

Cross-Cultural Variation in the Linguistic Politeness of Advice-Giving Speech Acts*

Moon-Young Chun
Korea University

Chun, Moon-Young. (2010). Cross-cultural variation in the linguistic politeness of advice-giving speech acts. *Modern English Education*, 11(2), 235-253.

This study aims to investigate cross-cultural differences in the speech act of advice between Canadian English speakers (CESs) and Korean speakers (KSs) and to provide interpretations of the differences not only in terms of individualism and collectivism but also horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. Thirty-five CESs and thirty-five KSs participated in this study. The questionnaire used in this research consisted of eight different situations in which participants were asked to choose one of the four strategies of advice: bald-on-record (BOR), on-record with redress (ORR), off record (OFF), and not doing face-threatening acts (NOT) strategies. Results indicate that in the impact of social distance, relative power, and the seriousness of advice on politeness strategies, there was in general a significant difference between CESs and KSs, and that the concept of politeness in Korean culture should be interpreted very differently from that in Canadian culture. The results of this study imply that the sociopragmatic conventions of advice-giving speech acts in English-speaking cultures should constitute an integral part of the EFL curriculum in order to facilitate intercultural communications.

[advice/politeness strategies/cultural
differences/sociopragmatics/충고화행/공손전략/문화적 차이/사회화용론]

I. INTRODUCTION

Speech acts such as advising, requesting, apologizing, and refusing, according to Austin (1962), are not essentially true or false but in general appropriate or inappropriate. The appropriateness of speech acts or illocutionary acts may differ from culture to culture.

* This article is a revised version of the author's dissertation, *Cultural relativity and universality of linguistic politeness: The speech act of advice*. (2009).

Many cross-cultural studies have determined that nonnative speakers (NNSs) exhibit speech acts that differ from those of native speakers (NSs) of English when performing various types of speech acts such as requests (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984), apologies (Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Garcia, 1989; Olshtain, 1989; Trosborg, 1987), expressions of gratitude (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993), refusals (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990), and correction (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993). While there have been many comparative studies on various speech acts that contributed to revealing the differences between NSs and NNSs, only fewer studies on the speech act of advice have appeared in the literature: Hinkel (1994) and Ho-min Sohn (1986) represent some of these studies.

Hinkel (1994) compared the speech act of advice of 31 NSs and 172 NNSs (84 Chinese, 33 Japanese, 16 Korean, 16 Indonesian, 13 Arabic, and 10 Spanish) enrolled at an American university at that time. She found that, on the average, NNSs consistently chose advice more frequently than NSs. Among the six groups of NNSs, according to Hinkel, Korean students deviated the most from the responses of native speakers. While NSs preferred indirect comments to direct ones, a large percentage of Korean students selected direct advice to others. She explains the cross-cultural difference in terms of two cultural types: individualism and collectivism.

Based on a comparative study on the communicative and cultural differences between Americans and Koreans, Ho-min Sohn (1986) also argues that Americans generally perceive many Korean expressions concerning marriage, salary, and age as being too personal to tolerate. He observes that the Korean concept of politeness is different from American and allows for giving advice on matters which NSs of English view as intensely private. Sohn attributes this difference to American individualism emphasizing privacy and competition and Korean collectivism emphasizing mutual involvement and respect for the elderly.

Ho-min Sohn's (1986) and Hinkel's (1994) research provided considerable insights into how NSs and NNSs of English perceive the appropriateness of giving advice differently. However, their interpretations of cross-cultural differences in linguistic politeness based on the dimension of collectivism and individualism suffer from a limitation primarily because they failed to acknowledge that both individualism and collectivism can be horizontal and vertical (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995; Triandis, 1995). Combining the dimension of individualism and collectivism with that of horizontal and vertical orientations allows us to distinguish four cultural value orientations: horizontal individualism (H-IND), vertical individualism (V-IND), horizontal collectivism (H-COL), and vertical collectivism (V-COL).

In horizontal individualist societies such as Denmark and Sweden, people prefer to view themselves as equal and independent. Horizontal individualism implies "I am different",

but not "I am better than others" (Triandis, 1995, p. 207). In vertical individualist societies such as the United States and Canada, people tend to be concerned with improving their individual status by means of competition and achievement. Vertical individualism implies "I am better." The notion of "vertical" orientation in vertical individualism refers to the emphasis on pursuing upward mobility. The pursuit of achievement values, however, may conflict with the pursuit of altruistic values, because seeking success for self is likely to obstruct action aimed at enhancing the welfare of others. The underlying motivation of vertical individualists' speech acts may be a "strategic politeness" (Kasper, 1990, p. 194), in that concentrating on one's business may be effective in achieving one's own success, while becoming indifferent to other's business.

In horizontal collectivistic societies such as Israeli kibbutz, people prefer to view themselves as equal and interdependent. They emphasize interdependence with others within an egalitarian community. In vertical collectivistic societies such as China, Korea, and Japan, people tend to regard themselves as unequal and interdependent. Vertical collectivists are integrated not only horizontally but also vertically and tend to be respectful to their superiors (Triandis, 1995). People with a vertical collectivist orientation are more likely to agree with such items as "it is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want," and "it is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups" (Shavitt, Lalwani, Zhang, & Torelli, 2006, p. 327). The underlying motivation of vertical collectivists' speech acts seems to be "normative politeness" (Gu, 1990, p. 242), because "Confucian notion of politeness, *limao*" (禮貌), connotes the concept of normativeness (Gu, 1990, p. 238).

Cultural value-orientations therefore can be considered to be of great importance for determining the linguistic politeness because values tend to influence ordinary speech acts. In other words, cultural values and linguistic politeness are inseparably related because cultural value dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how politeness is expressed.

This study assumes that the linguistic politeness of performing advice speech acts may vary according to cultural value-orientations, and that speech communities differ in their assessment of interlocutors' social distance (D), relative power (P), and the rating of imposition (R) involved in particular speech acts. This study aims to investigate cross-cultural differences in advice-giving between CESs and KSs and to provide interpretations of the differences in terms of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism as well as individualism and collectivism. This kind of approach to investigate differences in speech acts in terms of four cultural types is an approach which to date almost no research has been done. For this purpose, the study addresses the following three research questions:

1. Are there significant differences between CESs and KSs in the impact of social distance on advice-giving?

2. Are there significant differences between CESs and KSs in the impact of relative power on advice-giving?
3. Are there significant differences between CESs and KSs in the impact of the seriousness of advice on politeness strategies?

The answers to these questions are expected to provide some theoretical and empirical justifications for a shift in EFL curriculum from the current preoccupation with the usage of linguistic forms to a focus on pragmatic competence as well as linguistic competence.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Universality of Linguistic Politeness

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of linguistic politeness begins with a universal "model person," who is endowed with two special properties: "rationality and face" (p. 58). By rationality, it means the ability of the model person to choose the most efficient means to achieve communicative ends. By face it means the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself. They incorporate the notion of face as fundamental to linguistic politeness theory, and assume that we all have face consisting of two kinds of desires: "positive face," referring to the desire to be approved of by others, and "negative face," the desire to be unimpeded by others (p. 13). Since everyone possesses positive and negative face, these two faces are universal. Moreover, to perceive indirect advice as a more polite expression than direct advice, according to Brown and Levinson, also is universal across cultures. This is the core of what they have been advocating as the universality of linguistic politeness.

Ever since Brown and Levinson's (1987) universal politeness theory was proposed, a number of studies have challenged the claim to the universality of politeness (Gu, 1990; Hill, Ide, Ikuta, Kawasaki, & Ogino, 1986; Hinkel, 1994; Ide, 1989, 1993; Matsumoto, 1988; Nwoye, 1992; Wierzbicka, 1985, 1991). Cultural relativists such as Ide (1989), Matsumoto (1988) and Gu (1990) tend to criticize Brown and Levinson's claim to the universality of linguistic politeness in the sense that their notion of face and politeness can be applicable only in individualistic societies but not applicable in collectivistic societies such as China, Korea, and Japan. Debates on the universality versus cultural relativity of the notion of linguistic politeness can be categorized in terms of the following three dichotomies: volitional versus discernment politeness (Ide, 1989), private versus public face (Matsumoto, 1988), and instrumental versus normative politeness (Gu, 1990).

2. Cultural Relativism of Linguistic Politeness

Ide (1989) claims that in Japanese the expression of linguistic politeness is much more conventionally determined than in the English-speaking world. She divides linguistic politeness into two types: volition and discernment. Volitional politeness refers to the aspect of politeness that allows the speaker a more autonomous choice. Discernment politeness refers to the obligatory and automatic observation of conventionally determined forms. In this sense, Blum-Kulka (1992) calls this concept "convention" instead of discernment (p. 274). The purpose of the use of discernment politeness is not to save face, whereas that of volitional politeness is to save face. In Japanese society, social convention requires one to use honorifics when one mentions a higher status person. The use of an honorific verb form instead of non-honorific verb form is determined by social convention (Ide, 1989). The purpose of the use of honorific form here is to show the status difference between the interlocutors, not to serve the addressee's face. Kasper (1990) also distinguishes 'strategic politeness' from 'politeness as social indexing.' Kasper's notion of strategic politeness corresponds to Ide's volitional politeness, whereas social indexing refers to discernment.

For all its merits, however, Ide's (1989) theory of discernment also suffers from a number of limitations (Fukada & Asato, 2004). First, if people do not use honorifics when they are expected to do so, then they could sound impolite and rude, and therefore threaten the hearer's face. Second, Ide's assertion that the use of honorifics is obligatory and automatic is not always true. If the acts involved are generally considered dishonorable, the use of honorific forms would also sound awkward. Third, Ide's conceptualization of discernment does not involve social phenomena concerning the superior's occasional use of honorifics to his subordinate. Therefore, it can be argued that honorific phenomena are not always automatic and obligatory. Even though discernment politeness is conventionally determined as Ide argued, it is not always independent of the speaker's intention.

Matsumoto (1988) also critically examines Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of linguistic politeness. She argues that although their theory of linguistic politeness claims the universality of face, its ability to explain Japanese honorific phenomena is questionable. According to Matsumoto, the United States is a highly individualist culture in which an independent person tries to defend his own territory from the encroachments of others. Japan is a highly collectivist culture where people are interdependent within their in-groups. People in highly individualistic cultures behave according to individual desires, whereas people in collectivistic cultures behave according to group-norms. What is important concern to a Japanese speaker is not his own face, but "the position in relation to the others in the in-group" and his acceptance by them (p. 405). The Japanese concepts of face are

qualitatively different from the American concepts of face. The former can be considered to be public face, whereas the latter is private face. Therefore, it can be claimed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) conception of politeness seems to be incompatible with Japanese conception of politeness.

According to Gu (1990), tact and generosity maxims in Chinese culture are frequently reflected by attitudinal warmth and refinement. Tact maxim refers to "minimizing cost to other and maximizing benefit to other," whereas generosity maxim "minimizing benefit to self and maximizing cost to self" (Leech, 1983, p. 132). In Chinese culture, it is rare that, for example, a successful performance of inviting is realized in a single utterance. It more often than not takes several exchanges. The speaker will insist on inviting the hearer to dinner even if the hearer has already explicitly refused the invitation. To a cultural outsider such as American people, the Chinese speaker's act of inviting is intrinsically impeding, while the hearer also looks like making fake refusals. This, however, is far from being a correct picture of how cultural insiders perceive the transaction.

It can be argued that such differences in ordinary conversation between Chinese and American societies are a reflection of respective cultural values (Ock Mo An, 2009; Daekweon Bae, 2006; Duk-Young Kim, 2008). Gu (1990) argues that Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is not suitable for Chinese culture and society on the following two reasons. First, the Chinese notion of negative face differs from that defined by them. Offering, inviting, and promising in Chinese are not considered as threatening the hearer's negative face. Second, unlike Brown and Levinson, who conceptualize politeness as an instrument to redress the disruptive effects of face-threatening acts (FTAs), the Chinese notion of politeness is not just instrumental but rather normative. Gu (1990) argues that it is a serious oversight for them not to see the normative aspect of politeness. In contrast to the approach of Brown and Levinson, which is far from any connection with the moral or ethical nature of politeness, Gu emphasizes that the Chinese conception of politeness is essentially moral and prescriptive in nature.

As reviewed so far, Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim to the universality of linguistic politeness has been criticized in terms of three distinctions between volitional and discernment politeness, private and public face, and instrumental and normative politeness. As argued by Ide (1989), Matsumoto (1988), and Gu (1990) among others, in collectivist societies such as Korea, China and Japan, the appropriateness of advice-giving speech acts and the notion of negative face seem to be assessed quite differently. How to investigate the differences in offering advice between CESs and KSs will be the focus of the following section.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

A total of 70 college students (35 Canadian students and 35 Korean students) participated in this survey research as respondents on a voluntary basis. The Canadian participants were recruited from an introductory linguistics course for the summer 2008 session at a university in Toronto, Canada. The linguistic course was composed of 50 students who were ethnically diverse. Of the 50 respondents, 15 students were not native English speakers (6 were speakers of Chinese, 2 Korean, 1 Tamil, 2 Ukrainian, 1 Serbian, 1 Bosnian, 1 Hindi, and 1 Persian) and were thus excluded. The remaining Canadian English speakers (CESs) consist of 20 female and 15 male students.

The Korean participants were recruited from an introductory philosophy course for the fall 2008 semester at a university in Busan, Korea. All 50 Korean speakers (KSs) enrolled in this course participated in the survey but responses of only 20 female students and 15 male students were randomly chosen in order to match the sex ratio of the Canadian participants. The linguistics for CESs and the introductory philosophy for KSs are not major subjects, they are liberal arts.

2. Instruments

The instrument used in this study was the multiple-choice questionnaire. In the questionnaire, the situations and the multiple-choice options adopted and refined the theoretical frameworks for speech act studies developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). They assume that a rational speaker's choice of which strategy to use is largely dependent on sociocultural variables such as social distance (D), relative power (P), and the degree or ranking (R) of impositions in the particular culture.

The questionnaire contains eight situations. The eight situations were constituted, first of all, in terms of two basic themes: serious advice (S1, S2, S3, S4: advising to stop smoking) and trivial advice (S5, S6, S7, S8: advising to occasionally change one's tie or hair style). The questionnaire was also designed to investigate the systematic variation of two sociocultural variables: social distance (D) and relative power (P). Social distance is a binary variable: that is, the interlocutors are either very close ($-D$) or distant ($+D$), while, for the purpose of this study, relative power also has only two values: hearer dominance ($+P$) or status equals ($=P$).

These two sociocultural variables result in four possible combinations: [$+P/-D$], [$+P/+D$], [$=P/-D$], and [$=P/+D$]. Because we have two basic themes for each combination, a total of 8 situations as attached to the Appendix A were included in the questionnaire. The eight situations are as follows:

<Serious advice>

- S1[+P/ -D]: advice to stop smoking to a close professor
 S2[+P/ +D]: advice to stop smoking to a distant professor
 S3[=P/ -D]: advice to stop smoking to a close friend
 S4[=P/ +D]: advice to stop smoking to a distant friend

<Trivial advice>

- S5[+P/ -D]: advice to occasionally change tie to a close professor
 S6[+P/ +D]: advice to occasionally change tie to a distant professor
 S7[=P/ -D]: advice to occasionally change hair style to a close friend
 S8[=P/ +D]: advice to occasionally change hair style to a distant friend

Each item in the questionnaire adhered to the same format. A situation was briefly described, following the situation, four multiple-choice options were presented. Since the speech act of advice is an intrinsically face-threatening act (FTA), the speaker has to decide whether to carry out the FTA at all, and if so, whether to do it in an on-record or some kind of off-record fashion (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993, p. 60). Alternative strategies were ordered from most (A) to least (D) threatening as follows:

- A) BOR: Bald-on-record strategy (in BOR, the FTA is performed in the most direct, clear, and concise way possible, but BOR is the most threatening strategy).
 B) ORR: On-record with redress strategy (the use of strategies designed to redress the hearer's positive and negative face-wants; in this study, positive and negative politeness strategies were combined together as ORR, because they are difficult for the students of non-linguistic major to distinguish the difference).
 C) OFF: Off record strategy (the most polite way of doing an FTA is to perform the act off record" by means of an implicature; in other words, "Off record" strategy is essentially indirect use of language).
 D) NOT: This strategy avoids performing an FTA; it refers to not-doing an FTA.

3. Procedure

The multiple-choice questionnaire was administrated through two versions: One version of the questionnaire was written in English for Canadian students and another in Korean for Korean students. But these two versions can be considered identical in their content because the author's translations have been checked with the assistance of graduate

students in the fields of human and social sciences. Before distributing the questionnaire, the participants were told the purpose of the study, for example, "this is a study on cross-cultural differences between Canadian and Korean students in advice-giving speech acts." After the participants agreed to participate in this survey, they were asked to provide basic personal information about themselves, such as gender, age, nationality, and the language they speak at home. The subjects were asked to check the one which they think or perceive as the most appropriate for politeness strategies in offering advice. Participants were also informed that they could spend as much time as they wanted, and no time limit was imposed. For each subject, it took roughly 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major purpose of this research was to investigate cultural differences in the speech act of advice between Canadian English speakers (CESs) and Korean speakers (KSs). Table 1 shows the frequencies of politeness strategies selected by CESs and KSs.

Table 1
Overall Frequency and (Percentage) of CESs (N=35) and KSs (N=35)

CESs	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
BOR	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (14.3)	3 (8.6)	3 (8.6)	3 (8.6)	2 (5.7)	0 (0.0)
ORR	6 (17.2)	4 (11.4)	21 (60.0)	6 (17.1)	15 (42.8)	5 (14.3)	12 (34.3)	10 (28.6)
OFF	7 (20.0)	5 (14.3)	8 (22.8)	10 (28.6)	10 (28.6)	13 (37.1)	15 (42.9)	11 (31.4)
NOT	22 (62.8)	26 (74.3)	1 (2.9)	16 (45.7)	7 (20.0)	14 (40.0)	6 (17.1)	14 (40.0)
KSs	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8
BOR	9 (25.7)	4 (11.4)	17 (48.6)	7 (20.0)	18 (51.4)	3 (8.6)	21 (60.0)	5 (14.3)
ORR	17 (48.6)	5 (14.3)	9 (25.7)	7 (20.0)	13 (37.1)	11 (31.4)	6 (17.1)	10 (28.6)
OFF	4 (11.4)	2 (5.7)	7 (20.0)	6 (17.1)	3 (8.6)	16 (45.7)	6 (17.1)	13 (37.1)
NOT	5 (14.3)	24 (68.6)	2 (5.7)	15 (42.9)	1 (2.9)	5 (14.3)	2 (5.8)	7 (20.0)

One result that is immediately clear from Table 1 is that, on the whole, KSs chose 'Doing FTA' more frequently than did the CESs. In other words, CESs selected 'Not doing FTA' more often than KSs. Another substantial difference in selecting advice strategies between CESs and KSs is that KSs chose a BOR form more frequently than did CESs.

1. Differences in the Impact of Social Distance on the Speech Act of Advice

The first research question was to investigate cross-cultural differences between CESs and KSs in the impact of social distance on their speech act of advice. The results of the survey are listed in Table 2.

Table 2
The Impact of Social Distance on Advice-Giving Acts

	S1-S2	S3-S4	S5-S6	S7-S8
CESs	1.08	22.30*	7.74	6.00
KSs	21.56*	14.44*	22.44*	16.20*

$\chi^2_{crit}=7.81$ ($df=3, p<.05$)

Since S1, S3, S5, S7 in Table 1 are situations including close (-D) relations, whereas S2, S4, S6, S8 are distant (+D) relations, the impact of social distance (D) on advice-giving speech acts can be inferred from Chi-square test of the difference of frequencies between S1 and S2, S3 and S4, S5 and S6, and S7 and S8 (symbolized as S1-S2, S3-S4, S5-S6, and S7-S8, respectively).

In the case of Canadian students, as Table 2 indicates, differences in frequencies between S1-S2, S5-S6, and S7-S8 can be considered insignificant, whereas in the case of Korean students, all the differences between S1-S2, S3-S4, S5-S6, and S7-S8 are statistically significant. In other words, collectivists make a sharp distinction between in-group and out-group members, whereas individualists do not (Triandis, 2000). This is why collectivists such as KSs appeared to be more dependent on social distance than individualists such as CESs in their interaction with others. A major reason for this difference may be that collectivists tend to be more concerned with in-group members but less concerned with out-group members than are individualists, as Triandis (1996) maintained.

Moreover, vertical collectivists are integrated not only horizontally but also vertically, whereas vertical individualists lack not only horizontal but also vertical integration. Vertical collectivists tend to subordinate their own goals (or desires) to those of in-group superiors. The tendency for Korean students to be friendly to in-group peers compared to

the Canadian students may be attributable to their collectivism. However, the tendency for Korean students to show more intimacy with in-group superiors than the Canadian students can be attributable to their vertical collectivism. It is because vertical collectivists tend to express concern for the welfare of close superiors.

2. Differences in the Impact of Relative Power on the Speech Act of Advice

The second question of this study investigated cross-cultural differences between CESs and KSs in the impact of relative power on their speech act of advice. Since S1, S2 and S5, S6 are situations involving a superior (+P) person, whereas S3, S4 and S7, S8 are situations including a peer (=P), the impact of relative power (P) on advice-giving can be inferred from Chi-square test of the difference of frequencies between S1 and S3, S2 and S4, S5 and S7, and S6 and S8. The results of the survey in terms of power (P) are given in Table 3.

As we can see from Table 3, in the cases of (S2-S4), (S5-S7), and (S6-S8), both CESs and KSs showed no significant differences in the impact of relative power on their speech act of advice. Since CESs showed a significant difference and KSs showed no significant difference between S1 and S3, it can be argued that there is a significant cross-cultural difference in the impact of relative power on advice-giving speech acts only in the case of (S1-S3).

Table 3
The Impact of Relative Power on Advice-Giving Acts

	S1-S3	S2-S4	S5-S7	S6-S8
CESs	32.58*	7.44	1.62	4.82
KSs	7.02	5.24	4.16	1.2

$\chi^2_{crit}=7.81$ ($df=3, p<.05$)

The results of the analysis indicate that KSs appeared to be less dependent on relative power than CESs in the case of S1 and S3. Especially, in the case of S1, the important difference between CESs and KSs is that CESs frequently selected 'NOT' (doing FTAs) as Table 1 shows, whereas KSs seldom selected 'NOT.' In other words, KSs frequently offered advice to a close superior, whereas CESs seldom offered advice to a close superior.

People in collectivistic cultures tend to regard a close superior as an insider within the psychologically attached we-group, whereas people in individualistic cultures tend to regard even a close superior as a remote member of the psychologically detached they-group. Collectivists pay much attention to the needs of members of their we-groups whereas individualists tend to pay attention to their own business or to the costs and benefits of relationships (Triandis, 1995).

Moreover, vertical collectivists such as Chinese and Koreans traditionally tend to emphasize staying in close contact with their parents and grandparents throughout their entire lifetime. In Chinese or Korean tradition, this vertical integration can be represented as *filial piety*. This is why Koreans embracing the cultural convention of encouraging *filial piety* often transfer their family loyalty relatively easily to other groups or person such as close professors. This is why KSs express sincere concern for the welfare of their superior by frequently offering advice to their close superior.

3. Differences in the Impact of the Seriousness on Politeness Strategies

The third question investigates the cross-cultural difference in the impact of the seriousness of advice on politeness strategies. Since S1, S2, S3, S4 are situations including serious advice, whereas S5, S6, S7, S8 are situations including trivial advice, the impact of the seriousness of advice on politeness strategies can be inferred from Chi-square test of the difference of frequencies between S1 and S5, S2 and S6, S3 and S7, and S4 and S8.

Table 4
The Impact of Seriousness of Advice on Politeness Strategies

	S1-S5	S2-S6	S3-S7	S4-S8
CEs	15.14*	10.28*	9.46*	4.18
KSs	6.34	26.58*	1.10	6.34

$\chi^2_{crit}=7.81$ ($df=3, p<.05$)

As seen in Table 4, both groups showed no significant difference between S4-S8, and both groups showed significant difference between S2-S6. This means that no significant cross-cultural difference between two groups in the impact of seriousness of advice on politeness strategies was found in the cases of (S4-S8) and (S2-S6). A significant cross-cultural difference in the impact of seriousness of advice on CEs' and KSs' politeness strategies was found in the cases of (S1-S5) and (S3-S7). In other words, when offering serious (S1) and trivial (S5) advice to a close superior and when offering serious (S3) and trivial (S7) advice to a close peer, CEs exhibited a significant difference whereas KSs did not show any significant difference. Such a cross-cultural difference between CEs and KSs can be attributable to their respective cultural value-orientations.

In vertical individualist societies such as the United States and Canada, people tend to be concerned with improving their own individual status by means of competition and achievement. Therefore, their politeness can be considered instrumental and strategic; they do not want to waste time and energy by threatening others' face. In vertical collectivist societies such as China and Korea, people emphasize both horizontal and vertical

integration. They tend to frequently offer advice with the intention of benevolence and deference when they interact with in-group members, regardless of the seriousness of the speech act of advice. Since vertical collectivists tend to regard both close superiors and close peers as insiders of their in-group, in other words, since their politeness is normatively oriented, they may not show any significant difference in the seriousness of advice as far as politeness strategies are concerned.

V. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to examine cross-cultural difference in the impact of social distance, relative power, and the seriousness of advice on politeness strategies. It further tried to interpret such difference between CESs and KSs mainly in terms of vertical individualism and vertical collectivism, respectively.

First, the results indicate that, in the impact of social distance on advice-giving, there was a significant difference between two groups. KSs were more dependent on social distance than CESs. What is particularly notable is that KSs tended to give advice significantly more frequently to close peers and superiors than CESs. This difference can be attributable to the respective cultural value-orientations. KSs as vertical collectivists tend to reveal not only horizontal integration emphasizing interdependence and collective duty but also vertical integration emphasizing the sense of propriety and respect for social hierarchy, whereas CESs as vertical individualists tend to predispose themselves toward individual achievement and competition.

Second, in the impact of relative power on advice-giving speech acts, CESs and KSs generally showed no significant differences, the one exception being the case of S1-S3. When offering advice to a close superior, KSs appeared to be less dependent on power than were CESs. This difference seems to imply that advice-giving on personal matters may be considered less of an imposition in Korean culture compared to the Canadian. While advice-giving on personal matters is generally considered very rude or inappropriate in Canadian culture, the same speech acts are frequently regarded in Korean culture as an expression of filial piety and collective duty. Based on the results of this study, it can be argued that the concept of politeness in Korean culture should be interpreted very differently from that in Canadian culture, and that Brown and Levinson's claims for the universality of politeness cannot be considered to be definitive.

Third, the results of the study indicate that the linguistic politeness of KSs was less dependent on the seriousness of advice than that of CESs. This difference seems to reveal that the two groups tend to perceive advice-giving with different communicative goals. KSs with the strong sense of collective duty and filial piety tend to regard advice as a

means to show warm interest in others' well-being, whereas CESs with the strong sense of individual rights and autonomy often see it as invasion of privacy.

This study has several limitations. First, there is a limitation related to the limited size of the sample. Only 35 CESs and 35 KSs participated in this study. Since the size is so small, the extent to which this study is generalized should be considered with caution. A second limitation is that the data used in this research were collected only from written questionnaire items without using actual discourse as an extended sequence of talk-exchange. A third limitation is that the multiple-choice questionnaire, while time-efficient, does not allow the participants to provide their intention or motivation of selecting a specific choice.

Despite all its limitations, however, this study provides at least two important pedagogical implications. First, this study suggests that EFL students might appear inappropriate when performing advice-giving speech acts to NSs of English. To help our students achieve optimal pragmatic success, EFL teachers need to make students aware of the NSs' cultural convention of ordinary speech acts. In other words, the teaching of target culture should constitute an integral part of the EFL curriculum. The acquisition of how to offer advice to NSs of English may be problematic for EFL learners in Korea. It is because advice-giving often welcomed as expressions of friendliness or sincere concern for others in our culture may be interpreted as rude or intrusive in Canadian cultural context. Since even linguistically competent EFL learners often tend to have difficulties in expressing themselves appropriately in discourse contexts, EFL teaching and learning have to emphasize not only linguistic competence but also pragmatic competence.

Second, it can be argued that Korean learners of English should be taught not to transfer their own way of giving advice to the target language. NSs of English also should be informed to refrain from blindly applying their own criteria of politeness to the foreigner's speech acts which are based on quite different cultural values. This does not mean that there is no morality or politeness at all. It rather means that the concept of politeness itself differs from culture to culture, and that the richness of other cultures and linguistic conventions should be respected in order to enhance mutual understanding.

REFERENCES

- An, Ock Mo. (2009). Analyzing complaint letters. *Modern English Education*, 10(3), 1-16.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bae, Daekweon. (2006). A pragmatic analysis of cross-cultural perspective and the implications for Korean EFL class. *Modern English Education*, 7(2), 3-18.
- Beebe, L., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. Anderson, & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative*

- competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). New York: Newbury House.
- Bergman, M., & Kasper, G. (1993). Perception and performance in native and non-native apology. In G. Kasper, & S. Blum-Kulka, (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 82-107). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1992). The metapragmatics of politeness in Israeli society. In R. Watts, S. Ide, & K. Ehlich (Eds.), *Politeness in language: Studies in its history, theory and practice* (pp. 255-280). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (Eds.). (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied Linguistics*, 5(3), 196-213.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chun, Moon-Young. (2009). *Cultural relativity and universality of linguistic politeness: The speech act of advice*. Doctoral Dissertation, Korea University, Seoul.
- Eisenstein, M., & Bodman, J. (1993). Expressing gratitude in American English. In G. Kasper, & S. Blum-Kulka, (Ed.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 64-81). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fukada, A., & Asato, N. (2004). Universal politeness theory: Application to the use of Japanese honorifics. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36(11), 1991-2002.
- Garcia, C. (1989). Apologizing in English: Politeness strategies used by native and non-native speakers. *Multilingua*, 8(1), 3-20.
- Gu, Y. (1990). Politeness phenomena in modern Chinese. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14, 237-257.
- Hill, B., Ide, S., Ikuta, S., Kawasaki, A., & Ogino, T. (1986). Universals of linguistic politeness: Quantitative evidence from Japanese and American English. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 10, 347-371.
- Hinkel, E. (1994). Appropriateness of advice as L2 solidarity strategy. *RELC Journal*, 25(2), 71-93.
- Ide, S. (1989). Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua*, 8, 223-248.
- Ide, S. (1993). Preface: The search for integrated universals of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua*, 12, 7-11.
- Kasper, G. (1990). Linguistic politeness: Current research issues. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14, 193-218.
- Kim, Duk-Young. (2008). A study of complaint strategies for EFL college learners. *Modern English Education*, 9(2), 58-70.
- Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.

- Matsumoto, Y. (1988). Reexamination of the universality of face: Politeness phenomena in Japanese. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21(5), 451-486.
- Nwoye, O. G. (1992). Linguistic politeness and socio-cultural variations of the notion of face. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 18, 309-328.
- Olshtain, E. (1989). Apologies across languages. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, & G. Kasper, (Eds.), (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. (pp.155-173). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Shavitt, S., Lalwani, A. K., Zhang, J., & Torelli, C. J. (2006). The horizontal/vertical distinction in cross-cultural consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 16(4), 325-356.
- Singelis, T. M., Triandis, H. C., Bhawuk, D., & Gelfand, M. J. (1995). Horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism: A theoretical and measurement refinement. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 29(3), 240-275.
- Sohn, Ho-min. (1986). *Linguistic expeditions*. Seoul: Hanshin.
- Takahashi, T., & Beebe, L. M. (1993). Cross-linguistic influence in the speech act of correction. In G. Kasper, & S. Blum-Kulka, (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 82-107). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Trosborg, A. (1987). Apology strategies in native/non-native speakers of English. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 11(1), 147-167.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1985). Different cultures, different languages, different speech acts: Polish and English. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 9, 145-178.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1991). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: The semantics of human interaction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire for the Speech Act of Advice [English Version]

Situation 1: [+P/-D] serious advice

A professor whom you are very close with is a chain-smoker. You always thought that he should stop smoking. While you are talking with him he smokes again. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

- A. You should stop smoking. It's really bad for your health.
- B. I think it's better to stop smoking. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.

- C. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- D. Nothing.

Situation 2: [+P/+D] serious advice

A professor whom you are not very close with is a chain smoker. You often thought that he should stop smoking. While you are talking with him he smokes again. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

- A. You should stop smoking. It's really bad for your health.
- B. I think it's better to stop smoking. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- C. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- D. Nothing.

Situation 3: [=P/-D] serious advice

A friend whom you are very close with is a chain-smoker. You always thought that he should stop smoking. While you are talking with him he smokes again. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

- A. You should stop smoking. It's really bad for your health.
- B. I think it's better to stop smoking. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- C. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- D. Nothing.

Situation 4: [=P/+D] serious advice

A friend whom you are not very close with is a chain-smoker. You often thought that he should stop smoking. While you are talking with him he smokes again. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

- A. You should stop smoking. It's really bad for your health.
- B. I think it's better to stop smoking. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- C. I've heard that smoking is really bad for the health.
- D. Nothing.

Situation 5: [+P/-D] trivial advice

The professor whom you are very close with is well known as a phenomenally popular professor. He has a keen sense of humor and great sense of intelligence. However, he hardly ever changes his tie which you always wanted to mention. How would you advise the professor in this situation?

- A. You always wear the same tie! You should change your tie!
- B. You always look good but why don't you change your tie sometimes?
- C. Whenever I think of you the first thing that comes on my mind is this tie!
- D. Nothing.

Situation 6: [+P/+D] trivial advice

The professor whom you are not very close with is well known as a phenomenally popular professor. He has a keen sense of humor and great sense of intelligence. However, he hardly ever changes his tie which you always wanted to mention. How would you advise the professor in this situation?

- A. You always wear the same tie! You should change your tie!
- B. You always look good but why don't you change your tie sometimes?
- C. Whenever I think of you the first thing that comes on my mind is this tie!
- D. Nothing.

Situation 7: [=P/-D] trivial advice

Your friend who is very close with you has lots of talents. She has intelligence, really good character. However, she has had the same hair style for ages. How would you advise your friend of her hair style?

- A. You always had that same hair style! You should change it!
- B. I like your hair style but why don't you change it sometimes?
- C. Whenever I think of you the first thing that comes on my mind is your hair style.
- D. Nothing.

Situation 8: [=P/+D] trivial advice

Your friend who is not very close with you has lots of talents. She has intelligence, really good character. However, she has had the same hair style for ages. How would you advice your friend of her hair style?

- A. You always had that same hair style! You should change it!
- B. I like your hair style but why don't you change it sometimes?
- C. Whenever I think of you the first thing that comes on my mind is your hair style.
- D. Nothing.

Moon Young Chun
1-202, Seong Jong Greenville,
Samseon-dong 3 ga-11, Seongbuk-gu,
Seoul, 136-043, Korea
Tel: (02)763-9527 / C.P.: 010-9580-9527
Email: cmy2196@korea.ac.kr

Received 23 May 2010
Revised 30 July 2010
Accepted 9 August 2010