

## A Cross-Cultural Approach to Contrasting Offers in English and Persian

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**Abstract:** This study is an attempt to carry out a comparative analysis using Natural Semantic Metalanguage (henceforth NSM). The offering routine patterns of native Persian speakers was compared with that of Native American English speakers to see if it can provide evidence for applicability of NSM model which is claimed to be universal. The descriptive technique was the cultural scripts approach, using conceptual primes proposed in the NSM theory. The cultural scripts were presented in both English and Persian Metalanguages. The data were taken from a corpus of 20 hours of recording the live interviews from the Persian and English TV channels. The results showed the applicability of NSM model for cross-cultural comparisons. Then, the paper concludes with the pedagogical implications of the development of the theory of cultural scripts for teaching L2 socio-pragmatics in general and offers in particular.

**Key words:** Natural Semantic Metalanguage • Socio-Pragmatics • Persian • Cultural Scripts • English • Offer

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### INTRODUCTION

The cultural scripts technique relies crucially on the metalanguage of empirically established semantic primes. Semantic primes are simple, indefinable meanings which appear to “surface” as the meanings of words or word-like expressions in all languages. The semantic primes and their principles of combination constitute a kind of “mini-language” with the same expressive power as a full natural language. There are about 60 in them, listed by Goddard and Wierzbicka [1].

Wierzbicka and her colleagues have developed an approach for exploring the cultural underpinning of speech acts which is known as Natural Semantic Metalanguage (e.g. [1-3]). Within this approach, cultural values and attitudes, or what they term ‘cultural scripts’, which give rise to pragmatic devices, are explicated in terms of a set of fundamental meanings, termed semantic primes, which are alleged to be universal.

According to Wierzbicka [3], the claim is that the semantic primes expressed by English words like someone/person, something/thing, people, say, words, true, do, think want, good, bad, if, because, among others, can be expressed equally well and equally precisely in other languages; and that, furthermore, they have an inherent universal grammar of combination and complementation which also manifests itself equally in all languages, albeit with language-specific formal variations.

The universal mini-language of semantic primes can therefore be safely used as a common code for writing explications of “terminological ethnocentrism” with maximum clarity and resolution of detail and in the knowledge that they can be readily transposed across languages. It offers a mechanism by which meaning can be freed from the grip of any single language. As the anthropologist Roy D’Andrade [4] remarks, the natural semantic metalanguage “offers a potential means to ground all complex concepts in ordinary language and translate concepts from one language to another without loss or distortion in meaning.”

Although the primes are being expressed in English, NSM researchers believe that all or most of them will turn out to be semantic fundamentals in all languages [5]. A growing body of research, begun in Goddard and Wierzbicka [6] and continued in Goddard and Wierzbicka [1] and other publications suggests that this might be the case [7,5]. Goddard and Wierzbicka [1] and Wierzbicka [3] assert that NSM studies have been carried out in a wide range of languages, including English, Russian, French, Spanish, Polish, Italian, Malay, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Maori, among others.

Another important point worthy of close consideration is that the majority of classroom-based studies used models of speech acts not based on naturally occurring data samples as instructional material to teach L2 socio-pragmatic norms. They provided their

learners with models of L2 socio-cultural norms which are usually exclusively based on native speaker intuition. Native speaker intuition, however, affords somewhat idealized versions of social interaction. Furthermore, like most previous studies on interlanguage pragmatics, the findings of these studies are based upon the examination of elicited data (for example, discourse completion tests). While such data may demonstrate learners' explicit knowledge of the L2 socio-pragmatic norms, they tend not to reflect learners' ability to apply their socio-pragmatic knowledge in naturally occurring conversation [8].

There are some studies that show how language use and speech acts such as offers, compliments and requests can be taught in the classroom, for example, Holmes and Brown [9] show how compliments can be taught and Taleghani-Nikazm [10] provides a teaching unit on telephone openings in German. While these studies represent a much needed step towards including the analysis of naturalistic conversation in second language classrooms, they do not (yet) assess the outcome of such instruction. In other words, while some studies [10] show that students seem to notice and correctly apply the pragmatic rules of the second language, the studies do not evaluate the long-term learning effects of this instruction.

In the present paper, the offering routine patterns of native Persian speakers will be compared with those of Native American English speakers. This paper aims at investigating evidence for or against Wierzbicka's universal theory and its application in the area of teaching L2 offers.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Different methods of data collection have been used in the study of speech acts. They include: (a) discourse completion tasks and questionnaires e.g. [11, 12] (b) recall protocols e.g. [13], (c) role play e.g. [14], (d) field observation e.g. [15, 16] and (e) conversation and discourse analysis [17-19, 7]. Golato [20] discussed the merits and demerits of each of these methods of data collection, noting that each of them allows the researcher to investigate different facets of the topic at hand. Furthermore, she argued that conversation analysis (CA) is well suited for the close study of culturally determined speech events since it makes use of video- and/or audio taped samples of non-elicited face-to-face or telephone conversations, thus allowing for the repeated and detailed analysis of a phenomenon in its sequential context. Context plays a tremendous role in disambiguation of

meanings as well as in understanding the actual meaning of words [21]. As a result, both interactional features and nonverbal elements can be included in the analysis. Since the data are always spontaneous, they represent what speakers are actually doing in conversation. Crucially, they do not represent speakers' intuitions, which are not always reliable in such contexts [20]. Following the recommendation by Golato [20] the researcher used naturally occurring interview data which was recorded.

**The Corpus:** The data were taken from a corpus of 20 hours of recording the live interviews from the following Persian and English TV channels: VOA Persian TV, IRIB1PER, IRIB2PER, IRIB3PER, IRIB4PER (Persian), CNN, Hope Channel, Inspiration and VOATV1(English). They were randomly selected from a larger pool of English and Persian TV channels and were collected in two months during January and February, 2009. The speakers ranged in age from almost 20 to 75 years. All speakers held or were pursuing a university degree or held white-collar positions (e.g. TV interviewers, politicians, managers, artists, authors, etc.). The 20 speakers (interviewers and interviewees) produced 43 offering patterns from which 24 were English and 19 were Persian offering sequences. (See the Appendix). The researcher randomly selected some English and Persian dyads and elaborated on them

**The Study:** Making an offer is a common activity in everyday conversation. According to Curl [22]:

“Offers may be produced with many different grammatical formats: do you want any pots for coffee? ; I'll take you up Wednesday; we were wondering if there's anything we can do; and I'll bring you a peony when they flower are all attested examples of utterances which function as offers. Such utterances are understood as offers due in part to their location in particular sequential environments and in part due to the type of activity they propose (e.g. object transfer).”

Offers in English typically make relevant either acceptance or rejection, each of which are performed with very specific turn sequence organizations. In general, acceptances which are preferred occur early or immediately after completion of their first part [23].

Similar to English, offers in Persian interaction also make relevant either acceptances or rejections, however their turn and sequence organization differs from those in English when performed in different contexts [24, 25]. In other words, while a given script is used to describe a pattern in a specific context, the same script may not be

employed in another context. To discuss the point under consideration here, an example from Persian will serve the purpose:

Extract 1(Persian): Note 1

A: khob.....shirini meyl daarin?

Ok.....would you like some sweets?

B: motshakkeram. Na, shirini chize khoobi nist.

Thank you. No, sweets are not good. (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)

This is the situation in which the interviewer offers the interviewee some sweets on the occasion of Nime Shabaan (the birthday of Imam-e-Zamaan, the twelfth Imam of the Shiite). Paying attention to the context from which the above communicative routine was adopted, one can see that the interlocutors involved are not of equal status. As is implied from the extract, the man to whom sweets are being offered is an educated person. Despite being unequal in terms of status, the offerer uses a seemingly whimperative construction the use of which is open to question with regard to appropriateness in thing-offering routines in Persian. The use of such a construction to offer something in Iran reflects a variety of shades of meaning. That is, in the light of Iranian cultural norms, a guest never expects his/her host to offer options especially in a food offering situation. Offering options may be interpreted as insincerity on the part of the offerer. In this context, the use of pure imperatives is more appropriate in that they involve an obligation of some sort incorporating politeness in Iranian culture, that is when you make offers, the more forceful and direct you are, the more polite it is [26].

The following cultural scripts can be put forward for the aforementioned interactional routines:

A: (a) I would want to do X for you

- I say this because I want to do it
- I know I won't have to do it
- I say this because I want you to feel good towards me

Component (a) says that the offer made here is realized in a whimperative construction. The speaker offers to do something (here offering sweets). Component (b) implies that the speaker makes an offer, linking it with other types of offer patterns. Component (c) postulates that the speaker appears to be reluctant to offer sweets. In fact, he takes it for granted that the addressee does not

have the desire to eat sweet. However, the speaker uses this expression to appear polite so that the addressee would feel good towards him. The last point mentioned is basically the outcome of the last component.

To contrast the offering routine patterns in English and Persian, the following example from English is worthy of consideration:

Extract 2 (English)

A:.....May I offer you some coffee, Jane?

B: Thank you. But I prefer tea. (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

The above exchange unit involves a context in which the host is offering coffee to her guest. To further elaborate on the point, the aforementioned interactional meaning is shown in the following cultural scripts:

A: (a) I would want to do X for you

- I say this because I want to do it
- I don't know if I will have to do it
- I want you to say if I can do it for you

Component (a) shows the realization of the offer in a whimperative construction, hence, the form. Component (b) links the pattern with different types of offer-making patterns in English. Illustrating the illocutionary purpose, these two components are common in both English and Persian. The point of contrast seems to be in components (c) and (d). Component (c) in English implies that the offerer does not mean to impose the offer on the addressee. Therefore, he is free to act at will. This is basically in harmony with the cultural norm that takes the autonomy of the person into account. Comparatively, in Persian, the same component posits that the speaker is not willing to comply with the offer he is making. He just employs the expression to appear polite. What was said is the outcome of the last component. Component (d) in English postulates that the addressee should express his true wishes towards the offer being made. Note that one's negative response to an offer in Persian does not mean that the speaker has no desire to what is offered. Of course, it is worth mentioning that one's positive response to an offer in Persian-offering routines might be interpreted as rudeness. Therefore, in Persian it is required to refuse an offer for several times and for the other person to insist further. A very strong social convention in Iranian society is that, out of modesty, any offer must be refused at least once and often more than once as a

matter of course, resulting in the initiator's stronger insistence. Such insistence is seen as a sign of consideration for the guests and of concern for the guests' needs. The situation has potential for cross-cultural miscommunication because the same amount of persistence may be interpreted as forcefulness in American culture [27].

The aforementioned cultural norm in Persian can be linked with the following cultural script:

- I say "no" because I want you to feel good towards me
- I can't say what I think, feel or want

In contrast, it is believed that one's no response to an offer in English means that the person does not truly have the desire for the item being offered. This cultural norm can be represented in the following cultural script:

- I say "no" because I don't want it (the thing offered)
- I can say what I think, feel or want

Advocating the semantic metalanguage model, Wierzbicka [2, 28] reasons that such terms as offer, suggestion and invitation to describe constructions having why don't you do X? in English are not self-explanatory, causing the analyst to fall within a case of indeterminacy. That is, the analyst doubts if he should assign offer, suggestion, or invitation to constructions of this type. Nonetheless, at times all of these terms can be used to describe them. On this ground, the semantic metalanguage presented in cultural scripts is proposed to tackle such intercultural meanings in a proper way.

To compare and contrast constructions starting with why in English and *chera* in Persian, the following two examples best serve the purpose:

Extract 3 (Persian)

A: *chera meyl namikonid?*

Why don't you eat?

B: *Mamnoon.*

Thanks.

A: *yeki ke eshkaal nadaare.*

But one is no problem.

B: *khaahesh mikonam.*

You are welcome. (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)

This is also the situation in which the interviewer offers the interviewee some candies on the occasion of Nime Shabaan (the birthday of Imam-e-Zamaan, the twelfth Imam of the Shiite).

The above interactional meaning can be represented within the following cultural scripts:

- I say: I want you to say, if you can, why you shouldn't do X
- I think you can't (say why)
- I think it will be a good thing if you do it
- I say this because I want you to do it

The following extracts show the corresponding interactional routine in English:

Extract 4 (English)

A:.....Why don't you have a cup of coffee?

B: I don't feel like drinking, Mrs. Elaney. (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

The following cultural scripts can be suggested for this communicative interaction routine:

- I say I want you to say why you shouldn't do X
- I think you can't (say why)
- I think it will be a good thing if you do it
- I say this because I would want you to do it

The exchange unit from Persian suggests that the speaker wonders why his guests do not have the sweet. This is basically in harmony with this cultural norm that people as guests in Iran do not go ahead and have the item offered without the insistence of the host due to the fact that it might be considered impolite. A closer look at the situation given, one can imply that the host is pushing the guest to go ahead and have the sweet offered; pushing in this context must be interpreted as a sign of good feelings towards the guest.

To further elaborate the point under consideration here, the above cultural scripts are contrasted and compared. Component (a) is similar in both English and Persian, giving the implication that the speaker wants to know why the addressee is not doing what the speaker expects him/her to do, hence, the meaning that lies in constructions starting with why in English and *chera* in Persian. Component (b) posits that the addressee cannot say the reason why he/she is not doing what is expected, henceforth, the ground for using this construction. This component is also similar in both cases. Component (c) in both English and Persian expresses the speaker's good feelings towards the addressee. Component (d) seems to be the point of contrast. While in English this construction is considered a whimperative one, it is rendered as an imperative in Persian, hence, the form.

The writer regards the Persian construction as a pure imperative one on the ground that what the speaker means in the Persian interaction is mixed with persuasion.

**Conclusions and Implications:** As it was shown, the cultural scripts described the characteristics of English and Persian use of offerings and the underlying cultural values accurately. This level of accuracy could not have been achieved by reliance on some abstract concepts or Western models of politeness driven by an Anglocentric perspective such as Brown and Levinson's Model. In all cases scripts and explications were presented in parallel, precisely equivalent versions, using the natural semantic metalanguage expressed via English and Persian. This served to demonstrate both that the metalanguage itself is not tied to any single language, either to English or to Persian and that the cultural scripts method provides a vehicle whereby cultural outsiders can access and understand Persian offerings much better.

The present paper supports Wierzbicka's [2] idea that the communicative interaction routines are realized with regard to different cultural norms in different communities. Indeed, speakers of a given culture have been shown to have mutually shared expectations about what the appropriate behavior and its social meanings are in different contexts [5].

In the last few years, however, another direction of studies has focused on the effects of explicit teaching of L2 pragmatics and intercultural communication and the development of pragmatics in L2 learners [8, 29]. These studies on L2 pragmatic instruction have examined the effect of implicit versus explicit teaching approaches on specific aspects of L2 pragmatics and suggest that explicit instruction may be effective for developing socio-pragmatic proficiency.

The present research paves the way for a novel approach for explicitly teaching L2 socio-pragmatics in general and offering patterns in particular to EFL learners by providing them with authentic exemplars from L2 social interactions that are based on findings in conversation analysis (CA) and presented through cultural scripts. These materials also provide translation students and translators not only with explicit information about socio-pragmatic norms, but also with opportunities to practice and use the learned L2 socio-pragmatic norms as they translate them from one language into another and vice versa.

As mentioned before, studies with respect to the use of the semantic metalanguage to describe language are still at an early stage of development. In order to broaden horizons in teaching cultures with an appeal to the use of the semantic metalanguage, further studies are required. Nonetheless, the authors think that there is the possibility of using the semantic metalanguage in teaching L2 socio-pragmatics (e.g. offerings) and translation. The scripts proposed to describe an interactional meaning can be employed to bring about awareness within the learners of the form, illocutionary purpose and the cultural norms implicit behind it. Besides, the use of the scripts makes it possible to compare and contrast different ways of interaction in different cultures. According to Wierzbicka [2, 3, 30], semantics can be regarded as a key to cross-cultural differences. Therefore, semantics presented in terms of cultural scripts can be used to teach the pragmatic aspects of language.

In spite of the fact that cultural scripts can be used in teaching L2 socio-pragmatics, they should be applied to teaching adult learners rather than children on the ground that the syntactic patterns and the lexicon used in the formation of the scripts are, to some extent, complex and that they deal with the meaning implicit in communicative interaction routines. Furthermore, in order to see whether or not they produce effective results, they must be empirically tested.

**Suggestions for Further Research:** The application of the semantic metalanguage to describe communicative interaction routines can be said to be still intact. However, it is for the interested readers to decide to undertake further research in the area of L2 socio-pragmatics. The following suggestions can be used as departures for further studies in the area:

- Directness versus indirectness (including imperative and whimperative constructions) and requestive behavior involving rejection of requests and offers can be explained and taught using the cultural script model.
- People living in a foreign community are brought up with a certain set of values and ways of life that constitute an entity called "culture". Portion of these values and ways of life are realized in communicative interaction routines. Sayings, proverbs and percepts are used to convey special meanings. Persian is rich in the use of sayings, proverbs and percepts. These

aspects of the Persian language, regarded a direct reflection of cultural values, can be described within the framework of the semantic metalanguage presented in cultural scripts.

- For the modern Anglo reader of the Holy Quran, a cross-cultural commentary is a necessity, in the same way as a cross-cultural guide is necessary for successful communication between “native” Americans and Persian speakers. The cultural script model can be an effective tool for the purposes of cross-cultural understanding and teaching-in personal interaction, social life, business, politics, literature and also in religion. In particular, it can be an effective tool for the interpretation of the Holy Quran-both from a literary and a religious point of view. For example, religious concepts such as Jihad (literally means war) and Isaar (literally means sacrifice) can be explained and taught using the cultural script model. In this sense, cultural scripts can be especially used in teaching translation students and novice translators.
- As Wierzbicka has tried to show in her book *English: Meaning and Culture* [29], English itself is not culturally and ideologically neutral: on the contrary, it is steeped in culture - Anglo culture. When the Iranian tries to engage in dialogue, they need, first of all, to try to explain their own position. To do this effectively, they may need to strip themselves of the complex language to which they are accustomed and which they normally take for granted. The closer the explanations get to the level of simple and universal human concepts, the more comprehensible they will be to outsiders. If we as members of a particular group (cultural, religious, or any other) try to speak to others using our own terminology and our own complex but familiar constructs, we will be talking to ourselves. To promote dialogue, we will do well to promote the use of simple and universal human concepts. Dialogue can facilitate such understanding and shared human concepts can facilitate dialogue and communication of any kind. For someone interested in dialogue the Natural Semantic Metalanguage, based on shared human concepts, will be a valuable practical tool.

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**Note1:**

1. In transcriptions from Persian, the letter “a” symbolizes a low front vowel which is close to the sound of “a” in the word “cat”. The “aa” sequence, on the other hand, stands for a low back vowel which is close to the sound of “a” in the word “father”.

**Appendix A**

**English and Persian Dyads (The Corpus).**

**Extract1 (English):**

A: *Do you want me to bake a cake for dessert?*

B: *Thanks. But I prefer an apple pie.* (Inspiration, February, 2009)

**Extract2 (English):**

A: *Can I invite you for dinner to a restaurant?*

B: *Thanks, you are so generous. I think a chocolate cake in a coffee shop is much better, isn't it?* (Hope Channel, February, 2009)

**Extract 3 (English):**

A: *Ok John, your prize is a ten-day trip to the Bahamas by plane.*

B: *I'll go there but not by plane of which I'm afraid. I prefer a cruise.*  
(Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 4 (English):**

A: *Let me help you.*

B: *Thanks, I take them. Please carry the books.*  
(Inspiration, January, 2009)

**Extract 5 (English):**

A: *Do you like to come to the movies with us?*

B: *No, I'm not in a good shape today.* (Inspiration, February, 2009)

**Extract 6 (English):**

A: *Why don't you eat some chocolate?*

B: *Thanks, chocolate makes me thirsty.* (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 7 (English):**

A: *Let me take you a taxi.*

B: *Thanks, I prefer to walk.* (Hope Channel, February, 2009)

**Extract 8 (English):**

A: *If you don't have an umbrella, you can use mine.*

B: *Thanks, I'd like to walk in the rain.* (Inspiration, January, 2009)

**Extract 9 (English):**

A: *.....May I offer you some coffee, Jane?*

B: *Thank you. But I prefer tea.* (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 10 (English):**

A:.....*Why don't you have a cup of coffee?*  
B: *I don't feel like drinking, Mrs. Delaney.*  
(Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 11 (English):**

A: *We are going to stadium to watch the match. Would you like to join us?*  
B: *No, thanks. Nothing is more boring than watching a football match.*  
(VOATV1, January, 2009)

**Extract 12 (English):**

A: How about a glass of water?  
B: Excellent! (Hope Channel, February, 2009)

**Extract 13 (English):**

A: Would you like to talk?  
B: Sure. (VOATV1, January, 2009)

**Extract 14 (English):**

A: What do you think about throwing a party at the yard?  
B: Good idea. Why not! (Inspiration, February, 2009)

**Extract 15 (English):**

A: Don't you think green fits you more?  
B: Let's give it a try. (CNN, February, 2009)

**Extract 16 (English):**

A: I can fill in for you if you'd like to go to the party.  
B: Great! I appreciate it ... Many thanks. (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 17 (English):**

A: I will bring your suitcase.  
B: It's kind of you. (Inspiration, February, 2009)

**Extract 18 (English):**

A: *A bar of chocolate before going to bed?*  
B: *No, thanks. Chocolate makes me thirsty.* (Inspiration, February, 2009)

**Extract 19 (English):**

A: *Any help in conducting the project?*  
B: *No, thanks. It's my own duty and I should learn to manage it by myself.* (VOATV1, February, 2009)

**Extract 20 (English):**

A: *Do you like to go skiing with us?*  
B: *No, thanks. I've got a terrible cold.* (CNN, January, 2009)

**Extract 21 (English):**

A: *Would you like some more? It's got no fat in it and is very delicious.*  
B: *So it's worth trying it.* (Hope Channel, January, 2009)

**Extract 22(English):**

A: *Fish for breakfast! Do you like to give it a try?*  
B: *It seems nice.* (Inspiration, January, 2009)

**Extract 23(English):**

A: *Let me help you. We can do it together.*  
B: *No. I prefer to be alone.* (Press TV, January, 2009)

**Extract 24(English):**

A: *Why don't you go with your father? You learn a lot.*  
B: *I don't feel like going there.* (Inspiration, February, 2009)  
(Persian Extracts)

**Extract1 (Persian):**

A: *Ghahvatun ro baa shekar meyl mikonid?*  
'Would you like to drink your coffee with sugar?'  
B: *Na, man diyaabet daaram. Baa shir mikhoram.*  
'No, I'm diabetic. I drink it with milk.' (IRIB1PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 2 (Persian):**

A: *Mikhaayd ghabl az raftan esteraahat konid?*  
'Do you want to take some rest before leaving?'  
B: *Delam mikhaast vali baayad taa zohr unjaa baasham.*  
'I like to do so, but I have to be there by noon.'  
(IRIB2PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 3 (Persian):**

A: *Mikhaayid baa maashine man berid unjaa?*  
'Would you like to go there by my car?'  
B: *Na, shomaa lof daarid vali piyaaderavi baraam behtare.*  
'No, you have kindness; but walking is better for me.'  
(IRIB1PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 4 (Persian):**

A: *Kuler ro baraatun roshan konam?*  
'Do you want me to turn on the air conditioner?'  
B: *Na, mamnun. Sarmaa khordam.*  
'No, thanks. I've got a cold.' (IRIB4PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 5 (Persian):**

A: *Az in soop meyl mikonid?*  
'Would you eat from this soup?'  
B: *Daste shomaa dard nakone.*



'May your hand not ache?'

A: *Befarmaaid, namak nadaare.*

'Please, it has no salt.'

B: *Chashm.*

'On my eye.' (IRIB2PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 6 (Persian):**

A: *Emshab tashrif miyaarid manzele maa?*

'Would you come to our home tonight.'

B: *Marhamate shomaa ziyaad.*

'Your kindness is great.'

A: *Khaahesh mikonam, sarafraaz befarmaaid.*

'Please, give us the honor.'

B: *Chashm, khedmat miresam.*

'On my eye, I'll come and be at your service.' (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 7 (Persian):**

A: *Begzaarid komaketun konam.*

'Let me help you.'

B: *Shomaa lotf daarid. Khodam mibarameshun.*

'That's kind of you. I'll take them myself.'

A: *Khaahesh mikonam. Shomaa mesle khaahare khodam hastid.*

'Please. You are like my own sister.'

B: *Mamnun. Saayatun kam nashe.*

'Thanks. May your shadow never grow less?' (IRIB4PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 8 (Persian):**

A: *Khob.....shirini meyl daarin?*

'Ok.....would you like some sweets?'

B: *Motshakkeram. Na, shirini chize khubi nist.*

'Thank you. No, sweets are not good.' (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 9 (Persian):**

A: *Cheraa meyl namikonid?*

'Why don't you eat?'

B: *Mamnun.*

'Thanks.'

A: *Yeki ke eshkaal nadaare.*

'But one is no problem.'

B: *Khaahesh mikonam.*

'You are welcome.' (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 10 (Persian):**

A: *Chaay meil mikonid?*

'Would you like some tea?'

B: *Daste shomaa dard nakone.*

'May your hand doesn't ache (Yes, please).' (IRIB2PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 11 (Persian):**

A: *Aakhare hafte aayande ye safar mirim Esfahan. Shomaa ham miyaayn?*

'We're going to Esfahan the following weekend. Would you come, too?'

B: *e! ettefaaghan maa ham mikhaastim berim safar. Munde budim kojaa berim!*

'Oh! Incidentally, we wanted to go on a trip. We just didn't know where to go!'

(IRIB1PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 12 (Persian):**

A: *Doshanbe in hafte tavallode faribaast. Shomaa ham da'vat hastid. Tashrif miyaarid?*

'Fariba's birthday is on Monday. You are invited to. Would you come?'

B: *Tavalldoesh mobaarak vali mote'assefane doshanbe mehmun daaram. Be har haal az d'avatetun moteshakkeram*

'Happy birthday to her! But unfortunately, I have some guests on Monday. Anyway, thanks for your invitation.' (IRIB2PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 13 (Persian):**

A: *Fardaa mirim kuhnavardi. Miyaaee berim?*

'Tomorrow, we're going mountain climbing. Do you come?'

B: *Cheraa ken na?! Man aasheghe kuhnavardiam.*

'Why not? I love mountain climbing.' (IRIB3PER, January 2009)

**Extract 14 (Persian):**

A: *Komaki az man bar miaad baraatun anjaam bedam?*

B: *Na kheili mamnun. Be shomaa zahmat namidam.*

'No thanks. I don't bother you.' (IRIB2PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 15 (Persian):**

A: *Ejaaee bedid man hesaab konam?*

'Let me pay'

B: *Na. Man hessab mikonam.*

'No. I pay.' (IRIB3PER, January 2009)

**Extract 16 (Persian):**

A: *Masiretun kojaast? Beresunametun?*

'Where is your destination? May I take you?'

B: Aakhe zahmatetun mishe. Namikhaam masiretun ra door konam.

'It bothers you. I don't want to take you far from your way.' (IRIB2PER, February, 2009)

**Extract 17 (Persian):**

A: Ejaaze midid komaketun konam?

'Do you let me help you?'

B: Khodaa kheiret bedeh maadar.

'May God bless you mother.' (IRIB1PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 18 (Persian):**

A: Miaee fardaa berim Shena?

'Would you come swimming tomorrow?'

B: Baashe. Saa`te chand?

'Ok. What time?' (IRIB4PER, January, 2009)

**Extract 19 (Persian):**

A: Fardaa baa maamaanet miaee khune maa? Nazri daarin.

'Would you come to our house tomorrow? We have Nari (a religious ceremony).'

B: Aare. Ettefaaghan maamaanam kheili dust daareh.

'Yes. Incidentally my mom likes it very much.' (IRIB3PER, February, 2009)