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A Cross-Cultural Study on Pragmatic Transfer in the EFL Learners' Speech Act of Refusal

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This paper examines a cross-cultural pragmatic transfer of refusal by learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). The participants include 20 university students in Korea and Japan. The data consists of responses to a total of 12 items of written discourse completion test per participant; six items in English as a foreign language (FL) and six items in the students' native language (NL). The task consisted of four situations for refusals; request, offer, suggestion, and invitation. The data for refusals both in FL and NL were analyzed according to frequency and sequence of refusal strategies and interlocutor's social status. The classification of refusal strategies is based on the study by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990). Results showed Korean and Japanese EFL learners shared similarities in the frequency and choice of refusal strategies. Learners from both countries used apology and excuse most frequently. Also, there were instances of differences in the effects of pragmatic transfer between the FL and NL. Korean EFL learners had tendencies to make refusal using indirect methods in Korean in contrast to direct methods in English. Findings call for further research on pragmatic transfer of the varied English proficiency level and considering appropriate pragmatic teaching methods.

[cross-cultural interlanguage/pragmatic transfer/refusal strategies]

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since speech acts usually tend to reflect the speakers' cultural norm and value, English as a foreign language (hereinafter referred to as EFL) learners may transfer the pragmatic conventions of their native language into their speech acts in English. Pragmatic transfer is a cross-linguistic influence in language learning, that is, the influence of the existing native language knowledge onto newly-learned L2 knowledge (Odlin, 1989; Žegarac & Pennington, 2000). The empirical studies of pragmatic transfer in various speech acts are underpinned by the fact that the performance of speech acts articulated by non-native speakers are often different from that of English native speakers because the learners are likely to have limited knowledge of the L2's pragmatic rules and tend to transfer their native pragmatic rules into their L2 communication (Kwon, 2004; Scarcella, 1990). The lack of L2 pragmatic rules may in turn cause misunderstanding of a message in which a speaker intended to deliver or may threaten face-saving aspects between the interlocutors. Many studies reported that L2 learners who already have a high level in grammar and lexical capacity might fail to communicate effectively (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Thomas, 1983).

Using a language appropriately involves knowing the rules according to which the particular culture functions. The rules also apply to the speech act of refusals. Refusals occur in all languages but not all languages use refusals in the same way; thus a high level of pragmatic competence is demanded in order for the user to employ it sufficiently (Abed, 2011). Refusals can be recognized as face-threatening acts because of the offending nature of the act (Beebe et al., 1990; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Kwon (2004) supports the same idea by claiming that speakers are likely to feel difficulties when they perform the refusal speech acts linguistically as well as psychologically since the possibility of offending the interlocutor is inherent in the act itself.

Most of the studies on the speech act of refusals in Korean EFL learners (K. Kim, 2004; Y. Kim, 2008; Kwon, 2004; Lyuh, 1992; Yoon, 2010) reported that even fairly advanced English learners often lack pragmatic competence and fail to convey politeness value appropriately. The research studies focused on the refusal strategies Korean prefer when they perform the speech act of refusals in English. This study, on the other hand, focuses on the pragmatic transfer in the speech act of refusals and examines to what extent do Korean and Japanese EFL learners demonstrate pragmatic transfer from L1 into L2. The convincing evidence for transfer is demonstrated in Jarvis (2000), and three characteristics were shown in the study: intra-group homogeneity, inter-group heterogeneity, and similarities between native language and interlanguage performance (Odlin, 2008). Little research has been done dealing with the comparison of Korean pragmatic transfer in parallel with that of Japanese students' to identify these three

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characteristics. Intended as an initial trial to report the three characteristics, this present study aims to investigate the features above. Korean and Japanese have long attracted much attention from linguists (Miller, 1996; Starostin, Dybo, & Mudrak, 2003) and there are some vocabulary and grammatical structures that are in common. Therefore a comparison between Korean and Japanese pragmatic transfer in this research is expected to yield meaningful insights.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Pragmatic Transfer

As pragmatic transfer is considered one of the sources responsible for pragmatic failure, some researchers have raised questions to define what the transfer really is. Selinker (1992) pointed out that researchers should consider the definition and the use of the term 'transfer' because of its dynamic and unique features. In so doing, Weinreich and Martinet (1979) claimed that pragmatic transfer is known as the use of rules of speaking from one's speech act community when interacting or when speaking in a second or a foreign language (as cited in Abed, 2011). Odlin (1989) defined it as the influence derived from similarities and differences between the target language and no matter what language has been previously obtained. In a more broad perspective, pragmatic transfer involves any kind of behavior, processes and constraints that are linked to crosslinguistic influence, that is the influence of established linguistic knowledge, normally referring to the native language (Selinker, 1992). Pragmatic transfer can be distinguished into two types, namely positive transfer, which is also known as facilitation, and negative transfer. Positive transfer occurs when the relevant unit or structure of both languages is the same, and they facilitate the acquisition of a new language. On the other hand, negative transfer, which is also known as interference, takes place when the patterns or rules of the first language are likely to affect the target language which then leads to an inappropriate expressions (Brown, 2007).

The effects of language transfer are best witnessed within three possible features (Jarvis, 2000). The first probable effect of language transfer is the intra-first language (L1)-group homogeneity. This is found when learners with the same ethnic background speak the same L1 as they behave in a uniform manner when using the second language (L2). The second possible effect, inter-L1-group heterogeneity, is found when learners who speak different L1s diverge in their interlanguage performance. The third effect, intra-L1-group similarity between L1 and interlanguage performance, is likely to be found where learners' usage of L2 is shown in parallel with their use of L1 feature. Jarvis

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also pointed out that any one of these occurrences would be considered as sufficient evidence of the L1 transfer existence.

Along with the effects, the outlines of rigorous research settings are drawn out by a number of researchers (Jarvis, 2000; Odlin, 2008; Selinker, 1983). Clear guidelines in reference to L1 influence evaluation was provided (Odlin, 2008). The best method to identify the effects of L1 influence can be done through a comparison of the production of speech by the speakers from two different countries. That is, L1 influence can be best determined where learners from different L1 backgrounds behave differently when using the same L2 (Jarvis, 2000). In contrast, Selinker (1983) focused on the comparisons between learners' L1 and L2 behavior. That is to say, Odlin (2008) paid attention to the comparison between interlanguage from learners of two different nationalities, whereas Selinker (1983) focused on the comparison between interlanguage from learners of a single nationality group. Now that much of the pragmatic transfer studies in Korea or Japan have been done based on L1 and L2 comparison in one country (Jung & Kim, 2008; Kang, 2011; Yamagashira, 2001; Yang, 2001; Yang, 2005), involving the subjects from the two different countries, Korea and Japan in the present study, is likely to be perceived to be in legitimate demand.

In addition, nine types of outside variables were identified (Jarvis, 2000), which were a modified version of the list by Rod (1994). Jarvis (2000) said these variables should ideally be controlled to draw out reliable findings in language transfer study verifying interlanguage behavior. They are (a) age, (b) personality, motivation, and language aptitude, (c) social, educational, and cultural background, (d) language background (all previous L1s and L2s), (e) type and amount of target language exposure, (f) target language proficiency, (g) language distance between the L1 and target language, (h) task type and area of language use, and (i) prototypicality and markedness of the linguistic feature. Except for one variable, (b) personality, motivation, and language aptitude, eight variables were controlled either directly or indirectly in his study. It should be noted that Jarvis (2000) himself claimed all nine variables are equal in their importance and are not listed in a particular order. With a rigorously controlled variation of research, he reported evident effects of language transfer in an experiment carried out with interlanguage referential markers of Finns and Swedes.

2. Previous Cross-Cultural Studies on Refusal

Refusals often involve face-saving strategies to accommodate the offending nature of the act and their face-threatening nature requires culture-specific mitigating devices to minimize the threat for successful communication. The refusals take place in all languages but in distinguished methods (Abed, 2011), probably because of the complex

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nature of the refusals. Speakers within any language background are likely to feel difficulties when they make refusals since the possibility of offending the interlocutor is inherent in the act itself (Kwon, 2004).

The studies on the speech act of refusals have been examined in different approaches. Beebe et al. (1990) compared Japanese and American refusal strategies using a discourse completion test (DCT). In that study, a list of contents of semantic formulas based on the usage by Japanese and Americans was formed, and became widely accepted. This remained as the method to analyze taxonomy in the majority of the research in the refusal speech act. Kwon (2004) examined the refusal expressions in Korean and American English using the DCT taken from Beebe et al (1990). It was found that the frequency and content of semantic formulas were different even though the range of refusal strategies was somewhat similar between the two groups. Apology and gratitude were frequently expressed before making refusals among Korean participants whereas English speakers often stated positive opinion and expressed gratitude for a proposed action. Saeki and O'keefe (1994) also compared Japanese and American refusals to test the rational model of rejection messages found in the initial research. They reported that regardless of the nationality, communicators who have great social distance are more likely to produce direct rejection messages. Min (2013) explored the Korean speakers' English refusals against American English speakers' refusals. The results demonstrated patterns of direct and indirect strategies combined in both groups, however, Korean English learners were inclined to choose more direct strategies, especially the non-performative form 'can't' the most, but had a limited range of refusal strategies compared to the refusals of native speakers.

Lee and Kang (2001) conducted an experiment by comparing the strategies employed by the Korean EFL learners and American native speakers. They reported that Koreans tended to not use direct methods such as 'no' and 'I can't', compared to the American group. They also found that Korean responses were generally more vague by expressing regret, gratitude and pause fillers more frequently. Yamagashira (2001) conducted a research comparing Japanese EFL learners and American native speakers. Nine Japanese students responded both in L1 and L2 and eight Americans completed the questionnaire in the study. The finding was that pragmatic transfer was evident when the refusers had a higher status than the interlocutors. Kim and Kwon (2010) also carried out a research concerning the nature of L1 influence. The results showed that all participants shared the same range of refusal strategies, but the responses of both L1 and L2 in the Korean group were prone to be less specific in explaining the reasons and they used indirect methods. Kim and Kwon (2010) cautiously stated that Koreans' indirectness violates the Gricean maxims, which can bring about misunderstanding between the speakers and this may appear rude to native speakers.

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There also is a study that analyzing pragmatic similarities of refusals in Korean and Japanese. Aoki (2012) discussed this in his study and the study analyzed the refusal expressions, which appeared in educational materials like textbooks in Korea and Japan. It was found that the range of Japanese refusal expressions in textbooks showed more variation. Moreover, it seemed that expressions limited in the situation of request were repeated in both materials. The common refusal strategies used in both textbooks were found as apology, followed by two excuses.

Empirical studies of language transfer and refusal strategies in Koreans and Japanese reviewed above have shown that there is evidence of transfer, and that there are specific patterns found in Korean and Japanese groups. Based on these features observed in previous research, the current study aims to provide the bases for understanding pragmatic transfer by focusing on the following questions:

1. Do learners of the two ethnic backgrounds, namely Korea and Japan, show high levels of similarity in the L2 refusal strategies?

2. Do the L2 refusal strategies diverge from one another when comparing Korean and Japanese university students?

3. What similar refusal strategies between L1 and L2 appeared across Korean and Japanese university students?

III. METHODS

1. Participants

The participants were 20 students whose major are English education or English-related majors. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 24. They have two different L1 backgrounds and were divided into two groups according to their nationality; 10 students from South Korea and 10 students from Japan. Due to the restriction in data collection from both genders, only female students were selected in order to keep a gender balance in this study. Their English proficiency is considered to be intermediate or advanced and this was measured in terms of their TOEIC scores. The TOEIC scores of the Korean students are from 770 to 925 except for three students who did not provide their scores. However, taking into account that the department of English education requires all senior students to have TOEIC score of above 800, it is assumed that the three students also are at the equivalent level of other students. Japanese students'

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TOEIC scores ranged from 755 to 910. All participants' level of English competence can also be inferred from the departmental requirements for students to accomplish their English oriented course work. Among the outside variables defined by Jarvis (2000), the subjects in this research are considered to abide by three variables out of nine: (d) language backgrounds (either Korean or Japanese), (e) type and amount of target language exposure (over 10 years of English exposure) and (h) task type and area of language use (students were asked to complete the questionnaires in situations of refusals).

2. Instruments

A pragmatic transfer questionnaire, namely, DCT in the form of a written role-play questionnaire was used to collect the data in this study. Refusals are adjacent pairs, paired actions of commonly used conversational sequence, with different types of acts such as requesting, apologizing, complimenting, or inviting situations (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). As a result, the four kinds of eliciting acts were given to Korean and Japanese EFL students to draw out refusals. In addition to the four situations, social power varied in each situation: person of higher, equal, or lower status. Combining the situation with the different social status, the questionnaire was extended to include a total of 12 items. The researchers modified each situation to the culture of both countries so that the students could relate to the defined situations. The language of the questionnaire was written in Korean for the Korean subjects and in Japanese for the Japanese subjects. Table 1 is descriptions of each situation.

TABLE 1
The Twelve Situations to Elicit the Speech Act of Refusals

No.	Type of Act	Situation	Social Power
1	Invitation	A high school teacher's invitation to join in a home-coming party.	Higher
2	Invitation	A friend's invitation to see a movie.	Equal
3	Invitation	A junior staff's invitation to make a speech at a speech contest.	Lower
4	Suggestion	A professor's suggestion to take his/her class next semester.	Higher
5	Suggestion	A friend's suggestion to join in a group study.	Equal
6	Suggestion	A junior's suggestion to apply for a part-time job.	Lower
7	Offer	A professor's offer to on the job as a teaching assistant.	Higher
8	Offer	A friend's offers of a ride home in his/her car.	Equal
9	Offer	A restaurant employee's offer to pay for broken dishes. (The participant is the boss of this employee)	Lower
10	Request	A senior's request to help organize documents.	Higher
11	Request	A roommate's request to borrow the participant's laptop.	Equal
12	Request	A junior's request to borrow the participant's textbook.	Lower

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The 12 items were ordered in two different ways, namely type A and type B. In type A questionnaire, the first six out of the 12 situations for refusals were answered in the participants L1 (either Korean or Japanese) and the remaining half in English, and vice versa in type B, in order to keep tracing the pragmatic transfer by cross comparison of the responses in each situation. See also Appendix for the English translation of the type A questionnaire.

3. Data Analysis

The survey was conducted in class and participants filled in the questionnaire and informed consent forms. The participants were allowed to consult a dictionary to express their way of refusals. The participants were instructed to read and imagine being in each situation. Then they wrote down how they would refuse in the language specified on the questionnaire. The survey was completed within 15 minutes to 20 minutes. Table 2 below is the classification of refusal strategies by Beebe et al. (1990, pp. 55-73) with sample responses from the survey in this study.

TABLE 2
The Classification of Refusal Strategies (Beebe et al., 1990, pp. 55-73) with Sample Responses from the Survey in this Study

Refusal Strategies	Sample Responses
Direct	
1. Performative	I refuse.
2. Non-performative	I can't.
Indirect	
3. Statement of regret	I'm sorry.
4. Wish	I wish I could help you.
5. Excuse, reason, explanation	My laptop doesn't work well.
6. Statement of alternative	Let me ask other people.
7. Set condition for future acceptance	If you had asked me earlier, I would have...
8. Promise of future acceptance	I promise I'll do it next time.
9. Statement of principle	Everybody make mistakes.
10. Statement of philosophy	One can't be too careful.
11. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor	Please be careful next time.
12. Acceptance that functions as refusal	I'll consider it.
13. Avoidance	Let's have lunch next time!
Adjuncts of Refusals	
14. Statement of positive opinion/ feeling or agreement	I'd love to.
15. Statement of empathy	That's too bad.
16. Pause filler	Well..
17. Gratitude/ appreciation	Thank you.
18. Addressing term	Sir, professor, teacher...

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The total number of data collected was 240 refusals, 120 refusals by Korean participants and 120 refusals by Japanese participants. Half of each group wrote in L2 and the other half of each group wrote in L1. The 60 Korean and 60 Japanese refusals were translated into English by two bilingual researchers whose L1 is in accordance with the language. The data was coded according to their categories by Beebe et al. (1990). The number was tagged to each strategy. For instance, if a subject refused an offer of reimbursement by a person who has lower status, saying 'That's okay. This is just a mistake.', this response was coded as two strategies as shown below.

That's okay.	*This is just a mistake.*
[12. Acceptance that functions as refusal]	[5. Excuse, reason, explanation]

Two researchers independently coded each data and any differences in coding (2%) were discussed rigorously until agreed upon. The coded data was then examined in terms of frequency and the sequence in which the refusal strategies occurred.

IV. RESULTS

1. The Use of Refusal Strategies

1) Frequencies of Refusal Strategies by the Two Groups

Refusals were elicited in the context of 12 different situations. After the refusals were categorized into 18 refusal strategies (RS), they were analyzed by their frequency and the orders in which the strategies were used.

The ten KEFL used a total of 204 strategies when they refused in Korean, while 168 strategies were used in English. As for frequency in Korean, KEFL used RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation strategy (30.4%) most frequently. The second most frequently used strategy by KEFL was RS (3) statement of regret (21.6%) and RS (2) non-performative strategy (11.3%) followed. In English responses, RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation (32.1%) and RS (3) statement of regret (24.4%) were found to be the most and the second most favored strategy used respectively.

The ten JEFL used a total of 166 strategies when they refused in Japanese, while 156 were used in English. As for frequency in Japanese, JEFL used RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation strategy (35.0%) most frequently. The second most frequently used strategies by JEFL are RS (3) statement of regret (26.5%) and RS (2) non-performative strategy (15.1%) followed. In English responses, RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation

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(34.0%) and RS (3) statement of regret (27.6%) were found to be the most and the second most favored strategy used respectively and RS (2) non-performative strategy (9.0%) followed. None of the participants in the Korean or Japanese group used RS (10) statement of philosophy.

The frequencies of each strategy by Korean EFL learners (KEFL) and Japanese EFL learners (JEFL) are shown in Table 3. Percentages are given in parentheses.

TABLE 3
Frequencies of Refusal Strategies by KEFL and JEFL

Refusal strategies	Frequency (%)			
	KEFL		JEFL	
	Korean	English	Japanese	English
Direct				
RS (1)	1 (0.5)	2 (1.2)	0 (0.0)	8 (5.1)
RS (2)	23 (11.3)	12 (7.1)	25 (15.1)	14 (9.0)
Indirect				
RS (3)	44 (21.6)	41 (24.4)	44 (26.5)	43 (27.6)
RS (4)	4 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)
RS (5)	62 (30.4)	54 (32.1)	52 (35.0)	53 (34.0)
RS (6)	12 (5.9)	11 (6.5)	7 (4.2)	6 (3.8)
RS (7)	1 (0.5)	2 (1.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)
RS (8)	3 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.6)	2 (1.3)
RS (9)	2 (1.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
RS (10)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
RS (11)	2 (1.0)	1 (0.6)	3 (1.8)	1 (0.6)
RS (12)	3 (1.5)	2 (1.2)	3 (1.8)	0 (0.0)
RS (13)	13 (6.4)	6 (3.6)	7 (4.2)	2 (1.3)
Adjuncts of Refusals				
RS (14)	7 (3.4)	12 (7.1)	6 (3.6)	11 (7.1)
RS (15)	1 (0.5)	1 (0.6)	3 (1.8)	4 (2.6)
RS (16)	1 (0.5)	3 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.3)
RS (17)	9 (4.4)	12 (7.1)	11 (6.6)	7 (4.5)
RS (18)	16 (7.8)	9 (5.4)	4 (2.4)	1 (0.6)
Total	204 (100)	168 (100)	166 (100)	156 (100)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (1) = Performative; RS (2) = Non-performative; RS (3) = Statement of regret; RS (4) = Wish; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation; RS (6) = Statement of alternative; RS (7) = Set condition for future acceptance; RS (8) = Promise of future acceptance; RS (9) = Statement of principle; RS (10) = Statement of philosophy; RS (11) = Attempt to dissuade interlocutor; RS (12) = Acceptance that functions as refusal; RS (13) = Avoidance; RS (14) = Statement of positive opinion/ feeling or agreement; RS (15) = Statement of empathy; RS (16) = Pause filler; RS (17) = Gratitude/Appreciation; RS (18) = Addressing term. The number of each strategy was added, and then divided by the total number of occurrences for that group. The percentage numbers are rounded up to one decimal place.

The subsequent table brings light on the refusal strategy order. In this case, a specific pattern of order is formed in English as [RS (3) statement of regret] - [RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation] - [RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation] and this English refusal strategy order pattern is in parallel with both groups, which means that all groups began

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their English refusal with RS (3) statement of regret and continued with RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation and another RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation. In Japanese refusal strategy order by JEFL, however, it was sharply distinguished from the typical order as in Table 4. Percentages are given in parentheses.

TABLE 4
Typical Order of Refusal Strategies in L1 and L2 by the Two Groups

	KEFL		JEFL	
	Korean	English	Japanese	English
1st	RS (3) (36.8)	RS (3) (45.5)	RS (5) (38.3)	RS (3) (58.3)
2nd	RS (5) (50.9)	RS (5) (43.6)	RS (5) (38.3)	RS (5) (66.1)
3rd	RS (5) (34.6)	RS (5) (43.2)	RS (2) (27.3)	RS (5) (30.0)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (2) = Non-performative; RS (3) = Statement of regret; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation. The percentages show the percentage of respondents in a given group.

2) The Two Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies in L2 by the Two Groups

The following tables illustrate the two most frequently used refusal strategies according to each eliciting act. Refusals by KEFL and JEFL are compared in terms of the frequency of refusal strategies used in each situation. Table 5 shows the two most frequently used refusal strategies and their frequencies in each situation by KEFL.

TABLE 5
The Two Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies in Each Situation by KEFL

Social Status	Invitation	Suggestion	Offer	Request
Higher	RS (3) (23.3)	RS (5) (31.6)	RS (5) (26.5)	RS (3) (28.6)
	RS (5) (20.9)	RS (18) (15.8)	RS (3) (23.5)	RS (5) (28.6)
Equal	RS (3) (30.0)	RS (5) (33.3)	RS (5) (40.9)	RS (5) (30.3)
	RS (5) (30.0)	RS (3) (29.6)	RS (13) (18.2)	RS (3) (30.3)
Lower	RS (5) (32.4)	RS (5) (42.3)	RS (5) (25.0)	RS (5) (34.4)
	RS (3) (24.3)	RS (3) (26.9)	RS (2) (15.0)	RS (3) (28.1)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (2) = Non-performative; RS (3) = Statement of regret; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation; RS (13) = Avoidance; RS (18) = Addressing term.

As shown in Table 5, KEFL group's refusals reveal great reliance on usage of RS (3) statement of regret and RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation strategies in almost every cases. When KEFL refused to a suggestion made by a person who is of higher status, RS (18) addressing term (e.g. sir, teacher and professor) was used in considerably high frequency (15.8%). Refusing an offer by equal status person, a strategy RS (13) avoidance was used particularly often (18.2%).

Similar to the case of KEFL, JEFL's refusal strategies clearly show the great tendency

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of using RS (3) statement of regret and RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation. It is, however, also presenting exceptions particularly in an act of offer. In refusing a higher status person's offer, RS (17) gratitude/appreciation is used (25%). Additionally, RS (15) statement of empathy is also used when refusing to a lower status person. In the study of Beebe et al. (1990), compared to English native speakers, JEFL were more likely to express regret and apology more frequently with higher-status interlocutors but less frequently with the people at lower status. The result of present study does not support this finding. JEFL's favored usage of refusal strategies in each situation is shown in Table 6 as follows.

TABLE 6
The Two Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies in Each Situation by JEFL

Social Status	Invitation	Suggestion	Offer	Request
Higher	RS (3) (28.1)	RS (5) (35.7)	RS (3) (34.6)	RS (3) (46.2)
	RS (5) (21.9)	RS (3) (25.0)	RS (5) (34.6)	RS (5) (35.7)
Equal	RS (3) (38.5)	RS (3) (36.0)	RS (5) (32.1)	RS (5) (38.5)
	RS (5) (30.8)	RS (5) (36.0)	RS (17) (25.0)	RS (3) (26.9)
Lower	RS (5) (37.0)	RS (5) (37.5)	RS (2) (29.6)	RS (5) (40.0)
	RS (3) (25.9)	RS (3) (29.2)	RS (15) (22.2)	RS (3) (32.0)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (2) = Non-performative; RS (3) = Statement of regret; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation; RS (15) = Statement of empathy; RS (17) = Gratitude/ Appreciation.

3) Pragmatic Transfer in Refusal Strategies from L1 to L2

A further investigation of pragmatic transfer evidence from L1 to L2 appears in the following tables. In Table 7, the most frequently used refusal strategies in L1 and L2 by KEFL are compared. Percentages are given in parentheses.

TABLE 7
The Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies in L1 and L2 by KEFL

	Korean				English			
Social Status	Invita-tion	Sugges-tion	Offer	Request	Invita-tion	Sugges-tion	Offer	Request
Higher	RS (3) (21.7)	RS (5) (33.3)	RS (5) (40.0)	RS (3) (22.7)	RS (3) (27.8)	RS (5) (29.4)	RS (2) (21.1)	RS (5) (41.7)
Equal	RS (5) (35.7)	RS (3) (30.8)	RS (5) (30.8)	RS (3) (31.6)	RS (3) (31.3)	RS (5) (35.7)	RS (5) (55.6)	RS (3) (28.6)
Lower	RS (5) (40.0)	RS (5) (42.9)	RS (12) (25.0)	RS (3) (27.8)	RS (3) (33.3)	RS (5) (41.7)	RS (5) (37.5)	RS (5) (42.9)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (3) = Statement of regret; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation.

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The employment of the RS (3) statement of regret strategy in eliciting acts of invitation of higher status person and request of equal status speaker reflects a native cultural rule in Korea as it is most frequently used in equal. In situations of suggestion of higher and lower status person and offer of equal status also showed similarity in using a strategy, RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation.

In Table 8 below, the most frequently used refusal strategies in L1 and L2 by JEFL are compared. The pragmatic transfer by JEFL was also observed in the choice of refusal strategies either RS (3) statement of regret or RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation varied in relation to the situations and interlocutor's social status.

TABLE 8
The Most Frequently Used Refusal Strategies in L1 and L2 by JEFL

	Japanese				English			
Social Status	Invita-tion	Sugges-tion	Offer	Request	Invita-tion	Sugges-tion	Offer	Request
Higher	RS (3) (31.6)	RS (3) (25.0)	RS (5) (50.0)	RS (3) (42.9)	RS (5) (30.8)	RS (5) (41.7)	RS (3) (37.5)	RS (3) (40.0)
Equal	RS (3) (33.3)	RS (3) (33.3)	RS (5) (30.8)	RS (5) (41.7)	RS (3) (45.5)	RS (5) (50.0)	RS (17) (33.3)	RS (5) (35.7)
Lower	RS (5) (31.3)	RS (5) (30.8)	RS (2) (41.7)	RS (5) (41.7)	RS (5) (45.5)	RS (5) (45.5)	RS (1) (33.3)	RS (3) (38.5)

Note. RS = Refusal strategy; RS (2) = Non-performative; RS (3) =Statement of regret; RS (5) = Excuse, reason, explanation; RS (17) = Gratitude/Appreciation.

2. Similarities in L2 Refusal Strategies Used between KEFL and JEFL

The general picture of the total number of refusal strategies usage that Table 3 gives is that the three most frequently used strategies are identical in both groups. It is shown that both groups tend to use RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation, RS (3) statement of regret and RS (2) non-performative forms of refusals. It is worth noting that the two most frequently used strategies among KEFL and JEFL revealed in this study belong to the group of indirect strategy. The result is congruent with the findings of the previous studies (Kwon, 2004; Lee & Kang, 2001), which showed KEFL learners used many indirect refusals than native speakers.

The typical order of refusal expression is illustrated in Table 4 and the order in both groups is alike. They all are likely to start their refusal with RS (3) statement of regret (e.g. I'm sorry...) and RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation appeared repeatedly in the second and the third position. Thus, the typical order of responses resembled each other. The result is analogous again to Kwon's study (2004), in which apology or gratitude frequently preceded when Korean English learners made refusals.

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3. Differences in L2 Refusal Strategies Used between KEFL and JEFL

Table 5 and Table 6 show that participants in the KEFL and JEFL groups use limited range of refusal strategies, but at the same time they show different type of refusals employed by each group. Using RS (3) statement of regret and RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation in common, KEFL additionally used (13) avoidance and RS (18) addressing terms in contrast to JEFL who used RS (15) empathy and RS (17) gratitude/appreciation.

According to Miller (1996) and Starostin et al. (2003), a speaker usually uses unique addressing terms in Korea and Japan when talking to someone superior in status since both countries have the strict hierarchical language system. However, frequency of refusal strategies was somewhat different between the groups. Table 5 shows that the KEFL frequently used RS (18) addressing terms (15.8%) to the higher status speaker in the suggestion situation. In Korea, a speaker usually uses unique addressing terms when talking to someone who is of higher status, and this trait of Korean language was somewhat reflected in the production of the strategy RS (18) addressing term. However, it should not be taken that Japanese used no addressing terms at all since only the top two strategies used in each situation are listed on Table 5 and 6.

In terms of content of the responses, KEFL seemed to have more ease making refusal than JEFL as they perform the RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation by producing some scenario. One of the JEFL wrote "I have something to do" not clarifying the specific reason on the one hand, whilst one of the KEFL wrote "I have a meeting with an important person" providing a certain reason on the other hand. It was observed by the researchers who administered the survey that JEFL was less descriptive than KEFL in making a refusal in any case.

4. Effects of Pragmatic Transfer from L1

The present study also finds that there is pragmatic transfer which occurs when speakers' communicative strategies in L2 reflect that of their L1. In order to identify pragmatic transfer in both groups, the comparison was carried out between the most frequently used strategies in L1 and L2, depending on the situations and social status. Evidence of similarity in the application of refusal strategies appeared in both groups. In KEFL group, RS (3) statement of regret is used in L1 and L2 when they refuse to the person of higher status in an invitation and refuse to the person of equal status in a request situation. In addition, the strategy of RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation is equally displayed in the suggestion situation of higher and lower status as well as in the offer of equal status. Beside the commonly used refusal strategies among KEFL, two exceptional cases were found. In the situation of refusing to an offer made by a higher

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status person, the most frequently used refusal strategy in Korean was RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation, which belongs to indirect strategies according to the classification. On the other hand, when KEFL asked to respond to the same kind of offer situation in English, the most frequently used strategy was completely against the refusal in Korean. They employed one of the direct strategies, RS (2) non-performative, saying 'no', or 'I can't'. This finding may give an idea to teachers that teachers may need to consider how to encourage the students to use more indirect strategies when they make a refusal to a person of higher status. Another exception occurred in the situation of refusing an offer from a lower status person. KEFL employed a unique strategy, that is RS (12) acceptance that functions as refusal, when they refuse in Korean. In English, however, the refusal in this situation was simply repeating one of the most frequently used strategies in other situations, RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation. What can be inferred from this result is that the choice of refusal strategies by KEFL are likely to be narrowed in English rather than presenting various types of English refusals. The teachers, therefore, need to provide students with many opportunities to explore and practice different types of refusal strategies in English in various social contexts.

As for JEFL group, the same two strategies showed in KEFL group are also presented (See Table 8). The strategy of RS (3) statement of regret in an invitation of equal status and request of higher status occurred in both L1 and L2. The strategy RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation also repeated in L1 and L2 when they refuse to lower status interlocutor in the situations of invitation and suggestion. In case of refusing an offer from a lower status addresser, JEFL employed direct strategies (saying 'I can't' or 'no') in Japanese along with English. However, it is immoderate to draw a pattern, which is observed on a regular basis in both groups. This finding seemed to contradict what was previously stated in the study of Yamagashira (2001). In her study, a precise pragmatic transfer was claimed to be observed when Japanese people refused to higher status interlocutors.

V. CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly language is one of the most reliable and efficient mediums of human communication. As much as it is an efficient way to communicate, users require an understanding of cross-cultural difference in L2 realization in order to escalate the level of the target language proficiency, minimizing the possible problems that arise due to the underlying knowledge of L1. Spada and Lightbown (1999) claimed that as learners become aware of cross-linguistic differences, several difficulties in the target language may be reduced. In this respect, a cross-cultural comparison of the speech acts of refusal

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in the present study was conducted to enable people involved in SLA to achieve understanding of certain refusal strategies used in two different languages.

The purpose of this study was to identify similarities and differences in articulating refusal strategies between groups of Korean and Japanese university students. This study also aimed to find the effects from the knowledge of L1 to L2 in each group. The findings in this research have shown that both KEFL and JEFL tended to provide valid excuse and apologies for refusing particular speech acts, namely; invitations, suggestion, offer and requests. They employed strategies of RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation and RS (3) statement of regret. Selecting similar strategies in refusals, the order of strategies was also found to be identical. Both groups tended to begin their refusal with apology and continued their refusal with a valid excuse. At the same time, it also was revealed that each group favored different types of strategy other than RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation and RS (3) statement of regret. KEFL preferred RS (13) avoidance and RS (18) addressing terms, but JEFL were more likely to use RS (15) empathy and RS (17) gratitude/appreciation. Apart from these differences, both groups are considered to use similar strategies in general regardless of the interlocutors' social status. In terms of the pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2, KEFL and JEFL used the same refusal strategies in a couple of situations, employing RS (3) statement of regret or RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation. However, drawing out a typical refusal pattern in L2 that was directly transferred from L1 seem to be taken with much care because the refusal strategies in each situation showed repeating the two strategies, either RS (3) statement of regret or RS (5) excuse, reason, explanation in unregulated manner. Considering that the participants in both countries produced limited choice of RS, this may give some idea for teachers to provide many chances to practice various types of refusals. As mentioned in the beginning, this study was intended as an initial trial to report the three characteristics by Jarvis (2000), and the assignment needs to be further elaborated to work out a subsequent research study on cross-linguistic pragmatic transfer.

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APPENDIX

An English translation of the DCT Questionnaire (Type A)

Instruction: In the following situations, please describe what you would say to a particular person. Imagine that you are actually in the situation, and try to write down exactly what you think you would say to the person. For questions 1-6 answer in your native language and for questions 7-12 answer in English.

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1. You are a university student. You received an invitation from your former high-school teacher who you liked the most to a homecoming party. *You refuse this invitation by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Invitation: Person of higher status sent you the invitation)

2. You are invited to see a movie this weekend by one of your close friends. *You refuse this invitation by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Invitation: Equal status)

3. You are a post graduate student in a university. An undergraduate student who is younger than you in your department wants to invite you to do the introductory speech at the department speech contest. You don't know him well, and are just in the same department. *You refuse this invitation by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Invitation: Lower status)

4. A professor in your department suggests you to take his class next semester. You know the professor well because had taken his class with only a small number of students for the two previous semesters. *You refuse this suggestion by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Suggestion: Higher status)

5. You are a university student. Your friends suggest you join in a group study for the final test. *You refuse this suggestion by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Suggestion: Equal status)

6. You are a university student. A junior in the same club activity as you has suggested there is an opening for a part time job close to that students' house. *You refuse this suggestion by saying,* (answer in Korean/Japanese)
(Suggestion: Lower status)

7. You are a university student. You received an offer from your professor to take teaching assistantship. *You refuse this offer by saying,* (answer in English)
(Offer: Higher status)

8. You are a university student. Your friend who lives nearby your home offers you a ride. You have known the friend for a long time and you know the friend well. *You refuse this offer by saying,* (answer in English)
(Offer: Equal status)

9. You are a restaurant owner. One of your employees' broke dishes and makes an offer to pay for new dishes. *You refuse this offer by saying,* (answer in English)
(Offer: Lower status)

10. You are a university student. A senior in your department asks you to help out organizing documents after class. The senior student is someone you met only a couple of times but in the same department as you. *You refuse this request by saying,* (answer in English)
(Request: Higher status)

11. You are a university student. Your roommate asks you to use your laptop. You have known the roommate for a year and know the roommate very well. *You refuse this request by saying,* (answer in English)
(Request: Equal status)

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12. You are a university student in the senior year. A junior member asks you to borrow your textbooks. *You refuse this request by saying,* (answer in English)
(Request: Lower status)

(In type B questionnaire, the first six items above were answered in English and the remaining half in L1 for cross comparison)

Examples in: English

Applicable Languages: English

Applicable Levels: College

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