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Cultural and Gender Differences in the Speech Act of Apologizing*

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This research aims to investigate apology strategies used by American and Korean male and female students in order to elucidate similarities and differences between them. The data were collected by the discourse completion test (DCT) comprising seven apology situations. Sociopragmatic factors such as social distance, social status, and severity of offense were deliberately embedded in each situation. Four groups consisted of 10 NE-males, 10 NE-females, 10 EFL-males, and 10 EFL-females participated in this study. This study uses apology speech-act sets because most responses involved combinations of major apology strategies such as IFID+EXPL. Two research questions were formulated: First, what is the impact of culture and gender in the course of performing the speech act of apology? Second, what is the impact of sociopragmatic factors such as social distance, social status, and severity of offense on the selection of apology strategies? Based on major findings, some pedagogical implications for enhancing the communicative competence of Korean EFL students were discussed.

[gender and language/culture and language/gender and cultural differences in apologizing]

I. INTRODUCTION

Austin (1962) made a distinction between three kinds of speech acts. Locutionary acts only have the literal meaning of an utterance. Illocutionary acts convey social functions and force of an utterance. Perlocutionary acts have an effect on the emotions of the hearer. Since the effects of a certain speech act on the feelings of the hearer cannot be

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easily determined, Austin does not emphasize the importance of perlocutionary acts. Illocutionary acts form the very focus of Austin's interest, given that locutionary acts are embedded in illocutionary acts. Searle (1971) also emphasized that illocutionary acts constitute the basic unit of communication. In this sense, the term 'speech act' is considered identical with the term 'illocutionary act' (Levinson, 1983, p. 120). If someone says "I am sorry," he performs the illocutionary act of apologizing. In speech act theory, a speaker's intention in performing a speech act is referred to as the illocutionary force. Saying "I'm sorry" therefore can be considered an illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) for apologizing speech acts.

One of the basic assumptions of speech act theory is that speech acts called illocutionary acts such as apologizing, requesting, and refusing are not essentially true or false but in general either appropriate or inappropriate (Austin, 1962, p. 14). The appropriateness of these speech acts may vary according to social variables such as social distance (D) or familiarity, relative power (P), and severity (S) of offense (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 76). These social parameters in turn are influenced by cultural values. Members of collectivist cultures define themselves as members of groups whereas members of individualist cultures define themselves as autonomous individuals. Collectivists tend to see ingroups and outgroups as being distinct in stark contrast to individualists. In Korean culture, occupational rank or social status traditionally has been a very important consideration in the selection of apology strategies whereas in American culture social status is normally less significant (Byon, 2005; Chun, 2010).

Gender also plays a role in selecting speech acts. Some research suggests that there are differences between male and female styles of communication. Masculine speech styles are competitive, direct, and detached whereas feminine styles of communication are consensus-seeking, indirect, polite and emotional (Brownlow, Rosamon, & Parker, 2003). On the other hand, some research argues against the existence of any significant differences in masculine and feminine language (Weatherall, 2002). Based on the above discussion, this study aims to investigate the following two research questions: (1) What is the impact of culture and gender on the performance of a speech act of apology? (2) What is the impact of sociopragmatic factors such as social distance, social status, and severity of offense on the selection of apology strategies?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Language and Gender

The relationship between language and gender has been studied in terms of two major

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theories: dominance and difference. Dominance theory is associated with Lakoff (1975), Spender (1980), Zimmerman and West (1975), whereas a main proponent of difference theory is Tannen (1990).

In her pioneering work *Language and Women's Place* (1975), Lakoff provided momentum for dominance theory by attributing gender differences in language to unequal distributions of power and status, i.e., men and women inhabit the same cultural world where power and status are distributed unequally. This theory posits gender differences in language on the basis of male dominance and female subordination. Since male speech acts are generally assertive whereas female speech acts are passive, the speech acts of women are inferior to those of men (Shim, 2009). Lakoff claims that the tendency for women to use hedging (e.g., "sort of", "it seems like"), tag questions ("you don't mind eating this, do you?"), intensifiers (that's a "really" good idea), and super-polite forms ("would you mind...") more than men reflects male dominance and female subordination (1975, pp. 53-56).

In contrast to dominance theory which claims that men and women inhabit the same cultural world where power is unequally distributed, difference theory assumes that men and women exist in different cultural worlds because they belong to different subcultures resulting from divergent socialization. Counter to the dominance argument that feminine language is inferior, difference theory emphasizes that feminine communication styles should not be considered inferior (Tannen, 1990, p. 47). This theory assumes that boys and girls are socialized quite differently. Boys are socialized to view talk as a mechanism for conveying information and maintaining status and autonomy whereas girls are socialized to view talk as a primary vehicle to establish and maintain feelings of intimacy and closeness. Tannen's distinction of information and feelings is also described as "report talk" of men and "rapport talk" of women (1990, pp. 77-78). Holmes (1995) extends this approach and suggests that apologies have gender-specific functions. Women use significantly more apologies than men do because women tend to regard apologies as expressing solidarity and concern for others, whereas men regard them as admissions of weakness, inadequacy or failure (Holmes, 1995, p. 175).

2. Language and Culture

The impact of culture on cross-cultural and cross-gender communication has often been investigated in terms of two major dimensions of cultural variability: individualism and collectivism. Although both individualism and collectivism exist in all cultures, one pattern tends to predominate. Individualism and collectivism can be refined and distinguished in terms of the following four attributes (Triandis, 1995): (1) self concept, (2) relative importance of personal or group goals, (3) attribution of social behavior, (4)

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intrinsic or extrinsic aim of relationships.

Individualists tend to emphasize independence, autonomy from groups, a desire to be unique and self-reliance. In contrast, collectivists value interdependence, belongingness, pursuit of common goals with ingroup members, and maintenance of harmonious relationships. Self concept can be considered interdependent in collectivistic cultures, but independent in individualistic cultures. Collectivists perceive the group as the basic unit whereas individualists find it natural to view individuals as the basic social unit. Collectivists hold that one's business is also the business of the group, that is, friends should be concerned with each other's personal matters. Individualists hold that people should mind their own business and that privacy should be respected (Triandis, 1995).

Collectivists emphasize values that promote the welfare of their in-group members whereas individualists emphasize values that promote individual goals. When there is a conflict between personal and group goals in individualist cultures, personal goals have primacy over group goals; in collectivist cultures, group goals have priority over personal goals. Collectivists have personal goals that overlap with the goals of their in-groups, and if there is a discrepancy between the two sets of goals, they consider it obvious that group goals should have priority over personal goals (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995). Moreover, collectivists tend to show more intimacy with in-group members and a more formal manner toward out-group members than do individualists. Social behavior, including speech acts, is very different when collectivists interact with in-group members than when they interact with out-group members; it is only slightly different in the case of individualists (Triandis, 1995). Individualists also have in-groups and out-groups but are less inclined to see as sharp a contrast between them and are thus less inclined to behave as differently toward in-group and out-group members as do collectivists (Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990).

In individualist cultures, the motivation behind social behavior is attributed to individual attitudes, needs, or beliefs. In collectivist cultures, in contrast, social behavior is attributed to norms, duties and obligations. The former is internal or dispositional attribution, the latter external or situational attribution. In other words, individualists attribute social behavior to internal individual causes more frequently than collectivists, who tend to attribute them to external causes (Triandis, 1995).

With regard to relationships, individualists emphasize rational cost-benefit analysis of maintaining a particular relationship. When cost exceeds benefit, individualists often terminate the relationship. In contrast, collectivists emphasize that relationships themselves are of utmost importance. Even if the costs of these relationships exceed the benefits, collectivists tend to stay with the relationship. Collectivists focus on the intrinsic value of human relationships whereas individualists focus on their extrinsic value. Collectivists define themselves as members of in-groups whereas individualists

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define themselves as autonomous beings because collectivists are emotionally attached to their in-groups whereas individualists are emotionally detached even from their own in-groups (Triandis, 1995).

In fact, the dimensions of individualism and collectivism have been actively used because they have shown to have a strong impact on ordinary speech acts in many cultures. In his *Linguistic Expeditions*, Sohn (1986) addresses the question of cultural influence on communicative patterns and explains contrasting patterns of communication between Americans and Koreans in terms of individualism and collectivism. Sohn (1986) proposes the following five interlocking dimensions of value orientations to distinguish between the West and Asia in general, and between Americans and Koreans in particular: Individualism vs. collectivism, egalitarianism vs. hierarchism, confrontation vs. indirectness, pragmatism vs. formalism, and rationalism vs. emotionalism (pp. 445-6). Of these five value dimensions, it can be argued that the first two are fundamental, while the others are more or less derivative.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants consisted of 10 American male native English (NE) speakers, 10 American female NE speakers, 10 Korean male non-native English (English as a foreign language or EFL) speakers, and 10 Korean female EFL speakers. The NE speakers were selected from an introductory sociology course from the spring 2012 semester at a mid-western university in the United States. This course consisted of 38 students including 30 native English speakers and 8 nonnative speakers. NE speakers consisted of 10 male and 20 female students. From them only 10 male and 10 female students were randomly selected in order to match the sex ratio of male and female students. Their average age was 23.2.

The Korean EFL speakers were selected from an English reading comprehension course from the fall 2012 semester at a university in Seoul, Korea. In order to match the sex ratio of the NE speakers, only 10 Korean male and 10 Korean female EFL speakers were randomly selected from the all 35 EFL speakers enrolled in this course. They had a score ranging from 800 to 990 on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Their average age was 22.8.

From the data provided by the four participant groups, the following five types of differences were analyzed with respect to the apology speech act set: (1) cross-gender differences, (2) cross-cultural differences, (3) cross-cultural and cross-gender differences,

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(4) gender differences as a whole and (5) culture differences as a whole.

FIGURE 1

Contingency Table between Culture and Gender

		Gender	
		Male	Female
Culture	American	(1) NE-M	(2) NE-F
	Korean	(3) EFL-M	(4) EFL-F

※ (1)-(2) & (3)-(4): cross-gender differences
(1)-(3) & (2)-(4): cross-cultural differences
(1)-(4) & (2)-(3): cross-cultural & cross-gender differences
[(1)+(3)]-[(2)+(4)]: gender differences in whole
[(1)+(2)]-[(3)+(4)]: culture differences in whole

2. Instruments

The discourse completion test (DCT) was designed according to the seven situations used by the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989, pp. 13-15; Olshtain, 1989, pp. 160-161). In constructing situations, the social distance (SD) variable is symbolized either as 'very close' (-SD) or 'not very close' (+SD). The seven situations, labelled Paper (S1), Book (S2), Manager (S3), Waiter (S4), Meeting (S5), Driver (S6), and Insult (S7) are as follows:

S1: (S>H, -SD)

A university professor promised to return the student's term paper that day but hadn't finish reading it yet.

S2: (S<H, -SD)

A student borrowed her professor's book, which she promised to return that day, but forgot to bring it.

S3: (S>H, +SD)

A staff manager has kept a student waiting for half an hour for a job interview because he was called away to an unexpected meeting.

S4: (S<H, +SD)

The waiter in an expensive restaurant brings fried chicken instead of beefsteak to a surprised customer.

S5: (S=H, -SD)

A notoriously unpunctual student is late again for a meeting with a friend with whom she is working on a paper.

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S6: (S=H, +SD)

A driver in the parking lot backs into someone else's car.

S7: (S=H, -SD)

The speaker offended a fellow student by criticizing him during a discussion. After the meeting, the fellow student mentions this fact as an insult.

3. Procedures

The analysis model used in this study was based on the CCSARP coding manual. In order to make valid comparisons with native English data, this study categorized the apologizing speech acts of respondents by referring to the coding manual provided by the CCSARP group. Apology responses were mostly realized by a combination of major strategies, and were categorized according to Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) apology speech act set, e.g., IFID+EXPL, IFID+REPR+FORB. For example, the following discourse was categorized as IFID+RESP+EXPL:

- Discourse: I'm sorry (IFID). I missed the bus (RESP), and there was a terrible traffic jam (EXPL).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major purpose of this research was to investigate five types of differences as classified above in the method section among the apology strategies used by the four groups: NE-M, NE-F, EFL-M, and EFL-F. The following five types of differences were analyzed according to the seven situations in order:

(1) cross-gender difference (first type difference),
(2) cross-cultural difference (second type difference),
(3) cross-cultural and cross-gender differences (third type difference),
(4) gender differences as a whole (fourth type difference), and
(5) culture differences as a whole (fifth type difference).

The first situation (S1) concerned a university professor who promised to return the student's paper that day but had not finish reading it. In this case of S1, only the fourth type difference among apology strategies used by male and female groups as a whole was found to be significant (χ^2=12.8, df=5) at the level of $p<.05$.

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TABLE 1
Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 1 [S>H, -SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M	F	M	F
	N %	N %	N %	N %
(1) EXPL+REPR	1 (10)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
(2) IFID+EXPL	3 (30)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
(3) IFID+REPR	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (10)	0 (0)
(4) IFID+EXPL+REPR	4 (40)	8 (80)	6 (60)	9 (90)
(5) IFID+INTS+EXPL	0 (0)	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (10)
(6) IFID+INTS+REPR	1 (10)	0 (0)	3 (30)	0 (0)
	10(100)	10(100)	10(100)	10(100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification).

Table 1 reveals that the most common category used by the four groups (NE-M, NE-F, EFL-M, EFL-F) was category (4): IFID+EXPL+REPR (e.g. "I apologize for the inconvenience. I haven't finished reading all of your paper. I will hand it back ASAP"). This category was selected by 50% of males and 85% of females.

EFL speakers used semantically similar apology strategies to those used by NE speakers, but the appearance of their actual utterances did not sound native-like. In other words, though the category of apology strategies (such as EXPL) used by NE and EFL groups was similar, the forms of expressing the apology strategies selected by the two groups were substantially different. For example, apology strategies selected by NE and EFL groups such as EXPL and REPR were expressed differently as in the following two excerpts.

NE: No, I'm sorry. I didn't get the chance to finish it. (EXPL)
I'm sorry, I'll get it back to you ASAP. (REPR)
EFL: Oh, I am sorry. I do not finish reading your paper. (EXPL)
I will bring it next time. (REPR)

The forms of expressing EXPL and REPR strategies selected by NE speakers appear to be more colloquial form of language than those by EFL speakers. The EFL speaker used the same categories of apology strategies with the NE speaker but the actual expressions of the strategies do not sound native-like.

The second situation (S2) concerned a student who borrowed his professor's book and

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promised to return it that day, but had forgot to bring it. The five types of differences were not statistically significant in this situation but following features are remarkable in the case of S2.

TABLE 2

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 2 [S<H, -SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M	F	M	F
	N %	N %	N %	N %
(1) IFID+INTS+RESP	1 (10)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
(2) IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR	7 (70)	6 (60)	5 (50)	4 (40)
(3) ALT+IFID+RESP+REPR	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (20)
(4) ALT+IFID+INTS+RESP+EXPL	2 (20)	2 (20)	0 (0)	1 (10)
(5) ALT+IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (20)	2 (20)
(6) ALT+IFID+INTS+EXPL+REPR	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (10)	1 (10)
(7) ALT+IFID+INTS+REPR	0 (0)	1 (10)	2 (20)	0 (0)
	10(100)	10(100)	10(100)	10(100)

※ M (male), F (female), ALT (alerter), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification).

In S2, where the student apologizes to the professor for forgetting to bring a book borrowed from the professor, the student tends to use more INTS (intensifications) as in Table 2, while in S1, where the professor apologizes to the student, the professor uses relatively fewer intensifications as in Table 1. In S2, the INTS strategy was used in the most frequently selected category (2): (IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR), while in S1, the INTS strategy was not used in the most frequently selected category (4): (IFID+EXPL+REPR). Comparison of Table 1 and 2 seems to suggest that the frequency of using intensifiers (INTS) may be highly related to the speaker's social status. In other words, we might say that speakers of lower status tend to use more intensifiers, whereas speakers of higher status tend to use fewer intensifiers. This result seems to be very similar to the findings of Vollmer and Olshtain (1989, p. 203).

In the case of Korean students, the frequent use of address terms such as 'professor' as an alerter (ALT) to express deference to their college teachers can be regarded as a cultural convention of Korean society. As Table 2 demonstrates, the strategy of ALT (alerter) was used by only 25% of NE speakers and 55% of EFL speakers, whereas it was used by 35% of male and 45% female speakers. In using the strategy of ALT, the

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cross-cultural difference was greater than the cross-gender difference. In other words, EFL speakers frequently use an alerter like 'professor' much more than NE speakers. However, the difference of how much or how often males use an alerter compared to females was not that noticeable. The following two examples are representative of the speech-act set of apology used by EFL speakers. These examples illustrate the transfer of native Korean linguistic conventions of frequently using terms of address to Korean EFL speakers' apology.

EFL (M): I'm so sorry, professor. I forgot to bring it.
I'll bring it tomorrow.
EFL (F): I am so sorry, professor. I forgot to bring it.
I don't know why I forgot it... I am so sorry.
Is it okay to bring the book tomorrow?
I am so sorry, professor.

In Situation 3 [S>H, +SD], the manager apologizes to the student interviewee for having kept him or her waiting for half an hour. In this case of S3, the cross-gender and cross-culture (third type) difference between the apology strategies used by NE-male and EFL-female speakers were found to be significant (χ^2=9.6, df=3) at the level of $p<.05$. The fourth type difference between the apology strategies employed by male and female groups as a whole also were found to be significant (χ^2=10.01, df=3) at the level of $p<.05$.

TABLE 3

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 3 [S>H, +SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M	F	M	F
	N %	N %	N %	N %
(1) IFID+EXPL	8 (80)	3 (30)	6 (60)	2 (20)
(2) IFID+EXPL+REPR	2 (20)	2 (20)	1 (10)	2 (20)
(3) IFID+INTS+EXPL	0 (0)	3 (30)	3 (30)	4 (40)
(4) IFID+INTS+EXPL+REPR	0 (0)	2 (20)	0 (0)	2 (20)
	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification).

Table 3 reveals that the majority of males used category (1): IFID+EXPL (e.g. "I'm sorry, I was unexpectedly called to a meeting"), whereas females used four categories

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relatively evenly: category (1): IFID+EXPL (25%), category (2): IFID+EXPL+REPR (20%), category (3): IFID+INTS+EXPL (35%), and category (4): IFID+INTS+EXPL+ REPR (20%). Category (2) includes the strategy of offering repair (REPR), category (3) includes INTS, and category (4) includes both REPR and INTS in addition to EXPL. As Table 3 above demonstrates, both NE-females (50%) and EFL-females (60%) used INTS (intensifications) more frequently than NE-males (0%) and EFL-males (30%).

In other words, male respondents tended to highly regard explaining the reason why they kept the student waiting so long, whereas female respondents tended to emphasize the importance of obtaining others' empathic understanding and thus recovering harmonious relationships with others. These results seem to be very similar to Tannen's distinction between "report" talk of men and "rapport" talk of women, which attributes female linguistic behavior to the purpose of rapport-building (Tannen, 1990, p. 77).

In Situation 4 [S>H, +SD], the waiter apologizes to the surprised customer for an error in the main course served by the waiter in a restaurant. In the case of S4, all the five types of differences were not statistically significant in this situation.

TABLE 4

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 4 [S<H, +SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M N %	F N %	M N %	F N %
(1) IFID+REPR	4 (40)	3 (30)	4 (60)	1 (10)
(2) IFID+INTS+REPR	5 (50)	3 (30)	3 (30)	6 (60)
(3) IFID+EXPL+REPR	0 (0)	1 (10)	1 (10)	1 (10)
(4) IFID+INTS+EXPL+REPR	0 (0)	1 (10)	1 (10)	0 (0)
(5) IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR	1 (10)	2 (20)	1 (10)	2 (20)
	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensifier), RESP (responsibility).

Table 4 reveals that most participants used category (1): IFID+REPR (e.g., "My apologies, I will get you what you ordered right away") or category (2): IFID+INTS+REPR (e.g., "I'm very sorry I'll take the chicken back and bring you back your order immediately"). As shown in Table 4, only 15% of participants used category (5): IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR, which includes the strategy of expressing responsibility (RESP). In other words, the majority of participants seldom use the strategy of RESP in this situation because a waiter's explicit admission of responsibility may also be taken as

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an admission of incompetence. This result is very similar to the findings of Olshtain (1989, pp. 168-9).

Situation 5 [S=H, -SD] concerned a notoriously unpunctual student apologizing to his friend for being late again for a study meeting with the friend. In the case of S5, the five types of differences were not statistically significant.

TABLE 5

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 5 [S=H, -SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M N%	F N%	M N%	F N%
(1) IFID	1 (10)	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (10)
(2) IFID+EXPL	2 (20)	3 (30)	3 (30)	3 (30)
(3) IFID+FORB	5 (50)	3 (30)	4 (40)	3 (30)
(4) IFID+INTS+REPR	2 (20)	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (10)
(5) IFID+INTS+FORB	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (10)	1 (10)
(6) IFID+EXPL+FORB	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (10)
	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification), FORB (forbearance).

Table 5 above reveals that the most common category used by the four groups was category (3): IFID+FORB (e.g. "I'm sorry. I'll never be late again"; "Sorry, I'll not be late again. Please believe me one more time"). This category was used by 50% of NE-males, 30% of NE-females, 40% of EFL-males, and 30% of EFL-females. The next frequent category was category (2): IFID+EXPL (e.g. "I'm sorry. This time was really emergency"; "I'm sorry. I wanted to come on time but there was an accident on the way"). This category was used by 20% of NE-males, 30% of NE-females, 30% of EFL-males, and 30% of EFL-females.

In Situation 6 [S=H, -SD], a driver apologizes to someone else for backing into the other's car. The results of data analysis indicate that all five types of differences were not statistically significant in the case of S6.

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TABLE 6

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 6 [S=H, +SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M N%	F N%	M N%	F N%
(1) IFID+EXPL	1 (10)	2 (20)	1 (10)	0 (0)
(2) IFID+EXPL+REPR	2 (20)	1 (10)	1 (10)	2 (20)
(3) IFID+INTS+EXPL+REPR	4 (40)	1 (10)	2 (20)	1 (10)
(4) IFID+INTS+REPR	2 (20)	3 (30)	4 (40)	5 (50)
(5) IFID+INTS+RESP+REPR	1 (10)	3 (30)	2 (20)	2 (20)
	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification).

One of the remarkable features of Table 6 is that the frequent use of REPR strategy as an offer of repair for the damage may be regarded as compensation for the infrequent use of the responsibility (RESP) strategy. The REPR strategy was used by 90% of NE-males, 80% of NE-females, 90% of EFL-males, and 100% of EFL-females whereas the RESP strategy was used by only 10% of NE-males, 30% of NE-females, 20% of EFL-males, and 20% of EFL-females. In Situation 6 as in Situation 4, the speaker might assume that offering repair (REPR) would be more advantageous than acknowledging responsibility (RESP). In these two situations of S4 and S6, Korean and American participants employed their apology strategies in a very similar pattern.

In Situation 7 [S=H, -SD], a student apologizes to a fellow student for criticizing him during a discussion. The results of data analysis demonstrate that the fifth type of cultural differences as a whole between apology strategies used by NE and EFL speakers were significant (χ^2=9.80, df=4) at the level of $p<.05$. In this case of S7, it can be argued that cultural differences were more influential than gender differences on the speech act of apology.

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TABLE 7

Frequency of Apology Strategies in Situation 7 [S=H, -SD]

Category of Strategies	NE		EFL	
	M N%	F N%	M N%	F N%
(1) IFID+EXPL	7 (70)	8 (80)	4 (40)	4 (40)
(2) IFID+EXPL+FORB	1 (10)	0 (0)	3 (30)	2 (20)
(3) IFID+RESP+FORB	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (10)	2 (20)
(4) IFID+INTS+FORB	0 (0)	1 (10)	1 (10)	2 (20)
(5) IFID+RESP+EXPL+FORB	2 (20)	1 (10)	1 (10)	0 (0)
	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

※ M (male), F (female), IFID (illocutionary force indicating device), EXPL (explanation), REPR (repair), INTS (intensification), FORB (forbearance).

Table 7 above shows that the most frequently used strategy by both NE and EFL speakers was category (1): IFID+EXPL (e.g. "I apologize if you felt that way, but I did not direct it towards you"). This category was selected by 75% of NE and 40% of EFL speakers. American NE speakers frequently provided EXPL, whereas Korean EFL speakers preferred providing FORB to providing only EXPL. Korean EFL speakers (60%) apologized more in using the FORB (forbearance) strategy than American NE speakers (25%) did. As we can see in the following two excerpts, in the case of S7, Korean EFL speakers tended to apologize using the FORB strategy, promising not to repeat the offense again, whereas American NE speakers often use the strategy of EXPL in order to explain the situation they faced at the time.

EFL: I am sorry if you felt that way.
I apologize. I'll be more careful next time. (FORB)
NE : I'm sorry if you felt insulted.
Don't misunderstand me!
I just commented on your opinion, not you! (EXPL)

These differences may be interpreted in terms of the dimension of collectivistic versus individualistic culture. Collectivistic Koreans are more likely than NE speakers to apologize through the forbearance strategy to establish friendly relationships and social harmony whereas for individualistic Americans to apologize using the forbearance strategy could be a considerable violation of the speaker's self-esteem and autonomy (Choi, 2013; Chung, Min, & Uehara, 2013; Kim, 2013; Triandis, 1995). The findings

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that Korean EFL speakers apologized more in using the FORB strategy than American NE speakers can be regarded as evidence of the pragmatic transfer of Korean native speakers' linguistic conventions to Korean EFL speakers' apology.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

1. Conclusion

The major purpose of this study was to investigate similarities and differences between the speech act of apology used by American male and female NE speakers and Korean male and female EFL speakers. In order to attain this purpose, this study focused on examining the following two research questions stated at the end of the introduction: (1) What is the impact of culture and gender on performing the speech act of apology? (2) What is the impact of sociopragmatic factors such as social distance, social status, and severity of offense on the selection of apology strategies? This paper's major findings can be summarized as follows.

First, in general, there were no significant differences between the apology strategies used by NE-male, NE-female, EFL-male, and EFL-female participants. However, in situations represented by S1 and S3, cross-gender differences as a whole (fourth type difference) were found to be significant. This fourth type difference reveals that female speakers were more empathetic to the hearer than male speakers, even though the speaker's social status was higher than the hearer's in these cases. This finding appears consistent with other research emphasizing that feminine communication is more egalitarian and consensus-building, whereas masculine communication emphasizes establishing and maintaining social status and dominance (Lee, 2005; Tannen, 1990).

Second, in situations represented by S7, cross-cultural differences as a whole were found to be statistically significant. This fifth type difference indicates that in this case there are differences between the apologizing strategies used by American NE speakers and Korean EFL speakers. In other words, this difference indicates that even advanced EFL learners (TOEIC scores between 800 and 990) often fail to perform pragmatically appropriate apologizing speech acts characterized by NE speakers. Such a difference often reflects cultural differences between the two groups. In general, collectivistic Korean students are more likely to apologize to close friends through the strategy of FORB (forbearance), promising not to repeat the offense again for the sake of harmonious relationship, whereas for individualistic American NE speakers, offering apologies through the FORB strategy even with close friends can be a considerable violation of the speaker's self-esteem and autonomy. These differences between EFL and

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NE groups reveal that collectivistic Koreans tend to see ingroups and outgroups as very distinct, compared to individualistic Americans (Kim, 2008; Triandis, 1995).

Third, only a limited tendency towards some relationship between the speech act of apology and sociopragmatic factors such as social distance, social status, and severity of offense was found in this study. However, the REPR strategy was frequently used in S6 where the level of familiarity (social distance) is very low, whereas the FORB strategy was often used in S5 and S7 where familiarity is relatively high. The student in S2 used more INTS (intensifications) than the professor in S1, because the student's breaking a promise is more severe than the professor's breaking a promise. In other words, the frequency of using intensifiers (INTS) tended to be highly related to social status and severity of offense.

Finally, when Korean students in general get into a conversation with someone superior in status, they often indicate that superiority by using address terms such as professor with an honorific suffix (~nim). This is a Korean linguistic convention that reflects cultural norms. What we found remarkable in the case of S2 was that Korean EFL speakers more frequently used address terms such as 'professor' as an alerter (ALT) compared to American NE speakers. This is another evidence of the pragmatic transfer of native Korean linguistic conventions to Korean EFL speakers' apology.

The above notwithstanding, this research has several limitations. First is the very small size of the sample. Only 10 American NE-male speakers, 10 American NE-female speakers, 10 Korean EFL-male speakers, and 10 Korean EFL-female speakers participated in this study. Since the size of sample is so small, it may be difficult to generalize these findings to the populations as a whole. Second, the data used in this research were collected only from written questionnaire items without using actual discourse as an extended sequence of talk-exchange.

2. Pedagogical Implications

Despite these limitations, however, this research contributes to the understanding of how cultural and gender factors influence apology strategies employed by NE and EFL speakers. The pedagogical implications of this research can be summarized as follows.

Firstly, though similarities between the speech acts of men and women are far greater than differences as shown in the results analysis above, there are some differences between the speaking styles of men and women. For example, women tend to see apologies as expressions of solidarity and concern for others whereas men regard apologies as admissions of weakness. Male and female students therefore should be taught to make adjustments in order to make cross-gender conversation possible.

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Secondly, as shown in the case of S7, collectivistic Koreans tend to see friends (ingroup) and strangers (outgroup) very differently in terms of positive emotions, whereas individualistic Americans do not exhibit such differences. Koreans tend to express more intimacy toward ingroups and more formality toward outgroups than do Americans. In the context of teaching and learning EFL, Korean students should be taught not to show unnecessary intimacy toward ingroup members but rather take a more neutral stance toward both ingroup and outgroup members.

Finally, whether Korean students frequently use honorific address terms when addressing a superior in terms of occupational rank or frequently use INTS (intensifications) strategies toward someone superior in social status, it is not an appropriate pragmatic performance as far as American NE speakers are concerned. Collectivistic Korean students need to be trained not to overuse honorific address terms to someone superior in occupational rank such as an academic adviser. This can have important implications because frequent acceptance of authority by Korean students can be seen not as supporting but as flattering to members of American culture.

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APPENDIX

Discourse Completion Test

Dear Respondent,

The researchers are conducting a study entitled Apology Strategies of Native and Nonnative Speakers of English. You are kindly requested to answer the items of 'Discourse Completion Test' carefully and accurately. The information obtained in the course of this study will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of academic research.

Thank you.

General Information:

1. Gender: Male ( ) or Female ( )
2. Age : Below 20yr ( ), 20~25 ( ), 26~30 ( ), over 30 ( )
3. Your TOEFL score ( ) and/or TOEIC score ( )

Instruction: Please read seven brief situations calling for an apology. In each case, the person who you owe the apology to will speak first. Please respond as realistically as possible.

Situation 1: Suppose you are a university professor. You promised to return the student's paper that day but didn't finish reading it yet.

Student: "Did you read my paper?"

You:

_____

Situation 2: Suppose you borrowed your professor's book. You promised to return that day, but forgot to bring it.

Professor: "Did you bring the book?"

You:

_____

Situation 3: You are a staff manager and you have kept a student waiting for half an hour for a job interview because you were called to an unexpected meeting.

Student: "What happened?"

You:

_____

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Situation 4: Suppose you are a waiter of an expensive restaurant. You brought fried chicken instead of beefsteak to a surprised customer.

Customer: "I ordered beefsteak."

You:

_____

Situation 5: Suppose you are a notoriously unpunctual student. Today you are late again for a meeting with a friend with whom you are working on a joint paper.

Friend: "Oh. You are late again!"

You:

_____

Situation 6: Suppose you are in a parking lot trying to find a place to park. You happen to back up into another person's car. The driver of the car is so angry and says unpleasant words to you.

Driver: "Can't you look where you're going? See what you've done!"

You:

_____

Situation 7: Suppose you are in a study-meeting with your fellow students. During a discussion you offended a fellow student by criticizing him/her. After the meeting, the fellow student mentions this fact.

Student: "I think that your last remark was directed at me and I felt insulted."

You:

_____

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: College

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