A Study of Directive Speech Acts Used by Iranian Nursery School Children: The Impact of Context on Children's Linguistic Choices

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Abstract

This paper aims at finding out the forms and functions of directive speech acts uttered by Persian-speaking children. The writer's goal is to discover the distinct strategies applied by speakers of nursery school age children regarding three parameters: the choice of form, the negotiation of communicative goals within conversation, and the protection of face. The data collected for this purpose are based on actual school conversational situations that were audio recorded in four nursery schools during classroom work and playtime activities. Children, who are the subjects of this study, are of both sexes and various social backgrounds. The results revealed that (1) the investigation of children's directive speech acts confirm the fact that they are aware of social parameters of talk (Andersen- Slosberg,1990; Ervin, Tripp et al., 1990); (2) they use linguistic forms that are different from what is used by adults as politeness marker, such as, polite 2nd plural subject-agreement on the verb, "please" and "thank you" words; (3) They use declaratives with illocutionary force in order to mark distance (Georgalidou, 2001).

Keywords: Iranian children's speech; Directive speech act; Politeness, Conversational analysis; Persian

1. Introduction

In this article, the directive speeches used by nursery school children and their linguistic choices are investigated. According to Searle (1975 a: 335; Searle, 1976), directives are utterances addressed to an interlocutor in order to "make him/her do something". However, Ervin- Tripp (1990:308) declared that directive illocutionary force also exist in any move "which could be interpreted either by the speaker or hearer as an attempt to affect the behavior of an interlocutor".

As a result of this declaration, Searle's definition has been changed to include acts other than requests, orders and commands. In the revised definition, Ervin- Tripp's (1990: 308) prohibitions, invitations, offers, claims, intention statements and permissions, summons and treats (Wootton, 1981; Georgalidou, 2001) and also speech acts used to create a frame during symbolic play (Sawyer, 1993) can also be defined as control acts (Ervin- Tripp et al., 1990: 308), since using them forces the hearer to follow the speaker in achieving his/her intended goals. The present paper will inquire the interaction between sociocultural parameters, namely, the age of the speakers and their choice of form for the control acts, i.e., the speech acts with directive illocutionary force within the conversational context. The goal of examining directive speech acts in this study was to find their illocutionary force (Searle, 1969), their relation to the Gricean maxims (Grice, 1975; Searle, 1975b) and their relevance to the speaker's intention in communication and to show how the hearer perceive it (Sperber and Wilson, 1995). Besides, directive speech has also been examined to show its relevance or its impact on the acquisition of communicative competence. All these show that speech acts, especially those of directive illocutionary force are eminent in children's everyday conversation of all ages and choice of forms act as marker which reflects developmental stages of language acquisition in children (Ervin-Tripp et al., 1990).

Also, research has shown that children are able to use stylistic variation from their early ages (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1979; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986; Ochs, 1988). The forms of speech acts chosen by the children , like that of adults, does not correspond exactly, word by word, with their intended function, since some issues such as cost and consideration of face are used to express politeness. The organization of peer groups can also affect these choices. Children are under the impression of social norms of adult's societies. Their relationship

shows their effort to consider equality/ impression and they're more intended to preserve their own face than that of their interlocutor (Mitchell-Kernan and Kernan, 1997).

In short, studies have shown that nursery school children usually do not use the conventional politeness markers except in situations where their interlocutor has more right and the strategic use of politeness markers lead them to reach their goal (Ervin-Tripp et al., 1990). Moreover, when the hearer has a close relationship with children, like their parents and caretakers, they use less "polite" control acts. All of these imply the aim of this study which is to investigate children's strategies in using directive illocutionary force in their conversations in both formal and informal situations in the nursery school environment.

2. Directive speech and linguistic manifestations of politeness

A universal parameter of linguistic communication is politeness. Goffman (1967) named it *protection of face*[1] since it affects linguistic choices (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson suggested a model for it and there were high discussion on this concept during the last few decades. Their model shows that linguistic choices have two functions: to show that the speaker intends to maintain closeness with his/her interlocutor or he/she intends to retain the distance. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), in the first one, the speaker use positive politeness strategies and in the second one, negative.

Comparative studies reveal that speakers with different backgrounds protect face in distinct ways. So, the concept of universal linguistic politeness is aberrant (Tennen, 1984; Blum-Kulka, 1992; Bayraktaroglu and Sifianou, 2001). In addition, it seems that Iran is a society mostly inclined to positive politeness strategies. The uses of imperative forms, as well as direct control acts are quite common in Iran. Moreover, Iranians do not speak so formal with their acquaintances since they believe this rude and a hostile behavior.

In child's discourse in nursery school, the relative distance that is characteristic of teacher/ student relationship does not exist. Students use various devices and strategies to identify distance based on their age and the speech events which form the context of interaction. For example, students in nursery school classrooms utter declaratives like "Auntie, Arsham hit me in the back". It contains two directive functions: (a) it refers to a forbidden action, and (b) it is being addressed to the teacher who is responsible for keeping of rules at class (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). The communicative aim of the speaker is to inform the teacher of the breaking of a rule as well as direct her/ him toward punishing the aggressor. This kind of declarative, which is common in Iran nursery schools, functions as a direct command, the addressee will act in a special way in response to it. In using this kind of speech act, children describe the source of trouble in a way that force the teacher to do something and initiates the next action. Unlike this, a kind of imposition is evident when they address other children, even when declaratives are used. All of the above show that choice of form is a complicated issue. This implies that a combination of micro, such as the above, and macro pragmatic, i.e. "in the context of society"[2] (Mey, 2001:135) approaches should be applied.

3. Linguistic choices in Iranian directives

Linguistically, directive speech act can be realized by means of imperatives, interrogatives, and declaratives. Iranian chooses imperatives more since they want to imply their closeness and independence of interlocutors. They use imperative verbs or when this verb is not available, use subjunctives to function as imperative. Consequently, for the formation of first and third person of the affirmative, and also all negative imperatives, subjunctive is used. In the context of group play activities that have illocutionary force of command, indicatives can also be used in directives.

Like English, Iranians use modals (can, could, would, may, etc) in the formation of requests. In some occasions that a close relationship exists between the interlocutors, modals may be omitted but when distance among interlocutors is maximum, or in cases of formality, they are used.

Directives are recognized to be used with the verb (I want) or (I need), in present, past and the conditional. But the use of present one (I want) is very uncommon in informal situations. There exist some declaratives which refer to a source of trouble or describe regulations, consequences, intentions or commitments, etc., which are systematically used as hints and function as control acts.

There are some conventional politeness forms that are recognized as markers of distance and formality, such as second plural subject-agreement on the verb, 'please' and 'excuse' words, as well as expressions that are used as redressive action strategies (i.e. 'if it is easy for you' , ' if you would be so kind'). It is expected that Iranian children at least use the second plural subject-agreement on the verb, 'please' and 'excuse' word, and interrogatives introduced with 'can', when addressing their teachers and non-familiar adults. Although this is not

the case in everyday linguistic behavior, especially in children around the age of five, adults assess children contribution as 'impolite' when they fail to use these markers. Whether this is the case in context of Iran, is the subject matter of the subsequent discussion.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

The participants of this study (children) were of both sexes, between 4-6 years old and various social classes but their ethnic backgrounds were the same. The average age of both boys and girls was five.   The nursery schools chosen for the aim of this study were located in different parts of the city Isfahan. One was in Hezar Jerib St., with students mostly of upper middle class background. Other in Emam Khomeini St., with mixed middle/lower class students and one in Bozorgmehr St., with mixed middle/upper class students and one in Zeinabiyeh St., in an exclusively working class (lower class) neighborhood.

4.2 Material

The data of this study is consisted of 16 hours of actual conversational exchanges, audio recorded in four nursery school classes during class and play time activities.

4.3 Procedure

The researchers attended the classes and audio recorded the conversations and then transcribed them in order to find the speech acts with directive illocutionary force to be studied both in the context of the ongoing activity and the conversations they had occurred in. The analysis aims at discussing the different functions served by the forms chosen by children within the organization of their conversations.

5. Aim of the study

The aim of the paper is to analyze all directive contributions of children of this age regarding the system of preferences that seems to be operating in their choice of linguistic form.

For this aim, the nursery school provides an excellent environment for the collection of natural data. Since the class is mostly controlled by teacher, the class activities and contributions addressed to the teacher create a quite formal context of speech. On the other hand, during playtime children are left in groups (of about 4-5) and negotiate the course of action without any help on the part of teacher and he/she is addressed only when problem arise. Although nursery school teachers become familiar with the children but in school system, the hierarchy relations predominate. Therefore, directives addressed to adults reveal a relative distance that makes them different from corresponding contributions addressed to children. The linguistic markers of this difference will be discussed in the incoming sections.

6. Research questions

Research Questions:

1- Is the form and function of children's directive speech acts similar to that of adults?
2- Do children use the same politeness markers in their directive speech as adults?

7. Data Analysis

7.1 Imperatives

Imperatives are one of the linguistic forms which are used by children most of the time, at least within familiar contexts. Studies done by Anderson-Sloberg (1990) have shown that children direct many orders to other children, quite a lot to their mothers, but less to their father and adult interlocutors. Although Mitchell-Kernan and Kernan (1977) argued that talk among children is perceived as quite face-threatening and competitive, Sachs and Devin (1975:9) proved that the nature of the ongoing activity is also a determining factor for the social meaning of children's linguistic choices. This study is directly related to linguistic choices and as Ervin-Tripp (1977:184) claims, imperatives can be an acceptable form for control acts, for either obtaining "face goods", or for action that has to be taken at a fast pace.

7.1.1 Imperatives addressed to the teacher

The most important thing regarding children's conversations directed toward teacher in nursery school is the use of word "Auntie" which shows the close and intimate relationship that exists between children and their teacher. In most orders, directed to the teacher, the teacher is asked to hand the child things ("Auntie, give me my doll.") or to do things that children cannot do ("Auntie, come and open the locker. I want to put it in."), or even do

things that children must do themselves ("Auntie, take my bag and put it there"). What is noticeable is that children never use second person plural agreement on the verb while older children in primary school use the plural form. The reason, considering the close relationship between children and the teacher, is that the teacher never corrects the students toward the use of polite plural forms. So, this seems to be acceptable for both of them. In this context (teacher and students).

۱- خاله تو برو، خودش باید بخونه.

Auntie, leave him alone, he must read it by himself.

۲- خاله به من دوتا عدس بده برا چشمهاش، دوتا هم ماش.

Auntie, give me two lentils for its eyes and two vetches.

۳- خاله کیفمو بردار بگذار اونجا.

Auntie, take my bag and put it there.

۴- خاله بیا در کمد را باز کن میخوام اینو بگذارم توش.

Auntie, come and open the locker. I want to put it in.

۵- خاله بازش کن برام.

Auntie, open it for me.

۶- خاله نارنگیمو بده.

Auntie, give me my tangerine.

۷- خاله عروسک منو بده.

Auntie, give me my doll.

۸- خاله شش تا دیگه ماش بده.

Auntie, give me six more vetches.

۹- خاله صفحه بعد را بگو.

Auntie, read the next page.

۱۰- خاله جامدادی منو بنداز.

Auntie, throw my pencil case.

۱۱- خاله آب بده.

Auntie, give me some water.

۱۲- یگانه چی باید بگی؟

Yeganeh, what should you say?

۱۳- لطفا آب، لطفا آب.

Water, Please. Water, please.

۱۴- بفرما.

Here you are.

7.1.2 Imperatives addressed to children

Children frequently use imperatives when addressing other children. The intensity and quantity of imperatives addressed to other children is different from the ones addressed to the teacher. As it is obvious in the examples (sentences number 18 and number 22), repetition of the control act within the same sentence aggravates its directive force. In addition, other examples of imperatives can be noticed during cooperative play activities which help the fast pace of the ongoing action (examples 20, 21, 23). Control acts like sentences 15,16,17,19,25 and 26 are frequent in data, in which the child have a sense of authority over others and order them to do or not to do some actions. The child also feels that he/she is responsible of doing some actions like that of teacher. For example in sentence 27, he orders others to bring their dolls to put them in the shelf himself/herself.

On the whole, imperatives, as it is clear from above examples, are control acts used frequently by children in the context of control acts. Although aggravation and imposition are the prominent characteristics of their behavior, children know how to maintain cooperation even when their directives are unsuccessful. On the other hand, imperatives addressed to teachers are less imposing and once rejected, they are rarely reintroduced by children.

۱۵- بچه ها سکوت کنین.

Be quiet, kids.

۱۶- برو کنار.

Go out of the way.

17- خاله بشین.

Auntie, sit down.

۱۸- آی برو کنار، برو کنار.

Hey, get out of the way, come on.

۱۹- بلندش کن.

Pick it up.

۲۰- اون صندلی را بیار.

Bring that chair.

۲۱- آقا نکن. اینجوری خراب میشه.

Stop it. This way you will destroy it.

۲۲- برو کنار، از جای من برو کنار.

Go away. That's my seat.

۲۳- مصطفی بیا اینجا تا باهم رنگ کنیم.

Mostafa, come here. Let's color.

۲۴- مصطفی، قرمزت را بردار.

Mostafa, take your red pencil.

۲۵- بلندشو بندازش تو سطل.

Stand up and throw it away.

۲۶- اون بشقاب را بیار اینجا.

Bring that plate here.

۲۷- بچه ها عروسکهاتون را بدین به من بگذارم تو قفسه.

Kids, give me your dolls to put them on the shelf.

7.2 Interrogative

Interrogatives are other options children use for the formation of control acts. They are requests for information that speaker has not got. Children often use interrogatives in their everyday speech in order to request for information through the application of syntactic or/and pragmatic indirectness, as what can be perceived in the use of modals and hints respectively (Sifianou, 1992). As Sinclair and Van Gessel (1990) argued, if the ongoing action is conversational, questions from a great part of children's contributions, as requests for information, clarification or confirmation. On the other hand, interrogatives are sometimes used by children as ways for seeking the information, requesting goods and services (embedded imperatives). Hints, used in the form of interrogatives, are also common in conversations with children. Schegloff (1988) discussed that in contrastive analysis, hinting interrogatives are perceived as pre-sequences, checking the necessary conditions for success of control acts. They can also be used as a means for organization of turn-taking. Examples are found in the data discussed below.

7.2.1 Interrogative addressed to the teacher

There are interrogatives that serve as request for information, clarification or confirmation. Examples of this kind are sentences number 28 to 54. Other kinds of interrogatives are children's questions aim at asking for

permission, objects or services (ex. 28 to 36).   Although in these examples interrogative form is chosen, as opposed to imperatives, but there is no politeness marker (ex. 2nd person plural or 'please'). Sentences number 48 (Auntie, would you unwrap this chocolate for me?) is typical of the conversational negotiation of such speech acts, when addressed to the teacher. The contributions have the illocutionary force of imperatives, as opposed to demands or questions, thus mitigate the imposition. There is another type of interrogative control act that is not directly related to the requested action. Questions, such as "asking for the place of an objects" (Auntie, where is my pencil case?) are usually used by children which implies his/her interest for the object in question.

۲۸ـ خاله اجازه هست من به ستاره یک چیزی بگم؟

Auntie, may I say something to Setareh?

۲۹ـ خاله من تا شب باید رنگ کنم؟

Auntie, should I keep coloring until the nightfall?

۳۰ـ چرا ابرت را رنگ نکردی ملیکا؟

Why didn't you color the cloud, Melica?

۳۱ـ خاله اومدی اینجا چیکار کنی؟

Why did you come here, Auntie?

۳۲ـ خاله نیوشا کیه؟

Auntie, who is Niyoosha?

۳۳ـ خاله برم دستم را بشورم؟

Auntie, may I go to wash my hands?

۳۴ـ خاله اونها که تمام نکردن هم برن تغذیه بگیرن؟

Auntie, can the kids who haven't finished yet go to take the snack?

۳۵ـ من برم مداد رنگیهام را بیارم؟

May I go to bring my color pencils?

۳۶ـ خاله کی میریم رودخونه؟

Auntie, when do you take us to the river?

۳۷ـ خاله اجازه هست من برم آب بخورم؟

Auntie, may I go to drink some water?

۳۸ـ خاله امروز CD میدید؟

Auntie, do you give CD today?

۳۹ـ بچه ها این کتاب مال کیه که روش کنده شده؟

Kids, whose book is this uncovered book?

۴۰ـ خاله کجا را باید رنگ کنیم؟

Auntie, where should we color?

۴۱ـ خاله کدوم لاک پشت را میگین؟

Auntie, which turtle do you mean?

۴۲ـ خاله تراشهارو میدین؟

Auntie, can you pass the pencil sharpeners?

۴۳ـ مداد صورتی دارین؟

Do you have a pink pencil?

۴۴ـ خاله یک لپه به من میدین؟

Auntie, would you give me a split pea?

۴۵ـ خاله کیف منو میدی؟

Auntie, would you give my bag?

۴۶ـ خاله یه صورتی پررنگ میدی؟

Auntie, would you give me a dark pink pencil?

۴۷ـ خاله عروسک منو میدین؟

Auntie, would you give me my doll?

۴۸ـ خاله این شکلات را برام باز میکنی؟

Auntie, would you unwrap this chocolate for me?

۴۹ـ خاله این را برام باز میکنی؟

Auntie, would you unwrap it for me?

۵۰ـ خاله ظرف تغذیه منم میدی؟

Auntie, give my snack dish, too.

۵۱ـ خاله جامدادی من کجاست؟

Auntie, where is my pencil case?

۵۲ـ خاله تراش نارنجی من دست کیه؟

Auntie, who has my orange sharpener?

۵۳ـ خاله کیفم کجاست؟

Auntie, where is my bag?

۵۴ـ خاله دستکش منو کجا گذاشتی؟

Auntie, where did you leave my gloves?

7.2.2 Interrogative addressed to children

In addition to interrogatives that serve as request for information, clarification, or confirmation, children request other children for permission or objects. The use of interrogative structures for request or objects entails a strategic use of politeness, and this kind of requests is often accepted in the context of nursery school.

Children also use offers and requests for joint actions (ex. 57, 58, 59). Another interrogative is the one introduced with "where" or "whose", requesting an object by asking its location or its owner (ex. 55, 56, 61).

On the whole, interrogatives as compared to imperatives entail a greater protection of safe for both interlocutors, although both serve similar functions. In spite of that, interrogatives addressed to children also have the illocutionary force of either demands or requests. Therefore, interrogatives addressed to the teacher seem to be more appropriate form of using a control act when facing an adult compared to the ones addressed to children.

۵۵ـ مداد صورتی داری؟

Do you have a pink pencil?

۵۶ـ بچه ها قهوه ای کو؟

Kids, where is the brown pencil?

۵۷ـ زردت را با من عوض میکنی؟

Do you exchange your yellow pencil with mine?

۵۸ـ محمد پنیر نمی خوای؟

Mohammad, don't you want some cheese?

۵۹ـ اگه گفتی این چیه؟ آناناسه؟

Guess what it is? It's pineapple.

۶۰ـ محمد یکی از اون بزرگها را میاری؟

Mohammad, would you bring one of those large ones?

۶۱ـ این پازل مال کیه؟

Whose puzzle is this?

۶۲- میای بریم تغذیه هامون را بگیریم؟

Do you come to take our snacks?

۶۳- زینب میای با هم بازی کنیم؟

Zeinab, would you like to come to play?

۶۴- محمد رضا با من بازی می کنی؟

Mohammad Reza, will you come to play together?

۶۵- محمد رضا چرا اینقدر بلندش کردی؟

Mohammad Reza, why did you lift it so much?

7.3 Declaratives

One of the most common choices for the formation of various types of control act is declarative. As Mitchell-Kernan and Kernan, et al. (1977, 1983) argued, statements regarding the needs or wants of child is issued to caretakers and other children and are introduced with 'I want'. Also, as Andersen-Sloberg (1990:130) stated, this type of need statements are systematically used during symbolic play, when children role-play themselves addressing their parents. Similarly, as Axia (1996) pointed out, Italian children recorded in a department store used the verb voglio ('I want') to request the buying of the preferred toy, and Baroni and Axia (1989) called it a choice that is considered rather rude in the context of Italian society. Youssef (1991:617) also stated that Trinidad children repaired their need statements to each other when mothers are present, but used non-mitigated statements when they were playing with other children, in the absence of adults. In addition to need statements, nursery school children use declaratives to describe problems and consequences, state rules, declare their intentions, etc., in order to have the addressee adjust his course of action to their wishes.

7.3.1 Declaratives addressed to the teacher

Children, most of the times use statements that implicitly direct caretaker or other children to cooperate with them in order to describe their needs. They also use this strategy to their teacher in the context of class activities. As Ervin-Tripp (1982:236) pointed, children recognize a right on their part to receive help and their need statements have the illocutionary force of a request not that of a demand. So, once their requests are rejected by the teacher, they rarely insist them. Utterances like, "Auntie, I want the marker" is an example of this category. The teacher's response to this request, "This marker belongs to nursery. I can't give it to you" strongly rejects the request and the child had already accepted the rejection and quits trying.

Except for need statements, children sometimes address their intentions to the teacher; describe what they are going to do. These declaratives are different from the rest in that they apparently are going to reverse power relationship and they dictate their intention, not request. Although these statements refer to the speaker in school context, the children's behavior is controlled by the teacher. In sentence "Auntie, I wanna draw a killing shark for the kids", it is clear that the child is not going to request something, but to inform teacher of his intention. Here, the teacher rejects the intension statement by means of the following statement: "Mohammad Reza, either sit down or get out of the class". This order to sit down implies that this intention is rejected strongly on the part of the teacher and the student does not address the teacher anymore. In another sentence, when the child stated that "Auntie, today I want to be the leader", the teacher rejects his intension by the statement "No, we don't have leader today" which implies that there is no leader in the class today. Then, the child reintroduces his request, this time through this statement: "But yesterday we had one". And again teacher rejects his intension by this sentence "Be quiet, kids." But at last the child expresses his intension again without any attention to teacher's rejection and the expression about necessity of having a leader by means of this utterance: "Auntie, I am the leader, today."

At this point, the child does not address the teacher anymore, but himself, as a monologue. This examples show that although the child's control act has the illocutionary force of a demand, but different power relationship exist between the interlocutors.

Except for need statement, another most common type of declaratives is the one performed by means of describing problems and rule violations. This type describes problems or breakings of rules happen by children. Children seem to implicitly ask teacher to change the non-desirable situation. Statements like: "Auntie, I can't open it." shows that children need some help and they indirectly invite the teacher to help. Other statements like

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"Auntie, Mahdi has lined in Mrs. Rabi-ee's book." describes the breaking of rules by others. Utterances like "number 89 and 91" show that some children may have to be taken care of. These statements show that some forbidden action is committed in class.

۶۶ـ خاله ماژیک را بده.

Auntie, give the marker.

۶۷ـ محمد رضا بشین.

Sit down, Mohammad Reza.

۶۸ـ خاله ماژیک را میخوام.

Auntie, I want the marker.

۶۹ـ نکن، برو بشین.

Stop it. Take a seat.

۷۰ـ خاله میخوام برا بچه ها کوسه ی قاتل بکشم.

Auntie, I wanna draw a killing shark for the kids.

۷۱ـ محمد رضا یا بشین یا از کلاس برو بیرون. این ماژیک مال مهد کودکه. نمیشه بدمش به تو.

Mohammad Reza, either sit down or get out of the class. This marker belongs to nursery. I can't give it to you.

۷۲ـ خاله امروز من نماینده.

Auntie, today I want to be the leader.

۷۳ـ نه، امروز نماینده نداریم.

No, we don't have leader today.

۷۴ـ دیروز که نماینده داشتیم.

But yesterday we had one.

۷۵ـ ساکت باشین بچه ها.

Be quiet, kids.

۷۶ـ خاله من امروز نمایندم.

Auntie, I am the leader, today.

۷۷ـ خاله به من لیوانم را ندادین.

Auntie, you didn't give me my glass.

۷۸ـ خاله من قهوه ای ندارم.

Auntie, I don't have a brown pencil.

۷۹ـ خاله من آب نخوردم.

Auntie, I didn't drink any water.

۸۰ـ خاله تراش قرمز من نیست.

Auntie, my red sharpener is gone.

۸۱ـ خاله آرشام کتابمو برداشته.

Auntie, Arsham has taken my book.

۸۲ـ خاله امید دوتا تراش تو کیفشه.

Auntie, there are two sharpeners in Omid's bag.

۸۳ـ خاله متین میخواد این بشقاب را بذاره پیش خودش.

Auntie, Matin wants to take this plate near him.

۸۴ـ خاله این همش را رنگ کرده.

Auntie, he has colored all of it.

۸۵- خاله آرشام تراش شما را برداشته.

Auntie, Arsham has taken your sharpener.

۸۶- خاله مهدی تو کتاب خانم ربیعی خط کشید.

Auntie, Mahdi has lined in Mrs. Rabi-ee's book.

۸۷- خاله مهیار اذیتم میکنه.

Auntie, Mahyar bothers me.

۸۸- خاله این نمیگذاره کتابش را رنگ کنم.

Auntie, she doesn't let me color her book.

۸۹- خاله آرشام زد تو کمرم.

Auntie, Arsham hit me in the back.

۹۰- خاله مهدی علی را هل داد.

Auntie, Mahdi pushed Ali.

۹۱- خاله علی ربیعی میزنه تو دلم.

Auntie, Ali Rabi-ee hits me in the stomach.

7.3.2 Declaratives addressed to children

Declaratives addressed to children, unlike those addressed to teacher, are mainly demands. If they are rejected, it often leads to dispute. Some statements are similar to intention statements, so, dictating what the speaker wants to do. It shows that the speaker had already decided about some actions, who only makes an announcement as to what will follow (for example, "I want to make a snowman.", "I want to color its blouse green.").

Sometimes declaratives are only statements about what children have or don't have. Utterances like 92, 93,94,95,96 are some examples in this category. Here the massage is the ownership of objects and it seems that this type don't leave room for negotiations.

Threats are also common in children's statements and it seems that their most important function is to prevent the addressee from doing what the speaker consider inappropriate. They consist of two parts, the description of the action which is going to be done by the addressee, and the description of the negative consequences of doing that action, for example, the utterances "Don't do that, otherwise I won't play with you" and "Atiyeh, if you put a bomb, I won't be friend with you anymore." Show that in case the hearer decides to do what the first part describes, he/she will lose the speaker's friendship and cooperation.

On the whole, interrogatives serve the same similar function whether they are addressed to teachers or to children. In spite of that, interrogatives addressed to the children can also have the illocutionary force of demand or request. So, interrogatives addressed to children are more strategic, comparing with ones addressed to teacher, which seem to be more appropriate form of using a control act when facing an adult.

۹۲- بچه ها نگاه کنین. من پازل دارم. شما که ندارین.

Look at me. I have puzzle but you don't have.

۹۳- منم مثل این کتاب را دارم.

I also have a book the same as this.

۹۴- من قهوه ای ندارم.

I don't have brown pencil.

۹۵- من شمشیر راستکی دارم.

I have a real sword.

۹۶- من آدم آهنی دارم.

I have a steal man.

۹۷- علی نکن، باهات بازی نمی کنما.

Ali, stop it. Otherwise I won't play with you.

۹۸- عطیه اگه بمب بگذاری باهات دوست نمیشم.

Atiyeh, if you put a bomb, I won't be your friend anymore.

۹۹- بچه ها من میخوام شب عروسیم نقشه بکشم دزدی کنم.

Kids, I want to plan to rob at my wedding night.

۱۰۰- من میخوام آدم برفی درست کنم.

I want to make a snowman.

۱۰۱- من میخوام بلوزش را سبز کنم.

I want to color its blouse green.

7.4 The distribution of imperative, interrogative, and declarative forms

As shown in the analysis, nursery school children have the ability to realize the different status of the addressee. Among different types of control acts, they mainly use that of the declaratives. These utterances always have hints that describe needs and sources of troubles. Table 1 is based on the total number of the control acts addressed to both teacher and children found in the data. In spite of the fact that the forms does not differentiate according to their illocutionary force, the tables indicates that different linguistic structures are chosen when addressing teacher. As claimed above, children use more declarative structures to both children and teacher, with declaratives predominating in child-teacher conversations.
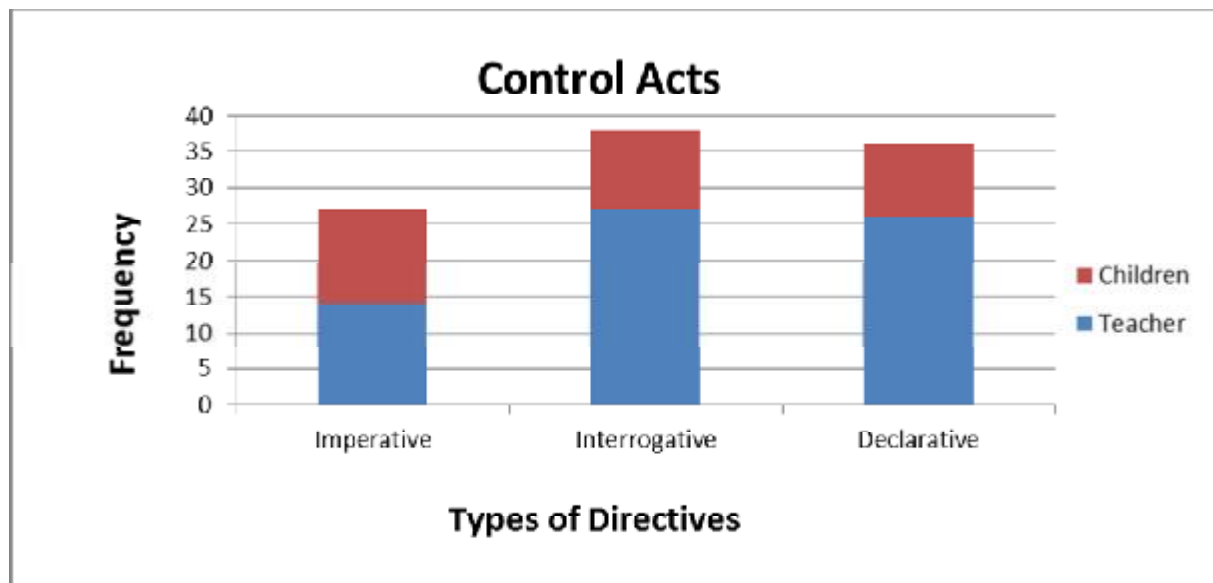
8. Conclusion

In the present study, the forms and different functions of directive speech acts among Persian-speaking children of nursery school age have been investigated. Thus distinct strategies used by the speakers of nursery school age through three parameters of "choice of form", "negotiation of communicative goals within conversation" and "protection of face" were thoroughly examined. The results of the study revealed that children appear to employ certain strategies and special forms in order to protect their relationship with their interlocutors and develop the chance of success in their communication. In the case of choosing forms within conversations, it was observed that they hardly ever use second person plural agreement on the verbs while addressing the teacher or their friends. Also, when teacher is directed children tend to employ shorter conversational episodes comparing the courses that only children involve.

Regarding the fact that Iranian children are rather direct and imposing, their conversational episodes usually involve the structure of disputes. Although children use all three structures of imperatives, interrogatives and declaratives in order to do their control acts, the main illocutionary force is "demand". When children are addressed, unlike the time when the teacher is addressed, children often employ demands. If demands are rejected by their friends it will result in dispute. On the other hand, there are times when children address their

teacher to express their intension using declarative. When the intention is refused on the part of the teacher, the child does not address teacher anymore and quits trying.

Ultimately, talk among children is usually face-threatening and competitive. They direct a large number of orders to other children, but less to adult interlocutors. There is evidence that when the teacher is addressed, politeness markers are absent in children speech. They usually address their teacher for need or in a difficult situation. It is noteworthy that strategies employed by children often contain degree of indirectness, for instance declarative and interrogative. This would bring us to the fact that children realize factors, such as distance and status of addressee and use different strategies to reflect them in conversational practices.

As a whole, in order to grasp the dynamics of children's conversational discourse, the cultural elements and ethnographic factors, altogether, should be taken into account. It is obvious that the investigation of child discourse through different cultures would contribute to understanding of different stages in acquisition of communicative competence (Corsaro, 1985).

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Notes
Note 1. "The positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1967:5)
Note 2. As Mey also claims, "the restricted co-text of the utterance is insufficient for our understanding of the words that are spoken …. We must look further than the co-text of utterance and take the whole of language scene into our view" (Mey, 2001:135).