

Politeness and In-Directness in Algerian and Russian Classroom Requests

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Abstract. Successful intercultural communication depends on the interlocutors' understanding of their pragmatic utterances and intended meaning. However, practical use of languages varies across cultures given the difference in cultural values and norms leading to different language means and politeness strategies applied in identical situations of intercultural communication. This article presents the findings of a contrastive analysis of politeness and (in)directness formulae used by Algerian and Russian students and teachers in classroom requests. It aims to find similarities and/or differences in directness vs. indirectness and politeness in requests in two different cultural contexts and to investigate the impact of socio-cultural factors in these situations. A Discourse Completion Task (DCT) method was used to collect data, whereby three situations were proposed to 148 respondents (53 Russian and 95 Algerian participants). The findings revealed that Russian and Algerian students adopted conventional indirect strategies when requesting their teachers. In comparison, impositives (direct strategies) were most frequently used by both Algerian and Russian teachers. Russian students used indirect request when communicating with their classmates, while Algerian students chose to request their fellow students directly. The results also showed that Russians used non-conventional indirectness to the least degree, while at the same time they scored high levels of conventional indirectness. The findings prove that politeness does not necessarily mean indirectness, and directness does not imply impoliteness. The study provides new data on the impact of socio-cultural factors on the levels of directness and politeness. It contributes to cross-cultural pragmatics and studies on classroom discourse.

Keywords: Algerian, classroom discourse, politeness, (in)directness, Russian, speech act of request, conventional indirectness, direct strategies, non-conventional indirectness.

Вежливость и непрямая просьба в алжирском и русском языках в дискурсе общения в учебной аудитории

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Аннотация. Успешная межкультурная коммуникация зависит от понимания собеседниками прагматики высказываний и, соответственно, выявления предполагаемого смысла. Различия в культурных нормах заставляют коммуникантов прибегать к использованию разных языковых средств и разных стратегий вежливости в идентичных ситуациях общения. В статье представлены результаты сравнительного анализа способов выражения реализации речевого акта просьбы, используемых алжирскими и российскими студентами и преподавателями в процессе общения в университетской аудитории. Для сбора данных был использован метод письменного завершения дискурса, в рамках которого 148 респондентам (53 русским и 95 алжирским участникам) были предложены три различные ситуации. Полученные результаты доказывают, что вежливость не обязательно предполагает замаскированную просьбу, а прямая просьба не всегда подразумевает невежливость. В исследовании содержатся новые данные о влиянии социокультурных факторов на использование прямых и замаскированных просьб. Статья вносит вклад в изучение прагматики межкультурной коммуникации и дискурса общения в учебной аудитории.

Ключевые слова: алжирский язык, дискурс общения в учебной аудитории, вежливость, русский язык, речевой акт просьбы, импозитивность.

1. Introduction

According to J. L Austin's [1962] Speech Act Theory, words describe the world, present information, and carry out actions such as requesting, apologising, inviting, thanking, refusing, etc. Searle [1969] later developed this theory and claimed that different speech acts, such as invitations,

commands, apologies or requests, are determined by specific rules that govern the participants' interaction.

The rapid development of speech act theory and politeness theory (PT) has attracted attention of many researchers to cross-cultural pragmatics. Their focus was on investigating and comparing how speakers of different languages perform requests differently across cultures [Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Fukushima 1996, 2002; Liao 1997; Reiter 2000; Pinto, Raschio 2007; Larina 2008; Ogiermann 2009]. However, little is known about cross-cultural pragmatic studies of the Arabic society, particularly Algerian Arabic, which thus needs to be investigated. This study aims to broaden the field of cross-cultural studies, drawing on a comparative analysis of requests in the light of politeness and directness strategies in both Algerian and Russian classroom contexts.

A *request* is a directive speech act intended to make the hearer do something in favour of the speaker. Based on the classification of speech acts suggested by Brown and Levinson [1987], requests are considered face-threatening since the hearer's face can be threatened by imposition. Therefore, to lessen the face-threatening in interactions, direct and indirect request strategies are adopted considering different social variables of power, distance, rank of imposition, and cultural conventions.

Indirect requests were related to politeness by Brown and Levinson [1978, 1987], Leech [1983], and Searle [1975]. According to Brown and Levinson's [1978] PT, being conventionally indirect is one of the politeness strategies that they suggested, using "phrases and sentences that have contextually unambiguous meanings which are different from their literal meanings" [Brown, Levinson 1978: 137]. In other words, a conventionally indirect request seems more polite when compounded with hedges and particles. Drawing on Grice's Cooperative Principle [1975], Brown and Levinson suggested that the performance of a face-threatening act is based on three levels of directness, including off-record strategies with interest to face redress, which distract from Grice's maxims. On the other hand, adopting the on-record strategies complies with Grice's maxims since they guarantee clarity and politeness when performing speech acts; the on-record strategies can be the best choice with redressive action [Brown, Levinson 1987: 72].

Moreover, Brown and Levinson [1987] and Leech [1983] stated that politeness is a general social phenomenon, and cultures are internally homogenous. In other words, the levels of directness are universal in all cultures and languages where politeness is necessarily correlated with indirectness, and any clarity or directness is considered a threat and imposition on the hearer's face. Brown and Levinson's theory was criticised for this claim because clarity and directness are appreciated in some cultures, while indirect requests make the speaker seem manipulative [Pinker 2007: 442]. Thus, despite the universal nature of the request speech act, its performance varies within and across cultures and might not be appropriate to all cultures as far as the level of requests' directness is concerned. In reaction to Brown and Levinson's claim, many researchers, such as Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper [1989], Eva Ogiemann [2009], and Larina [2008], conducted comparative studies of request realisation in different languages such as British English, Australian English, German, Polish, Danish, Hebrew, Spanish, Canadian French, and Russian, respectively. According to them, requestive strategies can be classified into three main groups from the most to the least direct, including direct (impositives), conventional indirect, and non-conventional indirect. Although most of the conducted studies support Brown and Levinson's classification of directness levels into direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventional indirect, most of them pursue Blum-Kulka's framework [1989], which proposed nine sub-strategies of requests that were extended later by other researchers into 18 types of requests [Aijmer 1996: 132–133]. Although these strategies were classified from the least to the most direct [Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 18], politeness and indirectness were not correlated.

Blum-Kulka [1989] states that indirectness does not necessarily imply politeness in all cultures. She maintains Brown and Levinson's claim that there is a link between politeness and conventional indirectness; however, this is not true for non-conventional indirectness (Brown and Levinson's 'off-record' strategy).

Although many researchers have investigated the speech act of request in many languages and cultures, no studies have been made to compare the cultural features of Algerian Arabic and Russian requests.

Therefore, this study explores the request strategies made by Algerian speakers in a classroom context compared to their Russian counterparts based on the following research questions:

- What are the request strategies made in Algerian and Russian classrooms?
- How do cultural and societal norms shape the speakers' choice of specific request strategies in the classroom among Algerian and Russian native speakers?
- To what extent do social variables of power, distance, and weight imposition affect the speakers' choice of request strategies in both investigated groups?

2. Theoretical Framework

In all cultures and languages, politeness reflects elements of the appropriate use of language with respect and consideration of others across different situations. Generally, politeness hinged on the idea of the face, defined by [Goffman 1967: 5] as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for herself or himself”. Goffman proposed that interaction with others can lead to a person's positive face loss or mitigation.

Drawing on Goffman's theoretical positions, Brown and Levinson [1987: 61] developed the “face theory” and assumed that the person's self-image is constituted of two aspects of the face:

- A negative face is the inclination of a human being to have a particular territory and a zone to stay far from other impositions because of his property.
- A positive face deals with the person's self-image, and nobody wants to be touched.

They assumed that interaction might involve acts that can threaten either the positive or negative face, called ‘Face Threatening’ (FTAs), like ordering, disagreement, requesting, expressing exaggerated emotions, etc.

The concept of face has gained a universal nature, and it directly relates to the idea of (im)politeness since all theories of first- or second-order politeness are interested in and connected with the face. In (im)politeness research [Watts et al. 1992; Eelen 2001], two levels of politeness have been developed into first-order politeness (Politeness 1) that refers to individuals' acts "deemed to be socially and culturally appropriate in any given social activity" [Watts et al. 1992: 48]. On the other hand, second-order politeness (Politeness 2) is labeled as a 'theoretical construct' uncoupled from 'praxis and being' [Watts 2003]. Many other works were concerned with second-order politeness, such as the work of Lakoff [1973: 298], who suggested that politeness requires language users to "be friendly, make others feel good, give options, don't impose". Similarly, Leech [1983: 108] has mainly focused on "indirectness" because it makes the illocutions more polite. Another influential work related to "Politeness 2" is the above-mentioned book of Brown and Levinson [1987], in which the authors focused on the concepts of the face, face-threatening acts, and mitigation strategies.

However, the long-held association of speech acts with second-order politeness has been criticised by other researchers such as House and Kádár [2023], whose approach proposes to study speech acts and other pragmatic notions like politeness in the process of interaction, which makes it possible to show the illocutionary dynamics. Their approach is an in-between framework that bounds first and second-order approaches.

Based on the classification of speech acts suggested by Brown and Levinson [1987], requests are considered face-threatening acts since the hearer's face can be threatened (by imposing on his/her freedom). Requests can be achieved directly and thus threaten the face or by adopting any strategy proposed by Brown and Levinson to lessen the threat. So, it is only by politeness that face-threatening is lessened.

Thus, Brown and Levinson suggested the "face-saving approach" that helps people to lessen the threat [Brown, Levinson 1978: 68].

Brown and Levinson [1987] suggested that in any culture, one can employ five types of politeness strategies: baldly on record, off-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and do not do the (FTA) strategies. Moreover, Brown and Levinson [1978: 79] identified three social

variables: social distance, social power, and the ranking of imposition that determine the choice of request strategies.

As mentioned above, requests are considered face-threatening acts that require politeness to mitigate the person's face. Therefore, requests from the most direct to the most indirect ones result from the socio-cultural factors of power, distance, the rank of imposition, age, sex, etc. Brown and Levinson [1978, 1987] suggested cross-cultural differences in performing the speech act of request; thus, people from different cultures have different choices of the strategies employed in realising speech acts [Wolfson 1989: 183].

However, the work of Brown and Levinson [1987] has been criticised for their overgeneralization of the concept of indirectness to be necessarily equal to politeness which is rejected by many discursive approaches that neglect the existence of polite or impolite utterances. Still, it is a matter of the norm of engagement that decides about (im)politeness. There is no reasonable correlation between indirectness and politeness; an example is presented by Ogiermann [2009: 191], who concludes that Poles and Russians are direct because they want to achieve solidarity, closeness, and affiliation, not because they are impolite.

Also, Brown and Levinson were criticised for the concept of universality, which suggests that interaction systems are based on universal principles. This claim contrasts with cultural differences and neglects any variation between cultures.

Scollon and Scollon [1995, 2001] proposed that factors of power, distance, and weight of imposition deeply affect politeness choices. Depending on the power and distance between interlocutors, they devised three types of politeness. First, when the participants have an unequal distance (+Distance), and no interlocutor has power over the other (-Power); in this case of the deference politeness system, the interlocutors use independent strategies to minimise the risk of face-threatening. The second case is also an egalitarian system of solidarity politeness, in which the speakers do not exert power (-Power) nor social distance (-Distance) among each other. Hierarchy politeness is the third system in which asymmetrical relationships occur between interlocutors who accept that power is distributed unequally and the one with a higher position has power over the lower one. In this situation, speakers employ superordinate and subordinate

strategies. Thus, these three types of politeness systems can explain cultural differences in politeness.

Blum-Kulka et al.'s [1989] coding scheme was used in the present study to classify request strategies according to the levels of directness into the following types: direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect. The request direct strategies include five head acts: mood derivable, hedged performatives, want statements, obligation statements, and explicit performatives. The conventionally indirect strategies differentiate between query preparatory and suggestory formulae, while the non-conventionally indirect acts contain mild and strong hints.

This study uses Scollon and Scollon's [1995, 2001] politeness framework to interpret request strategies, apart from other researchers' views in the field.

3. Previous Studies

In comparative studies of English to other languages such as German, Polish, and Russian, the findings proved that English is less direct than all these languages [Wierzbicka 1985; Rathmayr 1994; Larina 2003; House 2005]. These studies did not give attention to the level of directness in these languages. Ogiermann [2009] proposed that in Slavic cultures, such as Russian and Polish, requests are performed directly since this speech act is not considered a face-threatening act. However, the results of this study proved that a high percentage of Russian participants adopted conventionally indirect strategies. Thus, previous studies held by researchers (e. g., [Berger 1997; Larina 2003; Rathmayr 1994]) claimed that the imperative type most used in performing the requests in Russian culture cannot be confirmed. Ogiermann [2009] added that Poles and Russians preferred syntactic downgrading (negation and tense) in their requests.

Many researchers in politeness studies [Larina 2009; Ogiermann 2009] and conversation studies [Dingemans, Baranova 2016] have concluded that Russians prefer to use imperatives frequently in their communicative acts.

The studies that dealt with comparing Arabic speakers' requests and English native speakers in both cases analysed Arabic dialects

in comparison to English. Little is known about the degree of directness in Arabic requests, and more importantly, there was no comparative study between Russian and Algerian Arabic made for this aim.

Al-Marrani and Sazalie [2010] examined request strategies used by Yemeni male and female Arabic native speakers. The results revealed that when the interaction occurs between males, the requests are performed directly. At the same time, high levels of indirectness are employed when the interaction is between male and female Yemeni speakers.

The directness in male-male interactions is explained by the Yemeni society's cultural norms characterised by solidarity and involvement between males without losing face. On the other hand, in male-female interactions, requests are performed indirectly because of society's religious values.

Another study in an Arabic country was conducted by Alaoui [2011] who investigated the politeness formula employed in the performance of requests in English and Moroccan Arabic. The findings concluded that both participants were concerned about the face, and speakers chose negative politeness strategies in both languages to mitigate the hearer's face. The results also showed that the syntactic downgraders are the most used by the British investigated group in comparison to the Moroccans who employed lexical downgraders, including expressions like "*Allah ykhalik*" or "*Allah y'aychek*" (may God give you long life), to soften the speaker's imposition on the hearer.

Many studies in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics interpreted the impact of socio-cultural features on the realisation of requests. The present work describes a cross-cultural study of the request performance strategies in Russian and Algerian classroom discourse.

4. Design and Methodology

4.1. Sample

Because the main objective of this research is to determine politeness and (in)directness in Algerian and Russian classroom requests, university students are chosen to be the participants to show how requests

are performed in the classroom with their teachers and classmates and to depict how their teachers use them. The informants in this study are two groups of university students: 95 Algerian Arabic native speakers (AANSs) and 53 Russian native speakers (RNSs) from different specialties. The number of the participants is not equal in both groups as the access to Algerian classrooms was easier than Russian ones for the researcher's previous work in the Algerian universities besides her residence in Algeria at the time of data collection.

4.2. Procedure

The research participants are asked to do a discourse completion task (DCT) chosen as the best method to collect speech act data, especially in cross-cultural and cross-language studies [Tran 2006; Labben 2016]. It is the only technique to collect a large amount of comparable speech act data across different languages and cultures allowing the researchers to make generalisations and compare politeness norms in each culture [Ogiermann 2009].

Also, a written DCT facilitates manipulation and control of contextual factors such as social distance, power, status, and weight of imposition [Blum et al. 1989; Kwon 2004; Tran 2006]. However, DCT has encountered criticisms concerning its inadequacy in rendering authentic speech since it can only cover some formulas produced in a natural interaction [Tran 2006]. Even though DCT gained many criticisms, it is still the best method to collect data when the focus is on collecting speech act data, since the occurrence of the act cannot be revealed by other tools, including role plays or natural speech recordings [Kwon 2004: 342].

In this investigation, this type of questionnaire is organised in the following way: *Section One* deals with participants' information, whereas the second section includes three main cases of classroom interaction, each of which is described in terms of the social power of the interactants, the social distance between them and the ranking of imposition of the speech act. Moreover, each case contains a different request situation, i.e. where students and teachers performed their requests.

The DCT questionnaire was written in English and translated into Arabic and Russian.

Table 1. Different considerations of social variables across three situations of request

<i>Cases</i>	<i>Situations</i>	<i>Social Power</i>	<i>Social distance</i>	<i>The degree of imposition</i>
<i>Student-teacher interaction</i>	Request for repetition	$S < H$ (-P)	Equal (=D)	Moderate (R ^o)
<i>Teacher-student interaction</i>	Request to repeat the answer	$S > H$ (+P)	Equal (=D)	Moderate (R ^o)
<i>Student-student interaction</i>	Request to borrow a pen	$S = H$ (=P)	Equal (=D)	(-R)

S= speaker, H= hearer, P= social power, D= social distance, R= rank of imposition

4.3. Data Analysis

The coding scheme of Blum-Kulka et al. [1989] is used to analyse the requesting strategies performed by the two investigated groups. Thus, this research analysis is based on the degree of directness of the specific head act. Blum-Kulka [1989] defined ‘head act’ as “the minimal unit that can realise a request”, and they related directness to “the degree to which the speaker’s illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution”.

The directness/indirectness dimension determines the study’s three levels of directness, which will be discussed to differentiate between impositives (direct level) using imperatives, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect levels.

Thus, the present study aims to compare both groups’ preferences for the direct or indirect performance of the head act. The data are categorised using the coding scheme of [Blum-Kulka et al. 1989].

5. Results and Discussion

Table 2. Percentages of request strategies adopted across three situations of classroom request

Target request	Strategy type	Algerian Arabic (%)	Russian (%)
S1 student's request to the teacher to repeat	I	14 %	15 %
	CI	70 %	85 %
	N-CI	16 %	0 %
S2 teacher's request to a student to repeat his answer	I	80 %	82 %
	CI	12 %	14 %
	N-CI	8 %	4 %
S3 student-student request to borrow a pen	I	58 %	33 %
	CI	26 %	48 %
	N-CI	16 %	19 %

I= impositives, CI= conventional indirectness, N-CI= non-conventional indirectness.

5.1. Impositives

Figure 1: Comparison of impositives used by Algerian and Russian students across three different situations.

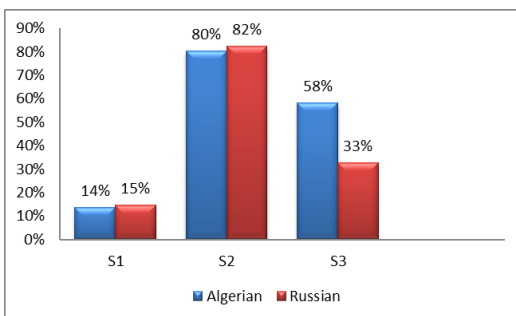


Figure 1. The use of impositives by Russians and Algerians

Figure 1 shows that RNSs use more direct requests than their Algerian counterparts in situations one and two. In situation one (a student requested his teacher to repeat what he had already said), the percentage was approximately the same between the two investigated groups. Still, it was not a high percentage like in the second situation (82 % Russians, 80 % Algerians) because, in the first situation, the request is performed from low to high (student-teacher). In contrast, in the second situation, teachers requested their students (high to low) where the speaker has power over the hearer.

Russian and Algerian students, in this case of impositives, preferred to use imperatives constructions as:

- (1) *Повторите, пожалуйста.*
'Repeat, please'.
- (2) من فضلك عاود واش قلت
'Please, repeat what you have already said'.
- (3) *Повторите, пожалуйста, свой ответ.*
'Repeat please your answer'.
- (4) عاودي الجملة
'Repeat the sentence'.

In the third situation, Algerian students were more direct in performing requests to their classmates to borrow a pen. 58 % of Algerian students asked their classmates for an extra pen directly (low to low), and only 33 % of Russians used imperatives in their requests. In this situation, the S and H are equal, and the relationship is closer.

The obtained results revealed that direct requests are adopted by both groups when the speaker has more power over the hearer or if they have a close relationship as classmates, especially in the Algerian culture where small favours (borrowing a pen) do not require high levels of indirectness. In situation 1, because the speaker is less powerful than the hearer (student-teacher), both AANSs and RNSs were less direct than in other situations of request.

These findings can be explained by the hierarchy system suggested by Scollon and Scollon [1995, 2001]. They suggested that when the

speaker has a superordinate status and the hearer has a subordinate status, the speaker can exercise power over the hearer and, thus, be direct in his requests and choose direct politeness strategies without the fear of threatening the hearer's negative face.

5.2. Conventional Indirectness Strategies

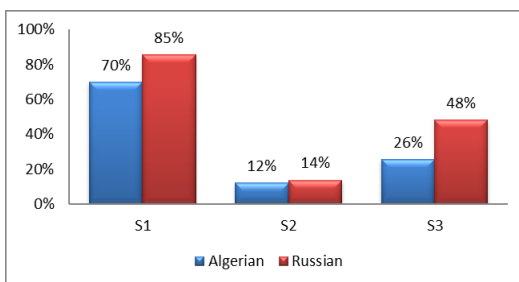


Figure 2. Russian and Algerian use of conventional indirectness

Figure 2 shows a cross-cultural agreement between AANSs and RNSs in the use of indirect requests in S2 when the request is made by teachers to their students to repeat their answers with almost similar percentage: 12% of Algerian teachers preferred to be indirect and 14% in Russian ones. In this situation, the percentage is almost similar but low because the request is achieved from high to low (teacher-student interaction).

Situation 1 involves the students' requests to their teachers to repeat what they have said with a high percentage of similar choice in both languages: 70% of AANSs and 85% of RNSs opted for indirect requests. In the third situation, 26% of Algerian students employed indirect requests with their classmates in contrast to the Russian students where, surprisingly, 48% of the respondents opted for this strategy. In Situation 1, the requester's position was lower than that of the requestee (-Power), which explains why indirect requests were employed in both cultures to mitigate the face and avoid impeding the latter's zone of freedom.

To perform the requests indirectly, Russian and Algerian students opted for interrogative constructions using modal verbs and conditional

or complex constructions as consultative devices performed in the following examples:

- (5) *Не могли бы вы повторить?*
'Could you repeat?'
- (6) *Можете, пожалуйста, повторить?*
'Can you repeat, please?'
- (7) *Извини, не могла бы ты одолжить свою запасную ручку, пожалуйста?*
'Sorry, couldn't you lend me your extra pen?'
- (8) *من فضلك، تقدر تعاود واش قلت هذا وين*
'Please, can you repeat what you have said right now?'
- (9) *تقدر تعاود اجابتك من فضلك*
'Can you repeat your answer, please?'
- (10) *تقدر نسلف منك قلم*
'Can I borrow your pen?'

Both AANSs and RNSs used indirect requests to address their teachers in Situation two, since their position was lower than that of the hearer (-Power). In such a situation, Scollon and Scollon's [1995, 2001] politeness framework can be utilised to interpret the hierarchical system regarding the speakers' ability to use independent strategy to free themselves from the dominance of social values and the imposition of others.

As opposed to what was expected, the Russians in Situation 3 did not opt for direct strategies; they used them in a low percentage and preferred to adopt indirect strategies to request their classmates for a pen; however, the weight of imposition was small. On the other hand, the Algerian students tended to use more direct strategies than their Russian counterparts. The minor imposition weighed in a small favour, such as requesting a pen from a classmate. It encouraged the use of more imperatives, since small favours in Algerian society do not usually necessitate asking for them in indirect ways.

5.3. Non-Conventional Indirect Strategies

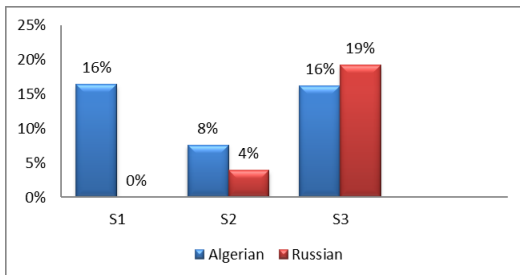


Figure 3. Non-conventional indirect strategies used by AANSs and RNSs

The results obtained from Situations 1 and 2 showed that NCI (hints) use was lower in the Russian than in the Algerian requests. 16 % of the students used Non-Conventional Indirect (NCI) requests with teachers in the Algerian classroom, while no one in the Russian classroom preferred this strategy in requests from student to teacher. Similarly, in Situation 2, Algerian teachers used NCI strategies with a higher percentage (8 %) compared to their Russian counterparts (only 4 %). However, in Situation 3, 19 % of RNSs preferred non-conventionally indirect strategies to request their classmates for a pen, while only 16 % of AANSs employed this strategy.

Considering the impact of the social variables of power, distance, and weight of imposition, the NCI strategies were the most preferred ones by AANSs in Situations 1 and 2. In Situation 1, students used to minimise face-threatening by adopting context-embedded meaning and hints such as:

- (11) ماسمعتش
'I did not hear'.
- (12) واش قصدك؟
'What do you mean?'

- (13) *Ещё раз?*
'Again?'
- (14) *У тебя есть запасная ручка?*
'Do you have an extra pen?'
- (15) *عندك ستيلو زايد؟*
'Do you have an extra pen?'

This tendency in the Arab students' requests with teachers is explained by Al-Ali and Alawaneh [2010: 327–328], who related the teachers' higher position in the Arab world (given their superior academic knowledge) to the student's obligation to respect this asymmetrical teacher-student relationship and perform requests indirectly, by using hints.

Situation 3 results were surprising, since RNSs employed NCI strategies more often than AANSs. The impact of the rate of imposition was less in the Algerian culture when the request was performed between classmates.

The NCI is used when the variables of power and distance between the interlocutors are not equal, with a high rate of imposition also playing a role.

6. Conclusion

The present study is a cross-cultural comparative analysis of the level of directness in requests and its relation to politeness in Algerian and Russian classroom discourse. The results show that Russian students used conventional indirectness more often than Algerians to request their classmates. Similarly, the conventional indirect requests were adopted by Russians when requesting their teachers. These results do not confirm the findings of previous studies that direct strategies or impositives are the most frequent strategies in Russian requests (e. g., [Berger 1997; Brehmer 2000; Larina 2003; Rathmayr 1994]). On the other hand, the most frequent use of imperative constructions by Algerians and Russians was in Situation 2 where the request goes from teacher to student. Direct requests are the most used ones since, among Russians, they are

considered natural and quite polite. e.g., *читайте, пожалуйста* (read, please), *напишите, пожалуйста* (write, please).

Similarly, Algerian teachers employed direct requests but for a different reason — direct requests are preferred when the superiors are the requesters, and the inferiors are the requestees (teacher-student). On the contrary, students were conventionally indirect when requesting teachers who have a high status in the country because of social and religious norms that consider teachers as prophets.

This study's results contrast Brown and Levinson's [1978, 1987] and Leech's [1983] theories that relate politeness to indirectness. The present research demonstrates that directness is not necessarily a sign of impoliteness, as this is determined by cultural values and religious norms.

The present study endeavoured to undertake a cross-cultural comparison by examining the degree of directness in requests within classroom interactions in Algerian and Russian contexts. The potential shortcomings of the work that need to be addressed are related to the study instrument and the generalisation of results.

The analysed data were obtained from the DCT, a data collection instrument for eliciting speech acts of request. Although it is probably the most widely used data-gathering method in cross-cultural pragmatics as it allows the collection of large amounts of data in a limited amount of time, it could be considered a certain weakness of the study because, even if the information gathered through the DCT proved highly effective for making comparisons, it is still considered a non-authentic tool and does not reveal the complexity of human interactions. Therefore, answers from a corpus of naturally and spontaneously occurring data with audio recordings could yield better results. The collected written expressions of speech reflect individuals' perceptions of what was or should have been said [Kecskes 2014; Ogiermann 2009a].

Another limitation is that the current study's findings should not be overgeneralised — they are not applicable to all social groups in Russia and Algeria, let alone all cultures worldwide. Nonetheless, the obtained results reveal some important tendencies that should be checked in different settings, as the main ideas and the observed process provide direction for further research [Dörnyei 2007: 59].

Appendix 1

استبيان

سأكون شاكرة لكم إن قبلتم أن تمنحوا لي بضع دقائق من وقتكم للإجابة عن هذا الاستبيان الذي يهدف إلى جمع معلومات عن أنماط الطلب في الخطاب في القسم الجزائري. ملاحظة: ليس هذا الاستبيان اختباراً من أي نوع فسلوكمم اللغوي هو كل ما يهم وإجابتمم ستساعد كثيراً في إتمام بحثي

في المكان المناسب في ما يلي: X يرجى ملء الفراغات أو وضع

*العمر: _____ الجنس: مذكر: _____ مؤنث _____

* _____ الجنسية: جزائرية: _____ أخرى _____

* _____ : الجامعة

* _____ : المهنة

من فضلك أجب الآن على الأسئلة بالطريقة التي تبدو لك طبيعية أكثر في هذه المواقف؟ أسئلة الاستبيان:

* الحالة الأولى: التفاعل بين الطالب والأستاذ

الموقف الأول:

ما سمعتش واش قال الأستاذ وحاب تطلب منه/ها يعاود. واش تقول؟

.....

.....

الحالة الثانية: التفاعل بين الأستاذ والطالب

الموقف الثاني:

الاستاذة/ه حابك/ حابتك تعاود/ي اجابتك. واش يقول/ تقول؟

.....

.....

الحالة الثالثة: التفاعل بين الطالب والطالب

الموقف الثالث:

تكسرك قلمك وحاب تطلب من زميلك أو زميلت يسلفوك القلم على دقيقة.

واش تقول؟

.....

.....

Appendix 2

Анкета

Я была бы признательна, если бы вы уделите мне несколько минут вашего времени, чтобы ответить на вопросы анкеты, нацеленной на сбор материала о русском учебном дискурсе. Ваши ответы очень помогут мне в моем исследовании.

Ниже заполните, пожалуйста, пробелы или поставьте X.

- Возраст: _____ Пол: М: ___ Ж: ___
- Национальность: русский _____ Другое _____
- Университет _____
- Специальность: _____
- Курс: _____

Не могли бы вы теперь ответить на нижеследующие вопросы так, как вам кажется наиболее естественным в подобных ситуациях? Говорите сколько сочтете нужным.

I. Взаимодействие студента и преподавателя

Ситуация 1. Вы не слышали, что сказал преподаватель. Вы хотите попросить ее /его повторить. Что бы вы сказали?

.....

II. Взаимодействие преподавателя и студента

Ситуация 2. Преподаватель хочет, чтобы вы повторили свой ответ. Что бы он / она сказал/а?

.....

III. Взаимодействие студента со студентом

Ситуация 3. У вас сломалась ручка. Вы хотите попросить у своего одноклассника ручку на некоторое время. Что бы вы сказали?

.....

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