Advanced KFL Learners’ Sociolinguistic Transfer in Compliment Responses

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Introduction

• Sociolinguistic Transfer: “The use of the rules of speaking of one’s own cultural group when interacting with members of another group” (Chick 1996)

• Compliment: “Speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker

• Compliment Response: Speech act which responds to the compliment
Previous Researches

• Compliment:
  • Manes and Wolfson, (1981): Appearances & Abilities
  • Daikuhara, (1986) & Baek (1998): Compliment objects differ from a culture to another culture

• Compliment Response (CR):
  • Holmes (1988): Strategies of CR
Researches on Korean ESL speakers’ C & CR

• Kim (2006) Korean ESL learners often compliment on characters/ personalities while Americans don’t; Americans often compliment close friends whereas Koreans don’t.

• Han (1992), Kim (2001) & Lee (2007): Korean ESL learners (Female) has higher Compliment Reject than Compliment Acceptance; Appreciation and Agreement are rare; Koreans tended to deflect a compliment while American students were more likely to accept it; Koreans deflect compliments from a person of higher status more than Americans. Koreans reject a compliment from an equal status person while Americans reject a compliment from a person of lower status.
Researches on Korean Native Speakers’ C & CR as the model for KFL

• Jung (2006): Native Korean Speakers CR-evading (52.5%), followed by no response (20.5%), refusing (14.5%), and accepting (12.5%) in Korea with social atmosphere valuing modesty due to the burden for politeness and modest expressions in CR when people cannot receive or refuse compliments; present a scheme helpful for Korean language learners to perform the most appropriate speech act in compliments when they have to complement and respond to compliments.

• Cho (2010): the adjacency pair of Korean native speakers' compliment-response speech acts excerpted from the drama scripts are analyzed. The types of both subjects of praises and compliment-responses are analyzed.
Research Questions

1. What are the major compliment responses of KFL learners of American English native speakers in Korean interactions and what are their sociolinguistic and pragmatic functions?

2. What are the differences and similarities between these KFL learners’ CRs and Korean native speakers’ CRs? Are there any cross-cultural differences?

3. How the KFL learners’ CR strategies are different from their English CR strategies? Is there evidence of Sociolinguistic transfer from English to Korean?
Subjects

- Ten KFL college students: Female 3명, Male 7명
- Intermediate class: 6
- Advanced class: 4
- All non-heritage learners
- All completed the basic courses.
- All are beyond Intermediate High/Advanced Low in ACTFL Proficiency Scale
- Age: 21~35, 1 41 years old
Limitations of the study

• No gender differences are considered
• Difficult to investigate the learning on Speech Acts outside of classroom
• Need more analysis on the types of Compliments
Data Collection

• Discourse Completion Task: DST
  – Constrain the participants sociolinguistic variables =>
    complement the irregularity of natural data collection
    e.g.) Social status of the interlocutors were not
         mentioned → the participants do not need to
         consider the power relations

-- Relative easiness for Data Collection
-- More competence check than the performance
--- Difficulties in Natural Data Collection issues

• Post data collection Interviews: Learners’ own
  explanation
DCT Questionnaires

• Four Compliments
• Compliment on appearance: 2
• Compliment on ability: 2
• Based on common type distinctions by Manes and Wolfson, 1981.
• 40 tokens = 4 x 10 students
Holmes’ CR types (1988a)

• **Accept**
  - Appreciation/Agreement token
  - Agreeing utterance
  - Downgrading/qualifying utterance
  - Return Compliment

• **Reject**
  - Disagreeing utterance
  - Questions accuracy
  - Challenge sincerity

• **Deflect/Evade**
  - Shift credit
    - Informative comment
    - Ignore
    - Legitimate evasion
    - Request reassurance/repetition
## Results: Distributions of CRs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Type</th>
<th>Response to Appearance: 수 (%)</th>
<th>Response to Ability: 수 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept_Subtotal</td>
<td>31 (94%)</td>
<td>18 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>18 (55%)</td>
<td>9 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>9 (27%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downgrading</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>6 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>3 (9%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject_Subtotal</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>12 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>8 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QuestionAccuracy</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deflect/Evade_Subtotal</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

CR to Appearance

- Accept: 94%
  - Appreciation: 55%
  - Agreement C: 27%
  - Downgrading: 3%
  - Return it after appreciation: 9%
- Reject: 6%
- Deflect: 0%

CR to Ability

- Accept: 58%
  - Appreciation: 29%
  - Agreement: 3%
  - Downgrading: 13%
  - Return it after appreciation: 6%
- Reject: 39%
  - Disagree: 26%
  - Question on Accuracy: 13%
- Deflect: 3%
  - Shift credit (3%)
Research Question 1

• What are the major compliment responses of KFL learners of American English native speakers in Korean interactions and what are their sociolinguistic and pragmatic functions?
• Acceptance↑ vs. Reject ↓
• Reject rate increases depending on the object of Compliment: e.g. Korean ability vs. other skills
Han (1992) Native Korean’s CR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR Type</th>
<th>Number of Response</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept_Subtotal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downgrading</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject_Subtotal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Sincerity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deflect/Evade_Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Credit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative Comment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate Evasion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request Reassurance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Han (1992)

- Korean female speakers’ CR strategies
  - Agreement rule: 20%
  - Conflict between agreement and modesty rule: 35%
  - Modesty rule: 45%
- Cultural Value shown in their CR: pursue the compromise from the conflict between agreement and modesty rule
- When one rule is dominant, the tendency is to reduce the violation of the other rule.
- English speakers vs. Chinese ESL speakers: Chen (1993)
  - English Speakers: Agreement↑ vs. Modesty↓
  - Chinese Speakers: Agreement↓ vs. Modesty↑
Research Question 2

• What are the differences and similarities between these KFL learners’ CRs and Korean native speakers’ CRs? Are there any cross-cultural differences?

• KFL Learners:
  Acceptance↑ vs. Reject↓

• Native Korean Speakers:
  Reject↑ vs. Acceptance↓

• Need analysis on differences in genders
Comparison between Korean Learners’ and Korean Native Speakers’ “Appearance” CR
Comparison between Korean Learners’ and Korean Native Speakers’ “Ability” CR
Research Question 3

1. How the KFL learners’ CR strategies are different from their English CR strategies? Is there evidence of Sociolinguistic transfer from English to Korean?

• Appearance: Sociolinguistic Transfer from English CR

• Ability: possible results of sociolinguistic learning and acquisition; other abilities need to be explored (individual interview)
Conclusion

• The participants showed sociolinguistic transfer of their native language CR types in Korean

• Some learners expresses their awareness of cross cultural differences in CR, whereas others mentioned they did not know or thought of them.

• Need a further discussion on whether Speech Acts need to be taught

• Need in depth analysis of cross cultural differences causing different CRs.
Implication on KFL Learning and Teaching

- Teaching Speech Acts such as CR in proper context is needed & consider individual preferences
- Might need them for learners awareness raise
- Might not need them for learner’s productive skills
- Standards needed for helping learners’ proficiency increase
- When or in what level teaching Speech Acts are needed
- Need to increase the level of awareness of teachers on Speech Acts which represent Koreans’ cultural values
- The relation between language use and the ruling principles behind such Speech Acts
- The need for Socio-linguistic Acquisition at least at Advanced level learners