		2.1429
Sig.		.721	1.000

Furthermore, the researchers conducted descriptive statistics test in order to clarify and identify the types of suggestion strategies used by the participants of the three universities. Table 7 below shows

that the participants of National University used direct strategies significantly at a rate of 11 (78.6%) and Conventionalized forms by (21.4%) in situation one more than other participants of Azal University for Human Development and Al-Nasser University, while the participants of Nasser University used the strategy of Conventionalized forms by (57.1%), followed by Direct strategies by (28.6%).

**Table 7.** Descriptive Statistics of Universities for situation

Suggestion Strategies	Universities					
	AL-Nasser University		Azal University		National University	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Direct strategies</b>	4	28.6%	<b>10</b>	<b>76.9%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78.6%</b>
<b>Conventionalized forms</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	3	23.1%	3	21.4%
<b>Indirect strategies</b>	2	14.3%	0	0%	0	0%

Table 8 below shows that the participants of Al-Nasser University used direct strategies by a high percentage of (78.6%), and conventionalized forms by (14.3%). while the participants of National University used the indirect strategies by (42.9%).

**Table 8.** Descriptive Statistics of Universities for situation 4

Suggestion Strategies	University					
	AL-Nasser University		Azal University		National University	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Direct strategies</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78.6%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	4	28.6%
<b>Conventionalized forms</b>	2	14.3%	3	23.1%	4	28.6%
<b>Indirect strategies</b>	1	7.1%	1	7.7%	<b>6</b>	<b>42.9%</b>

## 5. Discussion

In general, it was found that the participant of the current used different suggestion strategies. The strategies depending on pragmalinguistics forms used the suggestion and differences of strategies suggestion used by the students of third level of Azal University, AL-Nasserr University, and National University. In this chapter, the results of the current study are discussed with reference to the previous studies presented in the literature review. It focuses on realization of expressions, patterns and perceptions of suggestion by Yemeni EFL learners in the DCT. In general, the researchers found that there are three types of suggesting strategies used by the students namely; direct strategies (56.5%), conventionalized form (24.4%), and indirect strategies (19.1%). It is found that the participants of this study use different types of suggestion strategies such as (*performative verb, negative imperative, possibility, personal, conditional, obligation, imperatives, need, interrogative forms, inclusive we, should, noun of suggestion*). It can be noticed that some strategies are used more frequently than others. According to the types of suggestion strategies, the results show that "*direct strategies*" is the most frequently used strategy by the participants in all situations of the current study. In particular, the results obtained from data analysis of the current study reveal that the participants have a great tendency to use the strategy of "*performative verb*" more frequently than other suggestion strategies. The interpretation for using "*performative verb*" shows that the participants have the perception that they have to use (*performative verb*) like "*I suggest that you...*" as a compulsory in each suggestion situation. It can be observed that the current study is in harmony with the results of Alzebaree and Yavuz's study (2018) which indicate that the study revealed differences in the overall strategies and strategy patterns between the responses of Kurdish EFL

undergraduate students (KEFLUS) and Native speakers of English groups (NSE). Although participants from both groups were observed using various strategies when making suggestions and refusals, the KEFLUS utilized direct and explicit strategies more often than did the NSE participants. The NSE group utilized strategies that were more polite and implicit. It can be observed that the findings of the study corresponds with Farina, Sohrabie, and sattar's (2014) results which show that the respondents of their study chose to use more direct strategies than other types (i.e. Conventionalized forms and indirect strategies). They tried to redress the face threatening act of suggestion by using mitigation devices such as justifying the reason of using direct strategies. Furthermore, the findings of the present study partly concur with Yiddish's (2020) study which the findings suggested that the participants tried to render their suggestions as less face threatening as possible by lessening the degree of imposition placed on the hearer while being as cooperative as possible. Moreover, it can be noticed that the participants of the current study used direct strategies by a large percentage and then followed by conventionalized forms. This result is also revealed that Turkish EFL learners tend to use direct strategies more frequently and then conventionalized forms strategies. Hence, it can be inferred that Yemeni learners of English in the present study had a great tendency with Gu's (2014) findings which revealed that the Chinese EFL learners resembled native English speakers in the use of direct suggestion strategies. According to the current study, performative verb and negative imperative strategies were the most commonly used strategies. The results of the current study are also consistent with the study of Farnia and Yazdan (2018) which show that English native speakers utilize more indirect strategies in reminding their interlocutors to cope with the required activity, Iranian EFL learners tend to use direct strategies more frequently. Overall, the findings of the present study revealed that the participants mostly used "direct strategy", specifically performative verb, to make suggestions. The participants tried to make their suggestions as less face threatening as possible by lessening the degree of imposition placed on the hearer.

## **6. Conclusion**

Depending on the displaying and explaining the collected data in Chapter Four, the research has come up to the following results: The results of the current study show that the participants at Azal university use eight suggestion strategies for six situations and the most frequent used strategy is "performative verb". The results show that the participants at Al-Nasser University use nine suggestion strategies for six situations and the most frequent used strategy is "negative imperative". The results show that the participants at National university use ten suggestion strategies for six situations and the most frequent used strategy is "performative verb". The results indicate that Yemeni EFL learners' knowledge of speech acts in general and suggestion strategies in particular that is the focus of the current study, is rather limited. English teachers do not concentrate on the need of the students for developing learners' knowledge of pragmatic ability, speech acts, and politeness markers in their teaching. The results reveal that the participants' lack of knowledge about using different types of suggestion strategies in English has affected their use of suggestion strategies, because they have never heard of these strategies, so they are unable to use these strategies successfully. The results reveal that the EFL learners translate the utterances in their mother tongue into the target language without considering the differences between the two languages. Any language is so much associated with its culture, so naturally there are some difficulties for Yemeni EFL learners in acquiring the nuances or small differences of the English language that are so culture-bound.

The results of the present study may provide some pedagogical implications for learners, teachers, syllabus designer and textbook compiler. This study can help in integrating and explaining some socio-cultural concepts to L2 and FL materials presented to second and foreign language learners to avoid communication failure or behaviour between native and non-native speakers of English. Also, the results can be a guideline for English learners of English as a foreign language. It helps teachers to highlight the similarities and differences to their students to facilitate the teaching of polite/impolite expressions in the target language as compared to the first language. It helps the language instructors who endeavor to reveal pragmatic competence by Arabic speakers in preparing their teaching materials in English language. Furthermore, the present study helps non-native speakers of English to get a clear idea about what are acceptable or not acceptable expressions in English language. It will also help non-native speakers of English to discover English people culture and how the speakers interact with each other in their daily life.

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