

# A Cross-cultural Study of Responses to Offensive Situations\*

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**Hahn, Jee-won. (2014). A Cross-cultural Study of Responses to Offensive Situations. *Language Research*, 50.2, 487-512.**

Although Korean and English speech act studies have increased in quantity, a closer look revealed some limitations from qualitative perspectives. Many speech act studies employed similar data collection that draw on similar coding systems and investigated speech acts between Koreans as non-native speakers and native speakers of English. For this reason, similar findings were consistently reported from the literature. This study examines two data sets collected from Koreans and Americans as native speakers. The study also examines diverse responses occurring in six different scenarios and considers cultural-social factors in the linguistic realization of apology. Results indicate cross-cultural differences are found in the use of non-apologies and non-verbal behavior which are missing from the previous studies. Secondly, contextual factors like social relationships and offense types are likely to affect the choice of language between Korean and English speech apologies. The study concludes a substantial comparison needs to expand kinds of speech acts in order to understand intercultural communication.

**Keywords:** cross-cultural pragmatics; speech acts; apologies; Korean; English

## 1. Introduction

Research on Korean-English cross-cultural pragmatics has grown and thrived. Many studies (Jung 2004; Kim 2008; Koo 2001; Lee 2000; Min and Lee 2013) were concerned with interlanguage pragmatics, which analyzed the English produced by speakers of the two languages. In particular, apologies were thus one of the most investigated speech acts owing to the framework known as the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Acts Realization Pattern) project (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Meier 1998). For

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\* This work was supported by the 2013 research funded by Pukyong National University.

this reason, studies on apologies shared in common the usage of similar data sets collection and coding systems. The CCSARP framework has brought progress in by linking theoretical issues and empirical interests. Benefits of the framework are in utilizing cross-cultural comparison and designed to facilitate cross-cultural comparison by providing a set of scenarios and analytical categories.

On the other hand, the analytical framework adopted for speech act comparison revealed problems in the literature. Similarities consistently reported were the case (Byon 2005; Lee and Park 2010). Pre-existing categories were hard to account for cross-linguistic variation as these categories mainly expressed sincerity and were prototypical forms. Some people do not apologize when they offend someone. The offender may react in a number of different ways. It is necessary to consider other strategies such as non-apologies and non-linguistic expressions.

This study aims to provide substantial findings to the understanding of cross-cultural differences between English and Korean. The study highlights apologies by examining how one responds to one's wrongdoings. Moreover, it analyzes native data for the sake of a comparison of English and Korean speakers. The study investigates diverse categories including apologies as well as non-apologies and non-verbal apologies.

## **2. Previous Studies**

### **2.1. Apology as Speech Act**

Apologies function to reestablish harmony after a virtual offense as remedial work (Goffman 1971). In social interactions, it is impossible to avoid conflicts and threatening acts to the other. The occurrence of an offense requires remedial work which "change the meaning that might otherwise be given to an act, transforming what could be seen as offensive into what can be seen as acceptable" (109). Remedial work included apologies, explanations, and excuses.

For Brown and Levinson (1987), apologizing is face-threatening for

the speaker's positive face and face-saving for the hearer. Within politeness theory, apologies redress face-threatening behavior and in so doing they acknowledge the addressee's need not to be imposed upon and offended. Leech (1983) classifies apology as a convivial speech act whose goal coincides with the social goal of maintaining harmony between speaker and hearer. The convivial speech act provides some benefits for the hearer and some cost to the speaker.

Empirical studies on apologies follow similar theoretical and analytical framework called the Cross-Cultural Speech Acts Realization Pattern (CCSARP) project (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Meier 1998; Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Trosborg 1987). The CCSARP combine interests arising from interdisciplinary fields and finds out similarities and differences across a variety of cultures. The framework focused on two speech acts, apologies and requests using a set of situations. The semantic categories for apologies suggested in the CCSARP (Meier 1998; Olshtain and Cohen 1983) consisted of (1) an explicit expression of an apology ("I'm sorry") (2) an explanation ("The bus was late"), (3) an acknowledgement of responsibility ("It's my fault" "I was confused"), (4) an offer of repair ("I'll pay for the broke base") (5) an promise of forbearance ("It won't happen again").

## 2.2. Methodological Issues and Korean Apologies

A Discourse Completion Task (DCT) is the main method employed in cross-cultural (Holmes 1998) and interlanguage pragmatics. To elicit speech, it is common to fabricate an offense and set up situations where someone may react. With a DCT, it is possible to collect the data quickly and respondents are easily surveyed. For limitations, elicited speech is criticized to be different from spontaneous one and can be stereotyped. Responses are distinguished from natural speech and people tend to respond what they think rather than what they actually say.

Despite these limitations, a DCT has been adopted for much work in interlanguage pragmatics, and the preference for this method is obvious in Korean speech acts in second language acquisition (Byon 2005;

Jung 1999; Kim 2000; Koo 2001; Lee 2000; Min and Lee 2013; Yang 2002).

A DCT has benefits for studying pragmatics particularly with reference to L2 contexts. In language learning contexts, speakers are limited in their linguistic performance. For this reason, it is not simple to collect massive data in a restricted time. Particularly, when two or more languages are necessary, conventional data collection are hard to be used because of time and concentration constraints.

The categories in the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Meier 1998; Olshtain and Cohen (1983) refer to five strategies: expression of apology, explanation, acknowledgement of responsibility, offer of repair, and promise of non-recurrence. Speakers of both languages used apology words the most and then used explanation and offer to repair, as the second most. For direct apology, Koreans were reported to use less expression of apology than Americans (Koo 2001). Byon (2005) reported similarities between the two languages, though. For indirect apology, Koreans were shown to preferred indirect form of apology (e.g., implicitly acknowledging responsibility and making an explanation) compared to Americans (Lee 2000). Specifically, Koreans tended to use acknowledgement of responsibility and offer of repair while Americans employed explanation. In apologetic situations, explanations are not preferred among Koreans (Lee and Park 2010) and instead compensation is the most preferred strategy for Koreans.

Lack of nonverbal behavior has been discussed with respect to cultural meanings. Kim (2008) points out the role of strategies which were not included in the prototypical categories. For instance, silence may convey sincerity in offensive situation in Korea. Such factors were difficult to consider within the current framework.

Interlanguage pragmatic studies report findings affecting language learners. Even advanced language learners have limitations in acquiring native-like competence in speaking. Jung (1999) finds that L2 Koreans used request for forgiveness ("Can you forgive me?") while native speakers of English rarely did. Yang (2002) complements Jung's (1999) study by increasing the number of subjects and considering social factors.

Koreans used expression of emotions (“How can I recover my fault”) which were not used by native speakers of English. Besides, Koreans used linguistic features such as prefaces and titles as a result of language transfer. L2 linguistic features consisted of verbosity and simplifications. Verbosity refers to Korean learners of English who speak longer than native speakers of English.

Despite a growing number of studies on Korean-English speech acts, many studies reported similar findings and similarities across the cultures. Such findings can be interpreted as a result of the same methodological and analytical framework. The study highlights substantial findings regarding Korean and English speech acts to understand different ways of speaking. An offense does not always bring polite behavior and make a person try to do remedial work. To understand cross-cultural differences, it is necessary to examine responses from a broad perspective. The study modifies the existing framework and DCT has limitations as data collection which will be discussed in Section 3.

### **3. Methods**

#### 3.1. Participants and Procedures

The questionnaires were written in English and Korean, respectively. For Koreans a total 31 participated consisting of 17 women and 14 men. For Americans, 25 women and 19 men participated. Data collection was conducted almost simultaneously for Korean and English questionnaires. American data were collected in 2010 from February and March at the university that the author attended. The survey for Korean data was conducted in 2011 in Seoul. Undergraduate students participated in the survey conducted for the classes that the author taught.

#### 3.2. Scenarios Used in the Study

A DCT was designed to explore how people in two cultures responded through language use. The study modified the DCT to overcome some

limitations such as using researchers' intuitions in designing scenarios. The scenarios used for the current study were drawn from an examination of the data of the prior research which collected speech acts data by means of ethnographic methods (Holmes 1990). Observation and note-taking were the main ways of collecting the data. An examination of the situations likely to occur in everyday interactions brought the creation of the situations.

The questionnaire consisted of six scenarios where a person committed wrongdoings. Three kinds of offenses were included: possession, psychological offense, and verbal offense. Possession has been ruined in S1 where a neighbor's household tool was broken; S4 where a friend's investment has been lost; and S6 where the bonus was not given. Psychological disappointment was dealt with in S2. Verbal offense contained complaints in S4 and arguments in S3. The scenarios included social relationships such as neighbors (S1 and S2), acquaintances (S3), friends (S4), strangers (S5), and colleagues (S6).

- Situation 1 (S1: Tool): The speaker breaks a neighbor's borrowed tool and does not confess. Speaker meets neighbor.
- Situation 2 (S2: Dating): The speaker is in a romantic relationship with the son/daughter of a neighbor in the apartment building. The relationship ends and soon after the speaker sees the neighbor in the hall.
- Situation 3 (S3: Party): Speaker gets in a heated argument at a party with Hearer. Speaker meets Hearer while getting a drink.
- Situation 4 (S4: Money): The speaker is a fund manager at a bank and gives stock advice to an old college classmates. The classmate loses money. The next day, the speaker sees the classmate at a party.
- Situation 5 (S5: Meal): The speaker has had a bad week at work and goes to a restaurant, but the meal is bad. The speaker complains and gets the meal free, but then the speaker complains more such that other tables are watching. A couple of minutes later, the speaker have relaxed and the waiter goes by the table.
- Situation 6 (S6: Boss): The speaker works in the public relations department of a company and says the incorrect thing on a financial news show. The team and the boss of the team do not receive a bonus

that year. After the bonus announcement, the speaker sees the boss.

### 3.3. Using Back-translation

All scenarios were originally written in English, considering cultural situations in Korea and America with the aid of a native speaker of American English. They were then translated into Korean by the author. The translation was assessed by a process of back-translation. Back-translation was employed to examine the validity of translation from English version into Korean. A bilingual Korean immigrant was asked to translate the back-translation and the original English were similar in meaning and there was any problem. A Korean teacher working in the university was an immigrant who grew in American and taught in Korea. As a bilingual fluent both in Korean and English, she back-translated the Korean version into the English one. Comparison between the two English versions showed the equivalence of translation and reliability.

### 3.4. Coding

Written responses to the given scenarios were by large divided into two groups depending on the presence of speaker's regret and sincerity. Those involving regret and sincerity included expression of apology, explanation, offer to repair, and acknowledgment, which are included in the CCSARP. Besides, this study also presented strategies such as expression of lack of intention. Those which do not indicate regret and sincerity can be classified as non-apologies. Non-apologies consisted of two types: 1) those which do not mention the offense and instead express friendly attitudes 2) those which minimize responsibility. The first category referred to strategies like hoping for good relationships, thanking, and complimenting. These can be seen as a sign of showing intimacy but hard to see any regret. The second consisted of strategies like brushing off, making a justification, and blaming the other. These actions are opposite to expression of regret. The study included two more strategies as non-apologies using the minimal or zero use of language. Greeting and silence were the case. Responses written as 'Nothing' or 'I would

say nothing' were coded as wouldn't say and those written as 'Hello and leave' and 'I would wave, smile, and walk away' were coded as greetings. These responses indicated to avoid further verbal interactions and classified as non-apologies.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. English Apologies

Results of English apologies are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** English Apologies

Scenario	Strategy	Times	%
S1 (Tool)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry</i> )	33	44.6%
	Offer to repair ( <i>I will get you a new one</i> )	38	51.3%
	Thanking ( <i>Thanks for the tool</i> )	1	1.35%
	Lying Yes, ( <i>I'm using it.</i> )	1	1.35%
	Wouldn't say ( <i>I wouldn't say anything.</i> )	1	1.35%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	
S2 (Dating)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry</i> )	6	12.2%
	Hoping for good relationship ( <i>I hope it doesn't affect anything between us.</i> )	5	10.2%
	Thanking ( <i>Thanks</i> )	1	2.0%
	Brushing off ( <i>Your daughter couldn't handle the beast, can you?!</i> )	1	2.0%
	Greetings ( <i>Hey long time no see.</i> )	25	52.0%
	Wouldn't say or using non-verbal behavior	11	22.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>		
S3 (Party)	Expressions of apology ( <i>Please accept my apology.</i> )	31	44.9%
	Explanation ( <i>It's been a rough day and I was drunk.</i> )	18	26.0%
	Expressing lack of intention ( <i>I'm not that kind of person to do that.</i> )	8	11.6%
	Hoping for good relationship ( <i>Hope we're cool.</i> )	2	2.89%
	Thanking ( <i>Thanks</i> )	1	1.44%
	Greetings ( <i>Hi and goodbye</i> )	1	1.44%
	Wouldn't say	8	11.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>		

Scenario	Strategy	Times	%
S4 (Money)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry</i> )	21	31.8%
	Expressing lack of intention ( <i>I had no idea that was going to happen.</i> )	7	10.6%
	Offer to help ( <i>If you need anything please let me know.</i> )	3	4.54%
	Showing concern ( <i>I heard about what happened to those stocks...</i> )	4	6.06%
	Making a justification ( <i>Stocks can be very unpredictable.</i> )	7	10.6%
	Blaming victim ( <i>You took my advice, not my fault.</i> )	7	10.6%
	Greetings ( <i>So how have you been?</i> )	5	7.57%
	Wouldn't say	12	18.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	
S5 (Meal)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry</i> )	31	36.5%
	Explanation ( <i>I've been having a bad day and a bad week.</i> )	13	15.3%
	Acknowledging faults ( <i>I was wrong to take my frustrations out on you.</i> )	4	4.7%
	Expressing lack of intention ( <i>I didn't mean to cause you trouble.</i> )	6	7.1%
	Expressing regret ( <i>I shouldn't take it on you.</i> )	2	2.4%
	Thanking ( <i>So thank you for understanding.</i> )	8	9.4%
	Starting to talk ( <i>Can I get more water?</i> )	4	4.7%
	Requests for better service	2	2.4%
	Tipping (including payment for the meal)	8	9.4%
	Wouldn't say	7	8.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>		
S6 (Boss)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry</i> )	14	22.6%
	Acknowledging faults ( <i>It was my fault.; I know I made a mistake.</i> )	9	14.5%
	Promising forbearance ( <i>I won't make the same mistake again.</i> )	8	12.9%
	Expressing lack of intention ( <i>It was unintentional.</i> )	2	3.2%
	Thanking ( <i>Thank you for still trusting me...</i> )	2	3.2%
	Starting to talk ( <i>I guess this year on one is getting a bonus.</i> )	4	6.5%
	Greetings ( <i>Well it's nice weather, isn't it?</i> )	8	12.9%
	Wouldn't say	15	24.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>		

#### 4.1.1. Situation 1 (tool)

Expression of apology and offer to repair were the two main strategies in S1 recording at over 90%. These two strategies were used both or either was employed. Example (3) illustrates the use of apology words and offer to repair.

##### (3) Typical example in S1

I accidentally broke your too. I'll pay you back.

I'm so sorry. I will totally buy another one to replace it.

#### 4.1.2. Situation 2 (dating)

S2 showed Americans' preference for minimal linguistic form like greetings and wouldn't say, recording 52% and at 22%, respectively. For apology strategies, expression of apology was employed at 12%. Non-apologies included making a justification and thanking. Example (4) illustrates Americans' concern towards the relationship between speakers.

##### (4) Typical examples in S2

Hi. Sorry it didn't work out with so and so. Hope this won't make things awkward.

Hey, I know that there is some tension between us but I'd really enjoy if we could have a friendly neighbor relationship.

#### 4.1.3. Situation 3 (Party)

S3 indicated the preference for two apology strategies: expressions of apology and explanation. Expression of apology was the most common at 45% and explanations at 26%. Minor strategies included expressing lack of intention and hoping for good relationships. Example (5) showed the use of explanation and hoping. Americans emphasized unusual behavior and express lack of intention.

##### (5) Typical examples in S3

Hey about earlier, I've just been really out of it today. I didn't

mean at all.

I'm usually not like that and I hope you can forgive me.

Sorry I was all liquored up earlier.

#### 4.1.4. Situation 4 (Money)

Use of apology strategies was common in S4. Expression of apology was the most used at 32% and the second most strategies included expression of lack of intention and offer to help. On the other hand, S4 showed Americans' preference for non-apologies. Apology and non-apology strategies showed close rates at 54% and at 46%, showing high rates compared to other situations. Example (6) showed the use of lack of intention and expression of frustration.

##### (6) Typical example in S4

I had no idea that was going to happen.

Sorry about what happened, but I can't really do anything for you.

I'm SOOO sorry! I really thought that stock was going to be a good one.

#### 4.1.5. Situation 5 (Meal)

Three apology strategies were the most common in S5: expression of apology, explanation, and acknowledgement of faults. Among them, expression of apology was the most common occurring at 37%. S5 showed a variety of linguistic realizations such as expressing lack of intention, expressing regret, thanking, and starting to talk. Americans employed diverse strategies in responding to the meal situation. Example (7) illustrates the use of explanation and thanking.

##### (7) Typical example in English in S5

I've had a stressful week, I didn't mean to cause you trouble.

Thank you for taking care of everything, I know its not your fault.

Sorry for being rude and complaining I just had a bad week.

Don't' take it personally.

#### 4.1.6. Situation 6 (Boss)

S6 showed the common use of the three apology strategies: expression of apology, acknowledgements of faults and promising forbearance. Minor apology strategies included expression of lack of intention, thanking, and starting to talk. In addition, S6 showed Americans' preference for nonlinguistic strategies. For instance, wouldn't say occurred at 24% and greetings were used at 13%. Example (8) presents the use of promising and acknowledgments.

#### (8) Typical example in S6

I feel really guilty about my forgetfulness, it won't happen again and I will work harder.

I will take this mistake forever with me to make sure it will never happen again.

I'm sorry, this might be my fault and I shall take full responsibility for this.

## 4.2. Korean Apologies

Results of Korean apologies are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Korean Apologies

Scenario	Strategy	Times	%
S1 (Tool)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry.</i> )	32	47.8%
	Offer to repair ( <i>I'll get you another one.</i> )	34	50.7%
	Lying ( <i>Yes, I'm using it.</i> )	1	1.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	
S2 (Dating)	Expression of apology ( <i>How are you doing? How is she doing?</i> )	8	18.1%
	Expressing frustration ( <i>We tried hard but we weren't meant.</i> )	7	15.9%
	Making a justification ( <i>Things go like that. There's nothing we can do.</i> )	6	13.6%
	Thanking ( <i>Thanks for your concern.</i> )	1	2.2%
	Greetings ( <i>How are you doing?</i> )	19	43.18%
	Wouldn't say	2	4.5%
	No response	1	2.27%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	

Scenario	Strategy	Times	%
S3 (Party)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry for the earlier.</i> )	23	42.59%
	Explanation ( <i>I was drunk and not thinking properly.</i> )	15	27.77%
	Acknowledging faults ( <i>I was rude.</i> )	8	14.8%
	Expressing concern ( <i>Are you all right?</i> )	1	1.85%
	Suggesting to stop talking ( <i>Let's stop arguments.</i> )	4	7.4%
	Pretending not to know ( <i>What happened?</i> )	1	1.85%
	Wouldn't say	2	3.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	
S4 (Money)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry. I have nothing to say.</i> )	22	36.7%
	Expressing regret ( <i>I shouldn't have done that.</i> )	9	15.0%
	Offer to help ( <i>I promise I will help you out.</i> )	9	15.0%
	Expressing lack of intention ( <i>Thought it was going to do well.</i> )	7	11.7%
	Suggesting to eat ( <i>Let's go and eat together someday.</i> )	2	3.3%
	Making a justification ( <i>Investing stocks is always risky. I'm not perfect.</i> )	8	13.3%
	Greetings ( <i>Hi</i> )	1	1.7%
	Wouldn't say	1	1.7%
	No response	1	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>		
S5 (Meal)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry.</i> )	18	32.1%
	Acknowledging faults ( <i>I didn't control myself and was rude.</i> )	14	25.0%
	Explanation ( <i>I was in bad mood.</i> )	6	10.70%
	Complimenting ( <i>This dish is delicious.</i> )	1	1.78%
	Tipping	3	5.35%
	Request for better service ( <i>Be careful next time</i> )	3	5.35%
	Wouldn't say	10	17.85%
	No response	1	1.78%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>		
S6 (Boss)	Expression of apology ( <i>I'm sorry.</i> )	26	36.0%
	Acknowledging faults ( <i>It was my faults. I made a big mistake.</i> )	18	25.0%
	Promising forbearance ( <i>I promise it will never happen again.</i> )	15	20.8%
	Request for second chance ( <i>Please give me another chance.</i> )	3	4.2%
	Suggesting to treat people ( <i>I will treat you.</i> )	3	4.2%
	Making a justification ( <i>I learned a lesson.</i> )	3	4.2%
	Wouldn't say	3	4.2%
	No response	1	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>		

#### 4.2.1. Situation 1 (Tool)

Expression of apology and offer to repair were the major ways of responding to S1, occurring at 48% and 51%, respectively. Example (9) illustrates the use of apology words and offer to repair.

##### (9) Typical example in S1

I'm sorry. The tool has been broken.

I will get you one soon.

#### 4.2.2. Situation 2 (Dating)

S2 showed Koreans' preference for greeting recording more than 40%. Expression of apology was the second most at 18%. Besides, Koreans employed strategies including expression of frustration and making a justification. Example (10) shows the expression of frustration and lack of intention.

##### (10) Typical examples in S2

We tried a lot but we weren't meant to be.

There is nothing we can do.

I'm sorry. We are going to keep relationship as friends. Don't be disappointed.

#### 4.2.3. Situation 3 (Party)

Three apology strategies were common in S3 consisting of expression of apology, explanation, and acknowledgment of faults. Koreans showed the most preference for expression of apology recording at 43% and explanation as the second most at 28%. Acknowledgement of faults occurred at 15%. Minor strategies included expression of concern and suggestion to eat. In Example (11), a Korean apologized and explained why they acted like earlier. Example (11) presents the use of explanation and apology words.

##### (11) Typical examples in S3

I'm so sorry. I had too much alcohol.

I was a little emotional earlier. I had a bad day.

#### 4.2.4. Situation 4 (Money)

Main apology strategies in S4 included expression of apology and offer to help. Expression of apology was used the most at 37% and offer to help recorded 15%. Other apology strategies referred to expression of regret (at 15%) and expression of lack of intention (at 12%). Koreans were likely to express their emotion and intention. Non-apologies were also noted in S4 like making a justification (at 13%). Example (12) illustrates the lack of intention and emotional expressions.

##### (12) Typical example in S4

I never thought that things went like that.  
I'm sorry. I should have been more careful.

#### 4.2.5. Situation 5 (Meal)

Three main apology strategies were employed in S5: expression of apology, acknowledgment of faults, and explanation. Expression of apology was the most used at 32% and acknowledgement of faults recorded 25%. Minor strategies included compliments and tipping. Non-linguistic strategy was employed for wouldn't say at 18%. Koreans were shown to try to avoid further interaction by leaving the place soon in S5. Example (13) illustrates the use of explanation and acknowledgement of faults.

##### (13) Typical example in S5

I'm sorry. I was rude.  
I may have made a mistake. Don't' take it personally.

#### 4.2.6. Situation 6 (Boss)

Main strategies in S6 involved explanation, acknowledgment of faults, and promising forbearance. Expression of apology recorded at 36% as the most common and acknowledgement of faults was used at 25%. Minor apology strategies consisted of request for chance and suggestion to eat. Example (14) shows the use of promising for better future and apology words.

## (14) Typical example in S6

I'm sorry. I promise it will never happen again.

I apologize. It was my fault to cause such problem to our team.

## 4.3. Comparison Between English and Korean Apologies

## 4.3.1. Situation 1 (Tool)

Koreans and Americans were shown to be similar with respect to types and rates of apology strategies in S1. Expression of apology and offer to repair were the main strategies. Non-apologies such as wouldn't say and lying occurred at 1%, respectively.

## 4.3.2. Situation 2 (Dating)

Results of S2 showed low rates of apology strategies and high rates of greetings in both English and Korean. Expression of apology was used at 12% for Americans and 18% for Koreans. On the other hand, greetings were used at 52% for Americans and 43% for Koreans. Koreans and Americans both answered they would say 'hello' and leave the place. Americans showed high preference for non-linguistic strategies, too. Americans used wouldn't say at 22% higher than Koreans at 5%. Want to terminate a conversation was obvious for Americans. Apology strategies were shown to vary across the languages. In S2, Americans expressed concern towards relationship and Koreans expressed frustration and made justification.

## 4.3.3. Situation 3 (Party)

Expression of apology and explanations were the most common in S3 between English and Korean. Expression of apology showed high rates of over 40% in English and Korean compared to other situations. Differences in the two languages were found in other minor strategies. Americans tended to expressed lack of intention and concern towards relationship while Koreans preferred acknowledgment of faults. For non-apologies, Americans used wouldn't say at 12% more than at 4% for Koreans.

#### 4.3.4. Situation 4 (Money)

Two apology strategies were common in S4 across the languages: expression of apology and offer to repair. Minor apology strategies varied across languages, though. Americans expressed lack of intention and hoped for relationship while Koreans expressed regret and made a justification.

In S4, Americans showed the preference for non-apologies such as making a justification and blaming the other. While non-apologies were minor in most situations, Americans used non-apologies at 46%. Minimal linguistic strategies such as greetings and silence occurred at high rates, too. For instance, Americans used wouldn't say at 18% for Americans while Koreans used just at 1%. Koreans used greetings and silence at 2% for each. Americans were shown to minimize responsibility when the offense was associated with financial loss.

#### 4.3.5. Situation 5 (Meal)

Three apology strategies were commonly used across the languages: expression of apology, explanation, and acknowledgment of fault. Among them, expression of apology was the most used. Cross-cultural variation was in the preference of apology strategies. Koreans used acknowledgment of faults more than explanations. Americans preferred explanations to acknowledgement of faults.

Koreans showed lack of verbal interactions in S5. Americans used diverse strategies such as expression of lack of intention, expression of regret, thanks, and requests. In contrast, Koreans used only a couple of strategies such as complimenting and request for better service. Lack of verbal interactions among Koreans was also found in the preference of non-linguistic strategies. Wouldn't say was used at 18% by Koreans compared to Americans' use of 8%.

#### 4.3.6. Situation 6 (Boss)

Three apology strategies were common across English and Korean. Expression of apology was the most used and the two strategies, acknowledgement of responsibility and promising forbearance were the used.

Cross-cultural variation was found in the preference of minimal linguistic strategies. Americans used greetings and silence more than Koreans. Americans showed high rates of wouldn't say at 24% while Koreans ceased to be at 4%. Greetings were used by Americans at 13% while Koreans didn't use greetings at all. Americans tended to avoid the offense while Koreans showed any action to take. Americans used 'wouldn't say' and greetings and wanted to terminate verbal interactions more than Koreans. Koreans were shown to continue conversation.

## **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

Previous studies dealing with offensive situations emphasized remedial work and polite behavior consisting of prototypical apology strategies. These studies leveled out possible reactions occurring in offensive situations. So they failed to describe more natural responses in social predicaments. The study showed a person is likely to avoid further interactions. Rates of greeting and silence indicated the use of avoidance strategies. Want to terminate a conversation was found to be quite common across the cultures, too.

One of the most common responses occurring in offensive situations is to avoid further interaction. This study indicated the role of avoidance strategies realized in terms of stopping talking or leaving the place by greeting. Avoidance is one common reaction occurring in threatening situations in both cultures. An offense does not always cause remedial work. An offense may encourage the person to avoid further interaction. It is necessary to consider natural reactions in social interactions.

Cross-cultural differences were noted in types of non-apologies which were not noted in previous studies. These strategies are hard to see speaker's sincerity and regret. Americans employed strategies such as brushing off, blaming the victim, and making a justification. As a way of distracting attention, Koreans tended to use suggestion to treat. Eating out was found to be very common as a way of softening the embarrassing situation.

Results of the study showed implications for analytical aspects of speech acts. Promising forbearance was treated as one of the most common strategies along with explanation and acknowledgement. However, this study showed that the occurrence of promising was restricted compared to other common strategies; it is associated with formal situations. It seems necessary to consider the distribution of common apology strategies.

Similarly to previous findings (Byon 2005; Kim 2008; Lee 2000), the preference of apology strategies varied according to culture. Americans preferred explanations while Koreans tend to use acknowledgements of faults. Appealing to emotion is another feature to characterize the Korean speech acts. For instance, Americans focus on unintentional accidents trying to present lack of intention. Koreans tended to express emotions like regrets.

Contextual factors were shown to affect the choice of apology strategies. Offense types were found to affect the choice of apology strategies. Financial loss in the money situation (S4) was taken as requiring the source of responsibility for Americans. Non-apologetic strategies were noted as an attempt to minimize responsibility by making a justification or blaming the victim. Obligation to apologize was highest in possession-related (the tool situation) and verbal offenses (the party situation) for both languages rating over at 40%. On the contrary, psychological offense involved with the dating scenario (S2) showed the least obligation to apologize in both languages. For this reason, rates of apologies were the lowest and rates of non-linguistic strategies such as greetings and silence were the highest in the dating situation.

Social distance was found to be effective for Koreans rather than Americans. Koreans were shown to be restricted in verbal strategies in the meal scenario (S5). Common social distance included the medium relationship including acquaintances and neighbors. The customer-waiter relationship occurred at the restaurant indicating the most distant relationship. Koreans were shown to be restricted in interaction with strangers while Americans showed diverse verbal interactions with strangers.

Social power was found to affect Koreans' choice of verbal interactions as a result of unequal relationship. The boss scenario (S6) where the boss and the speaker were involved indicated differences in the choice of responses. Koreans showed stronger obligation to taking a responsibility and express verbal expression. Americans were not as verbal as Koreans and avoided the situation by greeting or leaving the place.

Results of the study showed the role of nonverbal strategies in cross-cultural pragmatics.

Occurrences of nonverbal strategies were significant in the act of apologizing. People wanted to avoid responsibility and not to mention the offense. In addition, nonverbal expression played a role in cross-cultural differences. According to the study, Koreans and Americans differed in the use of greeting and silence in relation with social factors. The boss scenario (S6) showed Koreans were more verbal compared to Americans and silence and greetings were used less than Americans. This indicated social power was realized in the difference of non-verbal strategies.

The study showed that the linguistic realization of a speech act should be accounted for in relation with cultural and social factors. When studies focus on fixed semantic categories, it should be difficult to draw substantial findings contributed to understanding other cultures and language. More cross-cultural studies should expand theoretical perspectives and develop methodology. The study has limitations in providing qualitative findings due to the lack of methodological use of statistics. It is based on simple calculations of comparing the data drawn from the languages. The purpose of the study was to attempt to look at Korean and American data by varying data collection. Future research needs to complement analytical frameworks and enhance the validity of findings.

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## Questionnaire: A Research Project

All information will be stored anonymously, so please do *not* write your name on this paper.

### **Instructions**

With this survey, we hope to collect information about how people will interact in various social situations. The survey has six scenarios in it. Each one asks what you would say in this situation. Please consider each example carefully and decide what the most natural response would be if you were really in that situation. A sample is provided to help, but you may want to write more than the sample response, or less. Write the response that feels most natural in the space provided. If you think that you would not say anything in that situation, please note that on your paper. Your answers will be kept completely anonymous.

### **Scenarios**

1. You are building a piece of furniture but are missing a necessary tool. Therefore, you borrow the missing tool from a neighbor. However, while working, you accidentally break the tool. Later, you are cleaning outside and the neighbor visits and asks if you are done using the tool. What do you say to the neighbor?
2. You and your mother recently moved into a new apartment building just a little before you were going to graduate from college. A nice older woman in the building introduces you to one of her kids, who recently finished college. The two of you get along well and you start dating. However, after a few months, you decide to end the relationship. Not too long after the breakup, you see the neighbor who introduced you in the hall and she hides a disappointed look when she sees you. What do you say?
3. You go to a party at your cousin's house. It's been a bad day. You have a couple too many drinks and find yourself in a heat-

ed argument with a woman at the party. You can see her backing away from you embarrassed. A while later, you have calmed down some and the effects of alcohol are fading. While getting a snack, you happen to meet the woman you had a fight with earlier. What do you say?

4. You work as a fund manager for a bank. One day, an old college classmate of yours asks for some advice on stocks to select. You give your classmate the name of a stock that recently caught your eye and they make a substantial investment in that stock. A few months later, however, the company declares bankruptcy and the classmate has lost a lot of money. The next day, you see your classmate at a party. What do you say?
5. You have had a really bad week at work. By Friday, you are exhausted and fed up with everything. You go to a favorite restaurant to relax, but when your food comes, it's far too salty and just not very good. You crossly tell the waiter about the meal and the waiter makes your meal free. However, you are so annoyed that you can't resist complaining further to the waiter. The waiter looks uncomfortable and you notice a couple other tables looking in your direction. After a couple minutes, you relax a little. The waiter soon walks by your table. What do you say?
6. You are a spokesman in the public relations department for a company. One day, you are representing the company on a financial news show when you forget some important facts about the company's credit rating. After the show, you realize the mistake you made. The stock has dropped, but you quickly issue press releases and the stock returns to normal by the end of the day. That year, however, no one in your department, including the boss, gets a bonus. After the bonus announcement, you see your boss. What do you say?

## 설문조사

이 조사는 여러 상황에서 있어서 적절한 상호작용에 관한 설문조사입니다. 질문은 여섯 개의 시나리오로 구성되어 있습니다. 각 상황을 읽고 이런 상황에서 당신은 어떻게 말할 것인지 적어 주십시오. 아래에 보기가 주어져 있습니다. 이제 아래 사례를 잘 고려해서 가장 자연스런 반응이 어떻게 될 것인지 결정해 주십시오. 그리고 제공된 공간에 당신의 답을 적어 주십시오. 만약 당신이 그런 상황에서 말하지 않을 거라고 생각하면 공이에 표기해 주십시오. 당신의 대답은 익명으로 보관됩니다.

### 상황 1

당신은 가구를 만드는 중 필요한 도구 하나가 없어서 이웃에게서 그 도구를 빌립니다. 그런데 하필 작업 중 우연히 도구를 망가뜨립니다. 며칠 후 당신이 바깥을 청소를 하고 있을 때 이웃이 방문하고는 아직도 당신이 그 도구를 사용하고 있는지 묻습니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

### 상황 2

당신은 대학졸업이 얼마 남지 않은 최근에 어머니와 함께 새 아파트로 이사를 하였습니다. 어느 날 같은 아파트에 사시는 연세드신 한 아주머니께서 당신에게 최근에 대학을 졸업한 자제분을 소개합니다. 당신과 그 자제분은 곧 서로 친하게 되고 데이트를 시작합니다. 그런데 몇 달 후 당신은 그 관계를 정리하기로 결정합니다. 결별 후 얼마 되지 않았는데 당신은 당신에게 자제를 소개했던 그 아주머니를 복도에서 만났습니다. 아주머니는 당신을 보자 실망한 표정을 감추십니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

### 상황 3

당신은 사촌집의 파티에 갑니다. 울적한 날이라 당신은 술을 많이 마시게 되고 파티에 온 어느 여자와 소란스럽게 언쟁을 벌이게 됩니다. 당신은 그 여자가 당황해서 당신에게서 물러나는 것을 봅니다. 잠시 후 당신은 진정하게 되고 술기운도 가라앉습니다. 간식을 조금 먹는 도중 당신은 조금 전 언쟁을 벌였던 여자와 다시 부딪히게 됩니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

### 상황 4

당신은 은행에서 펀드매니저로 일합니다. 어느 날 당신의 옛 대학동창이 주식을 선택하는데 조언을 구합니다. 당신은 최근에 당신의 관심을 끌던 주식이름을 동창에게 알려주고 동창은 그 주식에 상당한 투자를 합니다. 그런데 몇 달 후 그 회사가 파산을 신청하고 동창은 막대한 손실을 입습니다. 그 다음 날 모임에서 당신은 당신의 동창을 만납니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

## 상황 5

당신은 직장에서 정말로 우울한 한 주를 보냈습니다. 금요일이 되자, 당신은 완전히 녹초가 되고 이제 모든 것에 지쳤습니다. 휴식을 취할 겸 당신은 당신이 제일 좋아하는 레스토랑으로 갑니다. 그런데 주문한 음식이 나온걸 보니 너무 짜기 만하고 맛이 하나도 없습니다. 당신은 화가 난 상태로 웨이터에게 불평을 하자 웨이터는 음식을 무료로 제공합니다. 하지만 당신은 너무 화가 난 나머지 웨이터에게 또다시 불평을 합니다. 웨이터는 당황하고, 당신은 다른 몇몇 테이블에 앉은 손님들이 당신 쪽을 보고 있는걸 알게 됩니다. 얼마 후 당신은 마음을 좀 가라앉혔고 그때 웨이터가 당신 식탁 옆을 지나갑니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

## 상황 6

당신은 큰 회사의 홍보팀 대변인입니다. 어느 날 당신은 한 재정뉴스쇼에서 회사를 대표하는 도중, 회사의 신용평가에 관한 중요한 사실하나를 잊어버립니다. 그 쇼가 끝난 후 당신은 당신이 한 실수를 깨닫게 됩니다. 주가가 떨어졌지만 당신이 신속히 언론 공식 발표를 내보낸 결과로 주가는 그날 늦게 다시 정상으로 돌아옵니다. 하지만 그해 당신 부서의 상사를 포함한 직원들 아무도 보너스를 받지 못합니다. 보너스 여부가 발표된 후, 당신은 상사를 만납니다. 당신은 뭐라고 말하겠습니까?

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Received: June 26, 2014  
Revised version received: August 8, 2014  
Accepted: August 15, 2014

