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Cultural conceptualizations of Korean *gyeomson* 'modesty' schema in L2 learning

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Language use as L1 and L2 both involves cultural conceptualizations because learning language requires continued cultural experiences and sustained mutual understanding among the members of a cultural group. This study aims to give some insights into the cultural conceptualization on L2 learning by examining the cultural schema of *gyeomson* 'modesty' and in Korean culture and language from the cultural linguistic perspective. Through the process of cultural experiences, the language learners internalize cultural schemas in both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. This study shows how Korean L2 learners rely on the cultural conceptualizations such as cultural schema of *gyeomson* that have essentially connected to their L1 and argues that both L2 learning and intercultural communication require getting used to new configuration of cultural conceptualizations. The study concludes with a discussion of practical implications of such processes in L2 learning and intercultural sense making in English as a lingua franca context.

[cultural conceptualization/cultural schema/cultural linguistics/modesty]

I. INTRODUCTION

The sociocultural scope of language use as both L1 and L2 has been primary concerns in cultural linguistics, anthropology, and applied cognitive linguistic studies, with a special focus on variation of cultural conceptualizations such as cultural schemas and

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metaphors (Diaz Vera, 2014; Goddard, 1996; Maalej, 2004; Musolff, 2010, 2014; Sharifian, 2007, 2015; Wolf, 2008; Yu, 2003, 2008, 2015). Since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) acknowledged the cultural ground of human experience and Palmer(1996) laid out a theoretical basis of sociocultural conceptualizations, research in the field of cultural linguistics investigate every sectors of language use in its sociocultural context (Goddard, 1996; Maalej, 2004, 2007; Musolff, 2010, 2014; Sharifian, 2007, 2015; Yu, 2003, 2008, 2015). Because only through the system of language we express the ways we conceptualize experiences of various kinds (Sharifian, 2015), they study language use in sociocultural context, placing great emphasis upon cultural conceptual configuration that affects our language use. The systems of specific culture, as Musolff (2010) articulates, are also culturally acquired, transferred, and negotiated among the cultural group. L2 learners, therefore, should confront different conceptual systems through the different system of L2. Therefore, it is not unacceptable that many L2 learners, especially at their early stage of language learning, face a substantial degree of misunderstanding due to the cultural aspects of language structure and use.

Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic variation in conceptualizations of cultural experiences has been clearly revealed in the field of English as L2 learning and English as a lingua franca (Musolff, 2010, 2014; Nacey, 2013; Sharifian, 2007, 2015; Yu, 2003). The research has provided evidence of cultural conceptualizations of experiences in the regions where English is used as L2. English is currently the most widely used language between speakers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. And cultural differences cause different linguistic configurations and foster different perspective in the minds of language users (Wierzbicka, 1995). Learners of English as L2, therefore, need to be equipped with different systems of conceptualizing experience. English classrooms, however, do not pay much attention to culturally loaded conceptualization embedded in language, just focusing on the learners' literal fluency (Watson-Gegeo, 2004). They exhibit a set of cultural assumptions that often differ from those of the learners' own cultures with varying degrees of explicitness (Shrifian, 2015). This does not mean that L2 learners in every second language contexts need to acquire all new cultural conceptualizations. For the learners from the shared cultural backgrounds, the differences in cultural conceptualizations may be less transparent.

Providing the case of Korean culture specific schema of *gyeumson*, this study presents the argument that L2 learning is likely to involve different configurations of cultural conceptualizations including cultural schemas. The schema associated with *gyeomson* encourages Koreans to show modesty or humility through the denial or downplay of praise by others. Instead of accepting and acknowledging the compliment, they tend to assign the praise to simply luck or redirect the compliment to the person who initiates the compliment or to others. Korean conceptualization of cultural schema of *gyeumson*

differs from that of English schema of modesty in Western culture to a great degree. Therefore, the differences between Korean and Western culture may prove to be more obvious and less subtle. Analyzing the data of cultural schema of *gyeomson* from Korean-speaking learners of English, this study shows how Korean L2 learners of English rely on cultural conceptualization of *gyeomson* which has essentially been related with their L1. This paper also discusses some practical implications of the processes of L2 learning and intercultural sense making in the context of English as a lingua franca.

II. CULTURAL SCHEMA

1. Cultural Schema

Subscribing its framework to applied cognitive science and anthropological linguistics and drawing on the combined resources, cultural linguistics explores the relationship between language and cultural conceptualizations (Sharifian, 2011, 2015), paying a particular attention to the role of culture in conceptualization of experiences and interrelationship between language and cultural conceptualization. It is argued that features of language represent culture specific conceptualizations of our experiences in the forms of cultural schemas and cultural metaphors (Sharifian, 2015). Since Palmer (1996) paved the basis for the theoretical progression and Sharifian (2007, 2011) established the further framework, both applied and empirical research (Maalej, 2004, 2007; Yu, 2009; Wolf & Polzenhagen, 2009; Musolff, 2015) demonstrate the critical role of culture in the process of conceptualizing experiences between the members of a speech community across cultures. From the perspective of cultural linguistics, meaning is conceptualization and conceptualization is culturally produced (Sharifian, 2007). In general, cultural linguistics investigates an intricate relationship between human experiences and language, emphasizing our conceptual faculty as a dynamic agent negotiating between language and experiences in a cultural context (Shariffian, 2015).

The analytical tools of cultural linguistics are cultural schemas, metaphors, and categories. Among the three components which are closely related to diverse features of languages, cultural schemas are a group of schemas that are culturally composed and act as a ground for interpreting cultural meanings (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). As Sharifian (2015) accounts, an illustrative example provided for a cultural schema is that of the restaurant schema. Although the restaurant schema belongs to many cultures, the detailed content of restaurant schema is different culture to culture. Culturally composed comprehensive meaning of vocabulary of each language, Palmer (1996) states, is

captured in each cultural schema, and as such whole cultural schemas reflect what we know about our language and culture. Cultural schemas mirror how we perceive world since our language use is culturally composed. Cultural schemas is also said to provide socio-pragmatic meaning since our everyday language use between interlocutors is based on the shared knowledge which is culturally constructed and captured in cultural schemas themselves (Sharifian, 2015). For example, 'greeting' speech act in Korean context usually involves lexical items connected with cultural schemas of 'eating', while it is related to different cultural schemas such as health or well-being in other languages. Levinson (1983) identifies this aspect of cultural schemas as inference or something taken-for-granted among the interlocutors who belong to the same cultural group. As such, cultural schemas provide important components that underlie both semantic and socio-pragmatic meanings of languages and language usages.

Till lately, research in the related fields of global spread of English from both historical and functional perspectives has mostly paid its attention to the representative linguistic features shown in different varieties of English. Each different variety of English, however, also shows distinctive features with regard to the culturally constructed conceptualizations of our experiences. Theoretical and analytic frameworks of cultural linguistics, therefore, provide a novel and meaningful approach to the studies on the different varieties of English across the world. Sharing the principal view with applied cognitive linguistics, the framework of cultural linguistics regards meaning as conceptualization which is a cultural construct and uses its criteria to reveal interdependence between culture and language. Within the theoretical and analytical frameworks of cultural linguistics, recent studies on varieties of English explores diverse components of English such as Aboriginal English and bidialectal education (Malcolm & Rochecouste, 2000; Sharifian, 2005), cultural framework of a variety of African English (Wolf & Polzenhagen, 2009), Persian cultural conceptualization embedded in English (Sharifian, 2007), unique Asian culture that underlies characteristic construct of Singaporean English (Wong, 2006). Through a thorough analysis of each variety of English, all the research has revealed that each different variety of English represents diverse linguistic features which encode certain cultural conceptualization.

By providing data from Persian-speaking English as L2 learners, Sharifian (2007) shows that Persian learners of English rely on cultural conceptualizations deeply related to their L1. Persian speech acts, Sharifian (2007) demonstrates, are closely associated with two typical Persian cultural schemas, *tarof* 'complement' and *shekastch-nafsi* 'modesty'. He explores the way Persian learners of English conduct cultural meanings when they communicate in English and what makes them to be misunderstood by non-Persian interlocutors. Examining Korean cultural schemas of emotions by adopting similar methodological approach, Min (2015, 2017) shows that Korean speech acts are

originally associated with Korean cultural schemas and Korean learners of English accordingly face difficulties when they use English. In Chinese context, Yu (2009) investigates how Chinese body schemas such as *xin* 'heart' has been conceptualized in Chinese language and philosophy, and demonstrates that parts of human body in Chinese has been believed to be the central capacity of cognition and the conceptualizations of body parts is extensively displayed in the form of cultural schemas of the Chinese language.

2. The Korean Cultural Schema of *Gyeomson*

Among the most predominant social and cultural schemas in Korea which owe much to Confucianism and Buddhism, one is the schema of *gyeomson* (Choi, 2000) and the other is schema of *chemyeon* 'face'. The schema of *gyeomson* is closely connected to the schema of *chemyeon* (Min, 2017; Kim & Yang, 2013). The schema of *chemyeon* supports Korean speakers to avoid force or pressure on other people and the schema associated with *gyeomson* encourages Korean speakers to show modesty through the denial or downplay of praise or laudation by others. Instead of accepting and acknowledging the compliment, they tend to assign the praise to simply luck or redirect the compliment to the person who initiates the compliment or others such as family members or friends. In other words, the schema of *gyeomson* encourages speakers to make better *chemyeon* 'face' of their interlocutors or others who might have played an important role in their achievement or success either directly or indirectly.

This schema of *gyeomson* in Korean culture is similar to that of *shekasteh-nafsi* found in Persian culture which represents one of the most Oriental cultures (O'shea, 2000; Sharifina, 2007). Ahmadi and Ahmadi (1998) maintain that the schema of *shekasteh-nafsi* in Persian culture restrains oneself from any form of self-attachment or show-off, which would imply the exclusion of others who may deserve credits. Similar to *shekasteh-nafsi* schema, the schema of *gyeomson* tends to hinder any form of self-admiration or self-flattering in Korean culture and language. The schema of *gyeomson* spurs Korean people to perceive their social identity and their achievement in relation with other members of society which they belong to and consider themselves as members who depend on others in the group.

Cultural and religious tradition of Confucianism and Buddhism can be presented to explain the schema of *gyeomson* (Shim, Kim, & Martin, 2008). Confucianism as the base of Korean collectivism emphasizes the importance of harmonic human relationship. The virtue of humility and modesty is more prominent in Buddhism and represents a characteristic that is both an essential spiritual practice and a result of it in the principles of Buddhism (Chung, 2015). Buddhism is a religion of self-examination (Tachibana,

1992) and aims to cultivate humility and enlightenment through sustained practicing of self-examination. The cultivated virtue of humility is expanded by the wisdom acquired by the experience of non-self (Tachibana, 1992). Criticizing oneself and praising others is considered a cardinal virtue in this traditional religion in Oriental countries including Korea (Chung, 2015). The emphasis on preserving harmony in relationship in Confucianism and practicing emptying self and cultivating non-self in Buddhism leads to the conceptualization of Korean culture-specific virtue of *gyeomson*. Chung (2015) believes that Korean society revolves around *gyeomson*, a formalized politeness that involves verbal and non-verbal forms. In that sense, the *gyeomson* schema provides a means for exercising a degree of 'face work' or *chemyeon*. The *gyeomson* schema frequently surfaces in expressions such as the following.

(1) *Gyeomson-i mideog-ida*
'Modesty is virtue'

(2) *Gyeomson-i mom-ey baeeoissda*
'He is modesty by nature'

(3) *Gyeomyang-ui mideog*
'Virtue of humility'

(4) *Gyeomsonhan saram*
'Modest person'

(5) *Gyeongsonhan maeumgajim*
'Modest attitude'

Aside from the above expressions, in which the word *gyeomson* is made explicit, there are many expressions of representing the schema of *gyeomson* shown in the following exchanges.

(6) *Hulyunghan eobjeok-ey taehae ikhi deulseoseo algo isseoyo*
extraordinary achievement about thoroughly heard knew
'I've heard so much about your extraordinary achievement'

(7) *Anipnida hancham baewoya hamnida*
No for a time should learn
'Please don't say that. I don't even qualify as student.'

There are also several formulaic utterances in Korean that are commonly used in response to praise and they reassign the praise to the interlocutor such as the following.

(8) *Chokey* *bwaju-seoseo* *guleoh-chiyo*
Favorably think-due to be that way
'You view favorably'
'Your eyes see beautifully'

(9) *Deukbun-ibnida*
All thanks to you
'Whatever it is because of you'

(10) G*wachan-isibnida* *hancham* *bujokhamnida*
Overpraise for a while fall short of
'It is not worthy of you. I don't even qualify.'
'I'm so flattered'

(11) *Che-ga* *mweol* *hangey-issnayo*
I what did
'I haven't done anything.'
'It belongs to you'

The formulaic expression (8) is usually used in reply to a compliment about the beauty of what one has or how one looks. Expressions (9), (10), and (11) are commonly used formulaic utterances in response to praises on one's possessions or either physical properties or accomplishment and talent. The expression (10) may also be used in reply to compliments on what the speaker has made, obtained, and achieved. Recent comparative studies on response speech act to compliments in Oriental cultures where the schema of humility is highly valued notice that speakers tend to render such formulaic expressions when they interact in English (Sharifian, 2005, 2007). This may cause varying degree of awkwardness or discomfort in the side of their interlocutors to whom the cultural schema of humility is not quite familiar.

It can be seen here that the compliment is redirected and reassigned to the interlocutor by playing down one's own achievement or capabilities. These expressions are in fact consonant with the Korean cultural schema of *gyeomson*. In the context of using English as a lingua franca and the Korean speakers draw on the schema of *gyeomson* in their use of English, it may lead to undesired misunderstanding or misinterpretation on the side of non-Korean interlocutors, particularly not familiar with the *gyeomson* schema. The

following dialogue (12) between a Korean student and an American teaching assistant, and (13) between a Korean research assistant and her American colleague clearly demonstrate the case where Korean interlocutors draw on the *gyeomson* schema in their use of English lead to unexpected interpretations on the side of American interlocutors, who are unfamiliar with this schema. The parallel *gyeomson* schema is not shown in dialogues (14) and (15). Dialogues (14) and (15) are between American interlocutors. The dialogues are from the interview situation that was employed in this study.

(12)
A: I'm so glad you finished the final draft.
K: Oh, I haven't done anything. I owe all to you!
A: What? Don't say that! No. It's all your work.

(13)
A: You're so devoted to your work. You're always the first to arrive on the scene.
K: I'm not such a hard worker! You view favorably! Thank you.
A: You are always too modest about yourself.

(14)
A1: I heard you did a great job!
A2: Oh, thank you! So glad you say so.
A1: You're welcome!

(15)
A1: You are always thorough in your work!
A2: Hey, it's my job. I'm supposed to be that.
A1: Right. You are incredible, anyway!

In dialogue (12) Korean's response to American's praise seems to have left the American with a little bit of discomfort. When the American participant was asked to comment about his initiative praise, he said that the Korean student went too far and played down her work. The American participant is considered to draw on his own cultural schema of individual credit. The Korean student, on the other hand, reported that her response was totally natural and appropriate in such circumstance. The Korean student's response to the compliment is consistent with the cultural schema of *gyeomson*. Dialogue (12) suggests that Korean speakers of English may lose some form of merit due to the degree to which they depreciated or yielded their achievements or abilities. Dialogue (13) also demonstrates that Korean interlocutor draws on the *gyeomson* schema

when received compliments on her diligence or hard working.

The dispositions that are argued so far are cognitive in nature, therefore they may not always be provided in the form of fixed expressions or formulas. For example, even when the *gyeomson* schema may trigger certain formulaic manifestations or conventionalized expressions in Korean such as *guachan-isibnida hancham bujok-hamnida* 'we are not worth of it. I don't even qualify', when Korean speakers display the *gyeomson* schema in their use of English, they do not by all means use the word for word translation of a Korean formulaic expression. It is highly possible that they use different expressions such as 'I am just below average', 'In fact, I have low intelligence,' or 'I know I am an average person' to set a low value on their capabilities. Under this circumstance, the Korean speakers of English may have lost their credit to their language fluency or accuracy because they might give impressions that they are not able to properly respond to the complements by downplaying their abilities or achievements too much. While the cognitive nature of schemas such *gyeomson* schema is represented in linguistic forms, the schema may not be just linguistic in nature. As shown in many oriental cultures, culture specific schemas can be physically as well as verbally reflected (O'shea, 2000). The *gyeomson* attitude in Korean culture also has physical manifestations, such as standing to attention on the arrival and departure of other guests or offering the seat to somebody else, which comprise all polite behavior in Korean society.

III. EVIDENCE OF SCHEMA OF *GYEOMSON* 'MODESTY'

Aiming to show how Korean learners of English draw on cultural conceptualization of *gyeomson* which has essentially been related with their L1, the study is qualitative in nature and the data consist of interview with thirteen informants for more genuine responses and an inquiry into meta-linguistic attitudes to *gyeomson* 'modesty'. The twelve informants are comprised of seven Korean native and four native speakers of American English and one native speaker of Canadian English. All informants are graduate students pursuing a Master's degree in Asian Studies and Linguistics at a state university in the United States. Korean informants have been staying over two years and have good command of English. All informants, both native and non-native English speakers, can be referred to represent exemplary users of English as a lingua franca since they use English in everyday interactions for both academic and interpersonal purposes.

1. Schema of *Gyeomson*

In terms of learning and using English as an L2, Korean speakers of English have realized that they make attempts to render some formulaic expressions of *gyeomson* in English when they received complements on what they have made or achieved. This is reflected in the responses from the Korean informants whom the researcher asked how they respond to the praises and compliments from the American interlocutors and what expressions they normally use for the responses. Here are the responses from Korean informants (the responses have been edited for English spelling and grammar, but no content has been added or changed).

Korean A: Sometimes I receive compliments on my appearance, talents, or achievements at school. When I receive praises on kind of trivial things such as my appearance or the dishes I prepared for my friends, I usually respond with an expression such as 'thank you'. As for the complements on my achievements or talents, however, things are not so simple or straight. Whenever I get complements such as 'You did a really good job! It is extraordinary work', then I don't feel comfortable to respond saying 'Thank you, you're so kind'. It seems for me too arrogant and haughty to respond to the complements from colleagues or teachers by just expressing my gratitude. So I usually say 'Oh no! It's nothing' or 'I don't even qualify'. Of course, I am not quite comfortable saying like this either. But I feel this kind of modest expression is much better than just saying my thanks. Probably, it's because I grew up in the culture where being arrogant is not a virtue. You know we have always heard 'the virtue of modesty, even though I don't think 'modesty' is a proper English equivalent to *gyeomson* or *gyeomyang* in Korean. Though *gyeomson* in Korean society tends to lose its social meaning as concern about others, it is still important for elders.

Korean B: Of course I had a plentiful experience of both giving and receiving compliments in the U.S. When I praise somebody for his or her possessions such as new clothes or hair style, that is a trifle, I don't think I expect some expressions of hesitation or words of *gyeomson*. It seems totally natural to me. But in case of matters of a great deal of weight, things are different. When I pay praise on somebody's academic work or his or her talents, it seems natural to expect some words of modesty, I mean, *gyeomson*. I believe there is still so much concern about so-called the virtue of *gyeomyang* in our society. So, to say 'I haven't done anything, I owe all to my teacher' seems quite natural to me. In the same way, when I get praised by my American classmates or friends, I tend to use expressions such as 'Oh no, please don't say that,' or 'Thanks to you.' I know that saying those expressions

do not truly mean that. But it's natural for me to say the phrases first. It totally makes sense for us who grew up in Korean society. *Gyeomson* culture, being modesty, influences the way we talk in everyday interactions, formal or informal.

Korean C: *Gyeomson* is not simply translated into English word at all. 'Modesty' or 'humility' does not convey the social meaning of *gyeomson*. *Gyeomson* is an attitude which is closely related to the speech act of compliments. Therefore, either paying or receiving praises on something such as food, house, or appearance, we usually add 'Yours eyes see beautifully' after 'Thank you.' If I get compliments on more important matter like my school-work, scholarship, or academic achievement, I feel I have to express modest attitude by saying 'I haven't done anything,' 'I owe it all to everybody,' or 'All thanks to you,' or 'I don't even qualify.' Among these expressions, I usually say 'all thanks to you' and 'I'm so flattered.' If somebody does not say any of the formulaic expressions after receiving complements, he or she is thought to be kind of arrogant or lack of *gyeomson* attitude. This is my thought. And if the interaction is in Korean, it's perfectly normal and natural. But in English context, I often feel kind of awkwardness, frankly speaking. It's because expressing my *gyeomson* attitude in English seems not to be comfortable to my American friends or colleagues. This feeling is still the same after staying more than five years in US. I still feel uncomfortable both expressing my *gyeomson* attitude and not saying any word except gratitude. My American friends tend not to express much of being modest. They just express how they thank for the complements or how kind of the person who pays the complements. Maybe this is a typical example of culture difference.

Korean D: Two years ago, I received a scholarship for one academic year. You know it is not easy and even common for foreign students to win a full time scholarship. So I was so delighted. Of course I received compliments and praises from friends and teachers. One day I received compliments on my work and scholarship from one of my American classmates and responded to the complements with my gratitude, saying 'Oh, thank you so much, but I'm so much flattered! I owe all to you and others.' Then she smiled and said 'Hey, don't' be ridiculous! It's all your work and you've done something unusual.' Maybe she thought that I stretched the truth too far. So she seemed to feel a certain degree of discomfort. But I did not find anything wrong with my response. It's a kind of expression of *gyeomson* attitude. It is a kind of norm for me as a Korean to downplay my achievement or capability using *gyeomson* expressions. *Gyeomson* expressions do not mean that I really underestimate my talent or capability. It is just manners or etiquette to express

gyeomson attitude. It is a kind of mutual implicit agreement. Am I right?

Korean E: I personally find one misunderstanding of Americans about Eastern cultures including Korean. They often don't understand *gyeomson* and sometimes take it wrong. *Gyeomson* is a cultural phenomenon that consists of refusing and offering something out of politeness. *Gyeomson* attitude is good manners in Korean society. I think that is why we have certain conventionalized expressions associated with *gyeomson* attitude in Korean. So even when I talk with someone from different culture in English, I tend to use *gyeomson* expressions. But when many speakers of Korean manifest *gyeomson* attitude in their use of English, they do not by all means use the verbatim translation of a formulaic Korean expression. Rather, we Koreans including me may downplay their capability using other expressions such as 'Oh no! I think I am just an average person,' or 'You stretch my intelligence, I believe.' When the expressions, either conventionalized or not, are uttered in Korean, it's completely natural and easily understood. But in English, it may sound awkward. I have experienced such cases several times. Whenever I responded to the complements on my achievement or capability with those expressions of *gyeomson* attitude, my American interlocutors appeared to be discomfort to a certain degree.

Korean F: Korean politeness is as subtle as the intricate social network, I think. *Gyeomson* and also *chemyeon* have no English translation. It is important to show high degree of modesty in our behavior. But sometimes I am not quite sure the boundary between being and not being humble when I receive praises that are more than I deserve. I find it is not right to give up modest attitude at any circumstances.

From the above responses from Korean informants, it is clear that the Korean learners of English may find it is quite natural to draw on the schema of *gyeomson* in their everyday interactions. The interview also suggests that in many cases Korean speakers of English have lost some form of merit or credit because of the degree to which they downplay their capabilities or talents and reassign their achievements to somebody else. It is important to note that Korean learners of English may find it difficult to abandon the schema of *gyeomson* in their use of English, and this may lead to misunderstanding on the part of those not familiar with the schema.

Although Korean informants used English words such as 'modesty' or 'humility' intermittently, they have used the words *gyeomson* and *gyeomyang* throughout the interview, which reflects the lack of English word that accurately conveys this schema of *gyeomson*. The Korean cultural schema of *gyeomson* may not be reflected thoroughly by English words like 'modesty', 'humility,' or 'humble attitude' at all. That means the

schema of *gyeomson* is quite Korean specific cultural one. But the problem is not just the existence of different cultural schemas and consequently the lack of a comparable word or concept in English. Korean learners of English tend to anxious for making mistakes either in correctness of linguistic aspects or cultural intelligibility, and consequently losing their face. In other words, the *gyeomson* schema may discourage the Korean learners to actively respond to their interlocutors in the context of speech act of compliments particularly among the learners with low level of English proficiency. Table 1 shows the responses given by both Korean and American informants about their conceptualizations of *gyeomson*. The responses in Table 1 also have been edited and normalized for English spelling and grammar.

TABLE 1

Conceptualizations of *gyeomson* 'modesty'

Koreans	Americans
Gyeomson attitude is still very significant in social relations in the countries like Korea. We grew up learning that *gyeomson* is one of the important qualities that we must be equipped with. It is kind of attitude to show our courtesy and good manners to other people.	Modesty is one of desirable human nature. I think I am a modest person. But it's also natural to expect kind of credit for my achievements.
I tend to try not to be seen as arrogant or ill-mannered. That's why I keep *gyeumson* attitude. When I get praised or receive complements on my talents, particularly, I don't take it for granted, just saying 'thank you'. I usually refuse to accept the complements directly and try to reassign the praise to others.	I haven't given much thought on that. If it means humble attitude, it depends on the context, definitely.
It is not easy to choose English word for *gyeumson*. It seems quite different attitude from 'modesty' or 'humility'. Definitely it has different connotation. It involves both verbal and nonverbal forms. I think we can show our dignity through *gyeomson* attitude.	I think humble attitude is reflected in modest behaviors in our everyday interactions such as offering my seat to somebody else or making way for others, and not giving others inconvenience.
We can notice *gyeomson* attitude both verbal and physical manifestations. Good manners, for example, are also associated with the general meaning of *gyeumson*.	Modesty means good manners! We place a high value on good manners.

I don't like people who have not *gyeomson* attitude. *Gyeomson* does not mean self-depreciation. In contrast, it makes oneself more respectable. It also encompasses politeness. Of course going too far in *gyeomson* attitude sometimes may make people around feel uncomfortable or awkward.	We are supposed be moderate in showing our modesty. Going too far should be avoided.

The responses from the Korean informants instantiate culture specific schema of *gyeomson*, as they refer to 'very significant in social relations', 'different attitude from 'modesty' or 'humility'', 'to reassign the praise to others', 'it makes oneself more respectable', 'dignity', and 'politeness'. *Gyeomson* for Koreans is associated with the social aspect of self-consciousness for self-realization fulfilled by taking modest attitude in every sector of social relations. It is more than just good manners or politeness. *Gyeomson* schema in Korean culture is well reflected in linguistic expressions as demonstrated in aforementioned formulaic expressions. *Gyeomson* schema, however, is not merely linguistic in nature, nor are they realized only in linguistic terms. It has both linguistic and non-linguistic manifestations. The latter consist of activities or polite and formal demeanor. Along with *chemyeon* schema, *gyeomson* schema reflects collectivism in Korean society and culture compared to more individual-oriented western culture. On the other hand, the responses from the American informants activate cultural schema of individual merit and suggest that modesty or humble attitude as an important bearing for them is, in most cases, restricted to physical manifestation of good manners. Modesty for them is not a device to give up credit which they deserve. The responses such as 'to expect kind of credit for my achievements', 'good manners', 'not giving others inconvenience', and 'offering my seat' reflect an aspect of American culture of individual merit or being modest as physical manifestations. Modest attitude for the American informants represents, in most cases, their desire to get a credit for their achievements without going too much.

V. DISCUSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of Korean cultural schema of *gyeomson* suggests that language learning and using involve cultural conceptualizations through continued cultural experiences. Language learning is a part of more general process of obtaining membership of a cultural group (Sharifian, 2007). The process needs sustained cultural understanding and

negotiation with other members by participating in conceptualization of cultural experiences and the ways of language use. As Sharifian (2015) maintains, language learners take in cultural schemas brought from experiences both linguistic and non-linguistic and make them their own. Compared with acquiring language as L1, L2 learning may be more complicated and difficult. It is highly possible that the process of learning L2 which has quite different cultural conceptualizations from those of L1 and does not encode learners' cultural schemas brings about much more intricate situations.

The culturally loaded conceptualization of *gyeomson* schema is internalized by Korean L1 speakers. When learning English as L2, however, different conceptualization and schema of *gyeomson* that underlie language use in English should be acquired. In the same way, English learners of Korean as L2 also need to acquire different conceptualization and cultural schema of *gyeomson* which is quite different from their schema of modesty. While *gyeomson* schema represents collectivism in Korean culture, the schema of modesty reflects individualism in Western cultural context where modesty does not mean giving up or reassigning their credit, but belong to keeping individual merit and physically manifesting good manners.

The observations made in the previous chapters open up a new ground for more profound research into how cultural schemas conceptualized in Korean have an effect on the process of learning English as L2. Since language learning involves multifarious factors including linguistic and non-linguistic competence, activating knowledge about culture specific conceptualizations such as schemas and categories may significantly facilitate learning process of English. While it is obvious that the observations and suggestions in this study need to be backed up further with more thorough methodology and extended data analysis, they evidence a step toward in-depth research in cultural grounding of conceptualizations and language learning.

This study also has meaningful implications for the use of English as a lingua franca. Whether the cultural aspect and social norms of English conform to those of English L1 speakers or instead to those attributes of each local culture is one of the current debates (MacKay, 2002; Sharifian, 2007). Globalization with other significant social factors caused more and more use of English as a lingua franca among the non-native English speakers. Thus, the use of native English speakers as the 'cultural guide book' is controversial and problematic (MacKay, 2002). Nowadays, English is used for interactions among people with diverse non-Western cultural backgrounds. In those situations, it would be not realistic either desirable to ask the speakers of English as a lingua franca to make themselves well-acquainted with diverse cultural conceptualizations across the world including those of Anglophone culture. As a solution for the matter, Sharifian (2007, p. 48) suggests "meta-cultural competence" which necessitates kind of meta-cultural awareness that diverse cultural groups conceptualize

their experiences diversely, and that people in English as a lingua franca contexts also rely on diverse cultural systems of cognition. The difference in the systems of cultural cognition makes the structure of language use different. Therefore, speakers of English in ELF contexts need to be encouraged to be aware of diverse cultural conceptualizations and acknowledge the diversity as valuable resources and to avoid the assumption of sharing cultural experiences.

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