

# Differences in the Advice-giving Behavior between Korean EFL Learners and English Native Speakers

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This paper investigates whether the Korean EFL learners' linguistic realization in discourse completion tests is significantly different from that of English native speakers under 4 advice-giving situations, each of which has different value in the degree of face-threat and urgency, and to 4 addressees, where social and psychological distance were variables. The findings show that although advices given by the two groups were similar in directness, Koreans tend to be more sensitive to the degree of face-threat and urgency of the situations and to give significantly more direct advice than English native speakers when they feel themselves psychologically close to the addressees, which is congruent with the assertion that in Confucianism- and Taoism-based societies advice is seen as a solidarity strategy. Since the data suggests the evidence that Koreans' direct advice-giving behavior is partly due to their low English proficiency, classroom instruction is desired on the constructions frequently employed by English native speakers as well as on the situations appropriate to give advice.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background and motivation

A large body of literature published in the past twenty years has addressed non-native speaker (NNS) pragmalinguistic and politeness-related behaviors (Hinkel, 1997). A large number of studies have been conducted, focusing on the speech act of request, compliment, apology, refusal, rejection, and complaint (see Cohen). However, little attention has been paid to the speech act of advice.

The stimulus for this current study was Hinkel (1997)'s result that significantly more English native speakers than Chinese preferred direct and hedged advice in response of discourse completion tasks (DCTs). Although previous research revealed that hedged advice and advice-like statements and questions in Chinese are frequently employed as a solidarity strategy to show benevolence, develop conversational rapport, and/or establish group belonging (Hu and Grove, 1991, qtd. in Hinkel, 1997), and thus Chinese learners are expected to give advice more frequently and in a more direct way than English native speakers, Hinkel (1997)'s result on DCT turned out to be contrary to the existing literature. So, it was regarded as interesting to consider the veracity of Hinkel (1997)'s conclusions as they apply in the Korean EFL context.

In addition, Hall and Ames (1987)'s assertion that in Confucianism- and Taoism-based societies, which view an individual not as a separate entity but as a part of a group, decisions are made collectively and advice is seen as a socio-cultural strategy of interdependence (qtd. in Hinkel, 1997) has called into curiosity how Koreans, who were also exposed to Confucianism and Taoism, perform the advising behavior.

The main aim of the present study is to examine whether Koreans, whose traditional culture is based on Confucianism and Taoism, give advice differently from English native speakers, who are used to the Anglo-American individualism.

## 1.2. Previous Research

### 1.2.1. Advice

Advice is defined by Tsui (1994: 122) as 'a directive which advocates a course of action for the benefit of the addressee, and in which the consequence of compliance is desirable' (qtd. in Itakura, 2001). Searle (1969) has also defined advisement as directives that the speaker believes will benefit the hearer.

Brown and Levinson (1987) described giving advice as a negative face threatening act (FTA), even where the speaker indicates that he or she does not intend to impede the addressees freedom of action. They classified advice as one of the negative-face-threatening acts that predicate some future act of the hearer, and in so doing put some pressure on the hearer to do the act.

A clear border-line of definition between advice and suggestion has not been established, and researchers have referred to advice interchangeably with suggestion (Searl, 1969; Hinkel, 1997). So, it will enhance the understanding of advice to introduce the illocutionary components of suggestion.

A decomposition of 'suggestion' into illocutionary components was suggested by Wierzbicka (1991) as below:

I suggest that you do this (X)  
I say: I think it may be good if you do this (X)  
I say this because I want you to think about it  
I think: I dont know if you will want to do it

With those in consideration, this study follows the definition of advice by Searle (1969), and assumes that the decomposition of suggestion into illocutionary components applies to advice, thus making no difference between advice and suggestion.

### 1.2.2. Politeness

Holtgraves & Yang (1992) and Ambady, Koo, & Rosenthal (1996) have found that Americans differentiated politeness more according to the size of imposition of a speech act, whereas Koreans weighed more heavily the hierarchical and relational factors of power and distance. As for power and distance, studies so far seem to provide mixed results as to which is a more powerful predictor of politeness in English. However, distance rather than power seems to play a more important role in governing English politeness style. That is, whether the speaker and the hearer are in intimate relationship or not determines speech form to a greater extent, overriding such power variables as age, social status, occupation, gender, educational background, etc (qtd. in Kim, 1996).

Brown & Levinson (1987)'s politeness model is based on the notion of face. It assumes that since face is so vulnerable, and since an individual persons desire sometimes results in face-threatening acts which threaten the face of another person, those who perform such acts should minimize the face threat inevitably created by the acts.

Banerjee & Carrell (1988) point out 'urgency' and 'degree of embarrassment' in

the situation as the two factors affecting the speaker's decision to make a suggestion. As for urgency, Brown and Levinson (1987) mentioned that the more urgent the need the more baldly the speakers express themselves, e.g. "Jump!" not, "Sir, I would like to inform you that because this building is on fire it would be best for you to jump into the safety net". In addition, according to them, the speaker should be more indirect in personal and potentially embarrassing situations, using more politeness markers such as interrogatives and hedges to lessen the threat to the hearer, and may not make the suggestion at all if the situation is too face-threatening.

In terms of politeness-related sentence types, what is generally known is that what characterizes formal or more polite style is the use of more elaborate strategies, embedding, and more complete sentences rather than fragments as in negative politeness strategy. In contrast, informal or less polite style is characterized by omissions, contraction/reduction, and less elaborate sentences (Kim, 1996).

### 1.2.3. Discourse Completion Test (=DCT)

Although there is a question of the extent to which the data collected by DCT are a reflection of the sociolinguistic constraints that operate on the speech act in question, DCT has been the most widely used methodology in interlanguage pragmatics. In addition, Rintell and Mitchell (1989) found the language elicited was very similar whether collected in oral or written form (qtd. in Kim, 2000).

With DCT, large amount of data can be collected in a relatively short amount of time, and, because of the consistency of the situation, responses can be compared along a number of dimensions (Houck & Gass, 1996).

Since this study aims to investigate English native speakers' and Korean EFL learners' advising behavior in controlled situations and addressees, and examine how the subjects' demographic variables interrelate with their advising behavior, DCT was considered the most appropriate data-elicitation method.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The study reported in this article differs from previous research on advising speech acts, in that each imaginary situation was presented according to its

different value in the degree of face-threat and urgency, and the addressees also varied in social status and familiarity. It also differs from previous studies, in an attempt to examine how various demographic variables such as gender, age, English proficiency, and length of residence in an English-speaking country interrelate with the advising behavior.

The research questions to be answered from this research design are the following:

- (1) Are the DCT responses of Korean learners of English significantly different from those of native speakers of English?
- (2) If so, how different are their advising behaviors, in 4 different situations varied by the degree of face-threat and urgency, and to 4 different addressees varied by social distance and familiarity?

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Subjects

The subjects of the study consisted of two groups: 22 native speakers of English and 35 Korean EFL learners.

The subjects in the English native speakers' group were either college students or college graduates. They ranged in age from early 20s to 35 years. Of the 22 subjects, 11 were male and 11 were female.

According to Cook (1999)'s definition of a native speaker as a monolingual person who still speaks the language learnt in childhood, this study regarded as English native speakers only those who have been speaking English as their native language since their childhood and employing English as their main vehicle of communication. 4 of them were Korean-American, but their competence in Korean was such that speaking is almost impossible for them, while their English was that of an English monolingual speaker. Thus their data were coded as English native speakers'.

The subjects in the second group included 35 Korean learners of EFL, all of whom were graduate students enrolled in either master's or doctoral course at Seoul National University. Among the 35 Korean subjects, 17 were male and 18 were female. They ranged in age from 23 to 31 years. To overcome possible

developmental L2 difficulties associated with responding to L2 instruments, subjects were selected on the basis of their relatively high English proficiency, with TOEFL scores ranging from 557 to 651 (a mean of 612.6). Since the English proficiency scores the subjects had reported were not unified into one single test, subjects' TOEIC or TEPS scores were converted into TOEFL scores according to the TOEIC, TOEFL, and TEPS score correlation table obtained from the Language Research Institute at Seoul National University. 17 (49%) of the 35 Korean EFL subjects had living experience in an English-speaking country for periods of time between 1 month and 3 years with a mean of 4.6 months.

Since the fictitious addressees in the questionnaire included an old distinguished and young sociable professors, it was necessary to select subjects

**Table 1.**

English Native Speaker (NS)			Koreans (NNS)		
Characteristic	n	%	Characteristic	n	%
Gender			Gender		
Male	11	50	Male	17	49
Female	11	50	Female	18	51
Age			Age		
20-25	5	23	20-25	8	23
26-30	11	50	26-30	22	63
31-3	6	27	31-35	5	14
Education			Education		
College graduate	11	50	M.A. course	21	60
Graduate	11	50	Ph. D course	14	40
Nationality			English Proficiency (TOEFL)		
America	16	73	557-599	10	29
Canada	4	18	600-629	14	40
Australia	1	4.5	630-651	11	31
New Zealand	1	4.5	Mean = 612.6		
			Time in an English-speaking country		
			0 month	18	51
			1-5 months	8	23
			6 months 1year	7	20
			3 years	2	6
			Mean = 4.6 months		

Demographic Profile of Subjects (N = 57)

among those who have been in a graduate school. The rationale behind this was that it is easier for those in a graduate school, where the interaction between students and professors occur much more frequently than in the undergraduate years, to imagine themselves addressing a professor.

The ideal comparison would be between the Korean graduate EFL learners and the English native speakers with the same educational background. However, only 11 of the English native-speaker subjects in this study were graduate students.

Since the research has found that even English native speakers with different cultural background (e.g. Britain and America) exhibit different preferences for modes of speech acts (Creese, 1991)(qtd. in Cohen), and in many cases one variety of English serves as the yardstick for the comparison (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper), the ideal data of English native speakers would be obtained from a group of native English speakers with equal nationality. However, the present research was done with English native speakers with different national backgrounds (American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand), which is another limitation of this study.

## 2.2. Materials

The task consisted of a discourse-completion test (DCT) including 5 situations, each of which might elicit a possible advice from the subject. The complete questionnaire is reproduced in the Appendix I. The subjects were instructed to read the description of the situation, pretend they were in such a situation, and write down what they felt they would say. If they felt it would be inappropriate to say anything, they were instructed to check a box and write the reason.

The DCTs had the goal of establishing whether Koreans and NSs viewed similarly the appropriateness of advice-like statements of questions in 5 situations with different addressees. The questionnaire was constructed in such a way as to systematically vary in the degree of face-threat to the addressee and urgency on one hand, and the social and psychological distance between the speaker and the hearer on the other hand.

The rationale behind establishing the situation on the continuum of face-threat and urgency lies in Banerjee & Carrell (1988)'s remark on the factors

affecting the speaker's choice of suggestion, which was mentioned earlier in the present study. The employment of the above 4 types of imaginary professors and students was replicated from Suh (1999), except 'new classmate', which was replaced in her study by 'an older neighbor whom the requester dislikes'. The establishment of 2 factors 'social distance' and 'psychological distance' also relates to the findings of the literature that the degree of politeness is affected by hierarchical and relational factors of power and distance, which was introduced earlier in the present study.

The 5 situations described on the questionnaire are as follows:

1. Unzipped pants. A person on the bus has his/her pants unzipped.
2. Blowing nose. A person who does not know the Korean culture blows his/her nose at the table, at which Korean customers eating lunch at the next table frown. You know the Korean table manner.
3. Illness. The professor whose office you are in is visibly tired and looks ill.
4. Illness. The student you are studying next to in the library is visibly tired and looks ill.
5. Greasy hamburger. A person you are eating with is about to make a bad menu choice.

According to the degree of face-threat and urgency, each situation can be categorized as below:

	Unzipped pants	Blowing nose	Illness	Greasy hamburger
Face-threatening	+	+	-	-
Urgency	+	-	+	-

The notion of 'face-threatening' is interchangeable with 'embarrassing'. '(+) face-threatening' means that the situation is on the right end of the face-threat continuum, and is likely to threaten the hearer's face or embarrass the hearer, while '(-) face-threatening' means that the situation is on the left end of the face-threat continuum, and is not so high in the degree of face-threat. Likewise, '(+) urgency' denotes that the situation is on the right end of the urgency continuum, and requires an urgent reaction from the hearer, whereas '(-) urgency' means that the situation is on the left end of the urgency continuum, and is not high in the degree of urgency.



Among the above 4 situations, 'illness' and 'hamburger' ones were taken from Hinkel (1997), though some revisions were made in the original to create more authentic context.

The 'blowing nose' situation was originated by the researcher.

Rose (1992) reported difficulties in administering DCTs to NSs, who were expected to make requests, when some of his subjects refused to fill out the DCTs and claimed that they would never make the required situational requests in real life. So, to test the acceptability of the situations to the subjects, the researcher consulted 2 native speakers of English, preceding the actual experiment, and they both reported no difficulty giving responses in the given situations.

The addressee also varied in four ways:

1. an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with in person
2. a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person
3. your closest friend
4. your new classmate, whom you met for the first time today

The values of social and psychological distance between each addressee and the subjects are represented in the table below:

	Old professor	Young professor	Closest friend	New classmate
Social distance	+	+	-	-
Psychological distance	-	+	+	-

'(+)' social distance' is 'hearer dominance' situation, where the speaker and hearer are likely to feel themselves socially distant from each other, and usually the hearer is in a higher social status than the speaker. '(-)' social distance' means that there is little social distance between the speaker and hearer.

'Psychological distance' is interchangeable with 'familiarity', i.e. it refers to the degree the speaker feels psychologically close to the hearer. '(+)' familiarity' denotes that the speaker feels familiar to the hearer, and '(-)' familiarity', that the speaker feels unfamiliar to the hearer.

Different from Suh (1999), who presented all the addressees to be male, any reference to gender was avoided in this study: no pronouns except second person

singular were used, and personal names or other gender markers were avoided.

### 2.3. Data coding

Subjects' responses to the DCT situations were coded based on the directness and indirectness of their responses.

Hinkel (1997) classified advice into three categories: direct, hedged, and indirect comment. Direct advice included imperatives and the modal verb *should*, as in *you should* without hedging. Hedged advice included such devices as softeners (e.g. *I think, it seemed that, it appeared, I believe*), questions (*Why don't you ... ? Don't you (think / feel) ... ? Aren't you ... ? Isn't it better (for you / that you) ... ?*), and impersonals (*It's important (for you / that you) ... , It's necessary (for you / that you) ...*). The indirect comment consisted of the advising structure which could have more than one illocutionary force (or interactional intent).

Banerjee & Carrell (1988)'s classification was different from Hinkel (1997) in that suggestion was divided into only two categories: direct suggestion and indirect suggestion. Direct suggestion was defined as any suggestion that included an indication of the desired or suggested action (e.g. *You need to change your blouse, It would be nice if you changed your blouse, Why don't you change your blouse?*), whereas indirect suggestions were defined as any suggestions that did not state the desired or suggested action (e.g. *Your blouse stinks, Did the store run out of soap? It's really hot, I'm perspiring.*)

In this study, a mixed data-coding procedure by Hinkel (1997) and Banerjee & Carrell (1988) was employed.

Any advice including the devices such as *let's ... , had better ... , need to ... , be supposed to ... ,* as well as imperatives and *should* without hedging was coded as direct advice. While Hinkel (1997) made no comment on devices like *let's ... , had better ... , need to ... , be supposed to ... ,* the researcher regarded such devices as those conveying directness.

Examples of the NSs' responses that were coded as direct advice are presented below:

"Hey, zip up your pants."

"When in Rome do as the Romans do."

"Let's take a break. I think we need one."

The responses given by Koreans and coded as direct advice are exemplified below:

"You should not blow your nose at the table in Korea."

"Hey! Never ever bite it at all."

"You'd better looking down your clothes."

The advice with hedging or indication of the desired or suggested action was coded as hedged advice. Some, produced by NSs, are exemplified below:

"You probably shouldn't do that here."

"You look like you could use a break."

"You may want to consider something else."

Samples of hedged advice responses by Koreans are listed below:

"I think it would be better for you not to blow your nose in restaurant."

"You'd better order other one, I think."

"I think you need to take better care of yourself."

Similar to Hinkel (1997), the responses which could have more than one illocutionary force and does not state the desired or suggested action, and in which no explicit or hedged advice was identified were coded as indirect advice. They include impersonals (*it's important (for you /that you) ..., it's necessary (for you /that you) ...*), or advice with joke.

Several of the NSs' responses are presented below:

"Your fly is down."

"I know you didn't know but it is considered rude to blow your nose at the table."

"Are you trying to show off your new underwear?"

Some of the Korean subjects' responses are as below:

"If I were you, I wouldn't order that hamburger."

"In Korea, we [people] don't blow nose at the table."

"Sir, you must have worked very hard. Is there anything that I could help you?"

Each of the above 3 types of advisement devices could be placed as direct, hedged, indirect, in the order of more directness from the left.

As shown in some of the above examples, many of the responses included more than one type of advice. For example, in the response like "let's take a break. I think we need one", the first sentence is the kind which could be coded as a direct advice, while the second, as a hedged advice. In such cases, the researcher selected only one type among them, focusing on the one conveying more illocutionary power, usually more direct advice.

#### 2.4. Data analysis

For the data analysis, the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 10.0 window version was used. An alpha level of .05 was chosen as the cut-off for significance. Exact probability levels are reported with each significant result. NS in the tables means the result was not significant at the .05 level.

For research question 1 and 2, results were analyzed quantitatively by Chi-square tests of the difference in proportions of advice-giving type between English native speakers and Korean EFL learners (research question 1) in 4 different situations and to 4 different addressees (research question 2).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Question 1: Are the DCT responses of Korean EFL learners significantly different from those of English native speakers?

3.1.1. Situation 1: Unzipped pants. A person on the bus has his/her pants unzipped.

For Situation 1, significant difference of the advice-giving patterns was observed between English native speakers' group and the Korean EFL learners' group, when they address a young sociable professor and their closest friend.

Table 2.

Addressee		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
Old prof.	NS	0 (0)	0 (0)	46 (10)	55 (12)	4.035 (p=.133, ns.)
	Kor	0 (0)	6 (2)	23 (8)	71 (25)	
Young prof.	NS	0 (0)	0 (0)	77 (17)	23 (5)	8.139 (p=.043 < .05)
	Kor	9 (3)	11 (4)	43 (15)	37 (13)	
Closest friend	NS	23 (5)	0 (0)	77 (17)	0 (0)	7.553 (p=.023 < .05)
	Kor	43 (15)	14 (5)	43 (15)	0 (0)	
New classmate	NS	5 (1)	5 (1)	46 (10)	46 (10)	1.229 (p=.746, ns.)
	Kor	6 (2)	11 (4)	34 (12)	49 (17)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis. The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

### 3.1.1.1. Addressee: a young sociable professor

While a majority of English native speakers preferred to give indirect advice to a young sociable professor and no one of them chose hedged or direct advice, 20% of Korean EFL learners preferred direct and hedged advice.

Answers by the English native speakers when the addressee was a young sociable professor are as follows:

"Excuse me, but your zipper is down."

"Excuse me, professor. I think you forgot your zipper."

While the English native speakers started their advice with "Excuse me ...", 3 Koreans started their first remark with "I'm sorry ..." as in:

"I'm sorry ..., but ... you'd better looking down. Your clothes ..."

The ungrammatical *-ing* form following *'d better* in the above sentence suggests that Koreans' directness in their advice may partly originate from their low English proficiency and ignorance of the cultural context in which *had better* is used. This is in line with Shim & Baik (1995)'s findings that Korean EFL learners use the expression "you'd better ..." as a marker of mild politeness that has a meaning similar to *please*, even though *you'd better* contains some kind of negative consequence in English.

A hedged advice exemplified by *why don't you ...?* was also employed by some Korean subjects as the following sentence shows:

"Sir, why don't you check the front of your pants?"

Some Koreans even resorted to imperative when they give advice to a young sociable professor.

"Hello Prof. OOO, (whispering) take care of your zipper."

Based on the English native speakers' preference for indirect advice and Koreans' relative preference for direct advice, it is expected for an English native speaker to feel embarrassed, especially in a (+) face-threatening situation as the 'zipper' one, when they are addressed by a Korean with a direct advice including the imperative or hedged structure.

### 3.1.1.2. Addressee: a closest friend

Koreans were also significantly more direct than English native speakers when they give advice to their closest friend.

While English native speakers' advice to their closest friend were not so different from those to professors, Koreans' advice to their closest friend were much more direct than when they address professors. Some examples of the answers by English native speakers are presented below:

"Hey, you're flying low."

"Your fly is open."

"Hey, zip up your pants."

Answers by Korean EFL learners are as follows:

"Check your pants."

"You need to zip up your pants."

"Hey! Look at your pants!"

It seems that when the social and psychological distance narrow down,

Koreans become more direct in their advice-giving than English native speakers. The findings of the existing literature which has revealed that advice in Chinese is frequently employed as a solidarity strategy (Hu & Grove, 1991, qtd. in Hinkel, 1997) seem to apply to Koreans, whose cultural origin is also rooted in Confucianism and Taoism.

### 3.1.1.3. Addressee: an old distinguished professor and a new classmate

For an old distinguished professor and a new classmate, the difference between the two groups was not significant, both preferring no advice to an old distinguished professor and no advice or indirect advice to their new classmate.

### 3.1.2. Situation 2: Blowing nose - A person who does not know the Korean culture blows his/her nose at the table, at which Korean customers eating lunch at the next table frown. You know the Korean table manner.

For Situation 2, no significant difference in the advice-giving behavior was observed between the NS and NNS group. They both preferred no advice to an old distinguished professor, indirect advice to a young sociable professor, direct advice to their closest friend, and indirect advice to their new classmate.

**Table 3.**

Addressee		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
Old prof.	NS	0 (0)	5 (1)	27 (6)	68 (15)	2.626 (p=.269, ns.)
	Kor	0 (0)	0 (0)	17 (6)	83 (29)	
Young prof.	NS	5 (1)	9 (2)	50 (11)	36 (8)	1.934 (p=.586, ns.)
	Kor	0 (0)	9 (3)	60 (21)	31 (11)	
Closest friend	NS	50 (10)	9 (2)	32 (7)	14 (3)	.415 (p=.937, ns.)
	Kor	37 (13)	11 (4)	37 (13)	14 (5)	
New classmate	NS	14 (3)	14 (3)	46 (10)	27 (6)	1.386 (p=.709, ns.)
	Kor	6 (2)	14 (5)	43 (15)	37 (13)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis. The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

3.1.3. Situation 3: Illness — The professor/student is visibly tired and looks ill.

For Situation 3, where the addressee looks ill, no significant difference in the advice-giving behavior was observed between the NS and NNS group. They both preferred indirect or no advice to an old distinguished professor, indirect advice to a young sociable professor, direct advice to their closest friend, and indirect advice to their new classmate, and the difference, if any, turned out to be insignificant by the Chi-square analysis.

**Table 4.**

Addressee		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
Old prof.	NS	5 (1)	14 (3)	50 (11)	32 (7)	.848 (p=.838, ns.)
	Kor	3 (1)	14 (5)	40 (14)	43 (15)	
Young prof.	NS	9 (2)	18 (4)	68 (15)	5 (1)	2.288 (p=.515, ns.)
	Kor	14 (5)	26 (9)	49 (17)	11 (4)	
Closest friend	NS	41 (9)	36 (8)	23 (5)	0 (0)	.292 (p=.864, ns.)
	Kor	46 (16)	37 (13)	17 (6)	0 (0)	
New classmate	NS	14 (3)	32 (7)	46 (10)	9 (2)	.386 (p=.943, ns.)
	Kor	9 (3)	34 (12)	49 (17)	9 (3)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis. The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

3.1.4. Situation 4: Greasy hamburger — A person you are eating with is about to make a bad menu choice.

In situation 4, English native speakers and Koreans showed no significantly different preference for advice, except when they address a young sociable professor.

#### 3.1.4.1. Addressee: a young sociable professor

While 85% of Koreans were inclined to give advice to a young sociable professor, whether it was a direct, hedged, or indirect advice, only 55% of the English native speakers chose to give advice, and 46% of them left the right of the menu choice entirely up to the professor. This also suggests that Koreans regard advice as a solidarity strategy especially when they feel themselves psychologically close to the addressee.

Among the advice types, indirect one was most preferred both among Koreans



**Table 5.**

Addressee		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
Old prof.	NS	0 (0)	5 (1)	36 (8)	59 (13)	.932 (p=.628, ns.)
	Kor	0 (0)	3 (1)	26 (9)	71 (25)	
Young prof.	NS	9 (2)	0 (0)	46 (10)	46 (10)	9.983 (p=.019<.05)
	Kor	3 (1)	11 (4)	71 (25)	14 (5)	
Closest friend	NS	27 (6)	0 (0)	64 (14)	9 (2)	5.870 (p=.118, ns.)
	Kor	31 (11)	11 (4)	57 (20)	0 (0)	
New classmate	NS	5 (1)	5 (1)	64 (14)	27 (6)	3.575 (p=.311, ns.)
	Kor	6 (2)	23 (8)	49 (17)	23 (8)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis.  
The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

and English native speakers.

Answers by English native speakers are as follows:

"Oh, I don't know if I'd recommend that here ... . My last one was pretty greasy."

"I had it before, and it wasn't good."

However, some Korean EFL learners answered as below:

"I hope you to order other one."

"Sir, You'd better change your order. The one you ordered is greasy one."

Again, the ungrammaticality of the above sentences provides the possibility that the directness in advice by Koreans is due to their ignorance of the cultural context in which the construction *had better* is used. Whether Koreans' direct advice is the result of transfer from their native language or of their low English proficiency will be investigated through the comparison between their Korean production of advice and the English counterparts.

If a professor who is an English native speaker is addressed by a student with the direct advice as above, it is expected for the professor to feel emotionally attacked and regard the student rude. So it is desired for Korean students to use the type of advice frequently employed by English native speakers, especially when they address those from an English-speaking country.

## 3.1.4.2. Addressee: the closest friend &amp; a new classmate

When the addressees are the closest friend and a new classmate, no significant difference was observed by the Chi-square test.

For the closest friend, the most preferred advice type for both groups was indirect one. However, Koreans were found to be more direct when they give advice to their closest friend, which is supported by 42.8% of Koreans and 27.3% of English native speakers who chose direct or hedged advice.

For a new classmate, both groups preferred indirect advice most. However, Koreans gave more advice to a new classmate, whether it was an indirect, hedged, or direct advice.

### 3.2. Research Question 2: How different are their advising behaviors in 4 different situations varied by the degree of face-threat and urgency, and to 4 different addressees varied by social distance and familiarity?

#### 3.2.1. Situation

In order to examine how different the advising behaviors of Koreans and English native speakers are in 4 different situations, each of which is different in the degree of face-threat and urgency, all the frequencies for the 4 addressees in each situation were added and compared by the Chi-square test.

**Table 6.**

Situation		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
zipper	NS	7 (6)	1 (1)	61 (54)	31 (27)	18.612 (p=.000 <.05)
	Kor	14 (20)	11 (15)	36 (50)	39 (55)	
blowing nose	NS	16 (14)	9 (8)	39 (34)	36 (32)	1.520 (p=.678, ns.)
	Kor	11 (15)	9 (12)	39 (55)	41 (58)	
illness	NS	17 (15)	25 (22)	47 (41)	11 (10)	1.748 (p=.626, ns.)
	Kor	18 (25)	28 (39)	39 (54)	16 (22)	
greasy hamburger	NS	10 (9)	2 (2)	52 (46)	35 (31)	17.458 (p=.001 <.05)
	Kor	16 (22)	19 (26)	44 (62)	21 (30)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis.

The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

#### 3.2.1.1. Zipper

When they address a person whose zipper is open, Koreans tend to more hesitate to give advice to the person than English native speakers. But once they give advice to the person, Koreans were more direct. The difference in the advice-giving behavior between English native speakers and Koreans was found to be significant by the Chi-square result, with  $\chi^2 = 18.612$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

#### 3.2.1.2. Blowing nose

When addressing a person who blows his/her nose in a Korean restaurant, English native speakers and Koreans did not show any significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 1.520$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.).

However, Koreans seemed to be more tolerant to the nose-blowing behavior. Actually, some Koreans answered like "I don't care much about that. I sometimes blow my nose at the table.", or "Blowing nose is beyond my control. It's a physical reaction". The higher rate of English native speakers' giving advice is presumed to be partly due to their ignorance of the Korean culture. To many of them, the issue itself of whether blowing nose is permitted or not was quite new, and they seem to have considered blowing nose at the table in Korea is too much a big deal.

#### 3.2.1.3. Illness

When they are in a situation where they see a person visibly ill, English native speakers and Korean EFL learners do not show any significantly different advising pattern to the ill person ( $\chi^2 = 0.626$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.), the majority of them choosing indirect advice as their most preferred advising strategy.

#### 3.2.1.4. Greasy hamburger

When they are in a restaurant with a person who is about to make a bad menu-choice, English native speakers and Korean EFL learners show significantly different advising behavior ( $\chi^2 = 17.458$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Koreans (78.6%) gave more advice, whether it was an indirect, hedged, or direct type of advice, than English native speakers (64.8%). Especially hedged and direct advice, which are considered more abrupt than indirect advice, was significantly more

employed by Koreans (34.3%) than by English native speakers (12.5%).

Overall, Koreans seem to be more sensitive to the factors of 'face-threat' and 'urgency', although it is hasty to generalize the result of only 4 situations. They significantly more hesitated to give advice in 'zipper' situation, which is (+) face-threatening and (+) urgent, and gave significantly more advice to the fictitious addressee than English native speakers in 'greasy hamburger' situation, which is (-) face-threatening and (-) urgent.

Therefore, it seems that as the degree of face-threat lows, and urgency increases, the advice given by the speaker tends to be more direct.

To conclude, in the zipper situation and hamburger situation, Korean EFL learners were found to be more direct in their advice-giving to a young sociable professor and their closest friend. Based on this observation, it seems that Koreans regard advice as a solidarity strategy especially when they feel themselves psychologically close to the addressee.

### 3.2.2. Addressee

In order to examine how differently Koreans and English native speakers give advice to 4 different addressees, each of whom has different value in the degree of social distance and familiarity, all the frequencies for the 4 different situations to each addressee were added and compared by Chi-square test.

**Table 7.**

Addressee		Direct	Hedged	Indirect	Nothing	Chi-square
Old prof.	NS	1 (1)	6 (5)	40 (35)	53 (47)	4.805 (p=.187, ns.)
	Kor	1 (1)	6 (8)	26 (37)	67 (94)	
Young prof.	NS	6 (5)	7 (6)	60 (53)	27 (24)	3.179 (p=.365, ns.)
	Kor	6 (9)	14 (20)	56 (78)	24 (33)	
Closest friend	NS	34 (30)	11 (10)	49 (43)	6 (5)	4.063 (p=.255, ns.)
	Kor	39 (55)	19 (26)	39 (54)	4 (5)	
New classmate	NS	9 (8)	14 (12)	50 (44)	27 (24)	2.581 (p=.461, ns.)
	Kor	6 (9)	21 (29)	44 (61)	29 (41)	

Note: Percentages are listed in each cell, with frequency count provided in parenthesis.  
The percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

3.2.2.1. an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with  
in person

There was no significant difference in the advice-giving behavior to an old distinguished professor between English native speakers and Korean EFL learners ( $\chi^2 = 4.805$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.). However, more percentage of Koreans (67.1%) chose not to give any advice to the professor than English native speakers (53.4%), though the difference was not significant. It implies that Koreans find it harder to address or advise a person who is socially and psychologically distant.

3.2.2.2. a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

English native speakers and Korean EFL learners showed no significant difference in their advice-giving behavior to a young sociable professor ( $\chi^2 = 3.179$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.). However, contrary to the general assumption that Koreans would be more reluctant to give advice to a professor, they (76.4%) gave more advice to a young sociable professor than English native speakers (71.7%). Furthermore, Koreans' advice (hedged + direct 20.7%) tend to be more direct than that of English native speakers (hedged + direct 12.5%).

The result suggests that Koreans feel more free to give advice to a person, if only the addressee is psychologically close to the speaker.

3.2.2.3. your closest friend

The result obtained from tables for a young sociable professor as an addressee is more strongly supported by the present case. Even though the difference of advice-giving behavior between Koreans and English native speakers turned out to be insignificant by the Chi-square result ( $\chi^2 = 4.063$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.), the advice given by Koreans (57.9%) were more direct than English native speakers (45.5%).

Therefore, the tentative conclusion that Koreans feel more free to give advice to a person, if only the addressee is psychologically close to the speaker gains more persuasive power.

3.2.2.4. your new classmate, whom you met for the first time today

When they are with a new classmate, both English native speakers and

Korean EFL learners preferred indirect advice most, and any difference between the two groups in their advice-giving behavior was not significant ( $\chi^2 = 4.063$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , ns.).

#### 4. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study has revealed that Korean EFL learners tend to give more direct advice, than the English native speakers, to the addressees they feel psychologically close to, even when the situation is face-threatening to the hearer.

Based on such findings, it is expected that an English native speaker would feel embarrassed, when they are addressed by a Korean who give them a direct advice, which they regard inappropriate in a given situation, result of which might lead to an unintended misunderstanding and communicative breakdown.

Therefore, it is required in the EFL classroom to teach appropriate advising strategies which this research has found to be mostly employed by English native speakers.

The evidence that Koreans' direct advice-giving behavior is partly due to their low English proficiency is found in the frequent use of *had better* by some of the subjects, which is consistent with Shim & Baik (1995)'s result. Thus, teachers in Korean EFL classroom are desired to teach students that such devices as *had better* has the meaning of strong recommendation or advisability and sometimes used as a threatening directive by native speakers of English.

#### 5. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FURTHER STUDY

Since the subjects in the present study were not equal in educational and national background, which might have damaged the internal validity of the study, a follow-up study is required to compare Korean EFL learners and English-native-speakers with the same educational background and nationality.

Furthermore, it is necessary for a follow-up study to expand the study to a larger population, since it is hard to generalize the result with only 22 English native speakers and 35 Korean EFL learners.

Since the ungrammaticality of the answers by some Koreans suggests the possibility for the Koreans' directness in advice to result from their low English proficiency, the origin of Koreans' directness should be elucidated by comparing their answers in English with those in Korean.

It would be ideal if the data are coded by several English native speakers with high interrater reliability. However, all the data-coding procedures were done by a Korean researcher, which is another limitation for this study.

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## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE

I'm doing a doctorate course at Seoul National University, majoring in English. I'm asking English native speakers to fill out this questionnaire form in order to prepare my term-paper. The result obtained from this survey will not be used for anything but my own research, and your identification will not be exposed, so please feel free to answer the questionnaire. Thank you very much.

Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male  Female

Age: below 15  16-20  21-25  26-30  31-35  36-40  40-

Education: high school graduate  college graduate

have been in a graduate school

(for Koreans) English proficiency test score: TEPS \_\_\_\_ TOEFL \_\_\_\_

TOEIC \_\_\_\_

(for Koreans) Have you ever been in an English-speaking country?

Yes  No

I have been in \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ (duration).

Read the following situations. Pretend you are there and imagine what you would do and say in each situation. Please write out your response in the space provided, and make your response as accurate as possible if you were in the given situation. If you feel that it would be inappropriate to say anything, please write down why you wouldn't say anything. There is no correct answer.



Example. You are at the Monroe County Library. You want to write down the names of books on your notebook for the paper. But you forgot bringing a pen. You see an old friend sitting next to you. You want to borrow the pen from him.

What would you say, or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the person you met was ...?

- (1) an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with in person

Excuse me, sir. I would appreciate it if you could lend me a pen.

- (2) a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

Professor. I forgot to bring a pen. Could you lend me one?

- (3) your closest friend

Can you lend me a pen?

- (4) a student who looks similar in age to you, and whom you have never seen before

Excuse me. I forgot to bring a pen. I would thank you very much if you could lend me one.

1. You are in a bus heading to your university. People are entering the bus, but there are not so many people on the bus so far. A person is getting on the bus, and you notice that the person's pants are not zipped. The person walks towards your seat and is sitting next to you.

What would you say, or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the person sitting next to you was ...?

- (1) an old distinguished professor whom you have *never* had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (2) a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (3) your closest friend

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (4) a student who looks similar in age to you, and whom you have never seen before

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

2. You are eating lunch with a person who is an English native speaker, at a restaurant which is mostly frequented by Koreans. The person blows his/her nose while eating lunch. The Korean customers who were eating at the next table frown at the person, but the person doesn't seem to have noticed it. You know that Koreans consider it rude to blow ones nose at the table.

What would you say or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the person you are with was ...?

- (1) an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (2) a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (3) your closest friend

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because.

- (4) your new classmate (you met the person for the first time today)

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

3. You are in the office of a professor. You know the professor has been working very hard. The professor looks really tired and ill, and clearly does not feel very well.

What would you say or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the professor was:?

- (1) an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with in

person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (2) a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

4. You have been studying in the library with a person for a long time. The person looks really tired and ill, and clearly does not feel very well.

What would you say or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the person was ...?

- (1) your closest friend

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (2) your new classmate (you met the person for the first time today)

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

5. You are in a school restaurant with a person. The person says something about ordering a hamburger. You ordered a hamburger in this restaurant before, and, in your opinion, it was really greasy.

What would you say or why would you say nothing in the situation, if the person you are with was ...?

- (1) an old distinguished professor whom you have never had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (2) a young sociable professor whom you have had contact with in person

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

- (3) your closest friend

\_\_\_\_\_

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_

(4) your new classmate (you met the person for the first time today)

---

I wouldn't say anything, because. \_\_\_\_\_