

GENDER AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES BETWEEN TURKISH AND IRANIAN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study of politeness strategies has been common area of interest for many disciplines in recent years since it easily reveals the interdependence of culture and language. This paper tries to represent the effect of cultural differences between speakers of two culturally and linguistically different situations namely Iranian and Turkish participants. The theoretical framework proposed by Brown and Levinson has been adapted to show the differences between Iranian and Turkish male and female participants in their employing of politeness strategies when interacting with their same or different sex in different situations. The findings reveal significant differences between participants as a result of gender and cultural differences.

Key Words: Language, Culture, Politeness Strategies, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Gender.

ÖZET

Kültür ve dil arasındaki bağımlılığı kolaylıkla göstermesi bakımından, son yıllarda birçok disiplinde nezaket stratejileri üzerine çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmada da, farklı iki dil kullanıcıları olan Türk ve İranlı öğrenciler üzerinde kültürel farklılıkların etkisinin ortaya çıkarılması amaçlanmıştır. Kuramsal boyutu Brown ve Levinson tarafından önerilen araştırma, İranlı ve Türk erkek-kadın öğrencilerin farklı durumlarda etkileşim içinde oldukları erkek ve kadınlara yönelik nezaket stratejileri kullanımını göstermek üzere yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları katılımcılar arasında cinsiyet ve kültürten kaynaklanan önemli farklar olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Dil, Kültür, Nezaket Stratejileri, Olumlu Nezaket, Olumsuz Nezaket, Cinsiyet

There have been different approaches to the study of language. Some have focused on the structure of the language while others have looked at language in the light of its culture and its context of occurrence. Speakers of different languages exhibit different verbal and non verbal behavior in their interactions. The possibilities of misunderstanding can be seen when two totally different cultures come into contact with each other. There are many examples of cross-cultural misunderstanding in the literature on sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and intercultural communication.

This study tries to investigate the communicative strategies used by Iranian and Turkish university students as representatives of two culturally and linguistically different situations.

Due to the fact that Iran and Turkey are neighbors and have a close historical relationship, there seems to be common cultural values in these two linguistically different societies. On the other hand, since Farsi and English languages both belong to Indo-European language family, there seems to be interesting areas of language transfer from English to Farsi. However, the efforts made by the Turkish government to enter the European community have made English one of the main concerns in Turkey.

In light of such considerations, the study aims to probe into the communication strategies of these two culturally/linguistically different communities and account for their similarities and differences in their use of politeness strategies.

Aims and objectives of the study

The present research has been motivated by a general concern for the study of the principles underlying interaction in cross – cultural contexts and has been inspired by the work of Brown and Levinson. The main aim here is to investigate the concept of politeness in two different cultural/ linguistic situations in order to discuss the extent to which it is universal. It attempts to investigate how it is visualized in Farsi and Turkish cultures.

The major speech acts to be studied here in this research are favor asking, complaint and griping.

The participants in this study represent eight cultural/ linguistic communities:

- a) Iranian male and female native speakers of Farsi studying Farsi language and literature at grade four in the undergraduate programs in different universities in Tehran.

- b) Iranian male and female native speakers of Farsi studying English language or English literature at grade four in the undergraduate program in different universities of Tehran.
- c) Turkish male and female native speakers of Turkish majoring in Turkish language and literature at grade four in the undergraduate program in a university in Istanbul.
- d) Turkish male and female native speakers of Turkish studying English language or literature at grade four in the undergraduate program in a university in Istanbul.

It is worth mentioning that the EFL participants mentioned above are studied to see the instances of deviation from the norms of Turkish or Farsi languages in the speech acts of these students as a result of studying English and getting familiar with it. It can be considered as transfer effect not from L1 to L2 but vice-versa, as Weinreich (1953) defined it as a two-way process.

The inclusion of two groups of undergraduate EFL students in the study can reveal the influence of any possible transfer effect from English to their use of their native language and will show whether being familiar with English language and studying it can cause any difference in selecting and using communication strategies between these groups and those who do not have more knowledge of English.

The major speech acts to be studied here in this research are favor asking high, favor asking low, complaining and griping. The study will focus on finding differences between interlocutors of two different languages and cultures, namely Farsi and Turkish, in the use of politeness strategies for realizing the above mentioned speech acts and the differences between the groups concerning the number of strategies employed. At the same time it aims to investigate the effect of studying EFL at the undergraduate level on the selection and realization of politeness strategies of native speakers of Farsi and Turkish languages.

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is one of Brown & Levinson presented in their extensive essay "Some universals in language usage: Politeness Phenomena." Brown and Levinson present a cohesive and comprehensive theory of politeness in which linguistic devices are realizations of specific politeness strategies.

Central to Brown and Levinson's theory is the concept of "face". They assume that all competent adult members of a society have (and know each other to have) "face". They define "face" as the public self-image that every

member wants to claim for himself (1978: 66). According to Brown and Levinson, all competent adult members of a society also have certain rational capacities, in particular consistent modes of reasoning from ends to means that will achieve those end. They claim that both face and rationality are universal human properties.

Many communicative activities entail imposition on the face of both or either of the participants. That is, face can be threatened, lost or enhanced in interaction. So, every interlocutor tries to maintain it since some communicative activities are intrinsically face threatening activities (FTAs), which are those activities that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and /or of the speaker. Participants in an interaction usually select from a set of strategies those which will enable them to avoid or minimize such face – threatening activities, in other words, they use politeness strategies or tact.

Brown and Levinson claim five super-strategies which every person tries to choose when interacting with another person in his own or other society. These are:

1. Bold on record (BR): This is used when efficient communication is necessary and other things are more important than face. This is speaking in conformity with the cooperative principle.
2. Positive politeness (PP) strategies which are addressed as expressions of solidarity, informality and familiarity as in exaggerating interest in H, sympathizing with H, and avoiding disagreement.
3. Negative politeness (NP) strategies which are addressed to H's negative face and are characterized as expressions of restraint, formality and distancing, as being conventionally indirect, giving deference, apologizing.
4. Off- record strategies where speaker resorts to conventional implicature via hints triggered by violation of Gricean maxims.
5. Don't do the FTA (NA) which is not performing the act at all.

It is assumed that the risk factor increases as one move up the scale of strategies from 1 to 5, that is, the greater the risk, the more polite the strategy. The degree of risk or weight of imposition is determined by the cumulative effect of three universal social variables which are:

1. The social distance (D) between the participants.
2. The relative power (P) between them.
3. The absolute ranking (R) of imposition in the particular culture.

Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson (1987), henceforth (B&L), propose a theory of politeness which draws its basic concepts from Grice's CP. They believe that the CP defines an unmarked or asocial presumptive framework for communication with the essential assumption of "no deviation from rational efficiencies without a reason" (p. 5), but they do not see the modifications of the Gricean program as wholly successful.

B&L also draw on speech act theory though less heavily than the CP. At first, they took this theory as a basis for a mode of discourse analysis, but then they found it not so promising as speech act theory forces a sentence-based, speaker-oriented mode of analysis where their own thesis requires that utterances are often equivocal in force. In what follows, these categories and notions, as depicted in their lengthy description of their theory (1987) are reviewed.

The notion of face and face threatening acts

Basic to Brown and Levinson's model, is a Model Person who is a willful fluent speaker of a natural language. All Model Persons are endowed with two qualities: 'rationality and face' as means to satisfy communication and face-oriented ends. They have borrowed the term 'face' from Goffman [1967] and from the English folk term that is related to the notions of being embarrassed or humiliated or losing face.

In B&L's view, face consists of two related aspects: (1) negative face: the basic claim of territories, personal preserves, right to non-distraction, i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition, and (2) positive face: the positive self-image or 'personality' (crucially the desire of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others.

The other notion that B&L's theory rests on is the notion of face threatening acts (FTAs). They assert that either or both of an individual's face, i.e., the negative face and the positive face can be threatened by certain face threatening acts, which are defined in terms of whose face, Speaker's (S's) or Hearer's (H's) is at stake and which face is threatened.

Strategies for doing FTAs

The next notion that B&L's theory rests on is the strategies for doing FTAs. They believe that in the context of the mutual vulnerability of face, any rational agent will seek to avoid these FTAs or will use certain strategies to

minimize the threat. In deciding to do the FTA, they can go *on record* or *off record*.

In going on record, an actor makes it clear to participants what communicative intention led the actor to do an act (A). For example, if an actor utters 'I (hereby) promise to come tomorrow' and if participants would concur that, in saying this, the actor unambiguously expressed the intention of committing him/herself, then in their terminology, the agent has gone on record 'promising to do so'. On the other hand, if an actor goes off record in doing A, then there is more than one ambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed him/herself to one particular intent. For instance, if an actor says, 'Damn, I'm out of cash, I forgot to go to the bank today', s/he cannot be held to have committed him/herself to that intent. Linguistic realizations of off-record strategies include metaphors, irony, rhetorical questions, understatement, tautologies and all kinds of hints by which the speaker communicates what s/he wants or means to communicate indirectly, and so the meaning is to some extent negotiable. (See B&L *ibid.* p. 214 for illustration).

Further, in going on record, the speaker has two choices. First, s/he can do the act boldly, in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way. For example, in a request s/he may say: 'Do X!' The speaker chooses this strategy under three circumstances:

- (a) S and H both tacitly agree that the relevance of face demands may be suspended in the interests of urgency or efficiency;
- (b) where the danger of H's face is very small, as in H's interest and do not require great sacrifices of (e. g. 'Come in' or 'Do sit down'); and
- (c) where S is vastly superior in power to H, or can enlist audience support to destroy H's face.

(B&L, 1987, p. 69)

On the other hand, by going on record *with redressive action*, B&L mean action that gives force to the addressee, i.e., it attempts to counteract the potential force damage of the FTA in a way that indicates clearly that no such force threat is intended or desired, and S, in general, recognizes H's force wants and himself wants them to be achieved. Such redressive action can have one of two forms, which depends on which aspect of face (negative or positive) is being aimed at.

Redressive action can involve positive or negative politeness. By positive politeness, B&L refer to those strategies that are addressed to H's positive face,

indicating that S wants H's wants and considers H as a member of an in-group, a friend or someone whose wants and personality are known and liked.

Positive politeness

The linguistic realizations of this strategy are very much like normal linguistic behavior between intimate individuals where expressions of solidarity, informality and familiarity are routinely exchanged. But the only feature that distinguishes positive politeness redress from normal everyday intimate language behavior is an element of exaggeration, which, in turn, introduces an element of insincerity. Nevertheless, this insincerity in exaggerated expressions of approval or interest, such as, "How absolutely marvelous! I can't imagine how you manage to keep your roses so exquisite, Mrs. B" (ibid. p. 103) implies that the S really sincerely wants H's positive face to be enhanced. (See ibid. p. 102 for illustration).

Negative politeness

In negative politeness, strategies are addressed to H's negative face, i.e., his desire to have his freedom of action unhindered. This is the heart of respect behavior and its function is to minimize the particular imposition that the FTA effects. In the western cultures, negative politeness is the most elaborate and the most conventionalized set of linguistic strategies and fills the etiquette books. The forms of politeness are characterized as expressions of restraint, formality and distancing, and its linguistic realizations can be exemplified as: be conventionally indirect, give deference, and apologize. The output strategies given for negative politeness (see ibid. p.131 for illustration) are all useful forms for social distancing and in so doing S wants to put a social brake on his course of intentions; unlike positive politeness realizations that are used for accelerating and minimizing social distance.

Off-Record

There are two major strategies within this super strategy making up fifteen minor strategies. The first type involves 'invite conversational implicature via hints triggered by violation of Gricean maxims'.

The second major strategy, namely, 'be vague or ambiguous' involves violation of Manner maxim which suggests being direct and relevant in communication.

The circumstances or the sociological variables

B&L argue that these following sociological variables, i.e., social distance (D), relative power (P), and absolute ranking of impositions in the particular culture are intended as actor's assumptions of such ratings which are mutually assumed between S and H within certain limits.

D is a symmetrical social dimension of similarity/difference in which S and H stand for the purposes of this act. More often, it is based on an assessment of the frequency of interaction and the kind of material or non-material goods, including face, exchanged between S and H.

P is an asymmetrical social dimension of relative power. This is the degree to which H can impose his/her plans and self-evaluation. They mention that there are mainly two sources of power that can be authorized or unauthorized: material control (over economic distribution and physical force) and metaphysical control (over the actions of others). Usually, both of these sources of power are at play.

R is a culturally and situationally defined ranking of impositions, which is based on two scales, or ranks that are empirically identifiable for negative-face FTAs. The first ranking is in proportion to the expenditure of *services* including the provision of time, and the second of *goods* including non-material goods, such as information, as well as the expression of regard and other face payments. Although these rankings are considered constant intra-culturally and situationally, the rank ordering of the impositions is subject to a set of operations that shuffles the impositions according to three criteria: (a) whether actors have specific rights or obligations to perform the act, (b) whether actors have specific reasons, be it ritual or physical, for not performing them, and (c) whether actors are known to actually *enjoy* being imposed upon in some way.

The ranking of FTAs against positive face involves three kinds of assessments: (1) the amount of 'pain' given to H's face, based on the discrepancy between H's desired self-image and that presented in the FTA; (2) cultural rankings of aspects of positive face, e. g. success, niceness, generosity, beauty; and (3) personal or idiosyncratic functions on these rankings. A person who can assess such rankings and the circumstances in which they vary is considered to be graced with tact, charm or poise.

B&L believe that the social dimensions of P, D, and R cannot be given absolute (context-free) assignments. Taking P as an extended example, they mention that assignments, such as a bank manager be given a high P rating and a lowly worker a low one can change under certain circumstances, such as when the worker pulls a gun at the manager. Thus, they reject attaching values to individuals.

Furthermore, they believe that even attaching values to roles or role-sets, such as manager/employee, parent/child in which asymmetrical power is built is problematic for two reasons: (1) not all kinds of naked power come clothed in role-sets, and (2) individuals acquire sets of roles and high P values in one role carry over into another. For example, the friends of a newly elected President may still be friends, but it's unlikely that they would retain the old equality.

B&L hold the view that situational factors enter into the values for P, D, and R; therefore, the values assessed hold only for S and H in a particular context, and a particular FTA. As an example, they posit an example in which two American strangers in New York are assigned high D values, but the same strangers if they were to meet in Hindu Kush would be assigned low D values.

B&L view these social factors as all relevant and independent and subsume other factors like status, authority, occupation, ethnic identity, friendship, situational factors, etc that have a principled effect on the assessment of FTAs.

There have been numerous studies on B&L's theory and have found this concept apparently successful. But the claim for universality of this theory has been called into question from both an empirical and theoretical viewpoint by a number of authors. O'Driscoll (1996) who strongly argues in favor of the universality of this theory summarizes the oppositions as follows. Within the mainland Chinese culture, this concept has been used for an exposition of the communicative norms and has been claimed to be irrelevant to this culture. Similarly, although one study has found the concept fruitful for illuminating the Japanese system of honorifics, several other studies have shown that there are some very common situations and linguistic enactments in Japanese culture to which it does not seem to be applicable. Siffianou (1992) finds this concept very useful for comparing British and Greek norms of politeness, but Pavlidou [1994] finds it hard to apply it to a comparison of Greek and German habits on the telephone. It has also been claimed that this concept has no place in an exposition of Igbo society. Finally, Wierzbicka (1985) shows that face does not seem to entail values in Polish culture. In sum, three aspects of this criticism can be perceived: (1) objections to the universality of B&L's face and its constituents, (2) B&L's exposition of its role in politeness, and (3) data found to be inapplicable.

With regard to the Persian speakers, there are but a few isolated strands of research in this area. Asdjodi (2001) did a qualitative contrastive study of politeness in Persian and Chinese using B&L's theory and found it a useful device in pinpointing areas of similarities and differences. Koutlaki (1997, 2002) carried out an extensive study of Persian politeness examining a variety of data to ascertain the extent to which B&L's theory applies to Persian and to formulate

a framework that would apply satisfactorily for the Persian data. She worked on the two speech acts of 'offer' and 'expression of thanks' among other verbal behavior like ta'arof (a politeness strategy which is used mostly as positive politeness strategy but some times can be used as negative politeness mark due to context and situation for expression of thanks in Persian language), formality and other speech acts (1997). She found the two speech acts of offer and expressions of thanks as face-enhancing rather than face-threatening in Persian, thus contrary to the ones postulated by B&L. She (2002) shows that for Persian speakers face is two-sided: an individual goes to certain lengths to maintain his/her face, but at the same time s/he is also expected to invest a lot of effort in preserving others' faces. This finding is also in line with Rafiee [1992], as cited by Sahragard (2000, p. 49) who maintains: ta'arof may be regarded as "a double-edged sword: a) used by the offerer as a positive politeness strategy; and b) used by the offeree as a negative politeness strategy". Therefore, the one who 'offers', or the Speaker (S) aims to assure the Hearer (H) that H's wants take precedence over S's wants. But the offeree employs it as negative politeness strategy "aiming to provide the offerer a way out should the; latter's offer have been a perfunctory one, thus minimizing the imposition" (ibid. p. 50).

Sahragard (ibid) acknowledges that Koutlaki (1997) has made a comprehensive study of politeness in Persian by using Leech's (1983) theory to complement the areas not captured by B&L and devising several maxims of politeness for Persian, namely, Deference, Humility and Cordiality. But, Sahragard (ibid) criticizes part of her work that assigns English equivalents for indigenous concepts in Persian, such as *ehteram* and *shakhsiyat*, etc.

Koutlaki (2002) mentions that B&L's theory has received criticism mainly because of their (1987, p. 24) assertion that "some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening". For a review of B&L's theory with respect to non-western languages see Koutlaki (1997, 2002).

It has been claimed that the most authentic data in sociolinguistics research is spontaneous speech gathered by ethnographic observation. But difficulties in relying on this method are well demonstrated (Blum-Kulka et al 1989, among others), and have led to the wide use of an elicitation procedure known as the *written discourse completion task* (WDCT). This is essentially a questionnaire containing a set of briefly described situations designed to elicit a particular speech act. Subjects read the situations and respond in writing to a prompt.

Data collection

The procedures for gathering the data were as follows: As for the NST and Turkish EFL groups, the researcher asked the Istanbul University to help him in doing the task. Since the subjects were senior students in two fields namely EFL and teaching Turkish literature and language, which is called NL henceforth, needed measure were taken to ask for permission from the officials. Then a copy of questionnaire was give to those students who were interested to take part in the study. Since the number of the students who accepted to take part in the study was not as enough as needed, the researcher had to wait for another semester to find sufficient senior students for the study. They were told that no time limitation was set to do the task and were given enough time to return the questionnaires.

As for the Persian EFL and NSP groups, the researcher as well as several colleagues attended different classes at several universities and explained to the classes the type of informants were needed with respect to their parents' and their own mother-tongue. To those who volunteered, a copy of the WDCT was given and was asked to take it home and return it to their professor within a month.

All the groups under study were asked to fill out a background questionnaire which required them to provide information about their age, degree(s) held or being sought, their first language, their parents' first language, language(s) spoken at home, place of birth and residence in the past and proceed along the instructions provided for completing the WDCT.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS:

1- Iranian males and females' choice of politeness strategies

In order to test whether the interlocutor's gender is effective in their choice of politeness strategies, a Chi-Square was applied to the data obtained from the Iranian male and female subjects in general. Table 1 reveals the results as follows:

Table 1: Iranian male and females' choice of politeness strategies.

Crosstab

		DEGREE OF POLITENESS					Total	
		BOR	PPS	NPS	OFFR	DON'T		
GENDER	FEMALE	Count	336	450	652	692	210	2340
		% within GENDER	14.4%	19.2%	27.9%	29.6%	9.0%	100.0%
	MALE	Count	384	481	706	593	236	2400
		% within GENDER	16.0%	20.0%	29.4%	24.7%	9.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	720	931	1358	1285	446	4740
		% within GENDER	15.2%	19.6%	28.6%	27.1%	9.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

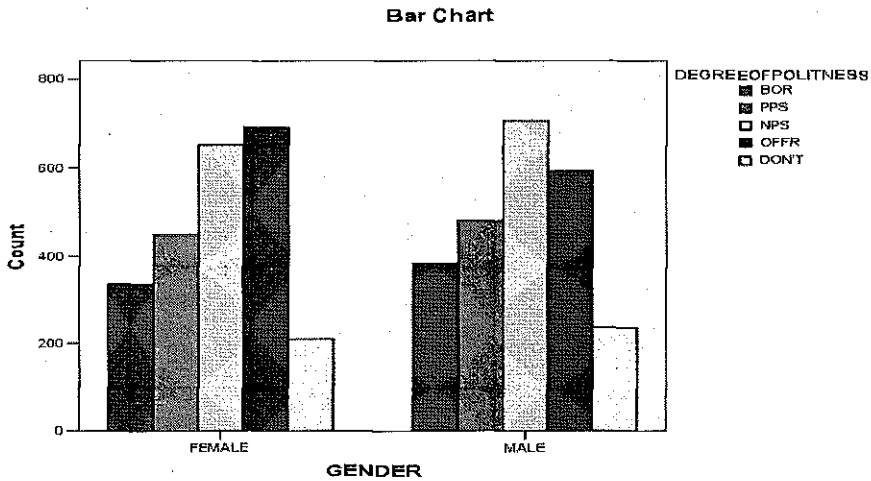
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.765(a)	4	.005
Likelihood Ratio	14.774	4	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.282	1	.039
N of Valid Cases	4740		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 220.18.

As shown the Chi-Square observed, 14.765 is greater than the critical Chi-Square at 4 degree of freedom which is 9.49, so it can be claimed that there is significant difference between Iranian male and female speakers in their choice of politeness strategies. It can be seen from the results that Iranian male interlocutors use more strategies than Iranian females. It may have the root in the fact that in Iranian culture females try to be more silent as a sign of politeness in many cases especially in their interaction with interlocutors from opposite gender. This fact can be interpreted when the concept of face threatening acts (FTA) is considered. Iranian female subjects try to keep face by not doing a FTA.

With respect to the type of strategies employed by the groups it is revealed that while for females the most preferred strategy is off-record, Iranian males tend to employ negative politeness most of the time. It can also be a sign of Iranian female's avoidance from face threatening acts as far as possible. Both groups have used NA or don't-do face threatening act as the least preferred strategy. The order of strategies used employed, is similar for the other three strategies. Chart 1 shows the Iranian male and females' choice of politeness strategies.

Chart 1



1.1. Rank of imposition for Iranian male and female participants

In order to investigate the rank of imposition for Iranian male and female interlocutors the data obtained was processed and the results are shown in Table 1-1 as follows.

Table 1-1: Rank of imposition for Iranian male and female interlocutors.

Crosstab

		LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY				
			EASY	DIFFICULT	VERY DIFFICULT	Total
GENDER	FEMALE	Count	1303	752	285	2340
		% within GENDER	55.7%	32.1%	12.2%	100.0%
	MALE	Count	1182	865	353	2400
		% within GENDER	49.3%	36.0%	14.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	2485	1617	638	4740
		% within GENDER	52.4%	34.1%	13.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.280(a)	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.299	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	18.767	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	4740		

A 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 314.96.

As shown, the Chi-Square observed at 2 degree of freedom is 20.280 which is greater than the critical value of Chi-Square which is 5.99. So it can be claimed that there is a great difference between Iranian males and females in their interaction. While 55.7% of females feel easy to ask something, this rate is 49.3% for males. But for the third rank of imposition males feel more difficult to ask something from others in general.

2. Turkish males and females' choice of politeness strategies

The same procedure is taken to see the possible differences between Iranian and Turkish participants, having in mind the cultural differences between two groups in general. Table 2 and its chart show the results obtained in this regard.

Table 2: Turkish male and females' choice of politeness strategies.

		Crosstab						
		DEGREE OF POLITENESS					Total	
		BOR	PPS	NPS	OFFR	DON'T		
GENDER	FEMALE	Count	395	637	562	591	109	2294
		% within GENDER	17.2%	27.8%	24.5%	25.8%	4.8%	100.0%
	MALE	Count	367	513	541	628	163	2212
		% within GENDER	16.6%	23.2%	24.5%	28.4%	7.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	762	1150	1103	1219	272	4506
		% within GENDER	16.9%	25.5%	24.5%	27.1%	6.0%	100.0%

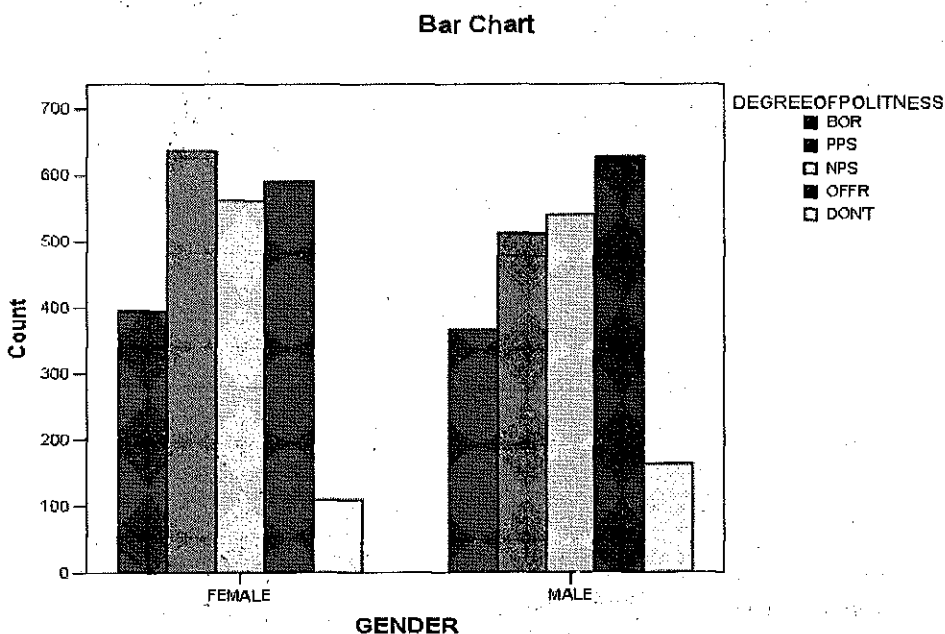
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.159(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.248	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.051	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	4506		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 133.53.			

The Chi-Square observed here is 25.1, which is greater than the critical value of Chi-square at 4 degree of freedom i.e. 9.49. It shows that there is significant difference between Turkish male and female students in their choice of politeness strategies. Unlike the Iranians here the most prominent strategy is positive politeness for females and off-record for males. This is totally different from those of Iranians which were off-record for females and negative politeness for males.

According to this data, it can be claimed that Turkish females are more friendly and sincere comparing Iranian females. Here also the least chosen strategy is don't –do face threatening act but an important point is that the number of Iranians who apply this strategy comparing Turkish subjects are much more. It means that Turkish people are more relax in their interactions compared to Iranians and this can be one of the most important finding of this research since Turkish people have been affected by western culture during the recent years because of their more interaction with Europeans and the drastic changes and reforms made in this country. This data will be discussed in detail when comparing the participants in separate groups. Chart 2. shows the statistical result obtained in this part.

Chart 2.



2.1. Rank of imposition for Turkish male and female participants.

In order to find out the rank of imposition felt by Turkish male and female participants, the data is once more analyzed on the bases of Turkish subjects' choice of imposition rank. Table 2-1 shows the statistical results obtained for this section.

Table 2-1: Rank of imposition for Turkish male and female participants.

Crosstab

		LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY				
			EASY	DIFFICULT	VERY DIFFICULT	Total
GENDER	FEMALE	Count	1310	794	282	2386
		% within GENDER	54.9%	33.3%	11.8%	100.0%
	MALE	Count	1386	620	247	2253
		% within GENDER	61.5%	27.5%	11.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	2696	1414	529	4639
		% within GENDER	58.1%	30.5%	11.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.075(a)	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	22.112	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.554	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	4639		
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 256.92.			

The Chi-Square observed here is 22.075 which is greater than critical value of Chi-Square at 2 degree of freedom. It means that there is significant difference between Turkish male and female subjects in their choice of rank of imposition.

Comparing Iranian subjects the rank choice for females is nearly the same but for male subjects there is very meaningful difference between the two groups. While 61.5% of Turkish males feel easy in their interaction, 49.3% Iranian males believe that it is not imposing to interact in different situations. This point can also be very important in this study, where we can follow the cultural differences between two groups from two culturally different situations.

3. Iranian and Turkish females and politeness strategies.

A cross-cultural survey in this regard is done separately for males and females in two different situations. Table 3 shows a comparison of Iranian and Turkish female students in their choice of politeness strategies.

Table 3: Iranian and Turkish females' choice of politeness strategy

		Crosstab					Total	
		DEGREE OF POLITENESS						
		BOR	PPS	NPS	OFFR	DON'T		
NATION	IRANIAN	Count	336	450	652	692	210	2340
		% within NATION	14.4%	19.2%	27.9%	29.6%	9.0%	100.0%
	TURKISH	Count	395	637	562	591	109	2294
		% within NATION	17.2%	27.8%	24.5%	25.8%	4.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	731	1087	1214	1283	319	4634
		% within NATION	15.8%	23.5%	26.2%	27.7%	6.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	83.085(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	83.814	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	58.172	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	4634		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 157.92.			

The Chi-Square observed, 83.085 is greater than the critical value of Chi-square at 4 degree of freedom which is 9.49. It can be claimed that there is a very significant difference between Iranian and Turkish females in their choice of politeness strategies. The order of strategies chosen by Iranians from most employed to least employed is, OFF-R, NP, PP, BO-R and NA. but this order for Turkish females is, PP, OFF-R, NP, BO-R, and NA. As it is revealed most of the Iranian females prefer to employ OFF-R strategy in order to avoid any FTA while most of the Turkish females feel friendlier and sincerely in their interaction and prefer to employ PP in their interaction.

One other interesting point here is the difference between two groups in their use of NA strategy. While 9% of Iranian females tend to use this strategy, this percentage is only 4.8 % for Turkish females. This shows that more Iranians tend to be silent in their interaction comparing Turkish females. This fact becomes more meaningful when looking at two groups employing the BO-R strategy. While 14.4% of Iranian females prefer to employ this strategy this result for Turkish females is 17.2% which is completely in line with two groups' use of NA strategy. Turkish females are more relaxed to be frank and speak boldly than Iranian females.

4. Iranian and Turkish males and politeness strategies.

Another comparison is made between the Iranian and Turkish males on their use of politeness strategies to see whether there is any difference between males and females in their choice of politeness strategies. To do this, the data obtained from this group was once more processed and the results of this comparison are revealed in Table 4.

Table 4: Iranian and Turkish males and politeness strategies

		Crosstab					Total	
		DEGREE OF POLITENESS						
		BOR	PPS	NPS	OFFR	DONT		
NATION	IRANIAN	Count	384	481	706	593	236	2400
		% within NATION	16.0%	20.0%	29.4%	24.7%	9.8%	100.0%
	TURKISH	Count	367	513	541	628	163	2212
		% within NATION	16.6%	23.2%	24.5%	28.4%	7.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	751	994	1247	1221	399	4612
		% within NATION	16.3%	21.6%	27.0%	26.5%	8.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.993(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.081	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.442	1	.118
N of Valid Cases	4612		
A 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 191.37.			

The Chi-Square observed, 29.993 is greater than the critical value of Chi-square at 4 degree of freedom which is 9.49. It can be claimed that there is a very significant difference between Iranian and Turkish males in their choice of politeness strategies. Here the results are different from those of the females. The order of strategies chosen by Iranians from most employed to least employed is NP, OFF-R, PP, BO-R and NA, but this order for Turkish males is OFF-R, NP, PP, BO-R, and NA. As it is revealed most of the Iranian males prefer to employ NP strategy while most of the Turkish males prefer to employ NP in their interaction.

Another interesting point here is the difference between two groups in their use of NA. While 9.8% of Iranian males tend to use this strategy, this percentage is 7.3 % for Turkish males. This shows that more Iranians tend to be silent in their interaction comparing Turkish males.

Regarding the effect of gender in choice of politeness strategies for Iranian participants in general, the findings of this strategy reveal that Iranian male participants employ more politeness strategies than Iranian females for strategies of BO-R, PP, NP and NA but this is not the case for OFF-R strategy. For this strategy Iranian females show more interest than Iranian males. The great use of this strategy by Iranian females implies the fact that Iranian female participants tend to be more indirect and conservative in their interactions. But comparing rank of imposition felt by two groups shows that Iranian female participants feel less imposed in their interactions than Iranian male participants.

Regarding the effect of gender in choice of politeness strategies for Turkish participants in general, it can be said that in this group females use PP and BO-R strategies more than males and so tend to be more sincere and close in their interaction than Turkish males. At the same time Turkish females use NA strategy less than Turkish males. This can be said as a sign of Turkish males, being more conservative than females. Regarding the rank of imposition, unlike Iranian participants, Turkish male participants feel less imposed in their interactions than Turkish females. The root of this difference may be sought in cultural elements existing in both countries.

A general comparison between Turkish and Iranian participants shows that Turkish participants try to be more sincere and close in their interaction so do not have the fear of losing face. The proof of this claim is the use of PP and BO-R strategies more than Iranian participants, but Iranian participants try to be conservative and indirect because they have a fear of losing face so avoid from doing face threatening acts. The proof of this claim is the use of NP and OFF-R strategies more than Turkish participants.

Most Iranian female participants prefer to employ OFF-R strategy to avoid any FTA, while Turkish female participants try to use PP most of the time and then not fear to do FTA.

Iranian female participants try to use NA strategy more than Turkish female participants. This shows that Iranian female participants tend to be silent and not to do any FTA. This is not the case for Turkish female participants.

Comparing male participants, Iranian males tend to use NP strategy more than Turkish males but Turkish males, like Turkish females, are more interested to use PP strategy more than the Iranians. Iranian male participants employ the NA strategy more than Turkish males. This shows that Iranian males try to avoid FTA more than Turkish males. Turkish male participants are more relaxed in their interaction than Iranian males. The proof of this claim is Turkish participants reporting less imposed in their interaction than Iranian males. For Iranian male participants it is more difficult to make effective interactions compared to Turkish

males. This can be interpreted as a result of cultural differences between two groups.

Comparing Iranian male EFL and NL learners, it is clear that Iranian male EFL learners tend to be more frank and direct in their interactions than Iranian male NL learners. A proof of this claim is the use of BO-R strategy by male EFL learners two times more than male NL learners in their choice of politeness strategies. At the same time EFL learners use NA strategy two times less than NL learners. These differences can be interpreted as a sign of language transfer into Iranian male EFL learners' linguistic performance. Iranian male EFL learners feel less imposed in their interaction than Iranian NL learners. The rank of imposition felt by Iranian male NL learners is two times more than the rank of imposition felt by Iranian male EFL learners for less imposing rank level and two times less for more imposing rank level.

Comparing Turkish female EFL and NL learners reveals the fact that these two groups do differently in their interactions. Turkish female EFL learners use PP strategy most of the time but Turkish female NL learners use OFF-R strategy. BO-R strategy is also used by female EFL learner's more than female NL learners. Turkish female EFL learners feel less imposed than female NL learners.

Comparing Turkish male EFL and NL learners, shows that the results are again different for two groups. This difference may be interpreted as a sign of language transfer effect on Turkish male EFL learners' linguistic performance. The main difference here is the use of NA strategy by male NL learners more than male EFL learners. Male EFL learners have also reported less imposition than male NL learners in their interactions.

To see the role of gender in choice of politeness strategies for speech acts of FAL and FAH, a comparison between Turkish male and female EFL learners shows no difference for FAL, but for FAH, they do differently for BO-R and OFF-R strategies. Turkish male EFL learners prefer OFF-R to BO-r in their interactions but female group prefer BO-R to OFF-R. Here once more it is clearly seen that Turkish females prefer to be more direct and don't fear face loss in their interactions than Turkish males for speech acts of FAL and FAH.

For speech acts of gripping and complaining, there are also differences and similarities between Turkish and Iranian male and female NL and EFL learners in their choice of politeness strategies for realization of these speech acts in their interactions in different situations. A comparison between Iranian female NL and EFL learners shows that both groups have used OFF-R strategy as their mostly preferred strategy, but they do differently for NA and NP. While female EFL learners prefer NP as their secondly used strategy for gripping

female NL learners prefer NA. This means that Iranian female NL learners are more conservative than female EFL learners and this can be under the effect of language transfer coming from English into Iranian female EFL learners. This is the case for the speech act of complaining too.

For speech acts of griping and complaining, there are differences between Iranian male and female NL learners in their choice of politeness strategies both in order and frequency as well as the rank of imposition felt, hence the effect of gender differences. The same differences are applicable to Iranian male and female EFL learners in their choice of politeness strategy for speech acts of griping and complaining.

A comparison of Turkish and Iranian female NL learners for their use of politeness strategies for realization of speech acts of griping and complaining reveals that although the two groups use OFF-R as their firstly preferred strategy but there are differences in order and frequency of other strategies employed. Iranian female NL learners use NA as their secondly preferred strategy while Turkish female NL learners use PP secondly for speech act of griping. For complaining also the two groups have done differently. Turkish female NL learners have used PP as their second strategy but Iranian group has used OFF-R secondly. For Turkish and Iranian male NL learners for speech act of griping, a comparison shows that Iranian male NL learners prefer NA to BO-R and also NP to PP but Turkish male NL learners do reversely and hence tend to be more direct than Iranian group. These differences can be claimed as cultural differences between two groups.

As far as the results of this study reveals, there are considerable differences between Iranian and Turkish males and females' choice of politeness strategies which can be interpreted as the effect of cultural differences between two societies.

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