

琉球大学学術リポジトリ

依頼行為と「依頼－受理」行動の異文化コミュニケーション研究(1) －比較談話研究から異文化コミュニケーション研究へ－

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Intercultural Studies of Directives and Directive-Response Sequences: From Cross-Cultural Comparisons to Intercultural Coordination (I)

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I. Introduction

The phenomena of interest in this paper are directive utterances and directive-response sequences. Directives are considered intrinsically face-threatening (i.e., by nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 65). Because of this feature, directives have been studied from the analytical point of politeness strategies (i.e., ways in which interlocutors attempt to minimize face threats). In particular, cross-cultural validity of what is claimed to be a universal principle has been tested in many speech communities. This paper reviews some studies that discuss cultural dimensions of directives and directive-response sequences so as to illustrate why this particular speech act is a helpful communicative site where one can discover the symbols, meanings, premises, and norms of cultural self. Based on the review, I will resolve some controversial issues and present, as a conclusion, theoretical and analytical stances that are most accountable for studying the phenomena in the context of intercultural communication.

II. Directives in Intercultural Communication

Directives and directive-response sequences are analytical sites rich in displays of cultural voices of self and society. Rosaldo's (1982) ethnographic study of Ilongot speech demonstrated that there exist multiple ways of giving shape to illocutionary acts when speech is considered as an action situated in the sociality of interlocutors. Viewed from the

speech-as-action perspective, directives are an especially useful speech act resource for uncovering cultural dimensions of communication practices because they encapsulate the linguistically constructed cultural world of interlocutors. Fitch and Sanders (1994) point out that "directives are among the visible, ubiquitous communicative means through which persons understand who they are--and attempt to exert control over who they can be--in their social world" (p. 243). In a similar vein, Bruner, Roy, and Rutner (1982) argue that "learning to make a request is, in its way, a microcosm of socialization into a linguistic community and into the culture." This process of socialization into a linguistic community is particularly informative of intercultural communication practices problematized in this paper. Fitch (1994) also notes that directives reveal many facets of the workings of language, including the construction of meaning on several levels: the interpretation of indirect requests, relational meanings, power relationships, and the interplay of situation and directive forms for gaining felicitous meanings. Interlocutors' conceptions of self and identity are part of such potent meanings. In addition, focusing on specific act sequences will allow investigators to delimit a domain of analysis and delve into the questions raised, circumventing possible criticisms which some ethnographic studies have faced inadvertently by appearing to permit an attitude that says, "Anything goes." Taken together, directives are rich cultural spheres of human communicative practices, a gateway to situated accounts of cultural and intercultural identification.

What exactly are directives? According to Searle (1976), directives, a category of illocutionary acts, are "attempts (of varying degrees) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something" (p. 359). They are, according to Searle, one of five basic things humans universally do with language.¹ Sentences such as "I order you to leave" and "I command you

to stand at attention" (p. 365) are the prototypical forms of directives. Searle cites these sentences in order to examine the syntactic and semantic properties of the illocutionary act; however, it is unlikely that these sentences are actually performed in everyday conversation. Thus, directives, as they are conceived in this study, include various syntactic forms of utterances with the verbs denoting the directive illocutionary act; namely, ask, order, command, request, beg, plead, pray, entreat, invite, permit, advise, dare, defy, and challenge. Thus, the term directive encompasses other kin terms such as requests, commands, imperatives, and prohibitions (See Snell-Hornby, 1984 for a cline formulation of di-

'The other four illocutionary acts included in Searle's (1976) taxonomy are:

- (1) Representatives (Assertives): An attempt to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. (e.g., "I state that it is raining." "I predict that he will come.")
- (2) Commissives: An attempt to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to some future course of action. (e.g., "I promise to pay you the money." "I pledge allegiance to the flag.")
- (3) Expressives: An attempt to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content. (e.g., "I apologize for stepping on your toe." "I congratulate you on winning the race.")
- (4) Declarations: An act, a successful performance of which guarantees that the propositional content corresponds to the world. (e.g., "I find you guilty as charged." "I declare the meeting adjourned." "You're fired.")

rectives). The inclusive term is suitable because the focal point is not a syntactic analysis of sentence structures, but rather a pragmatic analysis of what interlocutors accomplish by the way they use directives. Thus, my treatment of directives is more in line with the approach taken by J. L. Austin (1962) than with the approach taken by John Searle, given the more pragmatic classification of speech acts by Austin. This stance is productive in light of Fitch's (1994) finding that in real world interaction, directives are often accomplished through a broader sequence of discourse. She notes, for example, that responses to non-directive utterances, such as informatives and expressives, function under some circumstances as directives as well. Thus, in this study, speech acts or act sequences which "get the hearer to do something" are all taken into consideration.

For directives to be efficaciously interpreted by hearers, they must satisfy certain felicity or sincerity conditions (Gordon and Lakoff, 1975, p. 84). The felicity conditions are quoted here with an example of relevant linguistic realization of each condition:

1. Speaker wants hearer to do act.
("I want you to take out the garbage.")
2. Speaker assumes hearer is able to do act.
("Can you take out the garbage?")
3. Speaker assumes hearer is willing to do act.
("Would you be willing to take out the garbage?")
4. Speaker assumes hearer would not do act in the absence of the request.
("Will you take out the garbage?")

These felicity conditions are the basis for William Labov and David Fanshel's (1977) "rules of requests" for mitigating the forces of directives (Bonvillain, 1996, p. 115). Simply stated, whenever a speaker

requests an action to a hearer, the speaker must presume that:

1. The desired action needs to be performed.
2. The hearer would not have performed the action without the directive.
3. The hearer has the ability to perform the action.
4. The hearer has the willingness or obligation to perform the action.
5. The speaker has the right to request the action.
6. The speaker sincerely wants the action to be performed.

(Wilson, Kim, and Meischke, 1991/1992, p. 217)

What is interesting about these conditions and rules is that in intercultural communication these may not be a priori shared knowledge between speaker and hearer even though directives are suggested to have universal utility. Gordon and Lakoff (1975) mention that they would not be surprised at all if the felicity conditions are indeed universals because they have confirmed that, in a wide range of languages, direct translations of the postulates were taken as requests. However, unlike their tests in which speaker and hearer share the same language and cultural resources, intercultural encounters present an abundance of uncertainties as to whether a speech act is a directive. Who exactly should or should not pay for a dinner while dining with foreign guests at a restaurant is often unknown. Likewise, there may exist uncertainty about felicity conditions if the hearer and speaker do not share the same linguistic and cultural premises. If shared understanding of needs, willingness, ability, rights, and obligations of "taking the garbage out" is presumed for issuing a directive, directives may never occur in an intercultural dyad, for the shared cultural resources are not fully mapped to satisfy the preconditions. What happens, quite naturally, is the discursive coordination of these conditions and rules. For example,

when an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) says to a JLT (Japanese Language Teacher) in a team-taught English class, "Mr. Kinjo will write the word if I say 'yellow' is no good," the declaration initiates a coordination, for only when all the speaker's presumed conditions are granted by the hearer does it function as a request. However, what this dynamic suggests is not a challenge to the validity of felicity conditions and rules of request; rather, it suggests the usefulness of intercultural processes in discovering the ways in which these conditions and rules are rendered meaningful in each culture and how interlocutors come to mutual agreement on such questions as with whom, with what activities, and under what circumstances the felicity conditions can be satisfied and rules of requests can be implemented.

The enigma of intercultural directive discourse challenges us with a daunting question: How do we understand what the speaker meant? Ervin-Tripp (1976) attempted to answer the question in American college scenes and concluded that hearers assess situated meanings by (1) inference, (2) conventional directive frames, (3) directive (socio-interpersonal) rules, and (4) context in interpretation. They do so from the reference points, norms, or common knowledge shared with other speakers. Most directives, except for hints and questions, are "on record," and thus are not susceptible to misinterpretation given proper communicative competence to interpret socio-cultural contexts. On the other hand, speakers rely on shared reference points, norms, or common knowledge in selecting the most appropriate directive forms according to the social dimensions of familiarity, rank, territorial location, difficulty of task, whether a duty is normally expected, and whether non-compliance is likely. What is important is that *deviations* from the expected norms under a specific situation are given the most poignant meanings (Ervin-Tripp, 1976). Such norms and common knowledge are

subject to cultural specifications. For the current inquiry about intercultural coordination of working norms and common knowledge, it is informative to overview cultural variations in which directives give voice to shared norms and cultural knowledge.

III. Cultural Variations of Directive Utterances

Research on directives that attempts to demonstrate such variations of cultural practice is abundant. Traditionally, studies of directives focused on explicating linguistic factors used either to "mitigate" or "aggravate" the imposition of directives (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Smith, 1992). Sociolinguists have examined correlations between types of directives and socio-cultural factors. In this line of inquiries, Goodwin's (1990) study of Maple Street boys and girls' conversation was ground-breaking because it described how, by issuing directives, these boys and girls exert control over their interpersonal lives and how they discursively construct egalitarian social organization (girls) as well as hierarchical organization (boys). Based on the findings, she argues that directives are best understood as actions embedded within a larger field of social activity such as "footing," "alignment," "sequential organization," "participant framework," and "activity structure." The study was unique in that Goodwin discussed directives as a research site where "one can investigate in an especially clear way ties between the details of linguistic structure and an encompassing cultural world of social action" (p. 70). Goodwin's study of directives is an ethnographic and conversation analytic demonstration of how instrumentalities of speech (uses of directive in particular), including linguistic variations and channels, medium, and frames of accomplishing an end, help co-construct the life worlds of participants.

Blum-Kulka (1987) studied cross-cultural differences in the percep-

tion of directness of requests among native English-speaking and Hebrew-speaking university students. The study found that on a scale of indirectness the two groups agreed on the end points of the scale but that the middle ranking requests were perceived differently. She attributes the results to three factors: (1) Different conventions of means of expressing requests (reference to hearer's obligation); (2) differences in language specific conventions of form and means ('*ulay*' + future in Hebrew indicating 'perhaps' + future); (3) Differences in linguistic structure which is conventionalized as request ('*ani roca seta'ase*' -- I want you to do...). Furthermore, on a scale of politeness, the two groups differed noticeably in interpreting 'hint' requests. Blum-Kulka concludes that English speaking participants consider hints to be a polite form, whereas Hebrew speaking people do not find hinting very polite. Furthermore, she points out that indirectness based on the properties of utterances is crucial in interpreting *conventionalized* request forms but pragmatic context is more crucial for *non-conventionalized* requests. A case in point, as far as the present study is concerned, is that norms dictating what constitutes reasonable directness are subject to situational and cultural constraints.

In a similar study, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) examined patterns of request utterances in English and Hebrew and found that the directive speech act is realized linguistically in a variety of ways given compatible social constraints. In particular, orientations to the action (hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, speaker and hearer-oriented, and impersonal), as well as varying sets of syntactic mitigating strategies (i.e., interrogative, negation, past tense, and embedded 'if' clause) and pragmatic mitigating devices (i.e., consultative devices, understaters, hedges, and downtoner) were used in an idiosyncratic manner by each group.

Fitch (1994b) presents an ethnographic study of directive uses in American and Colombian speech communities and displays varying meanings thematized in each culture from which directives are rendered intelligible in interpersonal life. In American discourse, "empowerment" is thematized in such a way that cultural beliefs about one's autonomy and sanctions against its violation reveal rich meanings in discourse. Thus, in American discourse, "I" is normally taken out of the discourse and disclaimers are stressed. She concludes: "In this community, unique individual psyches are the locus of social action, and words are powerful enough to disturb those psyches. Thus care must be taken not to exert undue force or to annoy the autonomous individual through overt external control" (p. 195). In Colombian data, she found that "connectedness" (*confianza*) and authority (*jerarquia*) are negotiated in a specific interpersonal relationship and give meanings to specific directives being issued because *confianza* is a culturally sanctioned resource for directives, but too much of it works against accomplishing the requested task. These cultural beliefs shape directives which are characterized by "intermediated directives" and unstigmatized subversion of directives uttered to subordinates from a person of power. As Fitch points out, in both communities directives pose a problem, but they are not the same problem. The issues of concern are desire not to infringe on autonomy in American community and building a relationship based on *confianza* in Colombian community.

Fitch and Sanders (1994) offer a harsh critique of the current state of cross-cultural theorizing of directives when they ask and systematically respond to a question: "How can we explain preferences for the way directives are expressed?" They contend that existing cross-cultural theories on directives crystallized in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is limited in scope because most damagingly it narrowly

focuses on "face threat" as a motive for indirection and on social factors for explaining directive variations, obscuring the broader cultural premises at work. Based on examination of directive use in three different speech communities, Fitch and Sanders advance a new perspective, a more comprehensive and culturally grounded one, in which they postulate that preferences for directives are formed within three levels of "nested constraints" consisting of pragmatic differences between direct and indirect forms, social factors made relevant in specific instances, and cultural beliefs about personhood, relationships, and the exercise of power.

To demonstrate the new perspective, Fitch and Sanders (1994) present case studies of directive acts in an Ilongot speech community, among migrant workers in the Southeastern United States, and in urban Colombia. In each speech community examined, direct directives were not considered face threatening because cultural ideology -- clusters of values and beliefs about the nature of personhood, desirable relationships between persons, and about power -- are differently configured to give distinctive meanings to direct and indirect forms of directives. The interpersonal ideology of persons as equal among the Ilongot, crucially interconnected beings with unknowable, unstable "hearts" which must be rigorously formed in private and delicately plumbed in public, predispose an Ilongot speaker to prefer direct forms in private settings and indirect forms in public ones (p. 232). Similarly, the use of cultural imperatives among a migrant agricultural community in the southeastern U.S. is to ensure a hearer's compliance and to minimize the chance of misunderstanding or ignoring directive utterances, for the social organization of the community is primarily defined by crewleaders and their subordinates and the effects of the relationship can be felt in all spheres of community life. Directives in the community understandably take direct forms to ensure the rigidly controlled social hierarchy (pp. 233-4). In

urban Colombian discourse, the cultural premise of a need for individuals to be joined, to know that they are joined, and to act in ways that acknowledge the importance of their being joined dictates that directives be direct and not indirect, which would distance interlocutors from each other in this community of "connected" interpersonal ideology (pp. 234-8). In these three communities, unredressed direct directives do not count as face-threatening acts, and the culture-specific logics briefly sketched above render indirect directives moot. Drawing on these concrete findings, the authors surmise that "cultural values and beliefs, particularly ideologies, constrain the definition of social factors, and social factors, in turn, 'constrain' the pragmatic meaning of different forms of directives" (p. 242).

In their exposition, Fitch and Sanders (1994) make two theoretical moves that are pertinent to this paper. First, they point out that directives are potentially meaningful at two levels: "transparent meaning," referring to the expressed wants of the speaker with specific agent, act, and end specified and "translucent meaning," referring to the implicit or explicit changes in the status quo and the relationship that the speaker wants to bring about by uttering a particular directive. The second theoretical move is based on two levels of meaning; the authors argue that indirect directives are also face threatening for reasons different from those of direct directives. They cite four specific cases: First, indirect directives potentially threaten the hearer's *positive* face if the hearer displays incompetence by not recognizing the intentions behind the implicit directives. Second, concurring with Blum-Kulka (1990), indirect directives are threatening to the hearer's positive face to the extent that they impose inferential burden to acknowledge non-transparent directives. Third, misunderstanding and non-compliance to indirect directives potentially threaten the speaker's positive face, for the hearer may

genuinely misunderstand these or may opt not to comply with them, making the task deliberately ineffective. Fourth, at the level of translucent meaning, indirect directives may threaten both speaker and hearer's face, for they could be unwittingly taken to indicate that an equal, rather than a hierarchical relationship, exists between the interlocutors. The confusion may result in a false depiction of opportunity not to comply in a relationship when no such opportunity exists (pp. 226-8).

These two theoretical moves advance the inquiries about facework involved in directive utterances in a direction coherent with the goal of my inquiry. With this new perspective one can interpret the principal face redressive action (i.e., indirection) from multiple analytical points. Such a perspective allows the researcher to move away from the monolithic view of indirect directives as a redressive action not to impose on the hearer (negative politeness strategy), and also allows a richer and more culturally coherent account of directive strategies. This perspective is particularly informative for those who investigate intercultural discourse in which a lack of shared linguistic and cultural resources subjects interlocutors to increased cognitive imposition, misunderstanding, and relational ambiguity.

Some other evidence of cultural variations in the use of directive utterances are found in quantitatively oriented research as well. Hollos and Beeman (1987, cited in Bonvillain, 1996, p. 114) report a study on how Hungarian and Norwegian children learn directive strategies as a part of acquisition of communicative norms. The study reports that Hungarian children used relatively more direct commands and requests and made distinction between familiars (friends, family, neighbors) and strangers in selecting directives. In contrast, Norwegian children generally favored indirect means to both initiate and repeat requests. As children grew older, they employed a wider range of directive forms. Kim

and Wilson (1994) conducted a cross-cultural study of requests in Korea and in the United States. The study examined quantitatively how "interactive constraints" (clarity, perceived imposition, consideration for the other's feelings, risking disapproval for self, and effectiveness) were perceived and related to the likelihood of use. They found, among other things, that U.S. participants considered the direct statement strategy the most effective way of making a request, whereas Korean participants rated it the least effective method. For U.S. participants, clarity was closely related to effectiveness, but for Korean participants, clarity was counterproductive. In a related area, West (1990) demonstrated that women physicians issue directives that will be reciprocated by compliance more often than men physicians do.

However, research that seemingly disconfirms cultural differences in the use of requests is also reported. Walters (1981) examined the effects of multiple social factors (age of addressee, sex of address and sex of speaker, setting and topic) on the use of directives and found that only sex of addressee and sex of speaker were significant variables that affected directive strategies. However, the study dealt with bilingual speakers who are communicatively competent in both languages (i.e., they can adapt to cultural norms of target cultures spontaneously). Thus, the results do not necessarily reject the proposition that cultures vary in their use of directives.

IV. Summary: Towards Studies of Intercultural Directive Discourse

Four general points can be drawn from the existing cross-cultural studies of directives and directive-response sequences which have direct bearing on the study of intercultural directive discourse. First, for explorations of issues of cultural symbols, meanings, premises, and norms, examinations of communication principles such as those of "felicity

conditions" described in the earlier section help discover salient issues of ongoing discursive coordination in intercultural discourse. For example, the ability, willingness, right, and obligation to do a particular act are subject to cultural specifications, and thus require discursive coordination in intercultural discourse. By attending to mismatches of these conditions, one can discover points of congruence and conflicts of cultural premises through intercultural directive discourse.

Second, among particular communicative phenomena chosen for this study (i.e., directives and directive-response sequences), the most fundamental pragmatic feature is their directness or indirectness. This is so because by making directives indirect interlocutors presuppose cultural knowledge of, for example, what a proper person should be in that culture, what types of interpersonal relationship is being called for, and what socio-political needs must be met. Elaboration of such presuppositions will also help identify salient issues of discursive coordination in intercultural discourse.

Intercultural coordination brings to the fore some cultural premises of each participant culture, enabling a researcher to describe culturally distinctive interpretations of directives. The indirectness of directives is interpreted in a culturally specific way. In order to interpret directives culturally, interlocutors must attend to pragmatic differences of directive forms (direct and indirect forms in particular) and social factors, as well as cultural beliefs about the self, relationship, and exercise of power. By locating directives along a continuum of direct--indirect forms, one can discover consistent patterns in which directives are issued. Once the patterns are identified, the directives and directive-response sequences are interpreted in situ with pragmatic, social and cultural features drawn from field observation. This will lead to discoveries of salient themes and frames of discourse employed in cultural ways of speaking.

It will also allow researchers to display how those thematized concepts play out in other occasions.

Moreover, and this is the fourth point, locating directives and interpreting what they mean to interlocutors must be supplemented with another analytical point in order to portray a kind of self depicted in interlocutor's discourse; what is important for this purpose is to look into specific moves or strategies interlocutors take to push or pull towards one of the two ends of the direct--indirect pole. By examining patterns of such strategies, one can discover and explicate the cultural meanings and premises about the self that motivate conversational strategies. For such an analysis one must have a proper analytical framework. I have chosen what is now widely known as "politeness strategies" initiated by Brown and Levinson (1987). Part II of this sequel will examine the theoretical utilities of politeness strategies towards the same end of discovering cultural symbols, meanings, premises and norms about culturally sanctioned self, and how they are coordinated in intercultural discourse.

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論文要旨

依頼行為と「依頼—受理」行動の異文化コミュニケーション研究(Ⅰ) — 比較談話研究から異文化コミュニケーション研究へ —

宮平 勝行

普遍的な発話行為のひとつとして唱えられた依頼行為 (directive) については、多くの言語共同体における比較談話研究から、その表現上の多様性が明らかにされてきた。言語共同体に特有な依頼行為から推察される、文化的に規定された自己、対人関係、そして権力構造などについても多くの論考が存在する。異文化コミュニケーションにおいては、このような文化的特色を持つ総体が複数存在することから、談話を通して依頼行為の表現と意味の違いに関する相互調整が必要となる。そこで本稿では、従来の比較談話研究の結果を考察することによって、異文化コミュニケーションにおける依頼行為の研究の理論的立脚点をまとめてみた。

考察の結果は四つの論点にまとめられる。(1) 異文化コミュニケーションの研究では、発話者と聞き手の能力や態度、権利、義務などに関する語用論上の条件を当然のものとして受け止めず、意識的に分析することによってまず依頼に関する異文化間の類似点と相違点が明らかになる。(2) 依頼行為の最も基本的な誤用論的特徴はその直接性と間接性にある。(3) 依頼表現を直接—間接という連続体の上で捉えることによって、顕著な依頼表現の特徴を見出すことができる。このようにして明らかにされた依頼表現の誤用論的特徴は、背景にある文化特有の意味を発見し、それを的確に解釈する手がかりとなる。(4) 異文化コミュニケーションで必要な依頼行為の相互調整の方法とそこから推察できる自己や対人関係の文化的な解釈には、直接—間接という連続体での駆け引きを考察することがひとつの有効な方法である。