Iraqi EFL Learners’ Recognition Of Politeness In The Speech Act Of Suggestion

Mushtaq A. Sharqawi , Elizabeth M. Anthony

Abstract: Despite the fact that the speech act of suggestion is used commonly in daily interactions in the EFL learners’ and other non-learners’ settings yet, no much attention was paid to suggestion by the recent literature when compared to other speech acts. Besides, suggestions have not been methodically studied for their politeness potentials as an end. Thus, the purpose of the current study is twofold: (1) To explore suggestions with their underlying inherent politeness aspects recognized by Iraqi EFL learners. (2) The study also examines if there is a relation between learners’ language proficiency levels and the types of suggestion in terms of politeness. To this end, a close-ended Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Task (MDCT) is used to collect data from randomly selected 104 undergraduate fourth-year students of EFL enrolled in the academic year 2018-2019 at the English Language Department, College of Education at the University of Qadisiyah. For quantitative analysis, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences’ software (SPSS) is used to generate descriptive and inferential statistics. The analyses uncovered that Iraqi EFL learners are aware of the politeness aspects of suggestions. Another outcome is that no relation exists between the proficiency level of the learners and the politeness of suggestions.

Keywords: suggestion, EFL learners, proficiency, politeness, directness

1. INTRODUCTION
With its introduction in 1962 by J.L. Austin, the theory of speech act has undergone waves of criticisms and approvals by many linguists. The theory was received and developed later by J.R. Searle in 1969. It is the first systematic theory in which speech acts are viewed not only as verbal behaviour but kinds of human actions [1]. Both Austin and Searle believe that when a person says something, it means he/she does something [2]. Since the time this argument came into being, speech act theory attracted a great deal of attention by researchers, especially from the western world. From a pragmatic perspective, the language is expressed solely by means of speech acts [3] like request, warnings, apologies, commands, blames, suggestions, etc. Suggestions, based on Searle and Austin’s taxonomies, belong to set of speech acts called ‘directives’; the acts in which the speaker aims to have the hearer does something [4]. So, the speaker mildly dictates the hearer to do perform an action. Although the action is dedicated to the benefit of the hearer, however, speech act theorists regard suggestion as a face-threatening act [5]. The face-threatening potentials inherent in suggestions may not be clear in other languages since speech acts are culture-bound. And here lies the necessity for the EFL learners to be aware of this fact in order to be able to make native-like suggestions. From a politeness perspective, due to the amount of imposition exercised by the suggestion maker on the addressee, suggestions should be mitigated (made politely) in order to reduce the amount of imposition [6]. Thus, the purpose of the study is to investigate the learners’ consideration of politeness when making suggestions to people with different social status and distance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
It is known that any piece of utterance can be problematic unless language messages are conveyed not only correctly in form but politely in manner as well [7].

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This means that when in conversation, EFL learners have to pay heed to two things: Correct linguistic forms and socially appropriate (polite) content. Despite these prerequisites, the current literature has uncovered impolite linguistic forms by learners from different regions. For instance, studies by [8] on disagreement by Chinese learners, [9] on refusals by Turkish learners, and Aribi (2012) on requests by Tunisian learners are rich with examples of learners’ misuse of the speech acts under these studies. Some studies showed that it is the low language level of the learners that led to the inappropriateness or impoliteness of language use. This means that their pragmatic competence was constrained by their poor linguistic competence as [10] and [11] claimed. They added that the higher the linguistic competence is the more polite their acts are. However, this may not be applicable to the Iraqi EFL learners because [12] have found that even the high-level learners were not able to act out politely. In fact, the issue of politeness was also evident at the Iraqi EFL learners context [13], [14] and [15] especially when the speech act has a face-threatening potential such as disagreements by [16], refusals by [13], requests by [14] which were all reported the learners to be less caring for the social status of the addressees. In this respect, since the study of [17] confirms that speech politeness is crucial to the actual understanding of the communicative intent of the interlocutors, so it is necessary to explore the learners’ consideration to politeness in other speech acts. Despite their importance to the EFL / ESL learners, speech acts, in general, have not received appropriate attention by the non-western scholars [18] and [15]. As for the specific act of suggestion, [19], [20] and [15] confirm that the speech act of suggestion is still underexplored when compared to other acts. Addressing the above-mentioned issues, the current study is set to explore how polite the Iraqi EFL learners are when dealing with the speech act of suggestion. Reviewing the literature on suggestions, it has been clear that some studies lied emphasis on the structural formulae of suggestions rather than their politeness as an end. For instance, [21] qualitative study targeted the structures in terms of gender. Studies like [22] and [23] both qualitatively examined structures. [24] even though focused on the structure as a means to measure the directness of suggestions. Studies
by [25] and [26] utilized the structure of suggestions to determine directness, which in turn, identified politeness. Such an approach may not be consistent since there were three types of analyses used on data elicited from one instrument. Bearing in mind that structures of suggestions determine the directness and the latter determines politeness. It seems that studies dealing with politeness as an end are scant and this led the researchers to set the current study. The literature uncovered that the modern trends on suggestion have focused on investigating the production level of language while the recognition level (how suggestions are recognized) with its intricacies remained under exploration. Besides, studies on suggestions focusing on the relation between language proficiency level of learners and politeness are limited. Although two Iranian cases by [18] and [5] are in this regard but these quantitative studies investigated the effect of gender and language level on the structure of suggestions only. Both used open-ended Discourse Completion Tasks to elicit data. Thus, to work on the gap in suggestion literature and to address the above-mentioned issues on politeness, the current study is set to (1) investigate the Iraqi EFL learners’ recognition level of the politeness in using suggestions and (2) explore the relationship between language proficiency level of the Iraqi EFL learners and the politeness of suggestions. To this end the study poses two quantitative questions in terms of politeness in recognizing suggestions:
1. What type of suggestion used by the Iraqi EFL learners?
2. What is the relationship between the learners’ proficiency level and the type of suggestion?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design
The study is quantitative for two reasons: the first is due to the quantitative nature of the two research questions which relate the independent variables (Iraqi EFL learners) to the independent variables (polite/impolite suggestions). Second, is the numerical data (quantifiable suggestions) obtained from a quantitative-based data collection instrument, i.e., MDCT. The study is descriptive in nature because it (1) reveals the learners’ recognition of politeness in suggestions and (2) explore the relationship between their language proficiency and politeness of suggestions. Being quantitative, the current study utilizes ‘Statistical Package for the Social Sciences’ software (SPSS) version 21 to generate descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations (Std. Dev.)) and inferential statistical tests; Levene’s test to check for homogeneity and Chi-square test to determine the relations under study.

3.2 Participants and Sampling
The population of the study is the Iraqi EFL learners of fourth-year at the English Language Department at Qadisiyah University. They range from 22 to 25 or more years old in ages. 104 learners were chosen randomly by means of [27] table consisting of two digits. The students were given numbers taken from the table and the researcher chose the first third first. This procedure continued until 104 volunteers were gathered. To ensure homogeneousness, the sample was split into 52 males and 52 females.

3.3 Language Proficiency Level
In coordination with the head of the English Language Department, the levels of the learners were obtained from record-keeping. The levels represented their averages of the final scored marks of the last three years of their study. These levels were given a scale to range from very good high to very low. But it seems that no learner was spotted at the very low level. Thus, the language proficiency scale descended from very high to very low. The table below reveals their language proficiency levels.

3.4 Instrument and Coding
The instrument is a close-ended Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Task (MDCT). It comprises 6 conversation-like situations simulating everyday encounters. In every situation, the social status (SS) and social distance (SD) are both considered. There are three types of choices (suggestions) for the participant to choose: the first choice is a direct suggestion, the second is a conventionally indirect suggestion, and the third is an indirect suggestion. [28] proposed a model inclusive of all possible suggestions which can be made in English [29]. The model comprises three types of suggestions:
1. Direct (overt) suggestions whose structures are characterized by the use of the verbs ‘I suggest’, ‘I recommend…’ and ‘I propose…’, or by the nouns ‘The/My suggestion…’, ‘The /My proposition…’ and ‘The/My recommendation…’.
2. Conventionally indirect (less overt) suggestions whose structures are characterized by the use of ‘Let’s…’, ‘Why not/don’t…?’, ‘How/what about…?’, ‘Shall we…?’, and conditional forms such as ‘If I were you I …’. According to [26], some expressions when used with direct suggestions they change them into conventionally indirect ones. These words are called redressive actions like: ‘Well’, ‘ok’, ‘if you ask me’, ‘perhaps’…etc.
3. Indirect (covert) suggestions characterized by the use of a hint such as ‘I have heard that …’ or the use of impersonal forms such as ‘It might/would be better/useful for you to…’

In terms of directness, every suggestion carries a certain degree of politeness. The table below shows the relevance of directness to politeness in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directness</th>
<th>Politeness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Direct</td>
<td>Impolite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Conventional</td>
<td>Less polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Indirect</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But these relationships vary depending on the speaker and hearer social status and distance [30]. In formal situations where, when a speaker addresses someone with higher social status, he/she tends not to say ‘I suggest…’ explicitly if he/she intends to keep social harmony among them. Instead, they may resort to using implicit or indirect ways, or at least conventionally indirect ways instead. For instance, the sixth hypothetical situation in the MDCT requires.

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making a suggestion by a student to the waiter at the college café. According to the general theory of politeness by [30] and depending on SS and SD, if a student uses a direct suggestion then the act is regarded as ‘impolite’, if he/she uses a conventionally indirect suggestion, the act is ‘fair’, and if uses an indirect suggestion, the act is ‘polite’. This means that the politeness of suggestions varies according to the degree of directness. The following table summarizes all the situations with their social scenarios included in the MDCT.

**TABLE 2. MDCT Situations and the Coding of Politeness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sit.</th>
<th>MDCT Scenarios</th>
<th>Direct Sg.</th>
<th>Conventional Sg.</th>
<th>Indirect Sg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&amp;2</td>
<td>Equal SSs (+SD)</td>
<td>Impolite Sg.</td>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&amp;4</td>
<td>SS to + SS (+ SD)</td>
<td>Rude Sg.</td>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&amp;6</td>
<td>+ SS to – SS (+ SD)</td>
<td>Impolite Sg.</td>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&amp;8</td>
<td>– SS to + SS (+ SD)</td>
<td>Impolite Sg.</td>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&amp;10</td>
<td>Equal Ss (– SD)</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
<td>Very polite Sg.</td>
<td>Very polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11&amp;12</td>
<td>+ SS to – SS (– SD)</td>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
<td>Very polite Sg.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(where +SS = higher social status, - SS = lower social status, + SD = with social distance, - SD = no social distance, Sg. = suggestion)

To know how the social values (scenarios) are included within in the hypothetical situations, see the Appendix.

### 3.5 Procedure

The study was conducted in October 2018 at the English Language Department at Qadisiyah University. The researcher was assisted by two lecturers from the English Department who helped in the organization of the MDCT (test) setting. Consent forms have been distributed to the learners and informed about their right to withdraw from the task at any time. The sheets were distributed to the learners, read twice, and translated into Arabic in case some words were not familiar to them. The learners were encouraged to ask any questions if any. The conduction of the MDCT went smooth and flowing, though it was the learners’ first time in such a task. Conveniently, all the 12 MDCT situations were responded to by the 104 learners. In other words, no items were dropped by the participants.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

When responding to the MDCT, it seems that the learners found it easy to only tick the appropriate choice they thought it fitted the situation. Due to full response by the learners, so the total is 104 (participants) x 12 (situations) = 1248 answers. All of these answers are regarded as valid because the learners had to tick the appropriate choice from three choices. Prior to making any content analysis, it is necessary to check whether the target sample is actually homogeneous in nature. To do so, Levene’s statistics of homogeneity of variances was performed via SPSS.

**TABLE 3. Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness level</th>
<th>Levene’s Statistic</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very polite Sg.</td>
<td>0.956</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the ‘Sig’ column in the table, we find no value is less than 0.05, the Alpha level, meaning no significant difference was spotted at any of the five types of suggestions. This means that the sample is homogenous and it fell within the normal distribution. Although there was a high probability that the result would show such homogeneity as the learners were sampled from one place and they were all students of the fourth year, however, Levene’s test is a confirming robust tool that helps generalize the results over the whole population. In terms of the content of answers, the descriptive analysis shows that the learners’ least used suggestions were ‘rude’ while the majority were ‘polite suggestion’.

**TABLE 4. Types of Suggestions in Terms of Politeness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Politeness</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very polite Sg.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite Sg.</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>2.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Sg.</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impolite Sg.</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude Sg.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By looking at the means, we can prioritize suggestions in the following descending order: (1) Polite, (2) fair, (3) impolite, (4) very polite, and (5) rude suggestions. By looking at the Std. Dev. Values, we conclude that no single value exceeded its related mean value. This indicates that learners’ performance is consistent. This is also confirmed by the results of Levene’s test where normal distribution was evident. So, the learners were aware of their answers and thus not due to chance. Referring back to the politeness of suggestions, in order to know if the learners were generally polite in making suggestions or not, we need to organize the results into two zones: (1) polite zone and (2) impolite zone. To do this, we go to Table 4 and we move ‘very polite suggestions’ and ‘polite suggestions’ to the polite zone, and move ‘impolite suggestions’ and ‘rude suggestions’ to the ‘impolite zone. We don’t need to move ‘fair suggestions’ to the new zones since ‘fair’ in a middle type of suggestion that is neither polite nor impolite. So, they can be for now. The results and calculations are tabulated below.

**TABLE 5. Polite and impolite zones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polite zone</th>
<th>Impolite zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very polite Sg. (1.08) + Polite Sg. (5.23) = 6.31 polite Sg. in general</td>
<td>Impolite Sg. (1.63) + Rude Sg. (0.39) = 2.02 impolite Sg. in general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After adding up the mean values of the matching suggestions to each other, it is found that 6.31 of the learners’ suggestions were in the polite zone, while less than a half of them, 2.02, were at impolite zone. So, suggestions located at the polite zone (generally impolite suggestions) are considerably more than the suggestions at
the impolite zone (generally impolite suggestions). This ultimately means that the polite suggestions (located at polite zone) are more than the impolite suggestions. So, the first research question, about the type suggestions in terms of politeness, is now answered. Thus, the Iraqi EFL learners significantly use more polite than impolite suggestions. This means that learners tend to be polite when making suggestions to people with higher social status. Not only on suggestion context, results showing that EFL learners be caring for social status and distance are also evident in other speech act studies. [31] and [32] revealed mitigated disagreements. On the other hand, [33] unveiled polite refusals by EFL learners. Surprising findings by [34] need to be mentioned here as the learners were found to act politely even when the speech act under study is face-saving; gratitudes. With regard to suggestions, [19] revealed interactions between student and professors manifested polite suggestions. On the opposite side, [8] have reported impolite disagreements by the learners. Similarly, on refusals, [35] and [36] both confirmed impoliteness with high rates. As for suggestions, [26], unlike [19], concluded that the suggestions were lacking politeness and therefore, need to be mitigated. After answering the first research question it is the turn of the second research question. To do this, we need to know the proficiency level of language of each learner and then compare it with the type of suggestion in term of politeness. As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, the learners’ levels were obtained from the department record-keeping. The levels represent the final scored marks for the last three years. The following table shows these levels.

**TABLE 6. Percentages of the Learners’ Proficiency Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest percentage (57.6%) tells that the majority of the learners were spotted at ‘good’ level. The lowest percentage (0%) to ‘very poor’. In order to know how every level dealt with the type of suggestions in terms of politeness, the proficiency levels of the learners and their related suggestions are visualized in the following figure.

The figure uncovers that the learners with very good proficiency used 1.1% of the very polite suggestions, 5.7% of the polite suggestions and only 0.5% of rude suggestions. Taking the learners with a very good level as a base, the learners with a good level, unexpectedly, used more very polite suggestions, more polite suggestions, more impolite suggestions, and more of the rude. As we move to the learners with medium level, they used more very polite suggestions, the same amount of polite suggestions, less impolite suggestions, and less of the rude. More unexpected results the learners with poor level were found as higher very polite suggestions were used, a similar amount of polite suggestions used, and finally the least amount of the rude suggestions. In general, it seems that the learners’ performance is somewhat unpredictable due to intricate discrepancies in their use of suggestions. Thus, as an attempt to obtain a better understanding of their use, the following figure can help visualize their variations. Clearly, the figure shows, to a very considerable degree, that the learners with a good level of proficiency have overused all types of suggestions when compared with other groups. Preliminarily speaking, with this complicated use of suggestions among the proficiency levels, it can be assumed that the types of suggestions used do not confine to the proficiency level. In other words, there may not be a relation between the level of proficiency and the politeness of suggestions. But this remains a mere assumption until an inferential statistical test confirms. Since there are four language proficiency levels expected to vary with five types of suggestions, then the statistical test on SPSS must be set on Chi-Square test of impendence; a test used to explore if there is a relationship between proficiency levels and the types of suggestions in terms of politeness. Plugging in the necessary data into the Chi-square window, SPSS generated the following excerpt.

**TABLE 7. Chi-square Test of Independence.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>9.531</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>9.452</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>5.506</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>1248</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the critical value 0.657 is greater than 0.05 (the alpha level). This means there is no statistically significant relationship between the learners’ levels of proficiency and the politeness of suggestions. This result answers the second research question. So, the use of five types of suggestions are not governed by the proficiency level and the learners act out, nearly, in the same manner. It also means that there is no effect by the proficiency levels on the politeness of suggestions. As a result, no relation between the language proficiency level and the type of suggestion recognized. From a broader perspective, unlike the results of the current study, some speech act studies revealed a significant relationship between language proficiency level and politeness. A study by [10] revealed that learners with high proficiency level produced indirect polite disagreements when talking to others with a higher social status, whereas the low-level learners were more
direct and thus less polite. In a similar context, [5] found that only low-level learners resorted to using impolite requests. Regarding suggestions, [18] emphasized a significant role with language proficiency, finding that the higher the proficiency is the more polite suggestions are. But in the case of [5], no significant role for proficiency was found to effect on suggestions.

5. CONCLUSION
Quantitative data analyses have revealed that Iraqi EFL learners pay attention to the social status and distance of the addressees when recognizing suggestions. This means that they are aware of the politeness aspects inherent in the speech act suggestion. With respect to proficiency level, it was unveiled that no relationship exists between the learners’ proficiency level and the types of suggestion in terms of politeness. In fact, learners with all proficiency levels act out in almost a similar way which is polite.

6 REFERENCES


Appendix

The Task

Part I: Demographic Information.

Please tick your option.

1. Gender: [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. Nationality: [ ] Iraqi [ ] Others
   Please specify: …………………….

3. Native Language: [ ] Arabic [ ] Others
   Please specify: …………………….

Age: [ ] Below 22 years old
      [ ] 22 – 25 years old
      [ ] Above 25 years old

English Language Proficiency: [ ] Very Poor [ ] Poor [ ] Medium [ ] Good [ ] Very Good

(to be filled by the researcher)
Part II: Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Task (MDCT)

Tick ✓ in the box to choose the appropriate suggestion.

1. You are a master student of the English language and you encounter a new PhD student in the library. You notice that he/she cites information from only old sources for his/her dissertation.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ My proposition to you is that you cite information from new sources to keep your dissertation up to date.

☐ If I were you, I would cite information from new sources to keep my dissertation up to date.

☐ I’ve heard that PhD students need to cite information from new sources to keep their dissertation up to date.

2. You are in a clothes store with a new friend. He/she is about to buy a jacket that does not look nice on him/her.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ Try to find another jacket.

☐ Why don’t try on another jacket?

☐ There is a number of better options that we can get in the other stores.
3. You meet your new neighbour who is about your age at a pre-wedding party. Everyone is enjoying the party but the new neighbour starts to tell the guests bad things about the groom/bride.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ I suggest you stop telling bad things about the groom/bride.

☐ Let’s not tell bad things about the groom/bride.

☐ It would be nice if we tell only the good things about the groom/bride.

4. You are doing window shopping in a mall and you see your neighbour, who is younger than you, looking at the displays of the new fashion. He/she tells you about his/her intention of buying a shirt but you know that the prices of this mall are so high in comparison with the prices of the other mall in the opposite building.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ My suggestion is that you go to the other mall where the prices are fair.

☐ Have you thought about going to the other mall? The prices there are fair.

☐ It might be better to go to the other mall. We may get fair prices.
5. You are in the company you work for. Your boss is talking to you about the preparation for the meeting and you notice that there is a blue ink stain on his/her sleeve.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ I propose you check your shirt before the meeting.

☐ Sir, you need to check your shirt before the meeting.

☐ Excuse me, sir. One thing that you may do is to check your shirt before the meeting.

6. You are in the college café for the first time to have a cup of tea. The waiter brought you the tea with a glass cup but you think that the café should serve the tea with disposable cups.

Your suggestion will be:

☐ Try not to serve the tea with glass cups. Disposable cups are preferred.

☐ If you ask for my opinion, you shouldn’t serve the tea with glass cups. Use disposable cups.

☐ I think that many customers prefer disposable cups to glass cups for personal health reasons.
7. You are in the house and your older brother/sister is watching TV in the sitting room. The TV sound is so loud and you think that he/she has to turn the volume down so as not to disturb your mother who is having a nap.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ I suggest that you turn the volume down. Our mother is having a nap.

☐ Perhaps you need to turn the volume down as our mother is having a nap.

☐ It would be nice if we let our mother get some sleep.

8. You have just arrived home and known that your father/mother is going to drive his/her car to downtown this afternoon. While you are watching TV, the weather forecast announces strong dust storms in the next two hours.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

☐ My recommendation would be to stay home today because dust storms will strike today.

☐ You may stay home as there will be strong dust storms on the way.

☐ The weather forecast announced strong dust storms today.
9. Near the stationary store at the university, you overhear a conversation between two colleagues complaining about your best friend Ahmed/Sara who borrows money but never repays it.

   Your suggestion to him/her will be:
   
   ☐ My suggestion to you is to repay the money you’ve borrowed from others.

   ☐ Why not repay the money that others lent you?

   ☐ I’ve learnt that repaying the borrowed money in time would strengthen honest relationships among friends.

10. You and your close workmate arrive at the workplace on a windy day. You look at your workmate and notice that his/her hair is windblown and it looks so messy. He/she doesn’t seem to know this.

    Your suggestion to him/her will be:
    
    ☐ Try to comb your hair after this strong wind.

    ☐ You can comb your hair. It is windblown.

    ☐ You know what? The strong wind has messed up our look.
11. You sit by your younger brother/sister in the sitting room and you smell a strong odour of garlic.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

- I suggest you brush your teeth now to get rid of the garlic odour.
- You need to brush your teeth immediately after having garlic.
- It would be better if we both brush our teeth in case we got garlic breath.

12. It is January and your nephew/niece tries to plant some Jasmine flowers in his/her garden.

You like gardening and know that flowers are planted in April in your area.

Your suggestion to him/her will be:

- I propose you wait until April. Planting the Jasmine is not recommended in this month.
- You should wait until April. Planting the Jasmine is not recommended in this month.
- In our area, it is advised to plant all types of flowers in April.