

Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and English Language



KASDI MERBAH UNIVERSITY- OUARGLA

Dissertation

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language and Literature

Specialty: Linguistics

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Title

The Effect of Gender in Using Polite Apology:

**The case of First year undergraduate Students English at kasdi
Merbah University - Ouargla**

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Academic Year: 2019 / 2020

Dedication

I dedicate my work to my dear parents

My beloved husband who supported me.

My brothers and sister

My lovely kids

Amel

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor **Mr Amrani Djalel Eddine** for his advice, guidance and patience .

Second, I am immensely thankful to **Dr Sadoune Farida** for her support, valuable remarks ; and for accepting with her class, to take part in the study . without her endless and unconditional encouragement, this humble work would have never been accomplished .

Third , I am much obliged to the members of the jury for accepting to review my work .

Finally , I thank the teaching staff of the English letters and language department for their support throughout my study .

Abstract

The present study attempts to investigate the effect of gender (both speaker and he listener) on the use of polite apology strategies. Thus, the starting point is to examine the effect of mastering the use of certain speech acts on promoting EFL learners' communicative competence and pragmatic competence in particular . Using polite apology appropriately is a tool for successful communication. That is why it is hypothesized that the speaker's and the listener's gender can affect the selection and use of polite apology. Findings from DCT showed that females use more polite forms when addressing people namely other females; whereas males use more polite forms to females rather than other males. On other occasions, the speakers' gender did not affect the use of polite apology . Implications suggest the implementation of speech acts teaching to promote EFL learners' communicative and pragmatic competence.

Keywords: Speech Acts, Polite Apology, Pragmatic Competence, Communicative Competence , Gender.

List of Abbreviations

CC : Communicative Competence

CLT : Communicative Language Teaching

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

FSA: Face Saving Acts

FTA: Face Threatening Acts

IFID : Illocutionary Force Indicating Device

SAT : Scholastic Aptitude Test

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Background of the study

Teaching English in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context has been through several approaches and methods which at early phases mainly focused on the immediate pedagogical outcomes. i.e EFL learners' language proficiency is assessed according their grammatical competence.

Lately, the shift has been oriented toward Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT) where the learners communicative competence is emphasized.

A learner is said to be communicatively competent when s/he is able to perform appropriately with grammatical patterns; to situate their utterances in their socio-linguistic environment; to strategically implement ways of expressing himself to overcome fluency difficulties; and to pragmatically use their language performance for adequate reasons.

Hence, the implication of pragmatics in EFL classrooms is crucial to promote EFL learners' communicative competence (C .C) in the same vein Kasper and Rose (2001) put that smooth language teaching would be possible by teaching pragmatics inductively or deductively. In fact, teaching pragmatics tackles or address many language uses such as speech acts, deixis, cooperation principles, and politeness...etc.

A successful communication of a speaker is asserted in accordance with his addresses response (Peccei, J.S.1999). Thus the intended meaning depends on to what extent the speaker is aware of what to do with language (Speech Acts Theory) .

Mey (1993, p.110) points out: « words that do things are called speech acts ».

Yule (1996, P.53-54) categorizes speech acts into five main types: declaratives, representatives, expressive, directives and commissives.

Apology is one form of expressive which seems to be common language function that EFL learners' need to be aware of. Further, polite apology is contextually defined and is gender bound. i.e. to get the exact message of apology, we take context into account. According to (Holmes, 1992), social context defines the way people address each other. Such way of addressing is communicatively efficient when the interlocutors opt for polite expressions with different degrees.

Politeness theories have discussed principles of politeness from different angles. As a result politeness is found in several speech acts such as requests, invitations, offers and apologies. All politeness theories seem to agree on the relationship between politeness and directness. Consequently, one has to bear in mind that the more the expression is indirect the more it is polite.

Statement of the problem

Speaking politely was given a little attention by early scholars of discourse and pragmatics such as Austin, Searle and Grice (Peccei,1999,p60) .The linguistic politeness is the ways language is employed in conversation taking into consideration the feeling and desires of the interlocutors in creating relationships, and complying with the rules of one's society and culture and how linguistic structuring uses polite forms, more polite as a good manner or etiquette or more indirect in order not to offend the other.

Pragmatic competence has been an issue for language teachers and learners since it is not clearly incorporated in the language syllabi and thus some language uses such as polite forms. People from different linguistic and cultural background, behave and communicate politely in different ways in accordance. With their beliefs, values and attitudes . Such differences may affect the speakers' mutual understanding.

Aim of the study

The present study is twofold: first to investigate the extent to which the speaker's gender can affect the use of polite apology. Second, to raise awareness about teaching pragmatics in EFL context with particular reference to speech acts namely politeness.

Research questions

In order to achieve the aim of the study, two questions are raised:

1-To what extent does gender differences (or the gender of the interlocutors affects the selection of polite apology as politeness strategy?

2-How can polite apologies be taught in EFL classrooms to enhance EFL learners pragmatic competence to 1st year use the language appropriately and authentically.

Hypotheses

Trying to answer the above the mentioned question some hypotheses are required:

- The speaker's and the listener's gender affect the use and selection of polite apology forms.
- Both males and females know the different uses of apologies' expressions and females are more polite in using apology.

Significance of the study

This study is formed to clarify the effect of gender through the use of apology expressions among the students of English at the university.

To see whether they use the apology expressions in expressing themselves correctly and suitably for the right reason and the right situation .

Methodology

Since this study is descriptive we use the mixed method which involves both qualitative and quantitative design of the students of the University of Ouargla since they are advanced in English and more qualified to be tested.

Structure of the dissertation

This study is composed of two chapters: one theoretical which contains the related literature of apology in the area of politeness strategies and expressing politeness expressions focusing on apology. Chapter two is a practical part, it is about the analysis and the interpretation of data.

Chapter one: theoretical part

Polite Apology in pragmatics

Introduction

The pragmatic studies have developed due to its overlap between other fields such as culture, comparative linguistics, socio-linguistics, discourse studies, speech communication, and psychology. This chapter attempts to account for the use of polite apologies, Thus concepts such as pragmatics, teaching, speech acts, and politeness theories are fundamental.

1-1 Definition of pragmatics

Different scholars suggested a number of definitions of pragmatics. According to Leech pragmatics is the study of meaning in accordance with speech situations (1983, p6). Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of speaker meaning taking into account context and how the speaker communicates.

Pragmatics and semantics are both concerned with meaning but pragmatics depends on inferring meaning, while semantics is not a context dependent (Thomas, 2013).

Thomas (ibid), gave a more clear definitions to pragmatics since this takes account of the contribution of both speaker and hearer and the utterance and context to make the meaning in interaction (p,23) .Another appropriate definition of pragmatics is the one of Crystal's (2008) as' the linguistic choice made by language users' and its effects of these selections in the social situation (p,379)

According to Leech, pragmatics is the study of how utterances do have meaning in a certain situation; it is a try in a systematic way to find

out and set the principles that rules a certain choices with rule situational meaning and leech is able to show and why.

Leech projects his research on the rhetorical model of pragmatics model of communication taking into consideration the communication goals of a good communicative behavior and Leech says that the choices between linguistics and traditional rhetoric discipline. Leech does not reject the importance of chomskian linguistics 'revolution, he says that the language system is abstract. This means that grammar is Lange according to Chomsky and must be studied in relation to a more developed theory of language use. so, there is a relation between grammar and rhetoric or between pragmatics and semantics and leech focuses his study on the functional model of language and the speech theory of Austin and Searle and the conversational Implicature of Grice what is more makes longer pragmatics including politeness, irony, phatic communication; and other principles of linguistic behavior.

The study of the practical aspect of human action and thought .The study of the use of linguistic signs, words and sentences in actual situations.

Pragmatics studies meanings in context , it looks at the utterance beyond the literal meaning , how the meaning is built focusing on the implication of meaning ,language is considered as a tool of interaction , what people mean when they use language and how people communicate and under and each other.

Thomas states that pragmatics negotiates meaning between both the speaker and the listener by it considering the context of the utterance .

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistic and semiotics, it studies the ways that context contributes to meaning. Further, Pragmatics deals with speech act theory, implicature , interaction what it is more deals with

philosophy , sociology linguistics and anthropology ;Pragmatics studies the transmission of meaning it says that it depends not only the linguistic knowledge (grammar , lexicon) of the speaker and other factors Pragmatics overcomes the ambiguity of language users. Because meaning relies on place, time, manner of the utterance Pragmatics is the ability to understand speaker's intended meaning.

1-2 Pragmatics teaching in EFL context

According to Kathleen bardoir – H arlig: she said that the role of pragmatics research in language teaching looks at the role in the language in classroom and the teacher to make that relation, pragmatics research has discovered differences in the ways in which first and second – language learners acquire the target language: differences speech acts used in forms of speech acts, in the choice of semantic formulas and its content. The researchers showed the Importance of input and its sources cross the cultural and inter language pragmatic research to help in the development of pedagogical suitable materials. It is said that speech act frame is helpful for translating pragmatic research into classroom practice which helps learners to interact and react and consider the effects of one choice of words over another.

Learner –centered teaching methods are viewed as useful and helpful. Speech acts selection focused on the second language classroom and techniques leech's for presenting the new speech act information. Drawing results of research contain 44refences

1-2-1 Pragmatic competence and communicative competence

According to Richard Nordquist , pragmatic competence in linguistics is the ability to use language effectively contextually suitable style. Pragmatic competence is an essential aspect of general

communicative competence. This term was presented by sociolinguist Jenny Thomas in 1983 applied linguistics article. Cross-cultural pragmatic failure was defined as the ability to use language in effective way to achieve a specific purpose in order to understand a language in context.

Pragmatic competence is understood as the knowledge of linguistic resources of a language to realize a specific illocutions, knowledge of sequential aspects of speech acts and knowing the appropriate contextual use of linguistic resources of language.

1-3 Speech Act Theory

«Saying is a part of doing » is an important concept of SAT (Austin,1962). Developed this theory in 1930,he made a distinction between performatives and constatives; the perform is an act to be verified as true or false, after that constatives were rendered as one from of performance (Lyons,1995:283) .

To produce an utterance means to use three acts.

The locutionary act is the basic one, illocutionary act which is a kind function in mind and the perlocutionary act which is considered as the effect of the illocutionary force an utterance (Yule,1996:48).

Searle (1969,and 1979)modified Austin's work. His speech acts are in Austin's illocutionary acts(Searle ,1969:37).He presents the four felicity conditions(Searle 1979):21ff) explains that SAT says that all speech acts in any language has five categories:

a/Assertive: is to express a belief the speaker is committing to the truth of what is asserted.

b/Directives : to express a wish and attempt to get the hearer to do something: a request.

c/Commissives : to express an intention as a commitment for the speaker to engage in a future action e.g.: promises.

d/Expressive :to express a psychological state (e.g. apologies) Apology is a written or spoken expression of one's regret, remorse, or sorrow for having insulted, failed, injured or wronged another: he or she demanded an apology from me for calling him a crook. a defense ,excuse or justification in speech or writing, as for a cause or doctrine.

Apology: is an act of saying that you are sorry: (e.g. has an apology to make to you .I open-ended your letter by mistake.) It is an act of saying sorry or a message that say sorry.

When being out of face results in some harm or imposition on the other person, to reduce the loss of face one offers an apology. we have a face of being on time so when we are late to pick up a friend we apologize and offer to pay for dinner. In order to restore our face in the eyes of our friend .

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:137)apologizing for doing one FTA ,the speaker impinge on the hearer s negative face .

e/ Declaratives: It is not to express psychological state or changing reality (e.g. declare a war)

1-4- Politeness theories in language

1-4-1- Definition of politeness

According to House and Kasper (1981) definition politeness is a social value that appears in civilized societies where the polite behavior

may vary across cultures in relation to the social norms since what is considered as polite in one culture can be rude in another culture.

However, Fraser and Nolen (1981:96) explain it is based on a conventional contract, each participant in a conversation.

According to Brown and Gilman (1989) politeness means to act in a way taking into account the feeling of the hearer (the psychological situation).

Lakoff (1989) said that polite behavior is not noticed when people said I did not mean to be rude they acknowledge the violation of the polite norms.

Kasper (1990) said that breaking polite behavior due to ignorance. Thomas (1983) pragmatic failure led by miscommunication results from the speaker's and listener's unfamiliarity with polite forms.

1-4-2 Principles of politeness

Politeness in linguistics in a conversation depended on principles of Grice (1967), Lakoff (1972) and Brown and Levinson (1978).

1-4-2-1 Grice Cooperative Principle

Grice (1967) introduced the principles of conversation called Cooperative principle (CP) which are :

1-Maxim of quantity: Be as informative as required

2-Maxim of quality: Say what you believe to be true

3-Maxim of relation: Be relevant

4-Maxim of manner: Be clear not ambiguous

According to Leech (1983) Maxims Principle' s conflict with each other ,they are regulative not constitutive

1-4-2-2 Lakoff's rules of politeness

Speakers violate Gricean maxim to fulfil the social function of language (eg indirectness), there are three principles called

1-Don t impose

2-Give option

3- be friendly.

1-4-3 Politeness models

Politeness theories have been tackled according to different models .

1-4-3-1 Brown and Levinson's (1987) Model

Brown and Levinson see politeness from the angle of face which is the public image wants: negative face (the want to be unimpeded by others) and positive face (the want to be desirable to others) (Brown and levinson1987:66) positive and negative face exist in human culture.

According to Yule (1996:60) politeness is defined as a mean to show awareness to others, face threatening.

Acts (FTA) if a speaker says something threats another person. Some actions can be interpreted as a threat of another face, so the speaker can minimize the threat, in this case it is called face saving acts (ibid).

Eelem (2001:4) said that the quantity and type politeness that is applied in speech act can be determined by its weightiness, this can be counted by from

1-4-3-2 Leech's politeness Maxims: There are (6)

1- Agreement Maxim's

*Minimize disagreement and Maximize agreements;

It means to try to avoid disagreement and to be enthusiastic when you agree about something.

2- Approbation Maxim

*Minimize expressions which dispraise other;

Eg; you 're geniuses

*Maximize expressions benefit to others

To be silent instead to say your work is rubbish.

3- Generosity Maxim

Putting other people first

-Minimize benefit to self and Maximize benefit to other .

E.g. : To offer help to other.

4- Modesty Maxim

*Minimize expressions of self-praise ; Don't say I m beautiful

*Maximize expressions of self-dispraise eg; I'm so stupid or I failed that test

5- Sympathy Maxim

- Minimize antipathy for others:
- Maximize to sympathy for others: I 'm so sorry what happened to your gold fish

6-Tact Maxim

-Minimize imposition : To give people choice , not opposing , never force then to do things.(Dani's Reivision channel.com)

three social variables: power, distance and rank.

1-5- Apology in language

As an illocutionary social act, apology reflects a reaction towards violated social norms. Thus, apologizing in language takes its power when the two parties take place in the act.

The apologizer and the apologized. Olstein (1983,p235) calls for "setting things right" with appropriate utterances selected by the apologizer. In this vein, one can admit that apology plays a role in the social convergence and solidarity between the interlocutors. The latter is supported by Marquez-Reiter's claim about apology as being a " compensatory action for an offense committed by the speaker which has affected the hearer" (cited in Istifcix Kampusn'

Understanding apology in language succeeds only with a multidisciplinary approach. It becomes clear when related to pragmatics, sociolinguistics and ethnography of communication.

This panoramic view of apologies has created some theoretical differences among scholars. Issues such as politeness and gender should a piece and parcel of defining apology.

1-5-1-Politeness and Apology

Obviously , apology and politeness are examined to be interrelated. Any language use reflects a human behavior framed in a specific convention .That is to say that any verbal use of language can serve a communicative purpose . Consequently , if one has to better understand how people efficiently use language he has to situate it in its socio cultural milieu

1-5-2- Politeness and Gender

A best way to understand the relationship between language, gender and politeness is to examine findings of sociolinguistics. Lakoff (1973) for example, is a pioneer in research related to language and gender.

Where she noticed differences in speech between men and women.

According to Segal (2004,P.3)" gender is taken to refer to a culturally based complex of norms, values and behaviors that a particular culture assigns to one biological sex or another."

Lakoff (ibid) sums up elements of women's speech being more politely noticed by the use of hedging, tag questions, indirections and hesitations.

On the other hand men's language style is forceful and direct but seen more polite when addressing women.

The previous claim is criticized by putting that women have changed through time; and stereotyped images about women and politeness are affected by cultural acts.

Moreover, Hang (2009) afforded gender differences in using politeness strategies. He found out that the use of polite forms depend on the gender of the receiver ,i.e. women speak more politely to women than to men.

Furthermore , the effect of gender in using polite language is reinforced by the social status of the speaker and the listener .it is remarked that women speak more formally and more politely.

Contrary wise , Brown (1980),and after a series of gender studies opposed the differences between gender in using politeness because of instable linguistic features. In fact , he argues that what leads women to

be more politeness pinely sociological since they are considered as lesser degree gender by society.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to sketch out several concepts pertinent to pragmatics and language in use . it is crucial to mention that studies about polite apology has been given attention but the effect of gender on its use still require deeper investigation with regard to other factors such as age, social status and education level .

Chapter two: practical part
Methodology and Findings

Introduction

In an attempt to reach the aims of the study and to answer the research questions, the practical part presents the research method, the participants, data collection tools and procedures, data analysis and discussion of the findings.

2-Research Method and design. In order to investigate the effect of gender on using polite apologies, we opt for an experimental study, based on both quantitative and qualitative research .

2-1-Research Instrument

One of the most common data collection methods in politeness studies is discourse completion tasks or tests (DCT), Kasper (2000) spells out nine data collection methods in pragmatic research: among which DCTs.

The DCT as a tool was first introduced by Blum-Kulka(1982) in the field of inter language pragmatics. It is a reliable tool in the sense that it can deal with a large number of participants in a short period of time with the possibility of limiting the answers required.

Though it is a form of a questionnaire ,DCT offers the participants situated dialogs, short conversations , scenarios to complete by the aimed intended speech act.

The gender of the participants is a crucial variable to be taken into account when analyzing the results of using polite apologies.

2-2-Research participants

The participants of the study are first year undergraduate students of English at Ksdi Merbah University of Ouargla(KMUO). All students are native speakers of Arabic and use English as a foreign language. We believe that pragmatic competence should be developed from early stages of language learning to avoid pragmatic failure and thus to avoid communication breakdowns. Speech acts are vehicles of language functions that promote the speakers' fluency and appropriate use of language that is why we have chosen first year students .Besides, the integration of the language skills together can develop EFL learners' pragmatic competence. In this vein, speech acts can be learnt and acquired in context via writing or speaking.

The simple

Twenty students (ten males and ten females) took part in the experiment, Due to Covid-19 circumstances we have administered DCTs online and the responses. Were collected after wards.

Based on the apology strategies proposed by Holmes(1990), we have analyzed the results according to his classification of apology strategies.

2-3 Research Tool

2-3-1 DCT Description

DCT is selected as the main data collection tool for our research for we believe that it is an instrument that suits the study's purpose. As the main objective of the present study is to check whether the interlocutors gender has an effect on his/her use of polite apologies, DCT offers situations where the EFL learners can select a given speech act accordingly .

Ogiermann (2009) argues that DCT a rich tool for collecting, comparing, and analyzed data .

Defined as a written questionnaire including explained situations to orient the participants to realize a specific speech acts which is the focus of the study ,DCT has some advantages and some disadvantages.

First DCT to convenient for EFL context and can deal with large samples. It is easy to administer and time saving(Beebe and cumming,1996).it simulates naturally occurring speech so that the participants can select the speech act that they would use in real life Moreover , the DCT can control the variable in addition to language such as power ,gender, social rank, age,...)which viii!

Enable us in this study to compare gender bound use of polite apology(Einstein and Bodmien,1986)

Further , Nuram (2009)believes that the DCT is a means to cheek the development of learners' socio-pragmatic competence.

On the other hand , some scholars view that data collected via the DCT is on many occasion artificial and non authentic since the respondents may modify their answers or bake time to answer the positions i.e. their acts are not spontaneous. Besides, the responses reflect the participants culture and expenence in using politeness strategies and apologies which cannot be identical to the foreign language they are learning .Finally, since the DCT is a written test ,it would heavily be based on linguistic competence or verbal language and neglect the paralinguistic channels that many accompany the intended speech act and reinforce it interpretation.

In regarded to the DCT of the present study, it contains two sections:

Section one is an inquiry of the participants age ,gender and language proficiency, section two includes Six situations which provide the use of apology strategies adapted from Holmes’s classification(1990).

Traditionally ,DCT comes in the form of situations that require a response fro; the receiver.

The DCT of our study contains six situations where the participants are asked to use apologies politely and appropriately. The situations suggest a content that is based on the apology strategies mainly proposed by Holmes(1990).

3-Results and Analysis

After administering and distributing The DCT to the participants, they have responded to all the situations.(see appendix I)

Section One:

Q1: Students’ genders there are ten male students and ten female students.

Table:1 Participants Gender

| Gender | Male | Female |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| % | 50% | 50% |

The students are equally examined in terms of gender to check whether their gender affect their use of polite apologies.

Q2: Age?

Lighten (18) students are between 17-19, and two (02) are more than 25 years old.

Table:2 Age of the Participants

| Age | 17-20 | 20-25 |
|-----|-------|-------|
| % | 90% | 10% |

We initially anticipate that age is another factor that can affect the use of apologies.

Q3-How do you evaluate your level of English?

Five (05) students replied that they are advanced EFL learners. Ten (10) judged their English proficiency as intermediate. Only five (05) still believe they are beginners.

Table:3 English Language Proficiency

| Level | Beginner | Intermediate | Advanced |
|-------|----------|--------------|----------|
| % | 25% | 50% | 25% |

Once again, one many consider the learners' English proficiency as a key factor of using specific expressions or speech acts. The learners' acquaintance with the language makes them select the appropriate expressions.

Situation 1:

Your teacher asked you to write an argumentative essay about advantages and disadvantages of social media, but you copied it from the internet

and your teacher discovered your plagiarized essay. What would you say to him?

The answer to this situation shows that the most commonly used apology strategy is the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device(IFID) E.g. I'm sorry, I apologize , forgive me) with a rate of 75%. This is an explicit expression of apology by either an offer of apology or a request for forgiveness.

It seems , then , that EFL learners are restricting their use of apology expressions. Most of them directly express apology without explanation.

Only few female participants have explained the account.(25%)For example, Student 09 stated:" *I did not find any kind of help or guidance in writing an essay* ".

Student 13 puts:"*I was sunning short of time...*"

Student 19: "*I am terribly sorry for that sir! I was sick . I promise not to that again. I need a second chance to catch up* "

Table: 4 Main Apology Strategies for Situation 1

| Apology strategy | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| IFID | 75% |
| Explanation | 25% |

According to the participants' gender , all female participants have explained their position.

Situation 2:

You have an important appointment for job interview. Your cousin called you to take her to the airport.

How can you politely apologize to her?

The responses to this situation vary in terms of gender.

Males used direct apology with using intensifiers such as swearing by God " *I swear by God ,I have that you forgive me* " Females preferred to use expressions of regret followed by verb to apologize .

" *Sorry ,I apologize*" This is due to the interference of the speakers' native language.

Situation 3:

You were driving with speed , suddenly you collided with a car a broke its mirror. The other driver is furious

Among 20 participants, 15 have used IFID where 10 males have explicitly expressed regret, and five females have accounted for explanation and offering repair. The rest (the other five respondents were female and they have acknowledged their responsibility.

This shows real intention of the speaker to take responsibility of her fault.

According to Brown and Levinson (1978) these strategies are "indirect and show that the apology is indirectly realized by explaining the circumstances of mistake .For example participant 16 states "*I'm terribly sorry, My little kid is waiting for me in front of school I'm late !*

In general IFID is a direct expression e.g. apology that offers a face saving for the apologized Still it is a considered as negative politeness.

Situation 4:

Your best friend is asking you to accompany him/her to fix a problem with the head master of his/her son . you are receiving friends that you haven't meet since a longtime. What would your reply be?

All participants have showed that receiving old friends is more important than accompanying another friend to fix a problem. Still they differed in their uses of polite strategies. It was noticed that the respondents have used expressions translate from Arabic to explicitly express apology such: " *excuse me* " *forgive me I apologize*" "*I regret that*"

All males, have used IFI D by using the per formative verb " apologize".

Generally , we notice that in situations where conversation is between friends or people who have familiarity with each other, we tend to find positive politeness strategies.

Situation 5:

You are a shop assistant in a famous mall. A client is at the cashier to pay by credit card. You have mistakenly printed a wrong bill with a high cost. The client was surprised that all his money has gone! How would you apologize?.

98% of the respondents (both males and females)

have chosen offer of repair strategy after taking responsibility.

For instance speaker 1says " *It is my fault , I will fix it right away* "

Speaker20:" *I didn't mean it ,it was a mistake that I shall fix it*"

Speaker 3: (a female): " *I am embarrassed about what I have done*".

Situation 6:

You were in need of an urgent phone call you have used you mate 's mobile without permission.

S/He found out that and become furious.

Results show that all the respondents expressed that deep regret of the situation since they consider the mobile phone is too personal and sensitive.

In details, all female respondents (50% of the sample) have acknowledged their responsibility.

By offering repair where as males promised forbearance .(50%)

4-Summary of the findings

The analysis of situations is summarized in the following table.

Table: 5 Summary of Apology Strategies According to Holme's (1990)

| Apology strategy | % | Male | Female |
|---|-----|------|--------|
| 1) A Explicit expression of apology | 75% | 50% | 25% |
| a) An offer of apology/IFID | | 10% | 15% |
| b) An expression of regret | | 35% | 15% |
| c) A request for forgiveness | | 5% | 5% |
| 2) An explanation | 11% | 1% | 10% |
| 3) An acknowledgement of responsibility(offer repair) | 10% | 5% | 5% |
| 4) A promise of forbearance | 4% | 1% | 3% |

The table shows that IFID is the most frequently used apology strategy by EFL learners with different rates between males 50% and females 25% , Males displayed the tendency to be more open and direct in expressing their apology.

Female respondents on the other hand, tended to account for further explanations which made their expressions indirect and more polite .

As Leech (1983) indicates, a promise and an offer of repair are signs of generosity which show politeness.

Another common apology strategy used by the respondents was explanation accounted for 11% where female participants reflected a higher rate.

What is worth mentioning is that both genders did not use a single apology strategy in the situations; but they combine more than one formula.

An acknowledgement of responsibility (with offer of repair) was employed with 10% equally split between male and female respondents(5%)

Finally, a promise of forbearance comes with a less degree (04%: 1%male,03% female) which reveals the influence of native culture where people seem to deny the faulty acts and put blames on others in order to justify their deeds .

5-Discussion of the Findings

With regard to the findings in the different situations, EFL learners showed a awareness about polite apologies and readiness to adequately express apologies .

According to Holmes (1990), explicit expressions of apology are the most common in an EFL context which is proven in this study.

In many situations, EFL learners accompany their expressions of apology by justifications and intensifiers (E.g.:" *I Swear, I didn't mean it ;forgive me it was a miss understanding...*)

Another remark to mention is that in many situations , EFL learners have used apology strategies according to the way they do by their mother tongue .This is due either to the lack of language proficiency or their belief that their ideas of apology come first in their native language.

All participants admit that the use of polite apology is important in communication and can be a tool for its success and interlocutors convergence.

Using positive politeness is a strategy to decrease face threat acts (FTA). Female respondents use more face saving act (FSA) to language. Culturally speaking , the results seen to be logical since in our society male or men are considered as superior and more responsible than women. They develop the habit to be more bold and rigid . This habit has shaped the culture of our society.

Since DCT are Witten we did not collect data about para-linguistic channels such as body language , gestures and facial expressions; but one may suggest that females use more para-linguistic features than male. The

gender of the receiver is also important. Female use more body language with females rather than males. At the structural level, females use longer expressions than males.

Socially speaking, Brown (1980) claims that the socio-cultural factors of a given society define people's behavior and speech. Surprisingly, sometimes, we can find that women can be impolite.

On the whole, one can say that women tend to use more polite apology strategies to integrate and adhere to society and to avoid conflict and rejection. Besides, politeness is culture bound and is affected not only by the gender of the speaker but by the gender of the receiver too. That is why men tend to be more polite to women than to other men. In this vein Brown (1980, P.22) states; "by linking behavior to social structure we are enabled to ask the question why do women talk the way they do in the society and what social structure, pressure and constraints are modeling behavior".

It is true, then, that cultural values and social norms are affecting gender preferences in using apology strategies in particular and language in general. Swinging between universality, individualism, and gender equality, politeness uses exhibits divergence among genders and cultures.

Other variables such as age, level of education, and the gender of the addressee would certainly provide a more authentic image of the way individuals in a given society use polite forms namely polite apology.

conclusion

The study's results showed that gender can affect the selection and use of polite apology strategies due to the effect of society and culture. It

is highly advisable, then, that EFL teachers raise EFL learners' awareness of cultural differences to succeed in using polite apologies in real life situations , the further research based on pragmatics can promote the teaching of pragmatic competence and enhance EFL learners' communicative competence from early stages.

The teachers can enhance the teaching of speech acts by exposing the learners to authentic materials such as videos , role plays, and simulations which would engage the students and maximized the language input ,intake, and output.

General conclusion

General Conclusion

Pragmatic studies are increasingly taking a considerable area of interest as they seek to promote EFL learners' communicative competence and as they put into reality language structures in use appropriately . One of the most stressed aspects of language forms and functions are expressives namely apologies .The latter seem to be socio-culturally bound and require skills beyond the linguistic competence. On the other side, gender is a factor that affects politeness strategies choice .

Hence , the aim of the present study was to investigate the impact of gender on polite apologies strategies use .

In order to achieve the research objectives, a DCT was designed to compare gender differences in using polite apology. Results showed that there were slight differences between males and females in using polite apologies with different degrees.

Most commonly ,strategies such as IFID and acceptance of responsibility occur in higher degree.

We noticed ,that females use more polite forms than males. On the other hand, gender can be more discriminative if accompanied by age and socio-cultural background .

The study calls for integrating pragmatics in the teaching EFL so that the learners' communicative competence would be enhanced.

Appendix: I) the DCT

Read carefully the following Situations. What would your response be to each situations

Situation 1:

Your teacher asked you to write an argumentative essay about advantages and disadvantages of social media, but you copied it from the internet and your teacher discovered your plagiarized essay. What would you say to him?

Situation 2:

You have an important appointment for job interview. Your cousin called you to take her to the airport.

How can you politely apologize to her?

Situation 3:

You were driving with speed, suddenly you collided with a car that broke its mirror. The other driver is furious

Situation 4:

Your best friend is asking you to accompany him/her to fix a problem with the head master of his/her son. You are receiving friends that you haven't meet since a long time. What would your reply be?

Situation 5:

You are shop assistant in a famous mall. A client is at the cashier to pay by credit card. You have mistakenly printed a wrong bill with a high cost. The client was surprised that all his money has gone! How would you apologize.

Situation 6:

You were in need of an urgent phone call you have used you mate 's mobile without permission.

S/He found out that and become furious

Thank you for your cooperation

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Résumé

Cette étude part du constat que, le genre de l'interlocuteur peut affecter l'usage des formes de demande d'excuse polie. Donc, on peut poser l'hypothèse que l'utilisation appropriée des la demande d'excuses polie peut renforcer la compétence pragmatique et communicative de apprenant de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. Les résultats obtenus ou issus des activités de discours a compléter que les femelles utilisent les formes polies plus que les males surtout avec les autre femelles. Idem pour les males lorsqu'ils s'adressent aux femelles. Cette étude des implications pédagogiques qui appellent a l'enseignement des actes de langage, notamment les formes polies pour développer la compétence communicatives apprenants

Mots clés : actes de langage, excuse polie, compétence pragmatique, compétence communicative, genre.

ملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تقصي مدى تأثير جنس المتكلم والمستمع على اختياره واستعماله لأسلوب الاعتذار المؤدب. وعليه تنطلق الدراسة من فرضية حول تمرس استعمال أسلوب الاعتذار المؤدب في تعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية والتداولية خصوصا لدى المتعلمين للغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية، وفرضية تأثير جنس المستعمل للغة على اختياره لأسلوب الاعتذار المؤدب .

أسفرت النتائج المستقاة من نشاطات مليء الخطاب مليء الفارغات أن الإناث يميلون دائما أكثر إلى استعمال الأسلوب المؤدب للاعتذار مع إناث آخرين، كما هو الحال بالنسبة للذكور كذلك الذين يعتمدون أسلوب أكثر تأدبا مع الإناث.

خلصت الدراسة في الأخير إلى توصيات تعليمية تقترح إدراج تعليم التداولية و أساليبها في مناهج اللغات الأجنبية لتطوير الكفاءة التواصلية للمتعلمين الأجانب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أفعال الخطاب، اعتذار مؤدب، كفاءة تداولية، كفاءة تواصلية، جنس.