

## **A Contrastive Study of Correction Strategies in Persian and English**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Despite the great number of interlanguage pragmatic (ILP) studies on different speech acts, only a few studies have been conducted on the correction speech act and its production strategies. Thus, the main purpose of this study is to discover Persian speakers' corrective strategies. It also aims at comparing and contrasting Persian correction strategies with those employed by native English speakers. To these ends, 50 Iranian university students were randomly selected to complete a *Discourse Completion Task* (DCT) questionnaire in Persian. Twenty native English speakers were also requested to complete the same DCT questionnaire in English. The findings reveal that corrective strategies in Persian and English are formulaic in pragmatic structures. Besides some similarities between the ways of correcting in the two languages, there are also some distinctions, such as criticising and using ironic expressions and threatening the correctee, strategies used by Persian participants and correcting through compliments, a strategy that is used only by

native speakers. Moreover, both Persian participants and native English speakers used more direct strategies than indirect ones. This can be attributed to the differences between cultures, interlocutors' positions and gender. This study has implications for language researchers, Iranian EFL teachers, test designers and material developers.

*Keywords:* Correction realisation, correction strategy, Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP), native Persian speakers, speech act

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## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of text organisation, grammar and pragmatics of a language is necessary for successful communication, as Aribi (2012) stated. As Aribi mentioned, Austin (1962) defined speech acts as actions performed by saying something. According to Farnia and Raja Rozina (2009, pp. 110–111), in Austin's theory, "these functional units in communication have propositional or locutionary meaning (the literal meaning of the utterance), illocutionary meaning (the social function of the utterance), and perlocutionary force (the effect produced by the utterance in a given context)."

According to Norrick (1991), correction could be found in every conversation when speakers pronounced a word or use names incorrectly and felt confused. In such situations, a second speaker could correct or clarify the confusion and continued the conversation in the correct way. This study focused mainly on conversational exchanges in which a participant corrects what was said in a conversation.

Since Takahashi and Beebe (1993), and Dogancay-Aktuna and Kamisli (1995)'s earliest reports on correction speech acts and their realisation in English and Turkish, the use of corrective strategies has had a significant impact on teachers, material developers and curriculum designers. The present research is significant in providing a different way to examine the correction speech act in terms of the strategies used in Persian and English, and how these strategies may be similar or different in these two languages.

However, the studies to date have tended to focus on different kinds of speech acts in English, such as Cels (2017); Jassim and Nimehchisalem (2016); Lutzky and Kehoe (2016); Su (2017); Tabar and Malek (2013), and Weatherall and Edmonds (2018). Likewise, in Persian, many speech act studies have been done such as apology (Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010) and request (Eslamirasekh, 1993; Jalilifar, 2009; Tabar & Malek, 2013). Comparatively, some researchers studied the correction speech act and its strategies in several other languages like Chinese (Gao & Liu, 2009), Vietnamese (Tran, 2011), Turkish (Dogancay-Aktuna & Kamisli, 1995) and English and Japanese (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993), but few studies can be found on correction speech acts in Persian. To this end, this study tries to fill in the gap. Therefore, the purposes of this study were to investigate correction speech acts and corrective strategies used by Persian speakers and compared the strategies with those of native English speakers.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Interlanguage Pragmatics

Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993, p. 3) defined interlanguage pragmatics as "the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language (L2)." It studies how a non-native speaker comprehends and performs linguistic actions in a target language, and how they obtain L2 pragmatic awareness. As ILP implies, it is an interdisciplinary

field that includes both second language acquisition research and pragmatics simultaneously.

### Speech Act

The concept of a speech act is defined as “the set of words which are used by speakers to convey their communicative functions” (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, p. 110). One of the outstanding researchers in speech act studies is Austin. He classified peoples’ utterances into three sub-categories: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. The first refers to the dictionary meaning of the utterance, while the second deals with the performance that was carried out based on the understanding of the interlocutor’s utterance. In fact, they refer to the conventionalised messages conveyed by a speaker. The third concept refers to the possible effect of utterances (Tsuo-lin, 2009).

Austin’s speech act theory was further developed by Searle, who classified it into two sub-categories: direct and indirect speech act. As cited by Tran (2011, p. 88): “According to Saviile-Troike (p. 36), “Direct acts are those where surface form matches interactional function, as “Be quiet!” used as a command, versus an indirect ‘It’s getting noisy here’ or ‘I can’t hear myself think’.” The indirect speech act is expressed more politely than the direct speech act.

The researches to date have tended to focus on different kinds of speech acts in English such as Cels (2017); Jassim and Nimehchisalem (2016); Lutzky and Kehoe (2016); Su (2017); Tabar and Malek (2013)

and Weatherall and Edmonds (2018). Similarly, many speech act studies have been done specifically in Persian such as the apology (Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010) and request (Eslamirasekh, 1993; Jalilifar, 2009; Tabar & Malek, 2013). For example, in his research study, Afghari (2007) tried to categorise the apology strategies in Persian. Data were collected from 100 students through a DCT. He found that Persian apologies were pragmatically structured and two variables of social dominance and social distance had a significant influence on the frequency of the use of that strategy.

### Correction

The speech act of correction occurs when a speaker directly or indirectly corrects the addressee’s speech. A correction is a face-threatening act to the listener/interlocutor because it opposes his or her statement. Thus, the proper performance of correction demands a high level of pragmatic competence. The direct corrective strategy refers to the utterance of actual correction expressions such as “No” or “You’re wrong.” Indirect corrective strategies refer to the strategies speakers employ to mitigate the illocutionary force of their corrections and to reduce the offence to the interlocutor such as expressing sorrow, offering an apology or giving a suggestion. Most of the studies in the area of correction were conducted on corrective feedback, especially in the field of second language teaching.

Among these studies, we can refer to a research done by Pishghadam and Norouz (2011). The main purpose of this study was to investigate the ways Iranian EFL learners correct their teacher when their teacher made a mistake in class. In this study, 180 learners were required to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains a situation in which a mistake was committed by the teacher. Learners were required to choose among six options available on how they would correct their teacher. The results of this study revealed that the EFL learners preferred to correct their teacher implicitly rather than explicitly. They also employed positive remarks such as softeners to reduce the harsh tone of the correcting. Moreover, it was approved that the participants' age, gender and level of proficiency did not have a significant effect on the way they corrected their teacher.

To our knowledge, the first study in the realm of correction in which correction was analysed cross-culturally was conducted by Takahashi and Beebe (1993). 55 subjects completed a DCT. They analysed their data considering semantic formulas such as positive remarks and softeners. Takahashi and Beebe (1993) clarified the two notions that were eloquently explained by Darweesh and Mehdi (2016, p. 131). Positive remarks include "praise, compliment and positive evaluation. Grammatically speaking, a positive remark is a 'preceding adjunct which is phrasal and separate from the main body' (e.g. it was a good presentation, but...). Softeners are down-toners integrated in the main body of speech act" (e.g. I

think, I believe, you may have...). Both are used in order to make each speech act less face-threatening. The purpose of Takahashi and Beebe's study was to investigate the corrective performance of American and Japanese speakers of unequal power status and to explore the effect of Japanese upon English through DCT. They found that in the first situation (higher to lower status), American native speakers used more positive remarks and softeners compared with Japanese native speakers and the Japanese who spoke English used more positive remarks and softeners than Japanese native speakers. However, in the second situation (lower to higher status), the phenomenon was completely changed. The Japanese speakers tended to use a more authoritative tone and to be more direct in correcting compared with their American counterparts; this might result from their lack of interest to interact verbally.

In 1995, Dogancay-Aktuna and Kamisli conducted research into the corrective strategies of Turkish native speakers. The participants of the study were 80 Turkish native speakers who were asked to take part in role-playing activities that contained situations in which a mistake was made by one interlocutor. The aims of this study were to investigate the semantic and syntactic formulas used by Turkish native speakers and to explore the politeness devices utilised to soften the speech act of correction. Furthermore, the correction behaviour of Turkish native speakers was compared with their American counterparts in terms of the use of politeness strategies. This

study revealed that positive prefaces were considered a significant part of the semantic formulas of American speakers' correction but they did not constitute a frequent part of Turkish speakers' correction, and higher status Turks were more polite in correcting than lower status ones, though not as polite as the American speakers.

In an extension of studies on culture and correction speech acts, a contrastive analysis was carried out by Tran (2011). In this study, the corrective behaviour of three groups (English native speakers, Vietnamese natives and Vietnamese EFL learners) was compared and contrasted to find similarities and differences between the corrective performance of the Vietnamese and English speakers. The research investigated the effect of Vietnamese upon English as a foreign language. The data for the study were collected through a metapragmatic questionnaire (MPQ) and the discourse completion task (DCT) questionnaire. The MPQ consisted of 12 situations and the informants were required to answer if they would perform correction or not by choosing from among five items ranging from the most advisable to the least advisable. The results, which were gathered through MPQ, showed that English and Vietnamese speakers' cultures had more in common by considering the advisability for correcting. In the other phase, the result of the DCT questionnaire indicated that English native speakers employed more politeness strategies (like questioning and hedging) to soften the impact of a potentially face-

threatening speech act than their Vietnamese counterparts. Moreover, Vietnamese EFL learners utilised more politeness strategies to make their correction as less face-threatening as possible compared with their Vietnamese counterparts. The study confirmed such pragmatic transfer influence.

After reviewing the results of the previous studies conducted on the speech act of correction and its strategies, it was revealed that there were cross-cultural differences in the performance of correction acts and there was a lack of adequate works on this subject. It should also be noted that in the literature, few studies had been done on the way Persian speakers performed correction. Therefore, the present contrastive analysis study set out to investigate the ways in which Persian and English speakers correct their addressees in their conversations.

The present study was intended to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of corrective strategy are used by English and Persian native speakers?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the corrective strategies used by Persian and English native speakers?

## METHODS

### Participants

**Native Persian Speakers.** Forty female and 10 male B.A. and M.A. students from a public university in Tehran, all studying

different majors of the humanities, were randomly selected based on convenience sampling to participate in this study.

**Native English Speakers.** Twenty native English speakers voluntarily participated in this study through the <http://www.linguistlist.org> website. They included five male and 15 female participants. In terms of their educational qualification, one participant had an associate degree, eight had a first degree in the Arts or the Sciences (B.A./B.Sc.) and 12 had a second degree in the Arts or the Sciences (M.A./M.Sc.)

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments used for data collection in this study were two discourse completion tasks (DCT). An English DCT was adopted from Tran (2011); these encompassed items 1 to 6. Five other items were added by the researchers in order to achieve a similar status in relationship as used in items 1 to 6 and to enhance the reliability of the DCT. These items were situations that are different in social status and social distance (Tran, 2011). In addition, a Persian version of the DCT was used to elicit corrective strategies of the Persian language. The Persian version was back-translated and an expert advisor double-checked it for the accuracy of the DCT used. In order to be sure about the participants' answers to the Persian DCT, the English version was translated into Persian. First, the English version was given to two expert translators to translate into Persian, and then, two other experts were asked to translate the Persian version into English,

and this English version was compared with the original English DCT by two other experts. Finally, the Persian version, which was the most appropriately translated version, was selected as the Persian DCT to be used in the current research.

Moreover, 10 experts checked the content validity of the DCT using Lawshe's (1975) methods of content validity ratio (CVR) and content validity index (CVI). The results showed that four added items needed to be discarded. Only one item, situation seven, was added to Tran (2011)'s DCT. This was a situation between speakers of the same status. Consequently, the DCT was piloted by 20 participants with a profile similar to the target participants.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

This is an investigation of English and Persian strategies used for correction and their realisation. In order to collect data for the analysis, two DCTs were employed. The participants of this study were asked to complete the seven given situations, which were carefully selected regarding their differences in social status and distance. The DCT were planned to elicit linguistic data for the analysis and discovery of what corrective strategies were used in the given situations.

### **RESULTS**

After collecting the answers, all data were analysed and tabulated in order to answer the following research questions:



### Research Question 1: What Types of Corrective Strategy are Used by English and Persian Native Speakers?

After collecting the English version DCT, the answers were grouped into direct and indirect corrective strategies. Twenty native English speakers used 15 correction categories, six direct correction and nine indirect correction categories in their responses, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. On the other hand, Persian native speakers, who answered the Persian version of the DCT, used 17 correction categories, seven direct correction categories and 10 indirect correction categories in their responses, as seen in Tables 3 and 4. These corrective strategies were derived from other speech acts strategies, such as Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Weltz (1990)'s refusal speech act, Dogancay-Aktuna and Kamisli (1995) and by the researchers, which cannot be found in

any other speech acts. The added strategies were reached after consultation with an expert adviser.

Comparatively, native English and Persian speakers did not employ some strategies. Native English speakers did not use the strategies of giving a suggestion, reasoning, criticising, using ironic expressions and threatening the correctee as did the native Persian speakers. On the other hand, native Persian speakers did not make use of the strategy of correcting through compliments, which was used by some native English speakers.

As the collected data revealed, native English speakers used both direct and indirect corrective strategies and had some examples in their answers in order to realise these classifications, as can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

*Classification of native English speakers' direct corrective strategies and their examples*

Classification of Direct Correction	Examples
1) Corrector's reference to his /her knowledge	As I know, she is Canadian.
2) Providing the right answer	She is Canadian.
3) Explicit correction	
3.1) Rejecting the correctee's response/ statement	She is not.
3.2) Finding fault with correctee	I noticed that someone made a mistake and put the wrong country here - I noticed that the origin on the report states China when it was actually originated in Japan.
3.3) Deemphasising correctee's fault: Passive structure	An error was found.
3.4) Requesting correction	Would you please correct the founding date?
4) No	No
5) Expressing certainty	I'm pretty sure it was made in the USA.
6) Expressing uncertainty	I think she is Canadian, but I could be wrong. I might be wrong, but I think the product is manufactured in Japan.

Table 2

*Classification of native English speakers' indirect corrective strategies and their examples*

Classification of Indirect Correction	Examples
1) Ensuring	Do you know this for sure? – What company are you thinking of?
2) Giving a suggestion	Let's check it – Let's google it.
3) Offering an apology	Sorry.
4) Thanking	Thanks.
5) Silence	
6) Finding fault with other(s)	People often mistake us.
7) Requesting (more attention)	Would you please resend it to me? Send me the corrected version when you have finished.
8) Correcting through compliment	Everything looks good except for this date. Nice work on the summary. It sounds like you know a lot about this event.

Before moving on to the findings, some clarifications are needed regarding the direct and indirect strategies:

**Finding fault with correctee:** This category refers to the situations in which the corrector tries to correct the correctee and directly lays blame on the correctee.

**Finding fault with other(s):** This category refers to the situations in which

the corrector tries to correct the correctee indirectly and accuses other(s) to justify the mistake.

Comparatively, as can be seen in Tables 3 and 4, the native Persian speakers used both direct and indirect corrective strategies and had some examples in their answers that realised these classifications.

Table 3

*Classification of native Persian speakers' direct corrective strategies and their examples*

Classification of Direct Correction	Examples
1) Corrector's reference to his/her knowledge	تا جاییکه من از این شخص شناخت دارم میدونم که کاناداییه
2) Providing the right answer	محصول ساخت ژاپنه نه چین - تاریخ این واقعه فلان روزاست
3) Explicit correction	
3.1) Rejecting the correctee's response/ statement	آمریکایی نیست - شعر مال این شاعر نیست.
3.2) Finding fault with correctee	اشتباه میکنی - شما اشتباه میکنی
3.3) Giving a suggestion	بهتر نیست قبلش اینو درست کنیم - اگه اجازه بفرمایید تصحیح کنم
3.4) Deemphasising correctee's fault: Passive structure	در این گزارش، تاریخ تاسیس اشتباه نوشته شده - محل تولید اشتباه زده شده
3.5) Requesting correction	تاریخ رو تصحیح کنید - اصلاحش می کنید؟
4) Reasoning	اگر آمریکایی بود که فرانسوی نمی خوند - تو سایت بیوگرافیش نوشته بود که فرانسویه
5) No	نه - خیر
6) Expressing certainty	من مطمئنم که اون کاناداییه - مطمئنم
7) Expressing uncertainty	فکر میکنم اشتباه میکنی - گمونم برای فلان شاعر باشه



Classification of Persian direct correction and their examples:

- 1) Corrector's reference to his/her knowledge

*Ta jai ke man midoonam Amrikaie.*

As far as I know American (As far as I know, she is American.)

- 2) Providing the right answer

*Mahsool sakhte japone, na chin.*

Product made Japan, not China (It was made in Japan, not China.)

- 3.1) Rejecting the correctee's response/statement

*Amrikai nist.*

American not (It is not American.)

- 3.2) Finding fault with correctee

*Shoma eshtebah mikoni.*

You wrong are (You are wrong.)

- 3.3) Giving a suggestion

*Age ejaze befarmaid tashih konam*

If let you correct I (Let me correct it.)

- 3.4) Deemphasising correctee's fault: Passive structure

*Mahale tolid eshtebah neveshte shode*

Origin wrong written (The origin of the product is wrongly written.)

- 3.5) Requesting correction

*Eslahesh mikonid?*

Correct it will you? (Will you correct it?)

- 4) Reasoning

*Too biogerafish neveshte bood kanadaie.*

In biography her written was Canadian (According to her biography, she is Canadian.)

- 5) No

*Kheir (No)*

- 6) Expressing certainty

*Motmaennam kanadaie*

Sure I Canadian (I'm sure, she is Canadian.)

- 7) Expressing uncertainty

*Fekr mikonam eshtebah mikoni.*

Think I wrong you (I think you are wrong.)

Table 4

Classification of native Persian speakers' indirect corrective strategies and their examples

Classification of Indirect Correction	Examples
1) Ensuring	مطمئنی؟ - کی میگه مال انگلیسه - مطمئنی تاریخ همینه هست که گفتی؟
2) Criticising and using ironic expressions	خواهشا مطمئن نیستی چیزی نگو - تاریخ به این مهمی رو نباید اشتباه بگی
3) Giving a suggestion	بهتره بیشتر مطالعه کنی - دوباره اگه وقت دارید متن رو بخوانید
4) Offering an apology	عذر میخوام - البته شرمنده کلامتون رو قطع میکنم
5) Thanking	ممنونم - شرمنده
6) Silence	
7) Finding fault with other(s)	البته می دونم تاریخ برخی رویدادها قاطی میشن
8) Requesting (more attention)	دوباره بنویسید - یه مقدار تأمل کنید و جواب بدهید
9) Threatening the correctee	تکرار نشه - بار آخرتان باشه - حرف نباشه من دارم بهت میگم

Classification of Persian indirect correction and their examples:

- 1) Ensuring  
*Motmaenni?*  
Sure you? (Are you sure?)
- 2) Criticising and using ironic expressions  
*Khaheshan motmaen nisti chizi nagoo!*  
Please sure not nothing say (Please don't say anything if you are not sure!)
- 3) Giving a suggestion  
*Behtare bishtar motale koni!*  
Should more read! (You should read more!)
- 4) Offering an apology  
*Ozr mikham.* (I am sorry.)
- 5) Thanking  
*Mamnoon* (Thanks.)

- 7) Finding fault with other(s)  
*Midoonam tarikhe bazi chiza ghati mishe.*  
Know I date something mistaken. (I know some dates can be mistaken.)
- 8) Requesting (more attention)  
Lotfan dobare Benevisid.  
Please again write you (Please write it again.)
- 9) Threatening the correctee  
*Dige tekrar nashe!*  
Again repeat don't (Never do it again.)

**Research Question 2: What are the Similarities and Differences between the Corrective Strategies Used by Persian and English Native Speakers?**

The frequency of use of each direct and indirect strategy was calculated and the percentage for both languages was tabulated. Table 5 and Figure1 provide details of the

Table 5  
Percentage of each classification of direct corrective strategies in English and Persian languages

Classification	Percentage in English (%)	Percentage in Persian (%)
1) Corrector's reference to his/her knowledge	1.63	4.23
2) Providing the right answer	25.71	23.11
3) Explicit correction		
3.1) Rejecting the correctee's response/statement	3.67	4.33
3.2) Finding fault with correctee	2.85	7.18
3.3) Giving a suggestion	0	1.52
3.4) Deemphasising correctee's fault: Passive structure	1.63	7.16
3.5) Requesting correction	2.85	5.31
4) Reasoning	0	2.03
5) No	6.53	5.49
6) Expressing certainty	2.44	1.98
7) Expressing uncertainty	17.95	7.83
Sum	<b>65.3</b>	<b>70.17</b>

percentage of use of each direct strategy; the native Persian participants used direct about 65.3% of the responses of the native English participants and 70.17% of those of English participants and 70.17% of those of

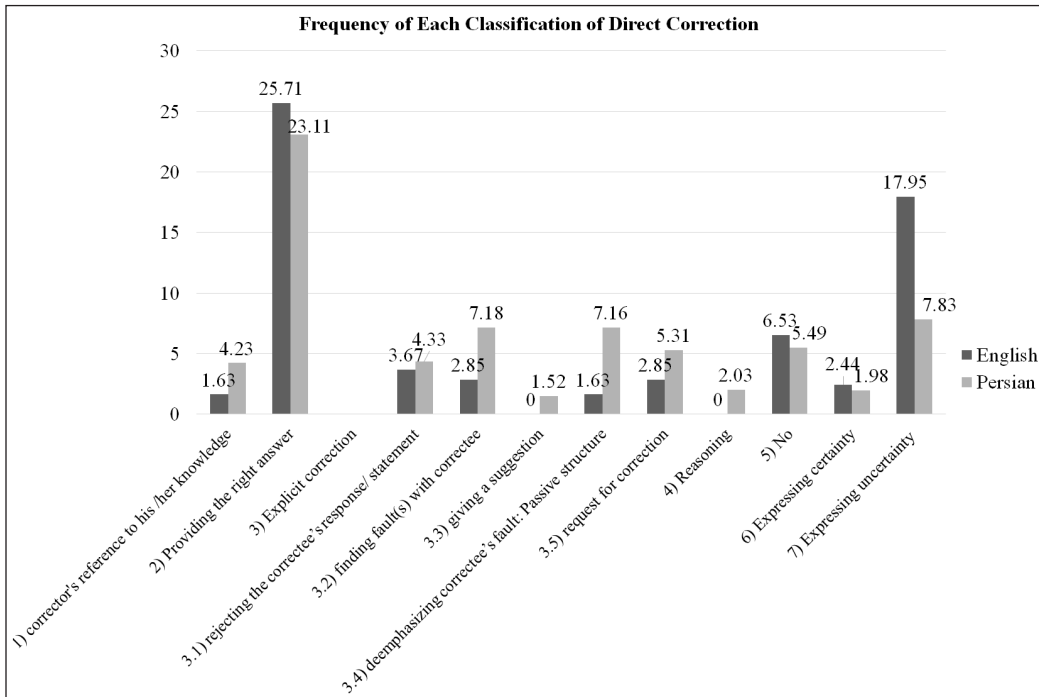


Figure 1. Frequency of each classification of direct corrective strategies in English and Persian languages

Table 6 and Figure 2 show that the native English participants used the indirect corrective strategy in 34.7% of their responses, while the native Persian participants used it in 29.83% of their responses.

By comparing the responses, some similarities could be found in the use of both direct and indirect corrective strategies of English and Persian languages. In the use of direct corrective strategies, both languages are somehow similar in the use of five corrective strategies: 1. Right answer,

2. Rejecting the correctee's response/ statement, 3. Requesting correction, 4. No, and 5. Expressing certainty. With indirect corrective strategies of the two languages, five similar strategies were used: 1. Giving a suggestion, 2. Offering an Apology, 3. Thanking, 4. Silence, and 5. Finding fault with others.

Besides these similarities, there were some differences between the two languages: six direct corrective strategies: 1. Corrector's reference to his/her background knowledge, 2. Finding fault with correctee, 3. Giving a

Table 6  
*Frequency of each classification of indirect corrective strategies in English and Persian languages*

Classification	Percentage in English (%)	Percentage in Persian (%)
1) Ensuring	12.65	2.41
2) Criticising and using ironic expressions	0	8.42
3) Giving a suggestion	4.04	3.13
4) Offering an apology	6.93	6.77
5)Thanking	1.63	0.62
6) Silence	2.04	2.8
7) Finding fault with other(s)	0.4	0.62
8) Requesting (more attention)	1.63	3.75
9) Threatening the correctee	0	1.33
10) Correcting through compliment	5.31	0
Sum	<b>34.7</b>	<b>29.83</b>

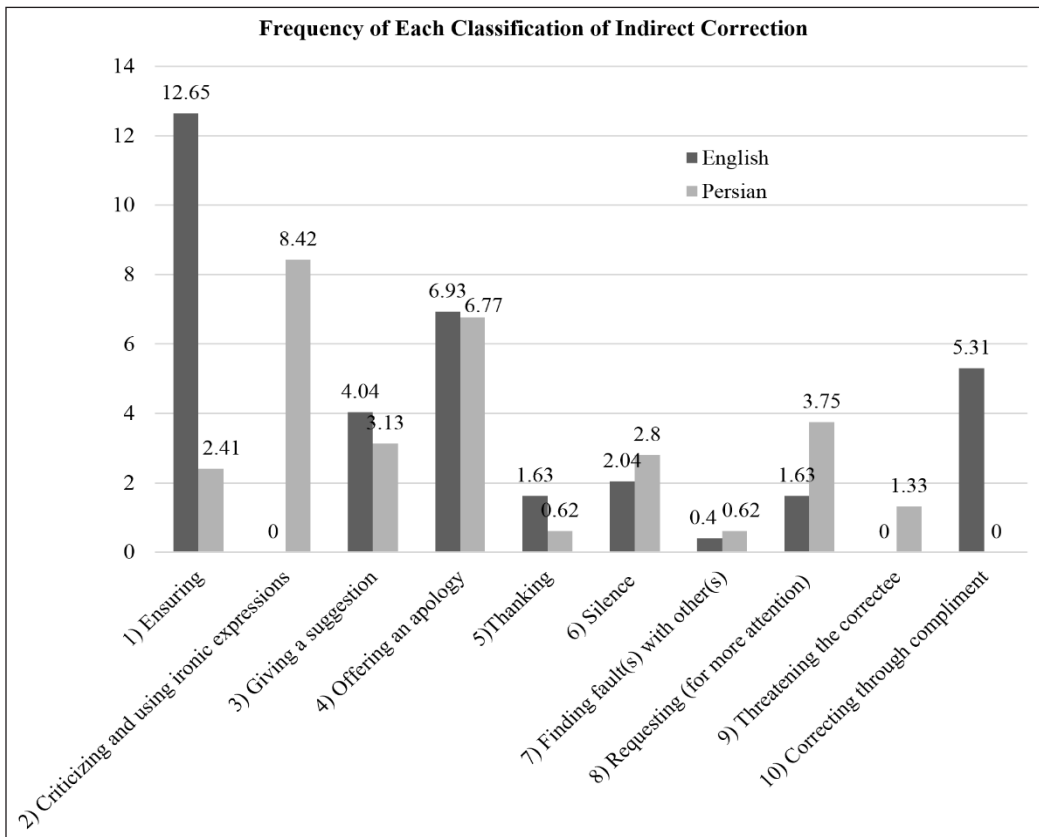


Figure 2. Frequency of each classification of indirect corrective strategies in English and Persian languages

suggestion, 4. Deemphasising correctee's fault: Passive structure, 5. Reasoning, and 6. Expressing uncertainty, and five indirect corrective strategies: 1. Questioning for assurance, 2. Criticising and using ironic expressions, 3. Requesting (more attention), 4. Threatening the correctee, and 5. Correcting through compliment.

Some corrective strategies were not used in both languages. Four corrective strategies used by native Persian speakers were not used by native English speakers: 1. Giving a suggestion, 2. Reasoning, 3. Criticising and using ironic expressions, and 4. Threatening the correctee. On the other hand, native Persian speakers did not report the correcting through compliment strategy in their responses, but this strategy can be seen in native English speakers' answers.

The responses show that directly providing the right answer was the most frequent strategy (25.7%) and indirectly finding fault with other(s) (0.4%) was the least frequent strategy used by native English speakers. In contrast, directly providing the right answer was the most frequently used strategy (23.11%), while indirectly thanking and finding fault with other(s) (both 0.62%) were the least frequently used strategies by native Persian speakers.

As Tables 5 and 6 display, both native English and Persian speakers preferred to use direct corrective strategies rather than indirect corrective strategies. About 65.3% of the responses of native English speakers used corrective strategies and 34.7% used indirect strategies, while comparatively, 70.17% of the responses of native Persian

speakers used direct and 29.83% percent of their responses used indirect corrective strategies. These results revealed that native Persian speakers' answers were more direct than those of native English speakers.

## DISCUSSION

The aims of this study were to investigate correction speech acts and the strategies used by Persian speakers in comparison with the strategies used by native English speakers in their speech acts. Fourteen corrective strategies were reached after collecting and analysing the English version DCTs. Corrective strategies and the realisations that native English speakers used in their correction can be found in Tables 1 and 2. Comparatively, there were also 16 Persian language corrective strategies and their realisations, as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

As the tables reveal, some similarities appeared in both languages, which means that these concepts may be parallel in both cultures. Besides the observed similarities and differences between the corrective strategies used in both languages as shown in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4, there were four strategies that were not used by native English speakers: 1. Giving a suggestion, 2. Reasoning, 3. Criticising and using ironic expressions, and 4. Threatening the correctee, and one strategy by native Persian speakers: correcting through compliment strategy.

The findings are in line with that of Takahashi and Beebe (1993). They reported that direct corrective strategies were used more than indirect ones by English speakers.

It confirmed that both native English and Persian speakers preferred correcting directly. This may be the influence of gender on the responses. However, the results contradict Lakoff's assertion (1973) that women use more hedges and tag questions i.e. indirect ways of speaking. According to Lakoff, "hedge mitigates the possible unfriendliness or unkindness of a statement" (p. 54). She added that women use more tags "because they are socialized to believe that asserting themselves strongly isn't nice or ladylike, or even feminine" (p. 54).

On the other hand, the findings are in line with Darweesh and Mehdi (2016)'s study of corrective strategies used by Iraqi EFL students. They showed that Iraqi students employed direct strategies more than indirect ones because of their personality or cultural features. They also reported the silence strategy used in some situations. They believed that the reason was that the participants "have the spirit of accomplishing the act and they are not shy to remain silent" (2016, p. 138). It can be presumed that the similarity between the findings could have been caused by some possible cultural similarities between the participants of the two studies. For instance, both countries pursue the same religion (Islam) and their spoken languages have many similarities (Persian and Arabic).

However, as the data revealed, the strategy of providing the right answer has a significantly higher proportion of usage, which is in line with Tran's (2011) findings. This may be due to two possible universal truths:

1. There is a preference for direct strategies as opposed to more indirect strategies.
2. Most competent adult members of society are expected to provide right answers immediately.

Nevertheless, the presence of strategies such as criticising and using ironic expressions or threatening the correctee, mostly reported among Persian native speakers, might be due to two reasons i.e. the way native Persian speakers treat faults of those deemed of lower status and the situational and status differences of interlocutors or the Islamic nature of Iran, where women employ conflictive and confrontational strategies that have the most impolite intention, mostly when and where the addressee is of the same sex (Parvaresh & Eslamirasekh, 2009).

The significance of the present research is that it provides a different way to examine correction speech acts in terms of strategies used in Persian and English, and how these strategies may be similar or different in these two languages. These strategies have a significant impact on teachers, material designers, curriculum developers and syllabus designers, all of whom are responsible for enhancing teaching materials at any levels.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current study was to determine corrective strategies used in the Persian language and to find out the similarities and differences between the



corrective strategies used in English and Persian. In summary, correction speech acts in Persian and English are formulaic in their pragmatic structure. This means that both direct and indirect corrective strategies are prefabricated, routinised expressions that include what speakers and language learners internalise as they develop pragmatically (Pawley & Syder, 1983). These formulas can be used over and over with no need of variation and elaboration. In addition, both native speaking Persian and English participants used more direct strategies than indirect ones; also, there were some corrective strategies used only by the Persian-speaking participants and not by the English-speaking ones and vice versa.

However, far too little attention has been paid to the correction speech act and its strategies in Persian and how it may be different from similar strategies of the English language. The use of corrective strategies has a significant impact on teachers, material developers and curriculum designers. Materials for teaching pragmatics should be based on the analysis of the social and cultural differences of both L1 and L2, which explains the performance of non-native speakers when using their target language knowledge. Awareness of the pre-established norms would aid teachers and instructors of English as a foreign language and Persian as a foreign language in knowing what is pragmatically proper in a given situation and would provide English and Persian learners with corrective feedback.

It is suggested that further studies be done on corrective speech acts in order to investigate the reasons behind these findings and to investigate the influence of gender on the use of corrective strategies used in both the English and Persian languages.

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