On the Iranian EFL Teachers Apology Production

Sayed Reza Nasiri[1], Ali Forutan[2, *]

[1]Ministry of Education, Region Five of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran
[2]English Department, Farhangian University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to find out to what extent Iranian EFL teachers in private institutes and senior high schools are capable of performing strategies of apology as one specific speech act and to evaluate this speech act in the course books they were teaching. To this end, sixty male and female language teachers teaching English as a foreign language took part in this study. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was distributed among the participants and their teaching materials were evaluated as well. The performance of two groups of high schools and institutes teachers was compared. The analysis of the results indicated significant differences between the apology strategies used by the public school and institute teachers. Correspondingly, there was a significant difference between the course books used by the groups in terms of apology strategies used in different social contexts. The results of this study might be of educational contribution and implication to teachers, learners and those interested in pragmatics in general and apology speech act in particular.

1. Introduction

The importance of pragmatics has been emphasized in the realm of language learning and teaching from 1980s. It refers to the study of how individuals understand and generate a communicative act in a speech condition. People in various nations may look at pragmatics principles to a certain extent, in a different way from each other, which persuade researchers to follow cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics investigations. Nowadays, English as a lingua franca has appeared as a means of communication among speakers with diverse native languages, which makes English teaching to become more and more important in EFL settings including Iran. Simultaneously, EFL teachers are seeking to develop learners' language competence broadly so that they can communicate with English speakers successfully with appropriate verbal exchanges. Nevertheless, regardless of being a fluent speaker there is often a pragmatic problem in various speech acts that may decrease the communicative

purpose (Cortazzi & Jin, 2008; Rao, 2002; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Kasper & Rose, 1999).

Learners are able to generate grammatically acceptable but pragmatically improper statements, which may cause break downs in communication or pragmatic failure. In the relevant literature it is generally noticed that an individual's being completely well-informed concerning the grammar of the target language does not warranty that s/he is also pragmatically competent. According to Ellis (1994) pragmatic failure originates from different reasons including EFL contexts which are one of the most leading factors in transferring the learners' speech act strategies from their mother tongues. Another factor which leads to pragmatic failure is the problems with input. Learners need a large amount of exposure to input in the educational settings.

In general, course books which are the most available source of input usually have problems with the presentation of pragmatics, i.e. speech acts (Kasper & Rose, 2001).In EFL

* Corresponding author

E-mail address: N38sr@yahoo.com (S. R. Nasiri), forutanali@yahoo.com (A. Forutan)

milieus, English teachers as well as course books are the chief source of input. However, following the outcome of the studies on the assessments of course books, it has been appeared they lack all the necessary input in terms of authenticity and frequency of essential aspects of speech acts (Bouton, 1996; Salazar Campillo, 200; Uso-Juan, 2007; Vellenga, 2004)

As an area in second language research, pragmatics is generally called interlanguage pragmatics, similar to interlanguage grammar and the interlanguage lexicon (Kasper & Rose, 2002). In Inter language pragmatics we study the learners' improvement and making use of pragmatic knowledge in second language milieus. To put it another way, it investigates second language speakers' understanding, production, and learning linguistic action in target language, or in other words, it examines how to do things with words in a second language (Kasper, 1998). In the process of expressing a meaning, individuals not only generate utterances including grammatical constitutions and vocabulary, they also perform actions by means of those utterances. In this regard, John Austin (1962) initially introduced Speech Act Theory and John Searle (1969) later expanded it from the basic principle that language is utilized to perform actions. Speech Act Theory, with a noteworthy assistance to interpersonal communication, encouraged a lot of researchers to study the modes in which people make use of language to deal with the social interaction (Bowe & Martin, 2007; Thomas, 2006; Vanderveken, 2009). Following Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1975) speech acts function according to universal pragmatic principles, however, Green (1975) and Wierzbicka (1985) claim that there are probable variations in expression and conceptualization among languages around the globe.

According to (Vellenga, 2004; Cohen, 2005) little attention has been paid to pragmatics in EFL language teaching, teacher education programs and curriculum. Research on speech act recognition by nonnative English-speaking teachers of ESL/EFL is very essential. Pragmatic ability requires "offline knowledge and online control of the linguistic and the sociocultural aspects of pragmatics" (McNamara and Roever, 2006: 54-55). In the domain of cross-cultural pragmatics, apologies have been frequently investigated (Deutschmann, 2003) to have a comparison of apology speech act use between native English speakers and speakers of other languages like Spanish (Garcia, 1989), German (House, 1989), and Persian (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004).

Apology is a sort of speech act that has a strong cultural facet. Consequently, its interpersonal interpretation may differ from one society to another. Lazaraton (2004) expressed that non-native English speaking teachers require additional cultural awareness, language enhancement, and academic experience.

These teachers might not promote cultural information in the educational settings for the reason that they may possibly feel uncertain of these issues and because they are not well prepared with detailed knowledge of target cultures (McKay, 2003). Culture has direct connection to pragmatic appropriateness and ESL/EFL learners may not have adequate chance to take part in communications that offer them pragmatic competence (McKay, 2003). Given that pragmatics is fundamental to language teaching and learning, aspects of pragmatic should be concentrated on in the classroom (Rose, 1994: 52). Thus, investigating the pragmatic competence of non-native English teachers demands more attention. Research confirms that non-native English -teacher students feel unconfident about their English language proficiency and their pragmatic competence may be weaker than their organizational competence (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005b;Pasternak & Bailey, 2004).Moreover, second language education programs do not put emphasis on pragmatic aspects of language and do not prepare the teacher candidates in teaching the pragmatic elements of language(Biesenback-Lucas, 2003;). Accessible teacher training materials usually contain sections on how to teach the four main skills which would lead to some grammatical declarative knowledge without pragmatics. EFL situations are often called impoverished L2 contexts since developmental pragmatic investigations carried out in such contexts indicate that contrary to second language learning settings, the variety of speech acts and realization strategies is fairly thin, and the usual communication patterns confine pragmatic input and occasions to perform discourse organization strategies (Alco´n, 2005; Kasper, 2001;Lo¨rscher& Schulze, 1988; Rose, 1999). Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1996) mention that the pragmatic input instructors present o learners in EFL contexts was status-bound, and accordingly they could not be used as direct models for the students.

1.1. Speech Act of Apologies

Among the speech acts which is used almost every day and in many conditions, apology is one of the most commonly used speech acts. Apologies are sensitive speech acts in interpersonal interaction since they guarantee the connection of interpersonal conversations through avoiding disagreement and interruption of interpersonal ties. Brown and Levinson (1987) stated apology is a face-threatening act that makes the speaker to accept the responsibility for a particular behavior or not being able to perform a behavior that seems costly to the hearer. In all human societies we come across apology, since human is a social being and preservation of agreement in individuals' interpersonal relationships is a social requirement. When there is some behavior which is against social norms or when an act or statement leads to the condition that one or more individuals

feel themselves as offended, there is a need for the act of apologizing. In fact in such contexts we have two parties: an apologizer and an apologizee. Nevertheless, merely if the one who caused the violation identify himself as an apologizer we have the act of making an apology. Apologizing is an act which demands an action or an utterance with the purpose of setting things right (Olshtain, 1983:235).Bataineh & Bataineh (2006:1903) expressed that apologies are a sort of expressive speech acts in which interlocutors try to show their position or thoughts and if it reflects exact feelings it can be concluded that an apology has its effect.

Holmes (1995) stated apology as a speech act directed to the addressee's face needs with the purpose of resolving an offence for which the speaker feels responsibility, and to re-establish balance between speaker and addressee. Marquez-reiter (2004) asserted an apology as a compensatory action for an offense made by the speaker which had an impact on the hearer. According to Trosborg (1995) there are some ways to make apology which are labeled apology strategies including expressing regret, offering justification, asking for pardon and recommending restoring or returning someone's assets. The speech acts of apology have been studied cross-culturally to have a comparison among the languages. The investigations have commonly been conducted in circumstances which are EFL contexts. The results of these studies have confirmed that some individuals make use of language transfer from their native language, while others approximate target language norms or employ totally different methods from the formulas they use in their mother tongue or target language. Loveday (1982) concluded that due to lack of proficiency and transfer, native speakers' apology forms are patterned and nonnative speakers digress from target norms.

1.2. Apology Studies in EFL Contexts

A few studies have been conducted to investigate the apology strategies used by EFL and ESL learners of different languages with different proficiency levels. In this section, some major published studies are reviewed.

In a study, Bataineh and Bataineh (2006) investigated 100 Jordanian intermediate EFL university students' apology by using a 10 senario DCT. The results of the study indicated that statement of remorse, accounts, compensation, promise for forbearance and reparation were the major strategies used by male and female respondents.However, a difference was observed between male and female preference of the primary strategies. Female participants tended to use more non-apology strategies that veered towards avoiding the discussion of offense, whereas male participants employed those which veered towards blaming the victim.

In another study, Alfattah (2010) used a DCT to investigate the apology strategies of 314 Yemeni EFL learners in the light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness and face-threatening act. The analysis of 1256 apology responses revealed that the subjects tended to use IFIDs as a compulsory component of apology act. The most frequent supportive strategy was 'taking on the responsibility'.

Istifici (2009) attempted to investigate the act of apologizing with 40 Turkish EFL learners from two different proficiency levels. Their performance was compared with that of five native speakers of English. The data were collected by an eight item DCT. The results of the study indicated that the participants'L1, especially intermediate group's, influenced the EFL learners' use of target forms. For example, in some situations intermediate group used 'blaming', an apology strategy which is a typical Turkish norm. with respect to IFID use and internal intensification, advanced learners and native speakers showed similar results.

In another study, Farashaiyan and Yazdi Amirkhiz (2011) compared the apology strategies utilized by 15 Iranian EFL and 15 Malaysian ESL learners by using a 12 item DCT of apology. The results of the study indicated some similarities along with some differences. Iranian and Malaysian learners used eleven similar strategies in many of the situations; however, Iranian learners used four additional strategies never observed in Malaysian responses. In addition, in certain situations there were similar tendencies to use strategies like, 'a request for forgiveness', 'explicit self-blame', 'self-dispraise', 'refusal to acknowledge guilt', and 'promise of forbearance'. However, some differences were observed in some other situations such as 'an expression of regret', 'an offer of apology', 'explanation', 'lack of intent', and 'concern for the hearer'.

Finally, Chang (2010) conducted a cross-sectional study to uncover the development of pragmatic competence in L2 apology. The Chinese participants comprised four groups: third grade, six grade, and tenth grade and college freshmen. The data were collected by means of an eight item DCT, four scenarios for high status addressee and four for equal status addressee. Raking the responses of each level, the researcher came to the following order of development (p.418):

Level I: IFID, expressing regret.

Level II: alerter, admission of fact.

Level III: intensifier, concern, minimize, repair.

Level IV: explanation, lack of intent, promise for forbearance, IFID, requesting forgiveness, acknowledgment, blame.

It was concluded that L2 learners' apology strategies expanded with levels proficiency. In addition, the first stage of apology acquisition was the formulaic utterance of 'I'm

sorry/ sorry'. The order of development also indicated a hierarchy of difficulty in terms of linguistic forms, and lack of some strategies in lower levels was due to their low linguistic proficiency.

In conclusion, the cross-cultural studies as well as interlanguage pragmatics studies suggest that there are some significant differences in apology strategies used by native speakers of different languages on the one hand, and EFL learners and native speakers of English on the other hand. Cross-cultural variations imply that learning to function in another language necessitates the cultural and situational knowledge of appropriate language use, and incomplete language use pointed to the demand of EFL learners to enrich their linguistic repertoire and fill the gap between their linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. In other words, they need to develop their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. Almost all cross-sectional and interventional studies come to the conclusion that EFL and ESL learners should be helped for this end.

1.3. Apology Studies of Native Speakers

The first part of the review addresses studies comparing English apology scheme with Japanese, Korean and Chinese apology schemes. Kim (2008) conducted a study to investigate how South Korean apology speech act expressions differed conceptually from Australian English expressions of apology. Using the natural semantic meta-language scheme, the researcher concluded that English 'sorry' is different from Korean 'mianhada', so the literal translation of the words would be a sign of negative transfer. Further investigation of the 74 South Korean university students' speech act strategy preferences revealed that, unlike Australian English speakers, Korean speakers preferred the compensation strategy to expressing responsibility. Instead, the Australian group tended to use the 'expression of responsibility' for apology intensification.

Guan, Park and Lee (2009) conducted a cross-cultural study on apology realizations of Chinese, Korean and English. The participants of the study including 376 students from three universities in China, Korea and the United states responded to a questionnaire to show their preferences in different apology situations. The results of the study showed that all participants indicated stronger obligation and intention to apologize to a stranger than a friend. However, some cross-cultural differences were observed. For example, American and Korean students, as opposed to the Chinese students, believed that the offended person would have a stronger emotional reaction if the offender offered no reply, or American participants showed stronger desire, obligation, and intention to apologize than the other participants.

To locate the cross-cultural variation of Japanese and English apology, Nonaka (2000) conducted a context analysis of some typical and atypical situations in both cultures, connecting them with her own experience. She pointed out that Americans were more logical and less emotional than the Japanese people, so they did not accept the Japanese' using of 'I'm sorry' when they wanted to show the consideration to the interlocuters' feelings. For the Americans, as she concluded, apology should only be used when there was a real fault.

2. Research Questions

The present study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. I s there any difference between Iranian EFL teachers at public schools and private institutes in term of performing apology?

2. Do the course books that the EFL teachers were teaching contain apology as a speech act?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Sixty male and female EFL teachers took part in this study. They all were BA holders in teaching English as a foreign language, English literatures or translation. Among the participants thirty EFL teachers were teaching at public schools and thirty of them in private institutes. The course books being taught by institute teachers were Top Notch series, while public school teachers just were covering four high school course books presented by the Ministry of Education.EFL teachers were also given a short background questionnaire prior to the discourse completion task, to have information about their age, sex and if they had been abroad .The participants' mean age was about 35 for both male and female teachers. According to the obtained information the majority of the teachers had nine to eighteen years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language. As for their experience in living in contexts where English was spoken as a native language, no one had such opportunity.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

A controlled elicitation method called open questionnaire which is a modified version of ''Discourse Completion Test'' (DCT) used in CCSARP project (Blum-Kulka, 1982) was employed to collect the relevant data in the present study. The DCT used in this study included a short description of the condition and a one participant dialogue. To put it another way, the applied DCT in the study contained 10 fixed discourse situations, which a university student is probably to

come across in his/her daily language interaction. .The rationale was that all the participants had such experiences during college days. Each situation contains a concise description of the addressee's characteristics, that is, social distance, social dominance, and also the offence being committed. The participants were informed to write the first thing that came into their minds regarding the situation they were in and the one they were interacting.

3.3. Data Analysis

After collecting the DCT questionnaires, the data were coded according to the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989: 289) with some adjustments. Following this coding scheme, the unit of analysis is the utterance or sequences of utterances generated by the participants to complete the DCT. Each utterance is analyzed into the following fragments: (1) Address term or; (2) Head act; (3) Adjunct(s) to head act. Based on the CCSARP coding scheme, the linguistic realization of the act of apologizing can take the form of any of the five feasible strategies accessible to the apologizer as follows:

(1) An expression of apology (Illocutionary Force Indicating Device IFID)

a. an expression of regret (e. g. I'm sorry)

b. an offer of apology (e.g. I apologize)

c. a request for forgiveness (e.g. excuse me, forgive me)

2) An offer of repair/redress (REPR) (e.g. I'll pay for your damage)

3) An explanation of an account (EXPL) (e.g. My daughter was ill, I took her to hospital)

4) Acknowledging responsibility for the offense (RESP) (e.g. It's my fault)

5) A promise of forbearance (FORB) (e.g. I'll never forget it again)

IFIDs are described as formulaic, expressions in which the speaker's apology by making use of a performative verb is made explicit , in this case the apology verbs such as (be) sorry, excuse, apologize, etc.(Blum- Kulka and Olshtain, 1984).

The responses of sixty EFL were counted and categorized according to the above criteria in the coding tables for each situation.

4. Results

As it was stated the purpose of this paper was to study the speech act realizations of EFL teachers in conditions which needed apologies. Through a DCT test the data were collected. The participants' responses were computed and their frequencies were estimated in order to compare two groups of EFL teachers.

Analysis of Top Notch series conversations and Iranian senior high school course books ,developed by the Ministry of Education from a pragmatic perspective to see how pragmatically rich these textbooks are in terms of apologies also was among the objective of this study.

4.1. Results of the DCT

The data in the table 1 displays the various patterns of apology strategies used by both institute and public school EFL teachers in all ten situations.

Table 1. Frequency of the use of semantic formulas in10 situations

I	Institute teacher responses					High school teacher responses				
situation	IFID	RESP	EXPL	REPR	FORB	IFID	RESP	EXPL	REPR	FORB
1	98	3	30	0	0	98	0	5	0	0
2	92	10	40	3	0	96.3	3	23	0	0
3	100	0	11	0	0	100	0	8	0	0
4	96	13	23	0	4	96	2	11	0	0
5	56	45	36	14	0	56	40	30	6	0
6	90	7	15	0	0	81	4	10	0	0
7	100	6	1	0	0	100	2	0	0	0
8	100	32	55	0	5	100	13	42	0	0
9	100	44	26	7	0	100	12	16	0	0
10	46	33	25	10	4	66	21	3	0	1

Regarding the first situation, based on the above Table, the most frequent formula used by both groups of teachers was the use of IFID (e. g. I'm sorry). EXP formula was employed 5%by Public school teachers (PST) and30% by institutes teachers (IT) and EXPL formula was used only 5% by PST.

In the second situation as table 2 demonstrates, IT preferred IFID 92% whereas PST preferred 96.3% .IFID. RESP

formula was used 10% and 3% by IT and PST group respectively. EXPL was used by IT participants 40% while PST group used it 23% and PERP formula was utilized 3% only by the participants in IT.

In the third situation, according to table 1 , all the teachers had the same performance in terms of IFID (100%),however PST preferred 11% EXPL whereas PST preferred8%.

Situation 4 was about filling a form for a university staff. As the above table shows all the teachers employed IFID equally (96%).Using EXPL formula accounted for 23 %for IT data and 11 % for PST data (e.g. I was at hospital). For RESP formula IT had 13% responses and PST had 2%. And for FORB, it was used only 4% by IT.

In situation 5, both groups of EFL teachers had the same frequency in using IFID semantic formula (56%). RESP formula was used 45% and 40% by IT and PST group respectively. EXPL was used by IT participants 36% while PST group used it 30%. Concerning the REPR formula, IT used it 14% while it was used6 % by PST.

As the above table indicates in situations6, the participants in IT and

PST differed in their use of formulas IT preferred IFID 90% whereas PST preferred 81%. EXPL was used by IT participants 15% while PST group used it 10%. For RESP formula IT had 7% responses and PST had 4%.

In situation 7, the most frequent formula which used equally by both groups of teachers was the use of IFID (100%). RESP formula was used6% and 2% by IT and PST group respectively. EXPL was utilized 1% only by the participants in IT.

As Table 8 demonstrates, in situation 8 IFID (100 %), RESP (32 %), EXP (55 %) and FORB (5 %) were the categories which were commonly used by the individuals in IT group. In PST the frequency for IFD, RESP and EXP were 100%, 13% and 42% respectively.

In situation 9 all the teachers employed IFID equally (100%). For RESP formula IT had 44% responses and PST had 12%. REPR was utilized 7% only by the participants in IT. EXPL was used by IT participants 26% while PST group used it 16%.

In the last situation, IFID (46 %), RESP (33 %), EXP (25 %), FORB (4 %), REPR (10%) were the categories which were commonly used by the individuals in IT group. In PST the frequency for IFD, RESP and EXP Was 66%, 21% and3% respectively.

4.2. Results of the Evaluation of Course Books

The results of the close inspection of the textbooks are displayed in Table2. As a result of the analysis of the English textbooks of three senior high schools and one pre-university used in the Iranian high schools it appeared that the frequency of occurrence of apology as a type of speech act is extremely low.

Table 2. Frequency of the presentation of apologizing strategies in teaching materials

situation	High School Books					Top Notch Series				
	IFID	RESP	EXPL	REPR	FORB	IFID	RESP	EXPL	REPR	FORB
+D/+P	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	1	0
+D/-P	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
-D/+P	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
-D/-P	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	4	1

Regarding the application of IFID formula, as Table 2 shows there is only one case which represents a situation of +D (+Dominance) and -P(-Power). Concerning the frequency of RESP and FORB, the researcher came across no cases. The use of EXPL and REPR formulae is the same as IFID with the same situation of +D and-P. In comparison to high school books the analysis of Top Notch Series indicates that they are very different in terms of frequency of apology. According to Table 2, IFID is presented 9 times during these books.3 cases are the situations of +D/+P, 1 example of +D/-P, 1 example of-D/+P and 4 cases of –D/-P situations. RESP formula appeared 3 times which are representative of +D/+P, -D/+P and -D/-P situations. Regarding EXPL, there are 3 cases in Top Notch Series which are instances of +D/+P, +D/-P, -D/+P situations. REPR formula appeared with the frequency of 7 which assigns1 case for each of the +D/+P,+D/-P and–D+/P situations and 4 cases for - D/-P. Regarding the FORB formula, we witnessed only one example which is the representative of- D/-P condition.

5. Discussion

First phase of the study was a comparison of the use of formulas in situations which required apologies by public school and private institute EFL teachers and the second part was a comparison of EFL teachers' teaching material in terms of apology. The collected data showed that the apology formulas of two groups differed based on the situations and regarding the presentation of apologies in their course books they were noticeably different.

The DCT questionnaire distributed in this research included 10 situations made according to the combination of the social distance and dominance perceived between the interlocutors. For instance, situations one and six are similar because participants in this situation are intimate friends (_distance) and no one has dominance over the other (_dominance). In terms of IFID usage, IT group used this formula and its combination more than PST .It was found that IFID usage

were common among native speakers and the most frequent utterance was "I'm sorry" (Kaspe1998). According to Owen (1983; cited in Suszczynska 1999:1059) the IFIDs are the most common strategies and seem as the axis of the speech act category of apologizing and indicate syntactic-semantic formulae. The interpretation is that according to Loveday (1982) due to lack of proficiency and transfer, native speakers' apology forms are patterned and nonnative speakers digress from target norms. Moreover, second language education programs do not put emphasis on the pragmatic aspects of language and do not prepare the teacher candidates in teaching the pragmatic elements of language (Biesenback-Lucas, 2003). The institute EFL teachers were teaching course books which were richer in terms of category of apologizing in comparison to public school teachers. Therefore IT had access to a large number of apology strategies used by native speakers. Another important difference between these two groups was that public school teachers frequently used "Excuse me" instead of "I'm sorry" which is an example of transfer of L1, since these teachers were poorer in terms of exposure, as a compensatory strategy they employed their L1 competence. According to Marquez Reiter (2000) 'Excuse me' is usually used when there is a virtual or genuine interference into another individual's physical space, which is, passing somebody in a narrow space. Nevertheless, 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' can be applied as prescribed remedies in some circumstances with minute discrepancy in effect, that is when two individuals collide with each other unintentionally. Excuse is used pre-event, to be precise, prior to a violation or when somebody is making his/her way through a throng of people, while 'I'm sorry' is used post-event, subsequent to getting in someone's way. In this regard, Borkin and Reinhart (1978) conducted a research to detect the variations and similarity between these two formulaic remedies. They came to the conclusion that 'excuse me' is employed 'as a formula to remedy a past or immediately forthcoming breach of etiquette or other light infraction of a social rule' (p. 61); with the exception of 'excuse me' being more appropriate than 'I'm sorry' 'in getting someone to step aside, while either *excuse me* or *I'm sorry* might be used after getting in someone else's way' (p. 59). Therefore due to low proficiency as result of less frequent speech acts in teaching material and the influence of first language high school teachers made use of "Excuse me" instead of "I'm sorry"

In situation 1, the two sides are close friends and IT group used RESP and EXPL differently which shows pragmatically they are more knowledgeable and their performance is closer to native speakers. In the second situation the participants know each other (_distance) and the addressee has dominance over the apologizer (student) (+hearer

dominance).Therefore this context requires some EXPL and RESP, however the frequency of these formulae is greater in IT group which shows they are pragmatically more competent which may be the results of their teaching material or different methodology they employ in their classrooms. In situation 3, the participants are not familiar (+distance) and are both college students (_dominance). In this situation the performance of two groups, more or less is the same, perhaps this context is to some extent universal in all languages. In situation 4 the participants do not know each other (+distance) but the addressee has dominance over the apologizer (+hearer dominance).In this situation IT again use more intensifiers which are closer to native speakers. In situations 5, the interlocutors are family members with no social distance (_distance), but, because of the age of the speaker, he is socially dominant (+speaker dominance). The performance of IT is different in REPR and FORB which may be attributed to cultural differences, that is, the allocated course books provide more native like input for IT. Situation 6 is the same as situation1in terms of power and dominance and again IT used more formula to guarantee the apologizing perhaps because of being more proficient in terms of pragmatic knowledge. Regarding power and distance situation 7is the same as situation 4 and PST used less formula of RESP, perhaps they are teaching textbooks which are poor in terms of pragmatic knowledge and they seek help from their L1. Similarly in the last three situations these two groups of teachers are different specially in using intensifiers which could be attributed to different sources of input, different application of transfer or different teaching methodology. Since almost in all public schools, English teachers make use of grammar translation method which has a reflection in their performance and application of their L1. At the same time institute teachers in addition to having richer textbooks which improve them in terms of cultural awareness, they teach English differently through communicative and natural approaches which will have a direct impact on their performance as well.

6. Conclusion

The first phase of the study was the comparison of public school and private institute EFL teachers in making use of apologizing strategies in their speech act performances. Analysis of the results indicated that in the most situations IT approached native speaker norms more than PST in the use of apologies. However, in some situations it was seen that the formulas used by teachers in both groups were similar. Their first language may have an impact on their use of apologies, particularly PST. The study demonstrated that there are many cases in which first language cultural norms influenced the EFL understanding of apology speech acts. Cohen (2005)

stated formal teaching speech acts accelerate learning the target language although acquisition of native like performance by nonnative speakers will take a long time. The second phase was on the presentation of apologizing strategies as a speech act in the EFL teachers' teaching material. The detailed examination of their syllabi revealed that high school EFL teachers were teaching materials which are not really adequate in general terms and consequently their instructors ' performance of apology deviates from native speakers norm. Therefore if we consider their textbooks as at least one source of input, this source is very weak and demands more consideration. However in comparison to high schools textbooks, Top Notch Series are considerably different in terms of apology occurrence. In fact these books offer many situations which are real instances of apology in target language contexts and these examples provide teachers with authentic language.

Appendix

The questionnaire used in this study to collect EFL teachers' apologetic utterances.

Please read the following description of situations and then write what you would say in each situation.

1. You have borrowed your friend's notes and because of the rain yesterday, some of the notes have been wet and damaged. What would you say when you want to return the notes?

2. You have promised to deliver a lecture in class but due to a very bad cold, you have not been able to even attend the class. What would you say to your professor the next session you attend the class?

3. The university bus is very crowded so you are standing in the bus. The bus-driver suddenly brakes and you lose your control and step on a fellow student's foot. What would you say?

4. You have promised one of the university staff to fill in and return a form two days ago but you have a two day delay. What would you say when you want to return the form?

5. You have promised your younger sister/brother to take her/him to the cinema and you have forgotten to do so. She/he has been waiting for you at home for hours. What would you say to her/him as you get home?

6. You have been supposed to meet your close friend at the university library to exchange some books and you get there an hour later and find your friend still waiting for you at the library. What would you say to her/him as you get home?

7. As you are talking to one of the university staff, you accidentally spill the cup of tea on his/her desk. What would you say?

8. You were expected by your supervisor. Dr . . . . , to discuss some of your problems but due to a heavy traffic, you are 45 minutes late. What would you say to your supervisor as you see him/her?

9. As you are carrying a chair in the lobby of the university, you hurt a fellow student's hand accidentally. What would you say?

10. You have promised your younger sister/brother to buy her/him a book from the bookstore but you have forgotten. What would you say to her/him

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