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Backward Pragmatic Transfer: The Case of Refusals in Persian

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine Cook's (2003) 'multiple competence' by investigating backward pragmatic transfer (from L2 [English] to L1 [Persian]) in refusals to invitations. It explored participants' frequency and content of refusal strategies in L1 regarding the status (i.e., power and distance) of interlocutors and the proficiency level of EFL learners. The participants were Persian speakers with no knowledge of English language, and Persian EFL learners at three proficiency levels of elementary, intermediate, and advanced. Data were collected via a three -scenario role play. Results revealed significant differences between Persian native speakers and high-proficient EFL learners in terms of content and frequency of refusal strategies utilized. Concerning the different status of interlocutors, EFL learners seemed more direct and employed more specific responses to their refusals than Persian native speakers did. Overall, this study provided some evidence for backward pragmatic transfer among EFL learners.

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1. Introduction

Developing communicative competence or "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" (Thomas, 1983, p. 94) among non-native speakers has always been a point of concern in the realm of interlanguage pragmatics. EFL learners often attempt to compensate for their lack of knowledge by transferring some features of their L1 to L2. 'Transfer', defined as "the use of native language knowledge—in some as yet unclear way—in the acquisition of a second language" (Gass & Selinker, 1992, p. 234), sometimes might lead to communication breakdowns which could be explained in terms of pragmatic negative transfer (Thomas, 1983), i.e., carrying over some features of L1 which are not compatible with L2 to their second or foreign language.

Research in the field of interlanguage pragmatics has long concentrated on its two general notions. First, the notion of ideal monolingual native speaker that has an emphasis on the talk 'as the native speakers do'. Their pragmatic competence is presented as a model, and deviations from this model are considered pragmatic failure. Second, it is claimed that the direction of transfer is from L1 to L2. In other words, the first language influences the acquisition and use of the second one. In addition, "positive correlation hypothesis" was proposed by Takahashi and Beebe (1987) which supposed a positive correlation between second language proficiency and pragmatic transfer. According to this theory, high-proficient learners would carry over more L1 elements to their L2, and less-proficient learners would transfer less L1 elements. A great deal of research done in this respect is the evidence in support of L1 interference with L2 (e.g., Beebe & Takahashi, 1989a; Chan, 2004; Gass & Selinker, 1992; Itakura, 2002).

This 'monolingual view of bilingualism' as well as the traditional understanding of transfer i.e., from L1 to L2 required a second thought if we take Cook's (1992) 'multiple competence' into consideration. Multiple competence describes 'knowledge of two or more languages in one mind' (Cook, 1991) and proposed a different state of mind for those who know two or more languages. A similar idea was put forward by Grosjean (1989). He, taking a holistic view, claimed that the bilinguals' language competence is not the addition of L1 competence to L2, but rather a unique competence of a bilingual as a 'specific speaker-hearer'. The competence might develop according to the needs of bilinguals or those of the environment. Therefore, L2 users are considered as bilinguals in their own rights not as deficient monolinguals (Cook, 1997).

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Pragmatic Transfer from L2 to L1 in Different Speech Acts

To date, very few studies have touched the issue of backward transfer; among those are Vald´es and Pino (1981), Blum-Kulka and Sheffer (1993), Cenoz (2003), and SU (2010). Examining compliments responses among bilingual Mexican-American speakers, Vald´es and Pino (1981) concluded that bilinguals' states of mind are not the same as monolinguals'. Apparently, they had merged compliment strategies in both languages and had made a distinct repertoire of strategies. Vald´es and Pino (1981) found that while monolinguals' verbal strategies are limited to only one language, bilinguals enjoy having access to more strategies. In his study on EFL Spanish learners and Spanish native speakers, Cenoz (2003) confirmed the effect of L2 (English) on L1 (Spanish) at pragmatic level in request strategies. He found fluent students tended to utilize their partners' first name more and were in favor of using indirect strategies in their requests. Also, their scope of using syntactic and lexical downgraders as

well as mitigating supportive was much wider than the 'less fluent in English' students. In another study (SU, 2010), Chinese EFL learners at two proficiency levels, intermediate and advance, were examined for their backward transfer in request speech act. The investigation yielded the result that both groups employed conventional indirect devices and consultative devices more often than Chinese native speakers. Thus, the results confirmed L2 to L1 transfer.

Compared to the bulk of studies about forward transfer (Chan, 2004; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Kellerman, 1979; Keshavarz, Eslami-Rasekh, & Ghahraman, 2006; Major, 1986; Olshtaln & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Scarcella, 1979), research on L2 to L1 pragmatic transfer is still very limited. Considering the fact that acquisition of the second or third language affects the minds of bilingual speakers to the extent that their competence is not regarded as the sum of previous learned competences altogether but as a unique one (Cook, 1995; Grosjean, 1992), backward transfer requires more studies to be conducted in different speech acts with different methodologies and in various settings in order to describe bilinguals or multilinguals' unique states of mind.

2.2. Refusals in Persian Context

When a speaker says 'no' to some speech acts such as request, offer, invitation and suggestion, refusals take place. Moreover, it has been defined by Searle and Vanderveken (1985, p. 195) as "The negative counterparts to acceptances and consentings are rejections and refusals. Just as one can accept offers, applications, and invitations, so each of these can be refused or rejected".

The speech act of refusal due to its face-threatening nature is often realized by means of indirect strategies. It is considered as a complex speech act which demands high pragmatic competence in communications. Accomplishment of refusals requires long sequences of negotiations and cooperation as well as "face saving maneuvers to accommodate the noncompliant nature of the act" (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 2).

In a recent study, Allami and Naeimi (2011) investigated native Persian and Persian EFL learners' language proficiency, types of eliciting acts, and status of interlocutors on the realization of refusal strategies with regard to their shift, frequency, and content of semantic formulas. Findings revealed that native Persian and American speakers are different in employing refusal strategies when encountering a person of different status: While the Americans were quite consistent in their refusals to people in various statuses, native Persian speakers employed a high level of frequency shift with regard to the person's status. In addition, the Americans were more precise and specific in providing excuses for their refusals than native Persians. On the other hand, results showed a positive correlation between pragmatic transfer and L2 proficiency among Persian-speaking EFL learners; more proficient learners seemed to transfer more Persian sociocultural norms to English and make more pragmatic errors than did those less proficient ones.

In another study, Keshavarz et al. (2006) investigated the pragmatic transfer of Persian-speaking EFL learners from their L1 to L2 in the speech act of refusals with regard to their proficiency levels. They found out that those less proficient EFL learners employed literal translations to convey their Persian semantic formulas. However, more proficient EFL learners were able to identify L2 pragmatic equivalence in referring to L1 cultural norms since they had access to more linguistic resources. Nonetheless, "Persian learners of English, especially the advanced learners, complained that they could not express the same sentiments and warmth in their English language use" (p. 390). That is why Keshavarz et al. (2006) considered Persian as a more "flowery" language than English which is regarded as "dry".

2.3. The Study

Compared to the studies conducted regarding the effect of L1 on L2 (forward transfer) in different languages (e.g., Chan, 2004; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Kellerman, 1979; Keshavarz et al., 2006; Major, 1986; Olshtaln & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Scarcella, 1979; Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Taylor, 1975), present studies on the effect of L2 on L1 (backward transfer) are limited, and the issue has not yet been fully addressed. Moreover, the focus of those studies on backward transfer was mostly on bilinguals and children in natural settings (Appel & Muysken, 2006; Clyne & Moser, 1967; Haugen, 1969) not on EFL learners who study their L2 in a formal classroom and have limited use and exposure to L2 in a foreign environment (SU, 2010). Furthermore, pragmatic and socio-pragmatic transfer have not been considered as much as the other aspects of language in L2 transfer such as phonological transfer (Andrews, 1999; Major, 1992; Zampini & Green, 2001), syntactic transfer transfer (Cook, 1999; Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002; Skaaden, 2005; Waas, 1996) and semantic transfer (Grabois, 1999; Hell & Dijkstra, 2002; Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002; Van Hell, 1998). Most studies on pragmatic aspect of transfer, however, employed Discourse Completion Task (DCT) as the method of their data collection. Considering the limitations of DCT in collecting pragmatic information, more research is required to verify their validation.

Addressing the limitations of previous studies, this paper intended to examine the role of interlocutor's status and language proficiency of Persian EFL learners involved in backward pragmatic transfer in the speech act of refusals. Therefore this study may contribute to pragmatic research in backward transfer in EFL context and help to reconsider the mistaken notion of fixed adults' L1 competence. In other words, under the framework of Cook's (2003) multiple competence and refusal classifications by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), the study examined the following research questions:

1. Do different status of interlocutors with various power and distance influence the L1 of Persian EFL learners in content and frequency of refusal strategies to invitations?
2. Does language proficiency level of Persian EFL learners play any role in the content and frequency of direct, indirect, and adjunct refusal strategies?

This study assumes special significance since it employs role play as the method of collecting data so to overcome the deficiencies of DCT. Also, it makes an effort to contribute to the knowledge of backward transfer concerning pragmatics specifically refusals.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Twenty– four Persian EFL learners and twenty Persian native speakers voluntarily participated in this study. The EFL learners were between 16 and 32 years of age, with the mean of 19. Regarding the Persian native speakers, their age ranged from 17 to 30, with a mean of 21. In terms of levels of proficiency, the EFL learners consisted of three different groups of eight advanced, eight intermediate, and eight elementary students at a language institute in Isfahan, Iran. To specify learners' proficiency, Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered. According to their scores, the learners were assigned to three different groups. Out of 60, scores below 29 were placed in the elementary class, scores from 30 to 47 in the intermediate class, and scores above 48 in the advanced group. The native speakers of Persian were a group of 20 Persian speakers with no or very little English background. It should be noted that although both EFL learners and Persian speakers are native speakers, in this study those Persian

speakers with no or very little English experience are called 'Persian native speakers' for the ease of understanding.

3.2. Instrument

In order to have a degree of control on social variables such as age, gender, and education, role play was chosen for data collection. The role play consisted of three refusal scenarios with people in different status of power (+P or -P) and social distance (+D or -D). The first situation took place between a boss and an employee who refuses to attend to boss's farewell party. There is a high degree of power and distance involved in this situation. The second situation involved the refusal of a friend's invitation to their birthday party with a low degree of power and distance between participants. The last situation showed a friend who refuses to go to an acquaintance's party whom they do not know well and they have not much interaction with. There is no power but a degree of distance in this relationship. The scenarios described were adopted from Félix-Brasdefer (2006) (Appendix A).

3.3. Procedures

The OPT test was given to the EFL learners in order to place them into one of the elementary, intermediate or advanced classes. After an interval of two weeks, data were collected through the interaction of EFL learners in pairs in Persian. This interval was chosen to prevent the possible interfering effect of the test on data production. Persian native speakers' data were gathered through role play by the researcher with friends and family. The data were then transcribed and coded using Beebe et al. (1990) (Appendix B) pattern for various strategies of refusal. The coding was based on the sequence of semantic formulas. Cohen (1996, p. 265) defined semantic formula as "a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy; any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question".

For instance, a three–strategy refusal to birthday invitation such as "I would love to come, but I can't. Something has happened, and I have to take care of it" would be analyzed like the following:

a) I would love to come, [statement of positive feeling]
b) but I can't. [negative ability]
c) Something has happened, and I have to take care of it [excuse/reason]

Furthermore, during data analysis some new semantic formulas were discovered which were suggested to be added to adjuncts section of Beebe et al. (1990) classification of refusals. The analysis of native and EFL Persian speakers revealed three categories of "offering compensation", "wishing for future well-being" and "supernatural forces". For reliability issue and for assurance that the new identified semantic formulas suited the data, two trained raters who were native speakers of Persian, verified the data independently. The researcher and the two raters found the classification of analyzed data similar in 95% of the cases. The discrepancies were resolved by a discussion among the researcher and the raters about each case. In the following section, the Persian data transcription consists of two lines. The original talk using English alphabets is presented in the first line and the tentative English translation is displayed in the second line.

4. Results

According to Beebe et al. (1990), the frequency of each strategy for each situation was calculated. In general, 134 strategies were produced across three role plays: 'farewell (+P+D)', 'birthday (-P-D)', and 'dinner party (-P+D)' situations. Table 1 displays the counts and percentages of direct and indirect refusals and adjuncts to refusals produced by the 20 native Persian and 24 EFL learner participants in each of the three refusal situations:

Table 1

Descriptive Analysis of Refusal Strategies in the Three Invitations between Persian Native Speakers and Persian EFL Learners

		Group											
		Persian EFL Learners						Persian Native Speakers					
		Situation						Situation					
		+P +D		-P -D		-P +D		+P +D		-P -D		-P +D	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Strategy	Direct	16	23.9%	13	22.4%	9	20.2%	70	20.3%	81	13.2%	32	13.5%
	Indirect	30	44.8%	26	44.8%	30	69.5%	157	45.1%	155	50.3%	175	74.0%
	Adjunct	21	31.3%	19	32.8%	5	10.3%	120	34.6%	112	36.4%	29	12.5%

The comparison of the data between Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners revealed a preference for indirect strategies; that is, indirect strategies possessed the most proportion in both groups in the three situations of farewell (+P +D), birthday (-P -D), and dinner party (-P +D). Adjuncts constituted the next most used strategies in both groups in almost all situations. Direct strategies; however, got the least frequency in both groups.

Farewell and birthday situations followed the general trend among Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners. Indirect strategies had the most frequency and direct strategies the least. However, adjuncts were the least frequent refusals in dinner party situation. This result proves the findings of previous studies for universal rule of refusals that indirect strategies get more preference over direct and adjunct strategies (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Kasper & Rose, 2003). Examination of the content of recorded data revealed that negative willingness/ability, statement of regret and excuse/reason are the most employed semantic formulas among the whole participants.

4.1. Research Question 1

4.1.1. Differences in Employing Overall Strategies

Independent Samples Test was run to compare the overall strategy use within the two groups of Persian native speakers and EFL learners. Results yielded no significant differences (*Sig= 0.92*). This is depicted in Table 2:

Table 2

Independent Samples Test between Persian Native Speakers and EFL Learners

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
All Strategies	Equal variances assumed	.010	.920	.613	346	.540	.092	.150	-.203	.388
	Equal variances not assumed			.598	72.266	.552	.092	.154	-.215	.400

Even though the quantitative results were insignificant showing that the two groups were similar in their application of refusal strategies, the qualitative analysis of the content of data revealed significant findings. After scrutinizing the transcribed data, some new categories for adjunct refusals in EFL and Persian speakers' talk were emerged. These categories include "offering compensation", "wishing for future well-being" and "supernatural forces". "Offering compensation" happens when the refuser offers compensation in exchange of his inability of acceptance. Compensations can vary according to the situations. The example below from situation two shows 'holding another party' as compensation:

Man ke az khodaam bood biyaam o dore ham baashim. Sharmande. Enshaalaa dafeye bad khodam ye mehmooni migiram hame jam beshim.

'I wholeheartedly wanted to come to be together. I'm sorry. If God helps next time I would throw a party to have a gathering.'

The refuser is unable to participate in her friend's birthday party; therefore having expressed her grief, she offers a compensation that she holds another friends gathering later in order to make up for her loss of friends' company.

"Wishing for future well-being" is expressing hopes, successes and lucks for the proposer whose offer has been refused. It is a technique to make the refusal soft and sound less face threatening as illustrated below:

Kheili mamnoon ke davatam kardin. Vali mikhaastam ozr khaahi konam azatoon. Mota'asefaane man moshkeli daaram ke nemitunam biyaam.omidvaaram dar saraasare zendegitoon movafagh baashid.

'Thanks very much for your invitation. But you have to excuse me. Unfortunately I have a problem that prevents me from coming to your party. I wish you a successful life.

"Supernatural forces" known among Persians as '*ghesmat'* or 'God's will' was employed to justify the inability of acceptance in refusal situations. In this way, an excuse is offered and it is concluded that the speaker is willing to accept the offer; however, some situations which are out of speaker's control have happened that make the speaker refuse the offer. This inability in acceptance which is out of speaker's power is considered as *ghesmat* or God's will. Following extract from situation one by a native Persian speaker shows this fact:

Mota'asefaane man az ghabl jaaee davat shodam, sharmande. Kheili doost daashtam biyaam amaa engaar ghesmat nist.

'Unfortunately, I have already been invited to another party. I'm sorry. I would love to come but it seems there is no *ghesmat* to come to your party.'

The excuse is offered as 'having already been invited to another party' and it is considered as the obstacle to speaker's willingness for the acceptance of the boss invitation; the obstacle which is out of employee's hand.

4.1.2. Differences in Employing Direct, Indirect, and Adjunct Types of Strategies in the Three Situations

Three Independent Samples Tests were run for each of the three situations to compare the frequency and content of direct, indirect, and adjunct types of strategies between the two groups of Persian natives and EFL learners (Appendix C).

Results manifested a significant difference between the two groups for the frequency and content of adjuncts in the +P+D situation and direct refusals in the –P-D situation (*sig= .03 and sig=.0 p<.05* respectively).

4.1.2.1. Farewell Situation (+P+D)

Frequency

A higher percentage for indirect strategies was found in both groups in this situation (Persian native speakers (PNS) mean (PNS=1.67) and EFL learners mean (EFL=1.60). What was significant in this situation was the use of adjuncts in two groups. Seemingly, Persian native speakers had a preference for the frequent use of adjuncts when encountering a person of a high rank and status. When there is power and distance among interlocutors, Persian natives tend to employ more adjuncts in their refusal speech than EFL learners did (PNS=1.17/ EFL=.65). The mean of direct refusals which all had the form of statement of negative ability was almost the same in the two groups (PNS =.89/ EFL=.90).

In this situation, statement of regret, negative willingness/ability, excuse/reason, and statement of positive opinion/feeling were the most common refusal strategies, respectively. The direct "No", statement of principle, acceptance that functions as a refusal and avoidance were never used by either groups. Moreover, EFL learners never employed statement of empathy for this hierarchical situation.

Analysis of Content

Apparently, the use of adjuncts by Persian native speakers makes refusal softer and more polite as in the example below:

Az inke tarfi gereftin besiyaar khoshhaalam. Shoma zahmate ziyaadi baraaye maa keshidid. Mota'asefaane nemitavaanam davatetaan raa ghabool konam chon kaare mohemi baraam pish aamade. Omidvaaram dar tamaame maraahele zendegi shaado movafagh baashid.

'I'm very glad about your promotion. You have done so much for us. Unfortunately, I cannot accept your invitation because something important has happened to me. I wish you a happy and successful life.'

In the above refusal, three types of adjunct including statement of positive opinion/feeling (I'm very glad about your promotion), gratitude/ appreciation (You have done so much for us) and wishing for future well-being (I wish you a happy and successful life) have been used. It seems Persian native speakers found elaboration on refusals as a mitigating and less face-threatening act.

In this hierarchical situation, Persian native speakers sounded more formal than EFL learners in general. They tried to keep the distance from the boss. On the other hand, EFL learners were easier in addressing and excusing the boss. In addition, both groups gave clear and specific excuses for refusing a person of a high status.

4.1.2.2. Birthday Situation (-P-D)

Frequency

In a solidary situation (birthday) in which there is no power and distance among interlocutors, EFL learners favored direct refusals more than Persian natives did. While both groups avoid stating the direct "No", EFL learners uttered direct negative willingness/ability such as "I can't", "I won't" or "I don't think so" more frequently than Persian natives. Expectedly, indirect strategies found the most preference among other strategies in both groups. Statement of regret and excuse/reason were the most common indirect strategies used. Among adjuncts, both groups favored statement of positive opinion/feeling the most. Statement of regret, negative willingness/ability, excuse/reason and statement of positive opinion/feeling constituted the most frequent strategies in this situation while direct "No", statement of principle and avoidance hardly ever used by either groups. Although Persian native speakers were interested in using conditions for future or past acceptance, gratitude/appreciation, wishing for future well-being, self-defense, and referring to supernatural forces in their refusals, EFL learners did not favored any of them.

Analysis of Content

Of special interest is the length of responses given in this solidary situation. Both groups tended to provide lengthier refusals in no power and no distance situation than the other two situations. In contrast to Persian native speakers, EFL learners seemed to be more specific in their refusals and this appears to be a transfer of their L2:

Baavar kon kheili delam vaaseye bache haa tang shode. Delam mikhaad tak takeshoono bebinam. Vali majbooram sare kaar baasham.

'Believe me I miss the guys a lot. I love to meet each of them but I have to go to work.'

Although it was a few numbers, it was interesting that only Persian native speakers made use of some supernatural forces to justify their inability to attend the party. None of EFL learners brought up supernatural forces or '*ghesmat'* -as it is commonly stated in Persian. '*ghesmat'* never used alone. In almost all cases, it was accompanied by an excuse or a reason as in following example:

Ey baba engar ghesmat nist too in jash baasham. Mota'asefaane kaari baraam pish oomade ke nemitunam biyaam. Az tarafe man az bache haa ozrkhaahi kon o be hamashoon salam beresoon.

Oh, it seems it is not ghesmat that I attend your party. Unfortunately, something has happened and I cannot come to your party. Do apologize on my behalf and say hi to all.

3.1.2.3. Dinner Party (-P+D)

Frequency

Apart from indirect strategies which had the most frequency in dinner party (deference) as well *(*means: PNS=2.02 and EFL=1.94), direct refusals constitute the next most common strategies in this situation (means: PNS=.33 and EFL=.44). Apparently, both groups were more comfortable in using direct refusals when there is distance but no power. This situation possessed the fewest number of adjuncts among other situations. However, Persian native speakers were more in favor of employing adjuncts than EFL learners (means: PNS=.26 and EFL=.16). The most frequent strategies used in both groups were statement of regret and excuse/reason. While Persian native speakers were more interested in stating an alternative, EFL learners favored negative willingness/ability more. There are strategies which were never used by either group including promise of future acceptance, avoidance, gratitude/appreciation, self-defense, wishing for future well-being, and referring to supernatural forces.

Analysis of content

The fact that Persian native speakers tend to elaborate their refusals and state a lengthier 'no' by using a variety of semantic formulas is evident in this situation as well. A native Persian speaker might express her regret, state her positive feelings toward attending the party, indirectly bring up an excuse and offer an alternative in order to refuse an invitation as in the following:

Sharmande, doost daashtam biyaam amma mehmoon baraam miyaad. Ishalla ye vaghte dige.

'I'm sorry. I would like to come but I will have guests then. Inshallah [if God wants] next time.'

An EFL learner who was at ease with the use of direct refusal might state:

Oon rooz khooneye daaeem davatim. Sharmande. Nemitunam biyaam.

'I'm invited to my uncle's place that day. I'm sorry. I can't come there.'

In conjunction with indirect strategies, namely, excuse (I'm invited to my uncle's place that day) and statement of regret (I'm sorry), the

EFL learner could not finish her rejection without refusing directly (I can't come there).

Overall, EFL learners seemed more direct and employed more specific responses to their refusals than did Persian native speakers. They, also, did not tend to elaborate as much as Persian native speakers did in their statement of rejection. It seemed they were less sensitive to power and distance of the interlocutor than Persian native speakers.

4.2. Research Question 2

4.2.1. Frequency and Content of Refusal Strategies between Native Persian and EFL Learners

One-Way ANOVA was run to find the difference between Persian natives and three levels of EFL learners. Post hoc results showed that there is a significant difference between advanced EFL learners and Persian native speakers for the employment of overall strategies (*sig=.012, p<.05*, Appendix D).

Three ANOVAs were run for each of the three main refusal strategies to find the difference between Persian natives and three levels of EFL learners regarding the employment of direct, indirect and adjunct strategies (Appendix E). The result revealed a significant difference at the *p<.05* level in strategy use. Post hoc results showed that there is a major distinction among advanced, intermediate EFL learners, and Persian native speakers.

4.2.2. Frequency and Content of Refusal Strategies between Native Persian and Advanced EFL Learners

Apparently, advanced EFL learners and Persian native speakers used the same range of semantic formulas, however, their frequency varied. Indirect strategies found the most trends in both groups especially among Persian native speakers (*means: PNS=1.81, ADV EFL=1.69*). Nevertheless, in contrast to advanced learners, Persian native speakers employed less direct strategies and more adjunct strategies in their overall speech (*sig=.051, and .47; p< .05,* respectively). As it was stated in Allami and Naeimi (2011), Persian speakers are concerned about their softness of their refusal tone very much in order for their rejection to be less face-threatening. On the other hand, advanced learners, apparently, felt more freedom in directly stating their refusals.

The most favored refusal strategies were statement of regret as well as excuse/reason notably among Persian native speakers. The most frequent direct semantic formula was negative willingness/ability which was employed more among advanced learners. The semantic formula 'statement of positive opinion/feeling' stood out among other adjuncts especially among Persian native speakers. In 87% of the cases, both groups began their refusals either by statement of positive opinion/feeling or statement of regret. Furthermore, these two semantic formulas never occurred alone. Often, first statement of regrets or positive opinion was expressed then reason was given as in the following example of a Persian native speaker:

Kheili khoshhaalam az inke tarfi gereftid, vali mota'asefaane kaari baraam pish oomade va jome nemitavaanam dar khedmatetoon baasham. Omidvaraam movafagh va moayad baashid.

'I'm very glad that you are promoted, unfortunately something had happened and I can't accompany you on the Friday. I wish you success and happiness.'

Advanced EFL learners surpassed Persian native speakers in providing more specific reasons for their refusals. Also, while the average number of strategies used in one refusal speech among Persian native speakers was five strategies, it was three and a half among advanced learners. Moreover, advanced learners distinguished their refusal by 'pause fillers' in 74% of the cases.

4.2.3. Frequency and Content of Refusal Strategies between Native Persian and Intermediate EFL Learners

The results indicated that both groups employed the same type of strategies. Indirect strategies was witnessed as the most used strategies in this category as well (means: PNS= 1.81, INT EFL= 1.64). The employment of direct strategies among intermediate learners was less than advanced group and Persian natives. The differences, however, were not significant between Persian native speakers and intermediate EFL learners regarding the frequency of indirect and direct strategies utilized. Furthermore, intermediate EFL learners used the least number of adjuncts in comparison to other groups. The difference revealed to be significant between Persian native speakers and intermediate EFL learners in their use of adjunct strategies (*sig=.043*). Just like Persian native speakers and advanced learners' content of speech, statement of regret and excuse/reason got the most frequency among this group as well. Negative willingness/ability was the next mostly favored strategy. Unlike Persian native speakers, it seemed intermediate EFL learners were not interested in employing many adjuncts in their refusals. Below is an example of intermediate EFL learner's refusal to farewell situation:

Mota'asefaane moshkeli pish oomade ke nemitunam too memhmooniye shomaa sherkat konam. Omidvaram betunam too yeki azin rooza khedmat beresam.

'Unfortunately a family problem has happened that I can't attend your goodbye party. I hope to see you these days before you move to Tehran.'

The strategies employed in this example are statement of regret (unfortunately), excuse (a problem has happened), negative ability (I can't attend your goodbye party) and statement of alternative (I hope to see you these days before you move to Tehran), respectively.

Intermediate EFL learners did not tend to provide much specificity in their refusals. They specified their excuse by referring to 'a work problem' or 'a family problem' that had happened. In addition, their average number of strategies in one refusal speech was four and a half. In other words, they did not tend to elaborate their refusals as much as Persian native speakers did.

4.2.4. Frequency and Content of Refusal Strategies between Native Persian Natives and Elementary EFL Learners

Elementary EFL learners also enjoyed the same range of strategies; however, this group was the most similar group to Persian native speakers. Indirect refusals enjoyed the most frequency in this category as well. Just like Persian native speakers, adjunct and direct refusals constituted the next mostly used strategies, respectively. Regarding the content of strategies, elementary EFL learners elaborated more on their refusals by employing a lot of adjuncts and they provided the least clear excuses for their refusals as the Persian native speakers did. Overall, the differences between these two groups were not significant with respect to content and frequency of strategies employed.

5. Discussion

The present study was aimed to contribute to the seemingly mistaken notion of fixed L1 competence in adults by investigating the speech act of refusals among Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners with regard to their backward pragmatic transfer, that is, transfer from L2 to L1. The purpose was to understand the differences between Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners in their employment of refusal strategies in the three proposed situations as well as to discover if language proficiency plays any role in the use of three main refusal strategies in given

situations. The following offers a discussion for each research question.

The first research question addressed the difference between Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners use of direct, indirect and adjunct refusal strategies in the three situations of farewell (+P+D), birthday (-P-D), and dinner party (-P+D) with respect to the content and frequency of the strategies utilized. Results revealed a significant difference in farewell (+P+D) and birthday (-P -D) situations in the employment of adjuncts and direct strategies. It seemed adjuncts enjoyed the most trends among Persian speakers in hierarchical situation (farewell) and direct strategies was favored more by EFL learners in solidary situation (birthday). With respect to the content of the strategies, statement of regret, negative willingness/ability, excuse/reason and statement of positive opinion/feeling were the most common refusal strategies, respectively. These results are in agreement with those of Al-Issa (1998), Kwon (2004), and Nelson, Carson, Batal, and Bakary (2002). The between groups difference was not significant for dinner party situation. The findings confirmed the results reported by Allami and Naeimi (2011) and Keshavarz et al. (2006) in that Persian native speakers are sensitive to status of the interlocutors. They tend to elaborate and utilize more semantic formulas to soften the voice of refusal as a face-threatening act in hierarchical situations. On the other hand, EFL learners were less sensitive to power and distance by providing more direct strategies in their refusals.

The fact that EFL learners were more comfortable to express their negative willingness or ability toward a friend and to use fewer strategies in a refusal speech might be attributed to the effect of English they are learning. It has been proved in a number of studies that English speakers tend to state more direct refusal formulas and are less sensitive to status of interlocutors (e.g., Kwon, 2004). Apparently, English as L2 has affected Persian as L1 to some extent since Persian native speakers tend to use less direct strategies and more adjuncts. In birthday situation, where there was no power and no distance, English culture managed to have an effect on the learners. However, in farewell situation, since there is power and distance, it would be hard for English culture to conquer the native culture. As stated in Beebe et al. (1990, p. 68) "deeply held cultural values are not easily given up". In addition, living in the native culture could add an advantage for compliance with that culture. It could be the case that if these EFL learners were studying in an English speaking country, they would use more direct refusals in hierarchical situations as well. Although there have been some studies which show a positive correlation between length of residence in a foreign culture and pragmatic development in L2 (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2004; Matsumura, 2003, 2007; Olshtaln & Blum-Kulka, 1985), no study so far has investigated the effect of length of residence in a foreign culture on L1 transformation.

The second research question examined the role of proficiency level of EFL learners on the employment of the three main refusal strategies regarding content and frequency. The findings suggested a difference among advanced and intermediate EFL learners and Persian native speakers in their employment of direct and adjunct refusals. It seemed these groups were similar in the type of refusal they employed but were distinct in their frequency of use. The most common feature distinguishing Persian native speakers from advanced and intermediate learners was the frequency of adjuncts in their speech. Adjunct strategies found its most frequency among Persian native speakers. Apparently, Persian native speakers employed adjuncts as softeners and mitigators of refusal speech Allami and Naeimi (2011). However, adjuncts were the least favored strategies among intermediate learners. Furthermore, advanced learners employed direct refusal strategies more than Persian

native speakers did in their speech. Also, the average number of semantic formulas used by Persian native speakers surpassed those of advanced and intermediate speakers. It could be inferred that the native language (Persian) of EFL learners has some coloring of their L2 (English) (Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002; Sharwood Smith, 1989).

These findings could be a contribution to Takahashi and Beebe (1987) 'positive correlation hypothesis'. They proposed that second language proficiency has a positive correlation with pragmatic transfer. In other words, high proficiency would mean more pragmatic transfer and low proficiency, less pragmatic transfer. In this way, low proficient learners due to their lack of sufficient linguistic resources are less likely to transfer pragmatic knowledge of L1 in their production of L2. High proficient learners, on the other hand, are more likely to show pragmatic transfer of L1 in their L2 since they have mastered sufficient linguistic means. These results have been supported by Blum-Kulka (1982), Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Hill (1997), and Olshtain and Cohen (1989).

The results of present study supported 'positive correlation hypothesis' introduced by Takahashi and Beebe (1987). The fact that low proficient learners are less able to express pragmatic knowledge in their L2 would lend itself to this prediction that these learners would encounter no or not much L2 pragmatic knowledge in their L1 since they are confined by limited resources in L2. Therefore, they would maintain their L1 norms in their L1 production completely. On the other hand, the fact that high proficient learners have gained sufficient means to express their pragmatic knowledge has a twofold conclusion; not only would they transfer their L1 pragmatic norms to their L2 (as in Matsumura, 2003), but also they would transfer L2 pragmatic knowledge to their L1 (as in SU, 2010). It seems their minds' gates have been opened to allow pragmatic transfer to and from languages. With commuting L1 and L2 norms in their minds, EFL learners' state of mind would not and could not be the same as monolinguals in either L1 or L2. EFL learners' interlanguage would claim a specific and exclusive state of mind. Nevertheless, bi-directionality of transfer is not a fully explored area and it needs further research.

In all, this study made an effort to contribute to the seemingly mistaken notion of fixed L1 competence and provide more evidence in support of backward pragmatic transfer. As to this aim, Persian native speakers and Persian EFL learners' refusals were examined to see whether their patterns of productions in L1 vary as a function of interlocutor status and language proficiency. Results supported Grosjean (1989) and Cook's (2003) notion of 'multiple competence' in that bilinguals' state of mind is specific to themselves and their competence is distinct from those of monolinguals.

The present exploratory study was one of the few attempts to investigate backward pragmatic transfer in refusal speech act. Although the results revealed a support for bilinguals' multiple competence, the findings should be considered tentative for the following limitations. First, the data were collected by a limited number of speakers. Future studies with larger body of participants are required to see if similar results could be obtained. Second, only one speech act was involved in this study. More research involving various speech acts is needed to characterize backward pragmatic transfer among foreign language learners. Furthermore, in order to explore the processes take place in bilinguals' mind, some qualitative studies are required to understand how L1 undergoes changes when learners are exposed to foreign languages and cultures for a certain period of time.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Three-Situation Role Play

Situation one- Invitation – Farewell [+Power, +Distance]

You have been working for a famous company as a sales representative in Isfahan for the last five years. You have a good working relationship with your boss although you do not socialize together outside the office. Your boss has always been supportive of your ideas and has been instrumental in your receiving a recent promotion. After you have worked for him for three years, he has recently been promoted and will become the Manager of Tehran Sales Division, which will require his relocation to Tehran next month. He is having a party next Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. at a restaurant and is inviting you and other members of his sales group to celebrate his promotion and as a farewell. Unfortunately, you are unable to attend.

Situation two - Invitation – Birthday [-Power, -Distance]

You are walking across campus when you run into a good friend of yours whom you haven't seen for about a month. You and s/he have been studying in the same program at the University for three years, and have spent a lot of time together in the past, but you don't have any classes together this semester since you have been working off-campus. Your friend, who is going to be 21, invites you to their birthday party at their house next Friday night at 8:00 p.m. S/he tells you that a group of mutual friends that you both used to hang out with and whom you haven't seen since the semester started will also be there. You know that this would be a good opportunity to see everyone again and to celebrate this special occasion with him/her. Unfortunately you cannot make it.

Situation three- Invitation- Dinner party [-Power, + Distance]

A friend of your close friend whom you do not know well has invited you and your close friend to a dinner party. Your close friend is not able to attend the party. This fact makes you unwilling to go. Because you do not know other people in the party, you think you might feel lonely there. So, you decided not to go to the party.

Appendix B

Classification of Refusals (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990)

A: direct:
1. Flat 'no'
2. Negative ability/willingness 'I can't/I won't"
B: Indirect
1. Statement of regret like "I'm sorry."
2. Wish like "I wish I could help you."
3. Excuse, reason, explanation like "I have an exam."
4. Statement of alternative which falls into two divisions:
4-1. I can do X instead of Y like "I'd rather ….."
4-2. Why don't you do X instead of Y like "Why don't you ask someone else?"
5. Set condition for future or past acceptance like "If I had enough money"
6. Promise of future acceptance like "I'll do it next time."
7. Statement of principle "I never drink right after dinner."
8. Statement of philosophy like "One can't be too careful."
9. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor:
9-1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester like "If I knew you would judge me like this I never did that"
9-2. Criticize the requester "It's a silly suggestion."
9-3. Guilt trip (waiter to customers who want to sit for a while: "I can't make a living off people who just order tea"
9-4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request like "I hope you understand my difficult situation"
9-5. Let interlocutor off the hook "Don't worry about it."
9-6. Self-defense like "I'm doing my best."
10. Acceptance functioning as a refusal:
10-1. Unspecific or indefinite reply "I don't know when I can give them to you"
10-2. Lack of enthusiasm "I'm not interested in diets"
11. Avoidance:
11-1. Non-verbal (silence, hesitation, doing nothing and physical departure)
11-2. Verbal (topic switch, joke, repetition of past request, postponement and hedge); an example for postponement can be "I'll think about it."
12. Statement of positive opinion like "That's a good idea"
13. Statement of empathy "I know you are in a bad situation"
14. Pause fillers like" well" and "uhm"
15. gratitude/appreciation like "Thank you."

Appendix C

Three Independent Samples Tests of Direct, Indirect, and Adjunct Strategies between Persian Natives and EFL Learners

Group Statistics

Situation		Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
+P +D	Direct	Persian Natives	20	.89	.323	.076
		EFL Learners	24	.90	.304	.031
	Indirect	Persian Natives	20	1.67	.767	.181
		EFL Learners	24	1.60	.700	.071
	Adjunct	Persian Natives	20	1.17	.707	.167
		EFL Learners	24	0.65	.804	.081
-P -D	Direct	Persian Natives	20	.52	.461	.109
		EFL Learners	24	.72	.502	.051
	Indirect	Persian Natives	20	1.44	.616	.145
		EFL Learners	24	1.58	.657	.066
	Adjunct	Persian Natives	20	1.06	.802	.189
		EFL Learners	24	1.05	.791	.080
-P +D	Direct	Persian Natives	20	.33	.511	.121
		EFL Learners	24	.44	.471	.048
	Indirect	Persian Natives	20	2.02	.639	.151
		EFL Learners	24	1.94	.718	.072
	Adjunct	Persian Natives	20	.26	.236	.056
		EFL Learners	24	.16	.241	.024

Independent Sample t-test

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Situation			F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
+P +D	Direct	Equal variances assumed	.052	.820	-.115	114	.909	-.009	.079	-.165	.147
		Equal variances not assumed			-.110	22.872	.913	-.009	.082	-.179	.161
	Indirect	Equal variances assumed	.521	.472	.355	114	.723	.065	.182	-.296	.425
		Equal variances not assumed			.333	22.501	.742	.065	.194	-.337	.467
	Adjunct	Equal variances assumed	.355	**.03**	.570	114	.569	.116	.203	-.286	.517
		Equal variances not assumed			.624	25.784	.538	.116	.185	-.266	.497

-P -D	Direct	Equal variances assumed	22.049	**.000**	1.586	114	.116	.202	.127	-.050	.454
		Equal variances not assumed			1.683	25.013	.105	.202	.120	-.045	.449
	Indirect	Equal variances assumed	.357	.551	-.822	114	.413	-.137	.167	-.468	.193
		Equal variances not assumed			-.860	24.661	.398	-.137	.160	-.466	.192
	Adjunct	Equal variances assumed	1.148	.286	.022	114	.982	.005	.203	-.398	.407
		Equal variances not assumed			.022	23.486	.983	.005	.205	-.420	.429
-P +D	Direct	Equal variances assumed	1.909	.170	.963	114	.338	.118	.122	-.125	.360
		Equal variances not assumed			.910	22.625	.372	.118	.130	-.150	.386
	Indirect	Equal variances assumed	.384	.537	-.419	114	.676	-.076	.181	-.435	.283
		Equal variances not assumed			-.454	25.545	.653	-.076	.167	-.420	.268
	Adjunct	Equal variances assumed	.034	.854	-.092	114	.927	-.006	.062	-.128	.116
		Equal variances not assumed			-.093	23.999	.926	-.006	.061	-.131	.120

Appendix D

One-Way ANOVA between Persian Natives and Three Levels of EFL Learners

ANOVA

All Strategies

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.183	3	3.394	3.366	.019
Within Groups	346.886	344	1.008		
Total	357.069	347			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: All Strategies

	(I) Level	(J) Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	Persian Natives	Elementary	.116	.160	.887	-.30	.53
		Intermediate	.309	.178	.305	-.15	.77
		Advanced	-.204	.182	.680	-.67	.27
	Elementary	Persian Natives	-.116	.160	.887	-.53	.30
		Intermediate	.193	.141	.517	-.17	.56
		Advanced	-.320	.147	.130	-.70	.06
	Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.309	.178	.305	-.77	.15
		Elementary	-.193	.141	.517	-.56	.17
		Advanced	-.513*	.166	.012	-.94	-.08
	Advanced	Persian Natives	.204	.182	**.012**	-.27	.67
		Elementary	.320	.147	.130	-.06	.70
		Intermediate	.513*	.166	.680	.08	.94
Bonferroni	Persian Natives	Elementary	.116	.160	1.000	-.31	.54
		Intermediate	.309	.178	.498	-.16	.78
		Advanced	-.204	.182	1.000	-.69	.28
	Elementary	Persian Natives	-.116	.160	1.000	-.54	.31
		Intermediate	.193	.141	1.000	-.18	.57
		Advanced	-.320	.147	.179	-.71	.07
	Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.309	.178	.498	-.78	.16
		Elementary	-.193	.141	1.000	-.57	.18
		Advanced	-.513*	.166	.013	-.95	-.07
	Advanced	Persian Natives	.204	.182	**.013**	-.28	.69
		Elementary	.320	.147	.179	-.07	.71
		Intermediate	.513*	.166	1.000	.07	.95

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix E

Three ANOVAs for Direct, Indirect, and Adjunct Refusal Strategies

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Direct	Persian Natives	54	.64	.469	.064	.56	.81	0	1
	Elementary	147	.55	.499	.041	.47	.63	0	1
	Intermediate	78	.59	.495	.056	.48	.70	0	1
	Advanced	69	.69	.484	.058	.52	.75	0	1
	Total	348	.60	.491	.026	.55	.65	0	1
Indirect	Persian Natives	54	1.81	.696	.095	1.50	1.88	1	3
	Elementary	147	1.75	.691	.057	1.64	1.86	0	4
	Intermediate	78	1.64	.664	.075	1.49	1.79	0	3
	Advanced	69	1.69	.827	.100	1.61	2.01	0	4
	Total	348	1.73	.714	.038	1.65	1.80	0	4
Adjunct	Persian Natives	54	.88	.799	.109	.54	.98	0	3
	Elementary	147	.71	.794	.065	.58	.84	0	3
	Intermediate	78	.59	.780	.088	.41	.77	0	3
	Advanced	69	.76	.867	.104	.68	1.09	0	3
	Total	348	.73	.809	.043	.64	.81	0	3

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Direct	Between Groups	.849	3	.283	1.175	**.019**
	Within Groups	82.829	344	.241		
	Total	83.678	347			
Indirect	Between Groups	1.231	3	.410	.803	.493
	Within Groups	175.835	344	.511		
	Total	177.066	347			
Adjunct	Between Groups	3.251	3	1.084	1.666	**.074**
	Within Groups	223.815	344	.651		
	Total	227.066	347			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable		(I) Level	(J) Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Direct	Tukey HSD	Persian Natives	Elementary	.134	.078	.316	-.07	.34
			Intermediate	.095	.087	.691	-.13	.32
			Advanced	.048	.089	**.051**	-.18	.28
		Elementary	Persian Natives	-.134	.078	.316	-.34	.07
			Intermediate	-.039	.069	.943	-.22	.14

			Advanced	-.087	.072	.621	-.27	.10
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.095	.087	.691	-.32	.13
			Elementary	.039	.069	.943	-.14	.22
			Advanced	-.048	.081	.935	-.26	.16
		Advanced	Persian Natives	-.048	.089	**.051**	-.28	.18
			Elementary	.087	.072	.621	-.10	.27
			Intermediate	.048	.081	.935	-.16	.26
	Bonferroni	Persian Natives	Elementary	.134	.078	.520	-.07	.34
			Intermediate	.095	.087	1.000	-.14	.33
			Advanced	.048	.089	1.000	-.19	.28
		Elementary	Persian Natives	-.134	.078	.520	-.34	.07
			Intermediate	-.039	.069	1.000	-.22	.14
			Advanced	-.087	.072	1.000	-.28	.10
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.095	.087	1.000	-.33	.14
			Elementary	.039	.069	1.000	-.14	.22
			Advanced	-.048	.081	1.000	-.26	.17
		Advanced	Persian Natives	-.048	.089	1.000	-.28	.19
			Elementary	.087	.072	1.000	-.10	.28
			Intermediate	.048	.081	1.000	-.17	.26
Indirect	Tukey HSD	Persian Natives	Elementary	-.063	.114	.945	-.36	.23
			Intermediate	.044	.127	.985	-.28	.37
			Advanced	-.126	.130	.765	-.46	.21
		Elementary	Persian Natives	.063	.114	.945	-.23	.36
			Intermediate	.107	.100	.707	-.15	.37
			Advanced	-.063	.104	.930	-.33	.21
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.044	.127	.985	-.37	.28
			Elementary	-.107	.100	.707	-.37	.15
			Advanced	-.171	.118	.473	-.48	.13
		Advanced	Persian Natives	.126	.130	.765	-.21	.46
			Elementary	.063	.104	.930	-.21	.33
			Intermediate	.171	.118	.473	-.13	.48
	Bonferroni	Persian Natives	Elementary	-.063	.114	1.000	-.37	.24
			Intermediate	.044	.127	1.000	-.29	.38
			Advanced	-.126	.130	1.000	-.47	.22
		Elementary	Persian Natives	.063	.114	1.000	-.24	.37
			Intermediate	.107	.100	1.000	-.16	.37
			Advanced	-.063	.104	1.000	-.34	.21
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.044	.127	1.000	-.38	.29

			Elementary	-.107	.100	1.000	-.37	.16
			Advanced	-.171	.118	.899	-.48	.14
		Advanced	Persian Natives	.126	.130	1.000	-.22	.47
			Elementary	.063	.104	1.000	-.21	.34
			Intermediate	.171	.118	.899	-.14	.48
Adjunct	Tukey HSD	Persian Natives	Elementary	.045	.128	.985	-.29	.38
			Intermediate	.170	**.043**	.635	-.20	.54
			Advanced	-.125	**.047**	.830	-.50	.25
		Elementary	Persian Natives	-.045	.128	.985	-.38	.29
			Intermediate	.125	.113	.688	-.17	.42
			Advanced	-.170	.118	.474	-.47	.13
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.170	**.043**	.635	-.54	.20
			Elementary	-.125	.113	.688	-.42	.17
			Advanced	-.294	.133	.123	-.64	.05
		Advanced	Persian Natives	.125	**.047**	.830	-.25	.50
			Elementary	.170	.118	.474	-.13	.47
			Intermediate	.294	.133	.123	-.05	.64
	Bonferroni	Persian Natives	Elementary	.045	.128	1.000	-.30	.39
			Intermediate	.170	.143	1.000	-.21	.55
			Advanced	-.125	.047	1.000	-.51	.26
		Elementary	Persian Natives	-.045	.128	1.000	-.39	.30
			Intermediate	.125	.113	1.000	-.18	.42
			Advanced	-.170	.118	.901	-.48	.14
		Intermediate	Persian Natives	-.170	.143	1.000	-.55	.21
			Elementary	-.125	.113	1.000	-.42	.18
			Advanced	-.294	.133	.168	-.65	.06
		Advanced	Persian Natives	.125	.047	1.000	-.26	.51
			Elementary	.170	.118	.901	-.14	.48
			Intermediate	.294	.133	.168	-.06	.65