

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES



LANGUE, LITTÉRATURE ET ÉTUDES CULTURELLES



Vol. IV, No. 2, December 2011
Military Technical Academy Publishing House

**LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURAL
STUDIES**

**LANGUE, LITTÉRATURE ET ÉTUDES
CULTURELLES**

Vol. IV, No. 2

© Military Technical Academy Publishing House
Bucharest, Romania, December 2011

Scientific committee / Comité scientifique

Alexandra Cornilescu, University of Bucharest

Anthony Kemp, University of Southern California

Elena Soare, Paris 8

Ghada Ghatwary, University of Alexandria

Luminița Ciuchindel, University of Bucharest

Marie France David de Palacio, University of Bretagne Occidentale

Mary Koutsoudaki, University of Athens

Rachel McCoppin, University of Minnesota

Reza Pishghadam, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

Robert Gauthier, University of Toulouse le Mirail

Editorial Staff / Rédaction

Chief Editor / Rédactrice en chef: *Amelia Molea*

Associate Chief Editor / Rédactrice en chef adjoint: *Daniela Mirea*

Editors / Rédactrices: *Antoaneta Demergean*

Maria Stoicovici

Raluca Elena Constantin

Maria Iacob

Andreea Ion

Madlena Nen

Assistant to Editor / Secrétaire de rédaction: *Adriana Carolina Bulz*



Editorial Office:

**“LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES
LANGUE, LITTÉRATURE ET ÉTUDES CULTURELLES”**

81-83 George Cosbuc Ave., Sector 5, 050141
Bucharest, ROMANIA

Tel.: +4021 335 46 60 / 253, Fax: +4021 335 57 63, e-mail: ameliamolea@yahoo.com

ISSN 2065-3867

Ab uno disce omnes

On the cover:
Vassili Kandinsky
“Various circles”

CONTENTS ♦ SOMMAIRE

Literature ♦ Littérature

1. A Reader's Journey into the Musicality of *The Owl and the Nightingale* – JOHN HANSEN 157
2. Eugene O'Neill's Cultural Interferences with the Romanian Literary Environment in the 1940s – ADRIANA CAROLINA BULZ 171
3. Performance of Gender in George Eliot's Novels – ALINA-MIHAELA STOICA..... 177
4. "To Be Thirty, Female and Single": Body as Place in Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* – PRIYA MENON..... 185
5. L'Identité par le Langage dans *Nós, os do Makulusu* de José LuandinoVieira – ISABELLE SIMÕES MARQUES..... 195
6. Imagination and Reality in the Visual Representation of (Dis)placement in Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* – MARIA KISSOVA and SIMONA HEVESIOVA 207
7. Réécriture des mythes de la rébellion des fils et des filles dans le roman moderniste espagnol – JULIE SORBIER-RAWLS..... 219

Cultural Studies ♦ Etudes culturelles

8. Destins de femmes d'Irlande et d'Angleterre : les vies brisées des femmes forcés déportées vers l'Australie – RENEE TOSSER..... 233

Linguistics ♦ Linguistique

9. Remarks on the Romanian Prepositional Construction with Lower Numerals – MIHAELA TANASE-DOGARU..... 245

Translation studies ♦ Traductologie

10. In-between Spaces: Translation as Intercultural Communication – ANNALISA BONOMO..... 253

Language Teaching ♦ Didactique des langues

11. Giving Directions: a Cross Cultural Comparison of L1 and L2 Strategies – REZA PISHGHADAM and FAHIME SABOORI 265
12. Terminology and Foreign Languages Teaching – AMELIA MOLEA 281

GIVING DIRECTIONS: A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF L1 AND L2 STRATEGIES

Reza Pishghadam*

Fahime Saboori**

***Abstract:** This study intends to examine the speech act of direction giving in L1 Persian and L2 English comparing it to the baseline data in L1 English. To this end, two sets of direction-giving interviews (in Persian and L2 English) were conducted. As for the L1 English data, the researchers relied on Taylor-Hamilton's (2004) results of the interviews with native English speakers. The three sets of data were then analyzed using Chi-square test. The findings revealed the similarities and differences in performing this speech behavior between the two cultures. Furthermore, L2 English results shed light on the possibility of transfer of training. Finally, pedagogical implications were discussed in the context of second language learning.*

***Keywords:** pragmatics, speech act, direction giving, L1, L2.*

1. Introduction

There has recently been a conscious-raising trend in both English teaching literature and actual classroom contexts highlighting the fact that successful communication is not simply assured by knowledge of grammatical rules and creating correct grammatical sentences; but it transcends this level to a more holistic level in which pragmatics and sociocultural rules are also taken into account (Bhatt, 2001). This point is best elaborated on by Hymes' communicative competence which is in fact the key concept in his culture sensitive approach to the second language teaching, i.e. ethnography of communication. In short, this construct refers to "the *appropriate* use of linguistic conduct" (p. 543). Put it another way, communicative competence contributes to the acceptability, appropriateness, and intelligibility of an utterance in a given situation. Sure enough, what is appropriate for a situation in one culture may not be so in another culture.

* Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran, PO box 9177948974, Park Square, Ferdowsi University, Mashhad, Iran, Email: rpishghadam@yahoo.com.

** Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

Different approaches analyzing communicative competence have regarded pragmatic competence as its basic component and, in turn, speech act has been given particular attention as the most fundamental part within pragmatics (Schmidt & Richards, 1980). Speech act theory was first introduced by Oxford Philosopher J. L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* in 1962. A speech act, according to Austin (1962, p.6), “is the issuance of an utterance which is intended to accomplish or perform a specific act”. Cross-cultural studies reveal that speech acts have different linguistic realizations from one culture to another, and it is the sociocultural context that determines which linguistic realization is the appropriate one in a given situation (Berns, 2006; Kachru & Nelson, 1996). Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) referred to some cases of unsuccessful communication due to the differences between the cultural patterns of speech acts. For example, the unmarked request like *Will you give water?* might be considered to be rude, based on American expectations, and on the contrary, when using their best cultural manners, eastern people might be misjudged as being insincere. Therefore, the communicative competence of a speech community originates from the sociocultural context and speech acts can be the basic manifestation of communicative competence (Berns, 2006).

There are five categories of speech acts, based on Searle’s (1976) classification: assertives (commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition), directives (make the addressee perform an action), commissives (commit the speaker to doing something in the future), expressives (express how the speaker feels about the situation), and declarations (change the reality according to the proposition of the declaration). Out of these five groups, direction giving belongs to directives and refers to describing the route to a particular destination.

Through a quick examination of the body of research on pragmatics, one cannot but notice a considerable lack of studies on the speech act of direction giving, as compared to the other speech acts. One reason could be, unlike requests and apologies; this speech act does not directly involve the cross-cultural perception of politeness, and accordingly, cannot have social consequences, namely, social misunderstanding and breakdown for nonnatives (Taylor-Hamilton, 2004). Still, a second reason could be the long-held assumption that “spatial conception is informed by innate, presumably biologically based universals, so that it is essentially the same in all languages and cultures” (Foley, 1997, p. 215). In other words, researchers have assumed that, since space is universally perceived in relation to our bodies, almost all cultures use relational terms (left, right, straight ahead) to talk about it. This assumption, however, has been proven wrong by a number of studies including Brown and Levinson (1993) and Levinson (1997) which showed that in some cultures space is conceived of and talked about entirely in non-relational terms.

Whatever the reason for such paucity of research on this speech act, it is clear that finding one's way and guiding one to do so is quite essential to everyday functioning. In addition, the high importance of the study of direction giving lies in the fact that failure in this speech behavior can be as troublesome, if not more, as a social misunderstanding and breakdown resulting from failure in other speech behaviors; it can lead to getting lost. With this in mind, the present study investigates the speech act of direction giving in L1 Persian, L2 English, and L1 English.

2. Theoretical background

Direction-giving is commonly considered as one of the easier speech acts to be learned in the acquisition of pragmatic competence. Nevertheless, an effective study of this speech behavior definitely needs to go beyond the way it is taught in most textbooks, that is, teaching the imperative plus a limited number of vocabulary items such as left or right (Foley, 1997). Generally speaking, there are two common types of direction used in giving directions: landmark descriptors and cardinal descriptors. Landmark descriptors are normally used in the description of routes from the perspective of a traveler who is moving from one place to another (e.g. go toward the bridge on Main St.). Cardinal descriptors, on the other hand, are used when describing a layout from a global frame of reference (e.g. go west on Main St.; Hund & Minarik, 2006). Apart from these two general direction types, there is a variety of cues (such as distance estimates, street names, comprehension checks, salient landmarks, etc) which tend to be included in direction giving in order to make it more effective and helpful to the listener (Denis, Pazzaglia, Cornoldi, & Bertolo, 1999; Mark & Gould, 1995; Pearson & Lee, 1992). It is the common combination of such features that makes a direction-giving sequence quite acceptable and appropriate in one culture while it does not match the expectations of another culture. In other words, it is such combination, exclusion, and inclusion of direction-giving types and strategies that accounts for the cross-cultural differences in this speech behavior (Scollon & Scollon, 1995).

While research on wayfinding, which is the counterpart of and closely interwoven with direction-giving, has not been scarce (e.g. Allen, 2000; Hund & Minarik, 2006; Klippel, 2003), direction-giving seems to have relatively been underexplored. Research on this speech behavior mainly involves studies on direction-giving systems (Hirtle, Richter, Srinivas, & Firth, 2010; Iwase & Ward, 1998), the nonverbal aspect of this speech act (Bergmann & Kopp, 2006), and the difference in performing it based on gender (Ewald, 2010; Pearson & Lee, 1992), and linguistic background (Burhanudeen, 1995; Taylor-Hamilton, 2004).

To improve the current navigation systems, Iwase and Ward (1998) conducted a study on direction-giving dialogues. Making use of ten direction-giving dialogues (27 minutes total), the researchers made attempts at devising a direction-giving dialogue system which can adjust the pace of dialogue without using speech recognition. In the same vein, Firth et al.'s (2010) study intended to improve automated route guidance systems through proving a better understanding of why some parts of directions are perceived as being more difficult than the others. To this end, the researchers examined a set of 45 naturally-generated verbal directions, each containing the phrase "tricky part".

With the aim of exploring the nonverbal aspect in the speech act of direction giving, Bergmann and Kopp (2006) conducted a study on how speakers distribute meaning across speech and gesture. Analyzing a corpus of video-taped direction-giving dialogues with 28 native speakers, the researchers managed to determine some factors influencing the use of gestures. They include problems of speech production, the communicative goals, and the information status. In another study, Pearson and Lee (1992) provided an analysis of the discourse structure of direction giving in terms of the moves (opening, main body, preclosing, closing) and submoves (directives, parenthetical remarks, orientation, and comprehension checks) used in this speech act. In this study, four direction seekers (two native speakers and two nonnative speakers) asked 200 native speaker respondents (100 males and 100 females) for directions. The results revealed that, in spite of the use of mainly similar moves and submoves, male and female direction givers had some differences including females' greater use of comprehension checks and males' greater use of indirect directives. The results also showed that only hedges and closings were affected by native/nonnative speaker status and that simplification was not automatic with nonnative speakers. Similarly, Ewald's (2010) study explored the potential existence of sex-related differences in direction-givers' route descriptions. A corpus of 60 naturally-occurring direction-giving exchanges in a gas station formed the data. Based on the findings, communicative styles (use of directional indicators and inclusion of landmarks, road names, etc.) of men and women were quite similar. There was, however, a slight difference. Males included significantly more mileage estimates than did females.

In an attempt to investigate the cross-cultural differences between the directions giving of people from different linguistic backgrounds, Burhanudeen (1995) analyzed three audio-taped direction-giving interviews with English native speakers, three with Japanese native speakers, and three with Japanese speakers of English. Comparing the results, the researcher concluded that Japanese speakers of English employ direction-giving strategies (the use of directives and the use locator comments) in ways that are different from those of native speakers of English. In the same vein, through the analysis of 214

direction-giving sequences (in L1 Arabic, L2 English, and L1 English), Taylor-Hamilton (2004) compared directions giving in L2 English to the baseline data in L1 Arabic and L1 English. The results revealed that the combination of strategies (use of relational directions, street names, and landmarks) used by L2 English speakers differs from those used in both English and Arabic baseline data.

Regarding Persian language, the body of research on pragmatics has witnessed a rapid growth particularly in the current decade. Such studies mainly involve speech acts, such as thanking (Koutlaki, 2002), complaint (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004), apology (Afghari & Kaviani, 2005), gripping (Allami, 2006), invitation (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006), compliment (Sharifian, 2008), disagreement (Parvaresh&Eslami-Rasekh, 2009), condolence (Samavarchi, Allami, & Samavarchi, 2009), and request (Abdolrezapour & Eslami- Rasekh, 2010). Direction giving, however, has been given scant attention in Persian studies. To our best knowledge, there has been no study conducted in Iran to date investigating the speech act of direction giving. Hence, in this paper, we have examined the realization of and strategies used in giving directions in L1 Persian and L2 English, and compared them with those of L1 English.

3. Purpose of the study

As stated earlier, this study aims at examining the cross-cultural differences that arise when people from different linguistic backgrounds give directions. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to analyze the speech act of direction giving in L1 Persian, L2 English, and L1 English, and also to compare the use of this speech act in these three languages.

This study is, therefore, seeking to answer the following questions:

a. Are there any significant differences between the uses of the three direction-giving strategies by L1 Persian speakers, L2 English speakers, L1 English speakers?

b. Are there any significant differences between Persian, L2 English, and L1 English speakers in the use of landmarks, street names, and relative directions in giving directions?

c. Are there any significant differences in the total number of strategies used in giving directions between Persian, L2 English, and L1 English speakers?

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants and setting

This study was conducted on 100 male and female participants. They were adult Iranians (within the age range of 20 to 50) who were native speakers of Persian. Half of the Persian speaking participants were ordinary people who, due to living in the EFL context of Iran, did not have any particular contact with English language in their daily lives. The other 50 Iranian participants were learners of English at upper intermediate or advance levels of proficiency studying in different English language institutes in Iran. The researchers relied on the institutes' placement tests in determining the learners' level of proficiency. The participants were not chosen randomly from a larger population and the two criteria for choosing them were simply accessibility and their tendency to cooperate. Moreover, since English in Iran is not used in daily conversations, for all of the respondents English was regarded as a foreign language. Finally, this study did not consider gender of the participants as a variable.

4.2. Instrumentation

This study enjoyed authenticity by collecting data through interviews rather than, say, a discourse completion task since, clearly enough, direction giving is a speech act which normally occurs orally and not in a written form. A corpus of 150 audio-taped interviews constituted the data. Such data consisted of three sets: 50 direction-giving sequences of L1 Persian speakers giving directions in Persian, 50 direction-giving sequences of L1 Persian speakers giving directions in L2 English, and 50 direction-giving sequences of L1 English speakers giving directions in L1 English. The first two sets of interviews were conducted by the researchers in Iran; whereas, due to the rare opportunity of having access and contact with such number of native English speakers in Iran, the third set of data, i.e. interviews with native English speakers was adopted from Taylor-Hamilton's (2004) study. This latter set of interviews was conducted by Taylor-Hamilton (2004) on 50 male and female adult English speaking participants who were faculty of two colleges in the Arab Emirates. It should be noted that in order for this adoption not to impair the comparability of this third set of data with the other two, the data collected by this study (interviews with Persian speakers) were intended to parallel those collected by Taylor-Hamilton (interviews with English speakers) in terms of number, length, and even the structure of the inquired address (considering the distance, number of turns, etc.).

4.3. Procedure

The process of data collection started in May (2011) and continued until July (2011). Each interview lasted five to ten minutes and was a one-on-one encounter in which the respondent was asked a way finding question (*How do I get to X?*) with the response being recorded. The interviews were then transcribed and coded into direction-giving strategies by two trained raters. In

determining the most likely direction-giving strategies, this study employed a combination of Levinson's (1992) model of "three distinctive kinds of location conception" (p.20) and Brown's (1998) "navigational strategy" (p.2). In his model, Levinson presents three general strategies for giving directions, i.e. relative directions (right, left, in front of, behind), cardinal directions (north, south, east, west), and landmarks (the Co-op supermarket, the falcon statue); whereas the strategy presented by Brown, that is the use of street names, is exclusively common in the urban area. Therefore, there were four types of strategy taken into account in this data, namely, relative directions, cardinal directions, landmarks, and street names. Finally, the results were analyzed using a Chi Square test in order to check the significance of the differences when comparing the occurrences of each strategy across the three groups as well as direction-giving behavior of each group across the three strategies. The Chi Square test was run using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16.

5. Results

The data collected in this study were analyzed in two distinct directions each leading to its own remarkable results. The first direction involved examining the use of direction-giving strategies, i.e. landmarks, street names, and relative directions, in each group of the participants, i.e. Persian speakers, L2 English speakers, and L1 English speakers, separately (Tables 1, 2, 3). The second direction, on the other hand, dealt with the analysis of the use of each direction-giving strategy across the three groups of speakers (Tables 4, 5, 6).

Table 1: Results of the Chi Square Test
for the Direction-giving Strategies Used by Persian Speakers

	Strategies	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
Persian	Landmarks	40	102.0	2	56.608 ^a	.000
	Street names	131	102.0	2		
	Relative directions	135	102.0	2		

As it is illustrated in **Table 1**, there was a significant difference between the direction-giving strategies used by Persian speakers ($\chi^2 = 56.608$, $p < .05$). The table shows that both street names and relative directions (N=131, 135) were used more often than expected (N=102.0). The results also revealed that while Persian speakers used street names and relative directions with similar frequencies, they made relatively few uses of landmarks in giving directions. In fact, their use of landmarks (N= 40) was less than one fourth of their use of each of the other two strategies.

Table 2: Results of the Chi Square Test
for the Direction-giving Strategies Used by L2 English Speakers

	Strategies	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
L2 English	Landmarks	30	98.3	2	77.458	.000
	Street names	115	98.3	2		
	Relative directions	150	98.3	2		

The results of the Chi Square test presented in **Table 2** revealed a significant difference between the strategies used by L2 speakers ($\chi^2 = 77.458$, $p < .05$). Here, again, both street names and relative directions ($N=115$, 150) were used more often than expected ($N=98.3$). In addition, it seems that the greatest variety in the employment of the three strategies belongs to the L2 English corpus. Similar to Persian speakers, their least frequently used strategy was landmarks ($N=30$). The use of street names occurred almost four times, and relative directions five times as many as that of landmarks in this corpus.

Table 3: Results of the Chi Square Test
for the Direction-giving Strategies Used by L1 English Speakers

	Strategies	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
L1 English	Landmarks	102	159.3	2	1.016E2	.000
	Street names	113	159.3	2		
	Relative directions	263	159.3	2		

According to **Table 3**, there was a significant difference between the three strategies chosen by L1 English speakers in giving directions ($\chi^2 = 1.016E2$, $p < .05$). The table also shows that relative directions ($N=263$) were employed more often than expected ($N=159.3$). In fact, their frequency in this corpus was more than twice as many as each of the other two strategies, i.e. landmarks and street names, which were employed with almost similar frequencies ($N= 102$, 113). Therefore, relative directions seem to represent the canonical direction-giving strategy for L1 English speakers. It is noteworthy that the order of the use of direction-giving strategies based on the frequency of occurrence (first, relative directions as the most frequently used strategy, then street names, and third, landmarks as the least frequently used one) was, interestingly, shared by all the three groups. Unlike the former three tables which reported the results of the direction giving behavior of each group of participants separately, the following tables take the second direction of analysis in comparing the three groups of speakers to each other in the use of the strategies.

Table 4: Results of the Chi Square Test for Landmarks

Landmarks	Language	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
Landmarks	Persian	40	57.3	2	53.070	.000
	L2 English	30	57.3	2		
	L1 English	102	57.3	2		

Table 3 reports the results of the Chi-square test for landmarks. Based on the results, there was a significant difference between Persian, L1 English, and L2 English speakers in the use of this strategy ($x^2 = 53.070$, $p < .05$). L1 English speakers' use of landmarks (N=102) was more often than expected (N=57.3). The statistical procedure further showed that landmarks were employed least frequently by L2 English (N=30) and most frequently by L1 English speakers. Persian speakers' (N=40) use of landmarks was slightly more than that of L2 English speakers. This slight difference, however, did not have statistical significance.

Table 5: Results of the Chi Square Test for Street Names

Street names	Language	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
Street names	Persian	131	119.7	2	1.627	.443
	L2 English	115	119.7	2		
	L1 English	113	119.7	2		

As illustrated in **Table 5** and quite contrary to the other two strategies, there was no significant difference between the speakers of the three languages in the use of street names ($x^2 = 1.627$, $p > .05$). In other words, all the three groups of participants used street names with similar frequencies (Persian N=131, L2 English N=115, L1 English N= 113).

Table 6: Results of the Chi Square Test for Relative Directions

Relative d.	Language	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
Relative d.	Persian	135	182.7	2	53.609	.000
	L2 English	150	182.7	2		
	L1 English	263	182.7	2		

The results of the Chi Square test presented in Table 6 revealed a significant difference between Persian, L1 English, and L2 English speakers in the use of relative directions ($x^2 = 53.609$, $p < .05$). As it can be seen in the table,

L1 English speakers' use of this strategy (N=115, 150) was more often than expected (N=182.7). Also, based on the results, this strategy had the least frequent occurrence in the Persian corpus (N=135) and the most frequent one in the English corpus. Similar to landmarks, the difference in the employment of this strategy between Persian and L2 English speakers did not have statistical significance. Here, though, it was the L2 English speakers who made the slightly more frequent use of the strategy (N=150). Thus, to reiterate, in two cases out of three, L2 English speakers showed behavior which was similar to Persian speakers and different from L1 English speakers by using direction-giving strategies in frequencies that are like those of Persian rather than English speakers.

Table 7: Results of the Chi Square Test for the Total Strategy Uses

	Language	Observed N	Expected N	df	X ²	Sig.
Total	Persian	306	359.7	2	58.567	.000
	L2 English	295	359.7	2		
	L1 English	478	359.7	2		

Finally, **Table 7** reports the results of the Chi-square test for the total strategy use of each group of participants. According to this table, there was a significant difference between the three groups in the total frequency of the strategy use ($\chi^2 = 58.567$, $p < .05$). Moreover, it was the third group, i.e. L1 English speakers who made the most frequent use of the strategy (N=478) which, not surprisingly, was more than expected (N=359.7). The Persian and L2 English speakers' total use of the direction-giving strategies were similar, with Persian speakers' use (N=306) being slightly but not statistically significantly more than that of L2 English speakers (N=295). The last point to be made here involves the use of the fourth strategy employed in giving directions, i.e. cardinal directions. It should be noted that the use of this strategy was too rare to be included in the strategies chart. There were only two uses of cardinal directions in L2 English corpus and three uses in the L1 English corpus. This strategy did not occur in the Persian data.

6. Discussion

To reiterate, the three most important findings of this study, in line with the three research questions, were: First, the order of direction-giving strategies based on the frequency of use was shared by Persian, L2 English, and L1 English speakers. That is to say, they all used relative directions most frequently, street names in the second place, and landmarks least frequently. Second, for landmarks and relative directions, L2 English speakers' direction-giving behavior resembled that of Persian speakers rather than L1 English

speakers. And third, the most total use of direction-giving strategies belonged to L1 English speakers, the second most to Persian speakers, and the least total use to L2 English speakers.

These findings are best discussed when approached from two distinct perspectives. The first and third findings are discussed from a linguistic point of view; whereas a psychological approach is taken to discuss the second one.

As stated earlier, the first finding denoted the fact that relative direction was the most frequently used strategy in all the three groups. The explanation to this fact seems to lie in the very qualities of this strategy. To begin with, relative directions are universal, that is, they include few words whose equivalents are present in almost all languages. In addition, they are more concrete and tangible, compared to the other two strategies, both to be understood and to be used. In other words, no matter what language you speak, you definitely understand what is meant by, say, left or right. Also, they are very easy to be used in giving directions since you can use it even with little nominal knowledge of the neighborhood (not knowing the names of the streets, squares, etc.). Still another distinctive quality which makes this strategy a concrete way of giving directions is its being nonverbal. The use of this strategy can be accompanied by, or even made only through gestures. Gestures, in turn, foster visualization of the address which makes both giving and memorizing directions easier.

The first finding also showed that street names had the second rank of use in Persian, L2 English, and L1 English corpus. As canonical as it seems to be in giving directions in urban areas, this strategy has its own deficiencies which put it in a lower rank than that of relative directions. One such deficiency could simply be the difficulty with memorizing and remembering the names of the streets. This memory problem becomes even more salient when one considers the fact that in most cities there are lots of streets which are known by several names. Streets can have map names, old names (when due to different reasons the municipality decides to change the name of a street), numbered names, and the so called taxi-driver names (referring to the most common destination in a street, e.g. Passport Road). All these can bring about confusion in the use of this strategy.

Landmarks, also based on the first finding, were least frequently used by all the three groups. There are three noticeable explanations to this lack of use. The first one is that choosing a landmark to refer to in giving directions is in fact “a social choice that takes place within a social context”. (Taylor-Hamilton, 2004, p. 163). That is to say, the choice to use landmarks, more than being a matter of the knowledge of the language, is the matter of the knowledge of the given interlocutor. This choice normally calls for a background knowledge of and shared schema with the person who is asking for directions. It is this background knowledge that forms the “common ground”, as Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs (1986, p.7) put it, without which conversation will not be able to proceed.

Apart from that, this choice can sometimes even be a call of judgment which takes into consideration the identity you wish to present to the interlocutor (Schegloff, 1972). Simply put, whether to choose a bar, a library, or a luxury restaurant as the landmark can present different identities for a given person. Therefore, the use of this strategy depends not only on the knowledge of the interlocutor, but also on the identity you wish them to know you with. The third explanation to such lack of use could be the use of landmarks is, in fact, giving address within address. This secondary address is normally used when one supposes that the given directions are not clear enough. So, this strategy can be considered as a rather spare strategy and not as basic as the other two.

With regard to the second finding, it was reported that in two out of three cases (landmarks and relative directions) L2 English speakers showed speech behavior which was similar to Persian speakers rather than L1 English speakers. Thus, in the speech act of giving directions, L2 English speakers seem to follow their L1 (Persian) norms rather than aim for their L2 (English) norms. Accordingly, we may come up with the remarkable conclusion that, in this speech act, Iranian L2 English speakers apparently transfer the speech behavior used in their L1. This finding confirms that of Burhanudeen (1995) denoting Japanese L2 English speakers' transfer in direction giving from their L1. However, it is in contrast with Taylor-Hamilton's (2004) finding which revealed that Arab L2 English speakers neither transferred direction giving from their L1, nor did they aim for the L2 norms for this speechact.

Finally, in regard to the third finding, it was shown that L1 English speakers' total use of the direction-giving strategies was remarkably more than those of the Persian and L2 English speakers. That is, their average direction-giving sequence was relatively more detailed and longer than the other two groups. This difference can best be explained by Hall's (1976) theory of high- and low-context cultures. This theory, which was first presented in Halls' book *Beyond Culture* in 1976, highlights the powerful effect culture has on communication. According to this theory, high-context cultures are those in which people tend to communicate mostly through implicit and covert messages. In such communications, much is left unsaid and taken for granted, relying on the context to explain. That is, much meaning is assigned to the stimuli surrounding a message. Accordingly, the fact that L1 English speakers belong to the low-context cultures can clearly justify their strikingly greater total use of the strategies. In the same vein, L1 Persian speakers' less total use can be justified by their belonging to the high-context cultures. As for the L2 English speakers, their least total use of the strategies can have two simple explanations. First is lack of vocabulary. Needless to say, these L2 English speakers were not using their mother tongue in giving directions. Nor did they have the language proficiency of bilinguals in speaking English since they were still learning English. So, their total use of the strategies could have been affected by their

limited knowledge of the language and lack of vocabulary. This brings us to the second explanation, i.e. lack of self-confidence. Naturally, one has less confidence in their ability to perform a speech act in an L2 they have not mastered yet than in their own L1. Not surprisingly, then, L2 English speakers' average direction-giving sequence was relatively less detailed and shorter than the other two groups who were performing the speech act in their mother tongues.

In spite of the fact that a given illocutionary act may be performed through the use of the same set of strategies in every language, still, the saliency of and preference for one strategy over the other tends to be culture specific (Scollon & Scollon, 1995). All in all, the findings of this study illustrated such culture-sensitivity for the speech act of direction giving in Persian and English. Hence, the results of the present study are in line with those of the previous ones concerning the detection of cultural variations in the performance of different speech acts both in Persian language (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Samavarchi et al, 2009, Eslami-Rasekh et al, 2010; Samar, Navidnia & Mehrani, 2010) and in other languages (Al-Khateeb, 2009; Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Belza, 2008; Felix-Brasdefer, 2008; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Yu, 2005).

The implications of this study can be discussed in both a broad and a narrow sense. In a broad sense, as Intachakra (2004) suggested, language instructors and syllabus designers should empower learners with consciousness raising activities on culture specific variations in pragmatic norms. Such awareness can help the learners develop their pragmatic competence and have authentic production, and consequently successful cross-cultural communication. In a narrow sense, these findings can enhance the instruction of giving directions in English in some ways. While teaching this speech act English teachers should not suffice to working on a limited number of words plus imperative structure, instead they should add to their teaching plan a comprehensive instruction of the direction-giving strategies with special focus on relative directions. More importantly, in high-context cultures, in particular, English teachers and textbooks ought to encourage students to give more explicit and detailed directions with less reliance on the context.

In the end, it is recommended that research into the speech act of giving directions examine other aspects of this speech act such as the gestures used in giving directions. Also, studies investigating this speech act in languages other than Persian can be conducted to compare the results. Finally, a replication of this study with multinational L2 English speakers can shed more light on the similarities and differences between the speech behavior of L1 and L2 English speakers.

References:

1. Abdolrezapour, P.; Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2010) A cross-cultural study of perception of politeness by Iranian and American in request forms, *Pakistan Journal of Social sciences*, 7(2), 164-169.
2. Afghari, A.; Kaviani, V. (2005) Apology speech act realization patterns in Persian, *IJAL*, 8(2), 1-28.
3. Al - Khateeb, S. I. (2009) *The speech act of thanking as a compliment response as used by the Arab speakers of English - a comparative intercultural study*, Unpublished master `s thesis, An-Najah National University, Palestine, Nablus.
4. Allami, H. (2006) A sociopragmatic analysis of griping: The case of Iranian students, *The Linguistic Journal*, 1(1), 59-76.
5. Allen, G. L. (2000) Principles and practices for communicating route knowledge, *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 14, 333-59.
6. Austin, J. (1962) *How to do things with words*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1999) Exploring the interlanguage of Interlanguage pragmatics: A Research agenda for acquisitional pragmatics, *Language Learning*, 49(4), 677-713.
8. Belza, A. (2008) A questionnaire-based comparative study of Irish English and Polish speech act of requesting. Unpublisheddoctoral dissertation, University of Silesia.
9. Bhatt, R. M. (2001) World Englishes, *Annual Reviews*, 30, 527-550.
10. Bergmann, K.; Kopp, S. (2006) *Verbal or visual? How information is distributed across speech and gesture in spatial dialog*, The 10th workshop on the semantics and pragmatics of dialogue, Potsdam: Universitätsverlag.
11. Berns, M. (2006) World Englishes and communicative competence, In B. B. Kachru, Y. Kachru, & C. L. Nelson (Eds.), *The handbook of world Englishes* (pp. 718-731), Oxford: Blachwell.
12. Brown, P.; Levinson, S. C. (1993) 'Uphill' and 'downhill' in Tzeltal. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 3, 46-74.
13. Burhanudeen, H. (1995) Giving directions: An analysis of the strategies used by Japanese speakers of English, *Akademika*, 47, 3-14.
14. Clark, H.; Wilkes-Gibbs, D. (1986) Referring as a collaborative process. *Cognition*, 22 (1), 1-39.
15. Denis, M.; Pazzaglia, F.; Cornoldi, C.; Bertolo, L. (1999) Spatial discourse and navigation: An analysis of route directions in the city of Venice, *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 13, 145-174.
16. Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2004) Face-keeping strategies in reaction to complaints: English and Persian. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 14(1), 179-195.

17. Eslami-Rasekh, A.; Tavakoli, M.; Abdolrezapour, P. (2010) Certainty and conventional indirectness in Persian and American request forms, *Medwell Journal, the Social Sciences*, 5 (4), 332-339.
18. Ewald, J. D. (2010) "Do you know where X is?": Direction-giving and male/female direction-givers, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(9), 2549-61.
19. Felix-Brasdefer, J.C. (2008) Perceptions of refusals to invitations: Exploring the minds of foreign language learners, *Language Awareness*, 17(3), 195-211.
20. Foley, W. A. (1997) *Anthropological linguistics: An introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell.
21. Hall, E.T. (1976) *Beyond Culture*, New York: Doubleday.
22. Hirtle, S.; Richter, K.; Srinivas, S.; Firth, R. (2010) This is the tricky part: When directions become difficult, *Journal of Spatial Information Science*, 1, 53-73.
23. Hund, A. M.; Minarik, J. L. (2006) Getting from here to there: Spatial anxiety, wayfinding strategies, direction type, and wayfinding efficiency, *Spatial Cognition and Computation*, 6(3), 179-201.
24. Iwase, T.; Ward, N. (1998) *Pacing spoken directions to suit the listener*, Fifth International Conference on Spoken Language Processing, Melbourne, Australia.
25. Intachakra, S. (2004) Contrastive pragmatics and language teaching: Apologies and thanks in English and Thai, *RELC*, 35(1), 37-62.
26. Kachru, B. B.; Nelson, C. L. (1996) World Englishes. In S. L. McKay, & N. H.
27. Hornberger (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language teaching* (pp. 71-102). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
28. Kasper, G.; Schmidt, R. (1996) Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18(2), 149-169.
29. Klippel, A. (2003) *Wayfindingchoremes. Conceptualizing wayfinding and route direction elements*, Bremen: Universität Bremen.
30. Koutlaki, S. (2002) Offers and expressions of thanks as face enhancing acts: Tæ'arof in Persian, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34(12), 1733-1756.
31. Levinson, S. (1992) Primer for the field investigation of spatial description and conception, *Pragmatics*, 2(1), 5-47.
32. Levinson, S. (1997) Language and cognition: The cognitive consequences of spatial description in GuuguYimithirr, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 7 (1), 98-131.
33. Mark, D. M.; Gould, M. D. (1995) Wayfinding directions as discourse: Verbal directions in English and Spanish. In J. Duchan, G. Bruder, and L. Hewitt (eds.) *Deixis in Narrative: A Cognitive Science Perspective*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
34. Mesthrie, R.; Bhatt. R. M. (2008) *World Englishes: The study of new varieties*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

35. Parvaresh, V.; Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2009) Speech act disagreement among young women in Iran, *Comparative Literature and Culture*, 11(4), 2-8.
36. Pearson, B. A.; Lee, K. S. (1992) Discourse structure of direction giving: Effects of native/nonnative speaker status and gender, *TESOL Quarterly*, 26 (1), 113-127.
37. Samar, G.; Navidinia, H.; Mehrani, M.B. (2010) Communication purposes and strategies in Email communication: A contrastive analysis between Iranian and American students, *International Journal of Language Studies*, 4(3), 55-72.
38. Samavarchi, L.; Allami, H.; Samavarchi, H. (2009) A contrastive study of the speech act of Giving condolences in English and Persian [abstract], *Asian EFL Journal*, 5, 34-78.
39. Schmidt, R. W.; Richards, J. C. (1980) Speech acts and second language Learning, *Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 129-157.
40. Schegloff, E. A. (1972) Notes on a conversational practice: Formulating place. In P. P. Giglioli (ed.) *Language and Social Context* (pp. 95-135), New York: Penguin.
41. Scollon, R.; Scollon, S. (1995) *Intercultural communication: A discourse analysis*, Oxford: Blackwell.
42. Searle, J. (1976) A classification of illocutionary acts, *Language in Society*, 5(1), 1-23.
43. Sharifian, F. (2008) Cultural schemas in L1 and L2 compliment responses: A study of Persian-speaking learners of English, *Journal of Politeness Research. Language, Behavior, Culture*, 4 (1), 55-80.
44. Tang, Ch.; Zhang, G. Q. (2009) A contrastive study of compliment responses among Australian English and Mandarin Chinese speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(2), 325-345.
45. Taylor-Hamilton, C. (2004) Giving directions as a speech behavior: A cross-cultural comparison of L1 and L2 strategies. In D. Boxer and A. D. Cohen, *Studying Speaking to Inform Second Language Learning* (pp. 149-73), Great Britain: Cromwell.
46. Yu, M. C.H. (2005) Sociolinguistic competence in the complimenting act of native Chinese and American English speakers: A mirror of cultural value, *Language and Speech*, 48 (1), 91-119.
47. Salmani-Nodoushan, M. A. (2006) A comparative sociopragmatic study of ostensible invitation in English and Farsi, *Speech Communication*, 48 (8), 903-912.

Published: The Military Technical Academy

Editor in Chief: *Lt. Col. Eng. Stelian SPÎNU*

Text Editing: *Mihaela ZAHARIOIU, Daniela NECULA*

Printing: *Viorica TOMA, Adrian STĂNICĂ*

Printed in The Military Technical Academy

142 pages

0208

C-14 / 28.12.2011



ISSN 2065-3867