

The Effect of Online English-Medium Instruction on Performance of English Face Threatening Speech Acts

Soojeong Paik*

Paik, Soojeong. (2022). The effect of online English-medium instruction on performance of English face threatening speech acts. *English Teaching*, 77(4), 103-128.

This paper examined the effects of online English-medium instruction (EMI) on high school students' performing English face threatening speech acts, by assessing indirect expressions and token agreement (agreement plus but). Participants completed an English placement test and English pretest and posttest through a Google survey. English proficiency, required for study participation was measured using the English placement test. An English pretest and posttest measured English pragmatic performance. The students were given approximately four weeks to complete eight online lectures. The experimental group completed eight online lectures which taught five face threatening speech acts, based on formal situations in the United States. The control group completed eight online lectures about worldwide cultures. The experimental group showed a significant improvement in the English posttest compared with the control group, based on improvements observed in the use of indirect expressions and token agreement. A difference between groups using indirect expressions was observed in an unfamiliar person scenario but not in a familiar person scenario.

Key words: English medium instruction (EMI), English face threatening speech acts, online instruction, high school learners of English

*Author: Soojeong Paik, Graduate student, School of English Language and Literature, Sookmyung Women's University; 100 Cheongpa-ro 47-gil, Yongsan-gu, Seoul 04310, Korea; Email: paiks@sookmyung.ac.kr
The author is thankful to her advisor, Dr. Aejin Kang for giving valuable guidance on designing online lectures.

Received 21 September 2022; Reviewed 1 November 2022; Accepted 1 December 2022



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1. INTRODUCTION

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has been known as one of the most effective English teaching methods since its introduction in 1970s. Despite of its emphasis on interactions among students, much importance is put on grammar and pronunciation in English education in general. Learning speech acts can be supported most effectively by CLT given that this approach allows students to practice various speech acts in classroom settings. However, popularity of CLT in English education contexts has not necessarily led to improvement of pragmatic aspects of English language on the part of students in public English curriculum.

It has also been commonsense that as long as one does not make a mistake or error in pronunciation and grammar, any misunderstandings between English speakers will not arise. However, different societies have different usage of speech acts in terms of linguistic contents and forms. Lack of knowledges about cultural aspects of speech acts is expected to be a barrier to successful communication in English. A direct refusal caused by lack of pragmatic competence of L2 Korean learners of English was evaluated as rudeness by a native speaker of English rather than insufficient English proficiency (Park & Oh, 2019). On the other hand, advanced Irish learners of German answered that a German interlocutor could be offended by their reoffer to his/her direct refusal and they did not want to transfer L1 cultural norm to their German use (Barron, 2002).

Cultural aspects related to speech acts are worth examining in English educational contexts considering its importance to communicating in English. It is useful to learn cultural norms in enacting face threatening speech acts. Specifically, face-saving is valued in Korean culture where Koreans are educated to indirectly express face threatening speech acts such as advice, complaint and refusal toward others. The indirect expressions are also preferred by native speakers of English. Park and Oh (2019) found that direct expressions used by an advanced learner of English in refusal contexts were evaluated as “inappropriate” by a native speaker of English (Park & Oh, 2019, p. 94). Both correction and disagreement are also face threatening act as an oppositional speech act. These speech acts require politeness on the part of interlocutors for successful communication especially in formal contexts.

This study examines the effects of online English-medium instruction (EMI) on performing English face threatening speech acts. With advanced learning technology, many L2 learners of English tend to rely on online lectures for learning English. Participants in this study will complete online EMI courses for about four weeks. A total of sixteen online video lectures were created for conducting research. The eight lectures for an experimental group were targeted to improve high school students’ pragmatic competence of English face threatening speech acts. The high school students in this study are expected to be familiar with taking online video lectures as a technology savvy age group. The researcher decided

to deliver contents through online video lectures instead of zoom sessions because students can learn from them in any time and place with any mobile devices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Face Threatening Speech Acts

Pragmatics is defined as “the study of language use in context- as compared with semantics, which is the study of literal meaning independent of context” (Birner, 2013, p. 2). Speech acts have been studied as one of the interesting topics in pragmatics because their intended meaning is manifested through an indirect expression rather a direct expression, which requires understanding of the given context. Searle (1969) divided speech acts into three categories; speech acts perform a locutionary act, illocutionary act, and a perlocutionary act. A locutionary act conveys literal meanings of an utterance. An illocutionary act is the act intended by an utterance of a speaker and carries an illocutionary force. A perlocutionary act is the act perceived by a listener and has a perlocutionary effect on a listener. When a speaker expresses face threatening speech acts such as advice, complaint, and refusal, he/she might try to make them sound implicit or indirect so that a perlocutionary act on the part of a listener can be achieved by saving face of others.

However, expressing face threatening speech acts indirectly in intercultural interactions is not an easy task if one does not have sufficient L2 linguistic skills. In other words, achieving a locutionary act implicitly in L2 requires L2 language proficiency. If a speaker of English as L2 performs these speech acts directly because of lack of English proficiency, a listener might feel offended and a perlocutionary effect might not be achieved even if a locutionary meaning was delivered. Expressing face threatening speech acts indirectly requires considerable English skills on the part of learners of English as L2.

2.2. Pragmatics from Three Cultural Perspectives

The basic assumption of cross-cultural pragmatics is that learners of similar L1 backgrounds have similar L2 communicative patterns which are influenced by their L1 cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Specifically, L2 learners of English from collectivistic cultures are assumed to use direct strategies less and indirect strategies more when they communicate in English than those from individualistic cultures. In other words, cross-cultural pragmatics explains that L1 cultural or linguistic patterns are transferred to L2 communicative patterns. According to Krulatz and Dixon (2020) who applied a cultural dimension of collectivism and individualism, Korean learners of English employed more

indirect strategies than their Norwegian counterparts when they refused both someone with higher status and someone with equal status, whereas Norwegian learners of English employed more direct strategies than their Korean counterparts.

However, cross-cultural pragmatics does not take into an account agency of L2 learners of English even though it shares similarities with intercultural pragmatics in terms of viewing the two cultures as different backgrounds for their pragmatic performance. Intercultural pragmatics approaches intercultural communication with more flexibility toward L1 influence on L2 than cross-cultural communication. When L2 learners engage in intercultural communication and use English as a lingua franca (ELF), it cannot be assumed that their communicative styles are all determined by their L1 backgrounds. Intercultural pragmatics explains that the role of L1 backgrounds of L2 learners is situation-specific given that L2 learners of English exercise their own cultural and linguistic agency in intercultural encounters. If they want to keep their L1 identity even temporarily, they will adopt their L1 communicative styles which might hinder successful communication. If their priority lies in successful communication, they will accommodate their interlocutors by being willing to give up their L1 identity temporarily. Thus, in the view of intercultural pragmatics, a cultural dimension such as collectivism-individualism has a significant influence on EFL contexts. But the influence of L1 is limited and unstable because it is L2 speakers of English who determine how much they adopt L1 and L2 identities based on their language agency.

Not being bounded by this binary view of culture, transcultural pragmatics argues that there are more than two cultures ongoing in intercultural communication. It assumes that both intracultural and intercultural factors are negotiated by L2 learners of English due to the transient nature of a relationship between ELF users in intercultural communication. Schnurr and Zayts (2013) demonstrated that refusal strategies used by L2 users of English in multicultural workplaces in Hong Kong do not reflect collectivism. They actively employed both direct and indirect refusal strategies when they refused to their supervisors in English. Integrating all three views of cross-cultural pragmatics, intercultural pragmatics and transcultural pragmatics, this study examines how performance of English face threatening speech acts is improved by online EMI and how the performance is influenced by other noncultural factors including (in)formality and (un)familiarity.

2.3. Directions about Learning English Face Threatening Speech Acts

2.3.1. Indirect expressions in face threatening speech acts

Studies about comparisons of pragmatic competence between nonnative speakers and native speakers suggest that using indirect or mitigating expressions can facilitate intercultural communication processes. It is also suggested that using these expressions also

requires considerable English proficiency on the part of L2 learners of English. These results from previous studies give a rationale of examining the effects of online EMI on performing face threatening speech acts such as advice, complaint and refusal with a focus on indirect or mitigating expressions. Specifically for English advice speech act, Min (2018) found that native speakers of English and Korean L2 learners with high proficiency used indirect strategies when they were giving advice, whereas Korean L2 learners with low proficiency relied on direct strategies. Strong hint as an indirect strategy was used by some of native speakers of English, but rarely used by Korean L2 learners regardless of their English proficiency. Korean L2 learners with low level of proficiency employed direct strategies most frequently. Min (2019) also found that Korean L2 learners of English used direct strategies more than native speakers of English when they were giving advice or when they were making suggestions. The Korean participants had intermediate or high-intermediate English proficiency. The significant difference between native speakers of English and Korean learners of English was that hedging devices were accompanied when native speakers of English used direct strategies such as declarative and imperative for giving advice. These mitigating devices were rarely used when Korean L2 learners of English used imperative and declarative for giving advice. This study implies that use of mitigating devices and indirect strategies when giving advice or making suggestions requires high English proficiency of Korean L2 learners of English.

Studies about English complaint and refusal speech acts also suggest that using indirect expression requires sufficient English proficiency but can have a beneficial effect on intercultural communication. Hong and Shih (2013) focused on how L2 English proficiency could affect pragmatic (in)competence in the speech act complaint. The study examined complaints of high proficiency learners (HL) and low proficiency learners (LL) in Taiwan. The results showed that hints strategy was more frequently used in HL group and accusation strategy in LL group. HL group used indirect request for repair strategy more whereas LL group used direct request for repair strategy. Lack of L2 proficiency is also assumed to have the negative influences on L2 learners' adopting refusal strategies. According to Min (2013), American college students used various refusal indirect strategies such as promising, making excuses and offering alternative, but none of their Korean counterparts with mid to high intermediate English proficiency used these indirect strategies and mostly relied on direct strategies in both addresses dominance and status equal contexts.

2.3.2. Token agreement in face threatening speech acts

Lee (2013) investigated the effect of English proficiency on (in)directness manifested in disagreement speech act. The results showed that EFL learners with intermediate level of proficiency disagreed in more indirect ways, whereas EFL learners with low level of

proficiency disagreed in more direct ways. Counterclaim is characterized as hedges, token agreement and positive remarks. Counterclaims requires syntactic and semantic complexity, which is reflected in the fact that counterclaim was less frequently used among the EFL learners with low proficiency. Maiz-Arevalo (2014) focused on investigating the common cultural norm adopted by L2 learners of English for disagreements. The study found that participants in multicultural contexts tried to avoid using strong disagreement and disagree indirectly by using mitigating devices or expressions in English as a Lingua Franca contexts. The mitigated disagreement was frequently expressed in the form of token agreement (e.g., ‘yeah...but’), use of hedges, giving explanations, requesting for clarifications, expression of regret and positive remarks. The results suggest that limited English proficiency can be an obstacle to practicing the cultural norm given that using mitigating expressions requires English proficiency on the part of learners of English as L2.

Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman and Su (2019) compared the effects of two kinds of corpus instructions on improvement in terms of performing 4 speech acts and 16 pragmatic routines related to the given speech acts. The targeted speech acts were agreements, disagreements, self-clarifications and other-clarifications. As pragmatic routines of disagreement speech act, three token agreements such as *Yeah but*, *Okay but* and *I agree but* were included in the study. The corpus materials group (CM) was provided with corpus materials in classroom contexts and learned the speech acts and pragmatic routines from their teachers. The corpus search group (CS) engaged in corpus searches on their own in classroom settings. The results showed that the two experimental groups improved significantly in terms of performing disagreement pragmatic routines than the control group. Based on above research about the effects of corpus instructions on pragmatic performance, this study aims to answer how online EMI contributes to English pragmatic performance on the part of high school students as L2 learners of English with a focus on indirect expressions and token agreement.

2.4. Research Questions

The present study intends to examine the following research questions.

- 1) Would online English medium instruction about indirect expressions improve performance of English face threatening speech acts?
 - 1.1) Would the improvement by instruction about indirect expressions be influenced by (in)formality?
 - 1.2) Would the improvement by instruction about indirect expressions be influenced by (un)familiarity?
- 2) Would online English medium instruction about token agreement improve performance of English face threatening speech acts?

3. METHOD

This study examines the effects of online EMI on improvement of pragmatic performance in terms of enacting English face threatening speech acts by using statistical analysis. Specifically, this study investigates whether there will be an improvement in high school students' English pragmatic performance after completing online EMI courses.

3.1. Participants

Thirty high school students (21 males and 9 females; 3, 15 and 12 respectively for first, second and third year high school students) in South Korea were recruited in this study through convenient/snowballing sampling. None of the participants had experiences of studying English abroad. They took a placement test with a total score of 20 in order to make sure that they had sufficient English proficiency required to participate in the study. Students who scored at least 16 out of 20 in an English placement test were qualified to participate in the study. They were randomly divided into an experimental group (N=15) and a control group (N=15).

3.2. Procedures

Participants took an English placement test and English pretest through a Google's online survey. They were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. One day after they completed an English pretest as well as placement test, they were informed of a blog where online video lectures were uploaded. Participants were instructed that they have four weeks to complete the lectures, specifically two lectures per one week. The experimental group was given eight lectures which taught five English face threatening speech acts. The control group was given eight lectures about visible and invisible cultures around the world. The experimental and control groups completed an English posttest through a Google's online survey four weeks after they completed a placement test and English pretest.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Placement test

A placement test was created based on an English tourism textbook for adult English learners. Twenty questions in a placement test were designed based on discourse completion test (DCT) format. The test was designed to choose one right answer among four multiple choices. The test was proofread by a native speaker of English who teaches English in a

college. It was checked that there is only one right answer for each of the 20 questions. All of these questions are related to request and question speech acts given that these speech acts are frequently used in tourism contexts. The placement test was designed to test general English proficiency of participants and familiarize them with DCT format (see Appendix A).

3.3.2. English pretest and posttest

An English pretest and posttest were designed to measure English pragmatic performance of high school students. An English pretest consists of 20 distractors questions and 39 multiple choice questions related to each of the four speech acts: 10 for advice, 12 for complaint, 6 for refusal and 11 for disagreement. An English posttest also consists of 39 multiple choice questions related to each of the four speech acts with 10 for advice, 12 for complaint, 6 for refusal and 11 for disagreement. An English pretest and posttest for correction speech act were created but was excluded in statistical analysis because disagreement and correction showed the redundant patterns. English questions as distractors were created from the English conversation textbook for high school students. The distractors were included only in an English pretest (see Appendix B).

An English pretest and posttest were designed to measure pragmatic performance in both formal and informal situations. As for formal contexts, an English pretest consists of 6 formal advice questions, 6 formal complaint questions, 6 formal refusal questions and 11 formal disagreement questions (see Table 1). This study assumed that a soup kitchen, a court and a hospital are the most common places where high school students in the United States volunteer to work. Formal situations in English advice, complaint and refusal contexts assumed that a participant is a second-year high school student who is doing a voluntary work in a soup kitchen, a court and a hospital. The participant is assumed to be conversing with his/her supervisor or coworker who is unfamiliar or familiar to them. For each of advice, complaint and refusal speech acts, 6 questions (4 in a higher social status scenario and 2 in an equal social status scenario; 3 in an unfamiliar scenario and 3 in a familiar scenario) were created for each of soup kitchen, court and hospital situations. This resulted in a total of 18 questions for each of the three speech acts. The 2 questions from each of soup kitchen, court and hospital situations (with a total of 6) for each of the three speech acts were included in an English pretest and another 2 from each of the three situations (with a total of 6) in an English posttest. This distribution resulted in 6 questions in both English pretest and posttest for each of the advice, complaint and refusal speech acts. In other words, the 6 out of 18 questions created for each of the three speech acts were not used in an English pretest or posttest. The topics of every conversation embedded in advice, complaint and refusal contexts are different regardless of social status of an interlocutor. For each topic, the two questions were created based on unfamiliarity and familiarity. Any topics or questions in an

English pretest and posttest do not overlap with each other (see Appendix C, Appendix D and Appendix E).

For disagreement speech act, all of 11 questions in formal situations assumed that a student is listening to a guest speaker's lecture in school and disagrees with him/her. Given that token agreement can be used in limited speech acts such as disagreement, a maximum number of 11 questions for disagreement were created based on topics from English conversation textbooks for high school students or among generally popular ones. As for testing token agreement, it was concluded that there is no need to create various situations because it is usage of a syntactic form that is examined in the study (see Appendix F).

As for informal contexts, both English pretest and posttest consist of 4 informal advice questions and 6 informal complaint questions (see Table 1). Informal situations in English contexts for advice and complaint assume that a participant as a second year high school student is conversing with his/her friend who is unfamiliar or familiar to them. The topics of English conversations in informal situations were adopted from English conversation textbooks for high school students: avoiding friends, checking on cellphone while talking to friends and patting friends on the back. It was assumed that these three informal situations were not proper to elicit refusal contexts and questions in informal situations were not created for refusal speech act. For advice and complaint speech acts, all the three topics above were applied to elicit informal advice and complaint contexts. Questionnaires for informal situations from these three topics was created based on age hierarchy (low vs. equal vs. high) and (un)familiarity with resulting in six questions for one informal situation for each of advice and complaint speech acts. The topic of patting friends on the back was later excluded in advice contexts due to its situational awkwardness in an older person scenario. In conclusion, 12 questions from the two topics were created for advice and 18 from the three topics were created for complaint. They were distributed to an English pretest and posttest with balancing age hierarchy and (un)familiarity. The 2 questions based on (un)familiarity within the same age hierarchy for each of the two topics (with a total of 4) in advice contexts and 2 based on (un)familiarity within the same age hierarchy for each of the three topics (with a total of 6) in complaint contexts were included in each of an English pretest and posttest. The 4 questions out of 12 for advice and the 6 out of 18 for complaint were not used in an English pretest or posttest. The same topics were shared between an English pretest and posttest. However, the questions with the same topic in an English pretest and posttest were different from each other based on age hierarchy. The age difference is an important communicative factor in South Korea and is assumed to elicit separate informal situations on the part of Korean high school students in advice and complaint contexts (see Appendix G and Appendix H).

TABLE 1
Formal and Informal Situations in English Pretest and Posttest

	Formal		Informal	
Advice	2 high 1 equal	(un)familiar	1 equal 1 low	(un)familiar
Complaint	2 high 1 equal	(un)familiar	1 high 1 equal 1 low	(un)familiar
Refusal	2 high 1 equal	(un)familiar	No	No
Disagreement	11 high	unfamiliar	No	No

3.3.3. Online video lectures

To examine the effects of online EMI on English pragmatic performance in the experimental group, eight ten-minute online English-medium lectures were designed based on formal situations for five speech acts from the English pretest and posttest (see Appendix I and Appendix J). Online lectures were conducted in English but main points were reviewed in Korean. All the English reading passages in the lectures focused on formal situations with an unfamiliar person scenario. Two lectures were created for each of advice, complaint and refusal speech acts and each of the lecture has two sessions (see Table 2). The first session of the first lecture explains (1) importance of using appropriate expressions when performing speech acts, (2) functions of various speech acts, (3) importance of using indirect/appropriate expressions in formal situations as opposed to informal situations and (4) the upcoming lectures' focus on formal situations. In the second session of the first lecture and each of two sessions of the second lecture, students learned one English passage related to a formal situation. English words and passages were read in English and explained in Korean. Then, the appropriate English expressions were taught to be used in the given situation. For each of the three speech acts including advice, complaint and refusal, students learned three English reading passages with a total of 9 ones. Among 9 reading English passages taught in the 6 online lectures, the 6 passages came from the English pretest, 1 from the English posttest and 2 from unused English passages in order to expose learners to various situations. The 6 indirect expressions for one English reading passage were taught as appropriate for successful communication in performing each of the three speech acts. The answers from the English pretest and posttest were included in the 6 polite expressions. The 3 polite expressions were introduced and then the 3 more polite expressions were taught. Between the polite and the more polite expressions, it was explained that using positive remarks and 'please' contributes to creating more polite expressions.

One lecture was created for each of correction and disagreement speech act and each of the two lectures has three sessions (see Table 3). The first session of the first lecture explains

that appropriateness can be attained by using indirect expressions and has the same information which was taught in the lectures for advice, complaint and refusal. In each of the second and third sessions, students learn a reading English passage related to a formal situation and the various English expressions which can be used for the given situation.

Unlike the English pretest and posttest, the online lecture added one more situation (i.e. student council situation) for disagreement and correction contexts in order to expose learners to a variety of situations. The positive comments followed by the conjunction ‘but’ were taught for correction and disagreement. In other words, students were asked to employ the token agreement such as ‘I agree but’ in order to correct others and disagree with them politely and indirectly. The 4 token agreement expressions for one English reading passage were taught as appropriate for successful communication in performing each of the two speech acts. Token agreements taught in the online lectures were used as an answer in the English pretest and posttest.

For the control group, eight ten minute online English-medium lectures were designed from English conversation textbooks for high school students (see Appendix K). Each of the eight lectures has two sessions (see Table 4). Before the first session, there were brief explanations about importance of cultural knowledge for successful communication and various examples of invisible and visible cultures. In each of the first and second sessions, cultures about the specific country were introduced briefly with various pictures before learning an English passage. The English passage and words about the given cultures in each session were read in English and explained in Korean. The control group did not have any chances to learn about the speech acts through the online lectures but they experienced worldwide visible or invisible cultural aspects.

TABLE 2

English Medium Online Lectures Related to Refusal for Experimental Group

Lecture	Session	Speech act	Situation	Social Status	Description
1	1	refusal	No	No	Importance of appropriate expressions
1	2	refusal	a soup kitchen	high	A soup kitchen manager asked you to go to a mart again.
2	1	refusal	a court	high	A court manager asked you to work alone, not with your friend.
2	2	refusal	a hospital	equal	A coworker asked you to cover for him/her.

TABLE 3
English Medium Online Lectures Related to Disagreement for Experimental Group

Lecture	Session	Speech act	Situation	Social Status	Description
1	1	disagreement	No	high	Importance of appropriate expressions
1	2	disagreement	guest speaker's lecture	high	You disagree with explanations of a guest speaker.
1	3	disagreement	student council	high	You disagree with explanations of a principal.

TABLE 4
English Medium Online Lectures Related to Cultures for Control Group

Lecture	Session	Source	Country	Topic
1	1	Visang	South Korea	Visible culture
1	2	Visang	New Zealand	Visible culture
2	1	YBM	Scotland	Invisible culture
2	2	YBM	South Korea and Italy	Invisible culture

4. RESULTS

4.1. The Effect of Online EMI about Indirect Expressions

In order to test the effects of online EMI about indirect expressions on English face threatening speech acts, the score of each of the three face threatening speech acts including advice, complaint and refusal were combined for each of the English pretest and posttest with a total score of 28. Independent t-test results showed that there was no significant difference in terms of combined English pretest score between the experimental group ($M = 10.80$, $SD = 4.62$) and the control group ($M = 12.40$, $SD = 3.25$); $t(28) = -1.10$, $p = .28$ (see Table 5). The total score difference between the English pretest and posttest was also calculated. The results of independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference between the experimental group ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 6.42$) and the control group ($M = -.40$, $SD = 4.87$); $t(28) = 1.60$, $p = .12$ (see Table 6).

TABLE 5
Comparison of Pretest Score for 3 Speech Acts

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	10.80	4.62	-1.10	.28
Control group	12.40	3.25		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 6
Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference for 3 Speech Acts

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	2.93	6.42	1.60	.12
Control group	-.40	4.87		

* $p < .05$

4.2. The Effect of (In)formality on Improvement by Instructions about Indirect Expressions

In order to test whether the improvement by instructions about indirect expressions would be influenced by (in)formality, the score of each of the three face threatening speech acts including advice, complaint and refusal in formal situations and informal situations were respectively combined for each of the English pretest and posttest with a total score of 18 for formal situations and 10 for informal situations. Independent t t-test showed that there was no significant difference in terms of pretest score in formal and informal situations between the experimental group (formal; $M = 7.87$, $SD = 3.09$, informal; $M = 3.13$, $SD = 2.13$) and the control group (formal; $M = 8.67$, $SD = 2.29$, informal; $M = 3.80$, $SD = 2.34$); formal; $t(28) = -.81$, $p = .43$ and informal; $t(28) = -.82$, $p = .42$ (See Table 7 and Table 8). The total score difference between the English pretest and posttest for each of formal and informal situations was calculated respectively. The results of independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference in a formal situation scenario between the experimental group ($M = 1.53$, $SD = 4.50$) and the control group ($M = -.07$, $SD = 3.37$); $t(28) = 1.10$, $p = .28$ (See Table 9). The results of independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference in an informal situation scenario between the experimental group ($M = 1.27$, $SD = 2.46$) and the control group ($M = -.33$, $SD = 2.53$); $t(28) = 1.76$, $p = .09$ (See Table 10).

TABLE 7
Comparison of Pretest Score for 3 Speech Acts in Formal Situation Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	7.87	3.09	-.81	.43
Control group	8.67	2.29		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 8
Comparison of Pretest Score for 3 Speech Acts in Informal Situation Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	3.13	2.13	-.82	.42
Control group	3.80	2.34		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 9
Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference in Formal Situation Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	1.53	4.50	1.10	.28
Control group	-.07	3.37		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 10
Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference in Informal Situation Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	1.27	2.46	1.76	.09
Control group	-.33	2.53		

* $p < .05$

4.3. The Effect of (Un)familiarity on the Improvement by Instructions about Indirect Expressions

In order to test whether the improvement by instructions about indirect expressions would be influenced by (un)familiarity, the score of each of the three face threatening speech acts including advice, complaint and refusal in unfamiliar situations and familiar situations were respectively combined for each of the English pretest and posttest with a total score of 14 for unfamiliar situations and 14 for familiar situations. The total score difference between the English pretest and posttest for each of formal and informal situations was calculated. Independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference in pretest score in unfamiliar and familiar scenarios in the experimental (unfamiliar; $M = 6.07$, $SD = 2.40$, familiar; $M = 4.73$, $SD = 2.52$) and control groups (unfamiliar; $M = 6.73$, $SD = 1.75$, familiar; $M = 5.80$, $SD = 2.01$); unfamiliar; $t(28) = -.87$, $p = .39$, familiar; $t(28) = -1.28$, $p = .21$ (See Table 11 and Table 12). Independent t-test was conducted to compare the pretest and posttest

score difference in unfamiliar and familiar scenarios between the experimental and control groups. The results of independent t-test showed that there was a significant difference in an unfamiliar person scenario between the experimental group ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 3.66$) and the control group ($M = -.80$, $SD = 3.01$); $t(28) = 2.40$, $p = .02$ (See Table 13). There was no significant difference in a familiar person scenario between the experimental group ($M = .87$, $SD = 3.68$) and the control group ($M = .27$, $SD = 2.55$); $t(28) = .52$, $p = .61$ (See Table 14).

TABLE 11

Comparison of Pretest Score for 3 Speech Acts in Unfamiliar Person Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	6.07	2.40	-.87	.39
Control group	6.73	1.75		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 12

Comparison of Pretest Score for 3 Speech Acts in Familiar Person Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	4.73	2.52	-1.28	.21
Control group	5.80	2.01		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 13

Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference in Unfamiliar Person Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	2.13	3.66	2.40	.02*
Control group	-.80	3.01		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 14

Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference in Familiar Person Scenario

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	.87	3.68	.52	.61
Control group	.27	2.55		

* $p < .05$

4.4. The Effect of Instructions about Token Agreement

In order to test the effects of online EMI about token agreement on English face threatening speech acts, the score difference between the English pretest and posttest of disagreement speech act was calculated with a total score of 11 for disagreement. The results of independent showed that there was no difference in pretest score in disagreement between the experimental ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 2.26$) and control groups ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.92$); $t(28) =$

-.93, $p = .37$ (see Table 15). In terms of score difference between the English pretest and posttest, the results of independent t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the experimental group ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 4.84$) and the control group ($M = -2.00$, $SD = 1.73$); $t(28) = 4.07$, $p < .001$ (see Table 16).

TABLE 15
Comparison of Pretest Score for Disagreement Speech Act

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	3.13	2.26	-.93	.37
Control group	3.86	1.92		

* $p < .05$

TABLE 16
Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Difference for Disagreement Speech Act

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental group	3.40	4.84	4.07	.000*
Control group	-2.00	1.73		

* $p < .05$

5. DISCUSSION

This study measured the high school students' ability to choose one of the most appropriate English expressions including indirect expressions and token agreement for performing English face threatening speech acts. Specifically, the study statistically compared indirect expressions in 18 questions in formal situations, 10 in informal situations, 14 in both familiar and unfamiliar situations in terms of advice, complaint and refusal speech acts as well as 11 token agreement questions in disagreement speech act. The results showed that there was a statistically significant effect of online EMI about indirect expressions and token agreement on improvements of performing English face threatening speech acts.

It is suggested that online EMI can be utilized to stimulate interests in learning pragmatic aspects of English on the part of L2 learners. The online lectures emphasized that indirect/appropriate expressions were more required in formal situations but (in)formality did not make a significant difference in learners' choice of indirect expressions. Instead, the learners focused on whether their interlocutor was an unfamiliar or familiar person. They were willing to choose to use indirect expressions when an interlocutor was unfamiliar to them. Online EMI lectures dealt with only English reading passages where an interlocutor is an unfamiliar person. It is possible that an unfamiliar situation is salient to the learners, which leads to them to adopt separate answers for each of familiar and unfamiliar situations. An additional study needs to include both familiar and unfamiliar scenarios in online lectures.

Even though formal/informal distinction was emphasized, online EMI lectures did not include English reading passages about informal situations. An additional study needs to include lectures about both formal and informal situations and investigate whether inclusion of both formal and informal situations leads to any significant differences in choices of indirect expressions.

According to the results, use of token agreement was significantly improved by online EMI lectures. Token agreement was tested in the disagreement speech act in this study based on previous studies about (1) how token agreement could be used as a mitigating device by L2 users of English in multicultural online contexts and (2) how instructions about token agreement through corpus materials increased frequency of token agreement usage by L2 learners of English. Token agreement as a syntactic form is conducive to using in performing face threatening speech acts such as disagreement and correction. Token agreement is easy to use for highly proficient L2 learners of English but is deemed as complex to use for those with low L2 proficiency (see Lee, 2013; Maiz-Arevalo, 2014). In this respect, online EMI in the study contributed to high school students' learning token agreements in terms of performing face threatening speech acts with some limitations such as using multiple choice questions instead of measuring written or spoken productive skills.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is the first attempt to examine the effect of online EMI on high school students' performing English face threatening speech acts in various contexts including formal/informal situations. The results of the study suggests that online EMI potentially contributes to their English pragmatics skills. This study measured the high school students' ability to choose the most appropriate English expressions including indirect expressions and token agreement for English face threatening speech acts. Online EMI of both indirect expressions and token agreement increased high school students' English pragmatic performance in terms of choosing the most appropriate expression among the given options. The results suggest that online EMI can be utilized to stimulate interests in learning pragmatic aspects of English on the part of L2 learners. However, their written or spoken data need to be collected in order to see whether their interests lead to an actual performance of English face threatening speech acts.

It is assumed in this study that the participants were doing a voluntary work in a soup kitchen, a court and a hospital in the United States. Online lectures in this study utilized detailed English reading passages which describe the specific situations that high school students could experience when they are doing a voluntary service in the United States. The online EMI targeted for the experimental group could help students to promote their interests

in learning appropriate English expressions related to English face threatening speech acts. Specifically, participants in the present study focused on distinction between familiarity and unfamiliarity. Future studies can be replicated with considerations of how lectures can be designed in a way to stimulate high school learners' interests in learning pragmatic aspects of English with taking into considerations different variables other than (in)formality and (un)familiarity.

Applicable levels: Secondary, tertiary

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APPENDIX A

Placement test

1. You are on a tour in the United States. You are about to reserve an airplane ticket back to Korea. What would you say as an answer to the following question?
A: Korean Air Lines. May I help you, sir?
B:
a. I'd like to fly to Seoul this Saturday. (the right option)
b. Your reservation number is 111.
c. I'd like to leave around 11:30 in the morning.
d. Thank you for listening to.

APPENDIX B

Distractors in pretest

Paula: Hey, Tim! Do you have any ideas for the festival booth?
Tim: I know we should do something, but I'm not sure what to do.
Paula: I don't want to run a food booth, though.
Tim: Me, neither. Everyone does food booths.
I suggest we do something unique and artistic.
Paula: Definitely. Do have any ideas?
Tim: How about face painting? I've always wanted to do that.
Paula: Great idea, but I don't know anything about face painting.
Tim: It's easy. There are tutorial videos online that you can watch.
They have lots of designs, too.
Paula: Okay, I'll look into them. A face painting booth would be fun.

1. What is not true about this conversation?
a. Paula does not want to run a food booth.
b. Tim wants to do something unique and artistic.
c. Paula knows a lot about face painting. (the right option)
d. Tim thinks that face painting is easy.

2. What is true about this conversation?
a. Paula is not interested in watching tutorial videos.
b. Paula thinks that a face painting is a great idea. (the right option)
c. Tim thinks that a food booth is unique and artistic.
d. Tim thinks that watching tutorial videos is not helpful to learn face painting.

APPENDIX C

Advice in a formal situation

1. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a soup kitchen for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to washing dishes in a soup kitchen. You wash dishes very well. A soup kitchen manager asks you to give him/her advice about how to wash dishes well. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate advice among the following options?

The manager: Can I have some tips about how to wash dishes really well?

You:

- a. I can show you how I wash dishes instead of an explanation. (the right option)
- b. I am not sure that I can explain it to you.
- c. It is so difficult to wash dishes really well.
- d. You do not need to learn from me.

2. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service for college entrance qualification by working at a business office at a court. All of your coworkers avoid organizing legal documents saying that legal terms are difficult. You always take responsibility for that hard work. A court manager asks you to give advice as to how you effectively deal with all the difficult legal documents. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate advice among the following options?

The manager: Can you give me advice as to how you process legal documents?

You:

- a. I am not the proper person to give you advice.
- b. I read legal documents whenever I have time. (the right option)
- c. I cannot because I am not a legal expert.
- d. I am not good at giving advice to others.

3. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a hospital for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to cleaning a restroom. You coworker is absent from work too often. You want to give him/her advice. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate advice among the following options?

The coworker: I am sorry for not attending work yesterday.

You:

- a. I have nothing to say in this case.
- b. You had better quit this job because you are inconveniencing others.
- c. How about quitting this job if you cannot attend work?
- d. If you continue to be absent, you might be forced to quit this job. (the right option)

APPENDIX D

Complaint in a formal situation

1. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a soup kitchen for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to washing dishes in a soup kitchen. You wash dishes very cleanly. But a soup kitchen manager always insists that the dishes should be cleaner. You have a hard time washing dishes. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following options?

The manager: You should wash dishes more cleanly.

You:

- a. I cannot make the dishes cleaner.
b. I hope that you can understand that I did my best. (the right option)
c. It is so difficult to work in a soup kitchen.
d. You should know that you are demanding too much.
2. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service for college entrance qualification by working as a tour guide at a court. You want to work with your close friend and ask a court manager to include your friend. But the court manager refuses. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following options?
The manager: There is no available position for your friend.
You:
a. Why can't you help my friend complete voluntary service?
b. Just let me know why he cannot join me.
c. I promise that he will be helpful. (the right option)
d. You cannot reject my friend just like this.
3. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a hospital for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to cleaning a restroom. Your coworker is absent from work too often. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following options?
The coworker: I am sorry for being absent from work yesterday.
You:
a. Your frequent absences irritate me.
b. You had better quit this job.
c. You need to stop not attending work.
d. Do you have any reason for not attending work? (the right option)

APPENDIX E

Refusal in a formal situation

1. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a soup kitchen for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to washing dishes in a soup kitchen. You wash dishes very cleanly. But a soup kitchen manager asked you to wash the dishes again so that the dishes are cleaner. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate refusal among the following options?
The manager: You should wash dishes again.
You:
a. I cannot make the dishes cleaner than this.
b. I am sorry but I think that you are demanding too much (the right option).
c. I have to quit this job because you demand too much.
d. Don't you think that you are demanding too much?
2. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service for college entrance qualification by working as a tour guide at a court. You want to work in a team with your friend, but a court manager asks you to work alone. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate refusal among the following options?
The manager: You should work alone.
You:
a. I have to work with my friend, so that I can help him.
b. Just let me know why he cannot join me.
c. I promise that we will do better in a team. (the right option)

d. I cannot follow your order because I have to help him.

3. You are a second year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a hospital for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to cleaning a restroom. Your coworker is absent from work too often and asks you to cover for him/her. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate refusal among the following options?
The coworker: Can you cover for me tomorrow?
You:

- a. I cannot cover for your because I am busy.
- b. I do not want to cover for you this time.
- c. I hope that you start asking others to cover for you. (the right option)
- d. You can ask other people this time.

APPENDIX F

Disagreement

1. You are a second year high school student. You are listening to a guest speaker's lecture. He/she argues that students should have a realistic goal to achieve their dreams. You oppose his/her opinion. What is the most appropriate comment among the following options?
A guest speaker: Do you have any thoughts or questions?
You:

- a. Don't you think that it is more desirable for students to challenge reality than conform to it?
- b. Thanks so much for your helpful lecture. But students' aptitude might be important. (the right option)
- c. I think that students have different opinions from yours.
- d. Do you think that students' aptitude is not important at all?

APPENDIX G

Advice in an informal situation

1. You are a second year student in a high school. A student in the same year avoids you whenever you ask her any questions. You want to give him/her advice. You got to know him/her a week ago for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate advice among the following options?

The student: Do you have anything to say?

You:

- a. I suggest that you talk to me instead of avoiding me. (the right option)
- b. No one will like your behavior.
- c. Can you tell me why you avoid me?
- d. Are you uncomfortable with being asked questions?

2. You are a second year student in a high school. A first year student checks his/her cellphone while you have a conversation with him/her. You want to give her/him advice. You got to know him/her a week ago for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate advice among the following options?

The student: Do you have anything to say?

You:

- a. I am worried that people will think that you are rude. (the right option)
- b. Checking your cellphone during our conversation is not polite.
- c. I do not want to talk to you when you are busy with your cellphone.
- d. You are not allowed to check your cellphone during our conversation.

APPENDIX H

Complaint in an informal situation

1. You are a second year student in a high school. A third year student pats your back whenever he/she sees you. You got to know him/her a week ago for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following options?

The student: Long time no see.

You:

- a. This is a bad behavior.
- b. Don't you think that this is too much even if you do it for fun?
- c. I hope that you will stop doing this although I know that it is for fun. (the right option)
- d. I cannot understand why you have to do this.

2. You are a second year student in a high school. A student in the same year avoids you whenever you ask him/her any questions. You got to know him/her a week ago for the first time. What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following options?

The student: Do you have anything to say?

You:

- a. I want you to let me know if you are worried about uncomfortable questions (the right option)
- b. Please, just stop avoiding me.
- c. Your acting like this is irritating.
- d. I will not ask questions of you from now on.

3. You are a second year student in a high school. A first year student checks his/her cellphone while you have conversations with him/her. You got to know him/her a week ago for the first time.

What do you think is the most appropriate complaint among the following option?

The student: Do you have anything to say?

You:

- a. Why are you checking your cellphone during our conversation?
- b. This is very impolite.
- c. How about checking your cellphone after our conversation? (the right option)
- d. You just continue to check your cellphone.

APPENDIX I

Online lecture for refusal speech act

English expressions

You are a second-year student in a high school. You plan to complete voluntary service in a soup kitchen for college entrance qualification. You are assigned to washing dishes in a soup kitchen. You wash dishes very cleanly. But a **soup kitchen manager** always insists that the dishes should be cleaner. You have a hard time in washing dishes. You got to know him/her through this voluntary service **for the first time**.

The manager: You should wash dishes more cleanly.
You:

➤ Vocabulary

Second-year student in a high school:
고등학교2학년

Complete voluntary service:
봉사활동을 이수하다

College entrance qualification:
대학입학자격조건

Soup kitchen: 무료급식소

be assigned to: ~에 할당되다

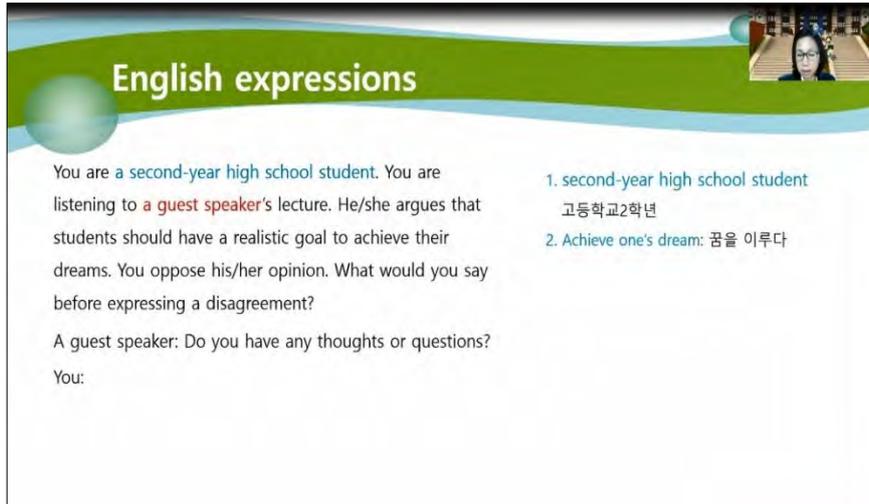
Have a hard time in~ : ~하느라 고생하다

공식적 상황에서 불평 (Complaint)

- I cannot endure your difficult demands.
- I think that you are demanding too much.
- I cannot make the dishes cleaner.
- **Indirectness, positive remarks & "please"**
- I want to help you, but I cannot make the dishes cleaner.
- Please understand that I did my best.
- I hope that you can understand that I did my best.

APPENDIX J

Online lecture for disagreement speech act

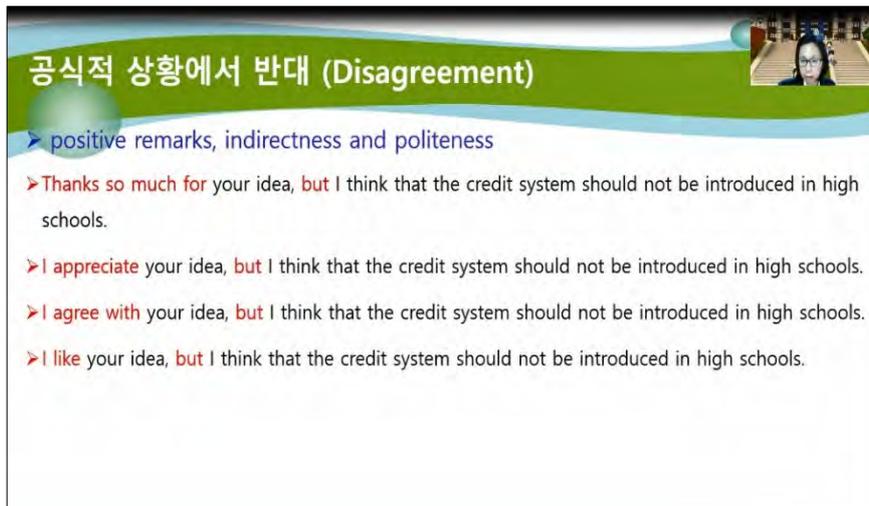


English expressions

You are a **second-year high school student**. You are listening to a **guest speaker's** lecture. He/she argues that students should have a realistic goal to achieve their dreams. You oppose his/her opinion. What would you say before expressing a disagreement?

A guest speaker: Do you have any thoughts or questions?
You:

1. **second-year high school student**
고등학교2학년
2. **Achieve one's dream**: 꿈을 이루다



공식적 상황에서 반대 (Disagreement)

➤ positive remarks, indirectness and politeness

- **Thanks so much for** your idea, **but** I think that the credit system should not be introduced in high schools.
- **I appreciate** your idea, **but** I think that the credit system should not be introduced in high schools.
- **I agree with** your idea, **but** I think that the credit system should not be introduced in high schools.
- **I like** your idea, **but** I think that the credit system should not be introduced in high schools.

APPENDIX K

Online lecture for cultures

South Korea



Jisu: Mike, How did you like staying in a *hanok* last night?

Mike: It was fantastic. I like the idea of floor heating. I slept like a log.

Jisu: I'm glad to hear you like it. We'll be visiting a *jjimjilbang* this afternoon.

Mike: A *jjimjilbang*? What's that?

Jisu: It's a public bath house that has various rooms of different temperatures.

Mike: Hmm, do we go to a public place to shower?

Jisu: Yes, We wash off, and then go to relax in one of the rooms.
You can eat, play games, or watch TV if you want to.

Mike: Sounds great. Is there anything I should keep in mind when we're there?

Jisu: Don't forget to hang on to your key so you can get back in your locker.

Mike: No problem. This should be interesting.

Vocabulary

How do you like~?: ~을 어떻게 생각하세요?

I'm glad to hear ~: ~을 듣게 되어 기쁘다

Keep ~ in mind: ~을 기억하다

Don't forget to ~: ~하기를 기억하다

Hang on to: ~을 잡다

New Zealand



Receptionist: Hello, may I help you?

Traveler: Hi. Do you provide travel information for visitors to New Zealand?

Receptionist: Yes, we do. Here are some flyers. Skydiving is very popular here.

Traveler: Well, I'm afraid I'm not an outdoor person.
Actually, I'd really like to see a set from *The Lord of The Rings*.

Receptionist: If you liked the movie, you'll want to see the Hobbiton movie set, too.

Traveler: That would be awesome. I'm also interested in learning about the Maori culture.

Receptionist: In that case, you should visit the Maori village and see a dance performance.

Traveler: Sounds great. Could you help me arrange transportation?

Receptionist: No worries. Here's package tour that includes transportation.

Traveler: Great. Thanks a lot.

Vocabulary

Receptionist: 안내원

Flyers: 전단지

Outdoor: 옥외의

Arrange: 마련하다

Transportation: 교통수단