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RESEARCH PAPER

Realization of Apologies: An Intercultural Study of Pashto and Saraiki Speaking Undergraduate ESL Learners in Pakistan

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	The primary aim of this study is to investigate the strategies that Saraiki and Pashto ESL learners adopted during the accomplishment of speech act of apology. Moreover, such strategies are developed and executed in different manners which truly reflect the influence of the mother tongue and culture on ESL learning. It also highlights the intercultural disposition of second language learners displaying the influence of sociopragmatic norms of mother tongue in their production and comprehension in the target language. Based on the theoretical consideration laid down by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, this study sets out to use Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) and semi-structured interviews as data collection means. Purposive sampling has been done and 30 undergraduate Saraiki and Pashto speaking ESL learners participated in this study. Data analysis demonstrates that learners do rely on socio-cultural norms already acquired through their L1, and the same are transferred into the target language learning. It was further revealed that social norms of L1 develop a balanced pragmatic competence during the learning process of the target language. Hence, other aspects related to the speech act of apology can be investigated in future research in different linguistic and cultural settings.

Introduction

Speech acts are viewed as universal and can be truly found in all languages across the world, and are often regarded as the core of all languages (Trosborg, 2010). Moreover, the accomplishment of all speech acts, particularly the accomplishment of apologies varies across languages and cultures as they are culture and context-specific (Shahrokhi & Jan, 2012). Every speech act is

accomplished in a different manner across different cultures which also stands true for apologizing and the possibility of the transfer of L1 pragmatics (Saleem, Azam & Saleem, 2014) to the target language has a strong probability. Apologies are the true indicators of either regretting a committed offence or the doer of an action is well aware of the fact that certain offense has been occurred in the due course of the act which is not appropriate. Thus, apologies in general are viewed as post events. In other words, seeking an apology (Sadeghi, 2013) contends that the speaker or the one who committed an offense realizes and admits the fact that certain violation of either linguistic form or social norm has been bluntly violated or occurred, and the performer of the act of apology is at least involved to a possible extent in its cause. Likewise, apology strategies (Gowasa, Radiana & Afifah, 2019) also embody in general the loss of face of face at the speaker's end, but also extend a support at the hearer's end.

While elaborating the speech acts, Cohen and Olshtain (1981) opine that that speech act of apology is mostly accomplished through explicit utterances conveying the purpose of regret over the committed offence known as illocutionary force indicating devices (hereafter, IFID). These strategies comprise performative verbs such as "be sorry," "apologize," or "excuse" which reflect an immediate regret, hence, considered being direct apologies. Taking the case of English into consideration, studies in the past have found the direct apologies commonly used as a strategy are the most widely acknowledged apology strategies. For instance, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) demonstrate clearly in their project that apologies are expressed in the form of regret for an action.

In contrast, it is not necessary that an apology must include a performative verb or an IFID, but seeking an apology can also be executed through the use of a variety of statements and strategies that can be used to convey the meaning of a speech act (Searle, 1976; Sykes & Cohen, 2018). It is true only in the case of indirect apologies which can be accomplished in different manners. In the same manner, Cohen and Olshtain (1983) divided the apologies into sub types of indirect apologies which can be performed thereby ensuring a provision of an explanation or an acknowledgement of the fact of committed action, offer of repair and a promise of forbearance. Thus, an explanation seeks a way for an action of a speaker which could also be used as a strategy for apologizing in an indirect manner. Previous research (e.g. Krulatz, 2018; Sadeghi, 2013) indicates that the use of appropriate strategies of apology is essential for interlocuters in order to establish the intended purpose of communication in a given social context (Kanık, 2017) and avoid the situations having the potential of leading to pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1984; Trosborg, 2011). Furthermore, gender, proficiency level in target language, and age too have a significant impact on the realization of speech acts (Li & Suleiman, 2017; Qari, 2019; Sultana & Khan, 2014).

Previous studies on apology strategies (e.g., Adrefiza & Jones, 2013; Wu & Wang, 2016) show that learners' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic repertoires are

not only context dependent but are also a part of an ongoing process (e.g., Ghazzoul, 2019) of the target language learning. However, the realization of apologies through various strategies has yet to explore among Pashto and Saraiki speaking undergraduate ESL learners. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that research on the realization of speech acts including the realization of the speech act of apology necessitate the present study with a focus on the strategies of in/directness in the accomplishment of apology carried out by Pashto and Saraiki English language learners. Having different sociocultural and linguistic background, the learners are expected to have differences in the execution of the speech act of apology. Hence, a special attention is given to how the intervention of learners' L1 along with their linguistic, sociocultural, and sociopragmatic resources are instrumental in the execution of the speech act of apology in the target language (English). For this purpose, this study addresses the following questions:

Research Questions

1) What are the strategies that learners from diverse linguistic and cultural background adopt during the execution of the speech act of apology?

2) What are the similarities and differences in the realization of the speech act of apology that Pashto and Saraiki English speaking language learners accomplished?

3) How the execution of apology in the target language does affect the pragmatic competence of the learners?

Material and Methods

In order to provide details through thick and thin descriptions and various interpretations, this study is grounded in qualitative research paradigm. Additionally, the study is designed in intercultural pragmatics encompassing pragmatic transfer, a phenomenon of utmost significance that occurs in the strategies taken during the utterance among second language learners. In a certain way, it shows an influence of mother tongue in the learning process of L2. Two elicitation tools were used. One of them, commonly and appropriately used in intercultural pragmatics is the discourse completion tasks (henceforth, DCTs) and the other is semi-structured interviews. Blum Kulka (1980) and Levenston and Blum Kulka (1983) initially designed and have effectively used DCTs while investigating the recognition of different speech acts. Furthermore, DCTs can be both written and oral carrying temporary situational portrayals and a blank space is provided at the end meant to be filled by the respondent.

The sample for this study comprises 50 participants(represented with pseudonyms) for DCTs, out of which eight were interviewed later. The significance of interviewsis that they are the best means not only to understand an individual, but also to get a holistic view of an individual's perception about a particular

phenomenon (Seidman, 2006).The present study uses semi-structured interviews to find out the remarkable difference (if any) in a cross-cultural and multilingual setting in their performance in the execution of the speech act of apology in the target language. In addition, interview unfolded the participants' views thereby creating awareness among L2 learners. Simply put, the study uses two research instruments as means of data collection which are acknowledged widely as appropriate tools in the field of ILP.

Results and Discussion

The following section present analysis of the data collected via Written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) and semi-structured interviews.

Written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs)

Written DCTs comprising three different situations were distributed among 50 participants who were grouped as Saraiki speaking learners of English language, and Pashto speaking learners of English language. For analyzing the speech act of apology, Cohen, Olshtain and Rosenstein, (1986) suggest a classification of apologies that exemplify different discourse strategies of directness and indirectness that the learners of a second language adopt while performing the speech act of apology. For the purpose of analyzing semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis was employed for elucidating the collected data as in qualitative research thematic analysis is acknowledged and viewed as a systematic methodology used to examine the informational details gathered and derived from the collected data (Mayring, 2000). To achieve the objectives of the study, thematic analysis was further accompanied by content analysis, which provided groupings that were mostly data driven and were centered on qualitative handling of the data through various readings. The following sections present data analysis of three situations used for collecting data through DCTs.

Situation 1: This particular situation is indicative of societal space and power relationships; however, the amount of committed offence varies. In this particular situation, a student who turns up thirty minutes late for the class makes an apology to a professor. Participants from both the language groups have employed distinctive forms of in/direct strategies. Furthermore, the dependence on mother tongue indicates that the respondents choose from a range of strategies available to them from their respective L1. In this particular situation, the most recurrently used approach of generally known as illocutionary Force Initiative Device (henceforth, IFID) that demonstrates an impact of L1 in the enunciation of the speech act of apology. The italicized script highlights the excerpts chosen from the collected data.

On the other hand, examining results of this situation that are considerable in terms of IFID which is normally used as a discourse strategy, the Saraiki speaking group has used this strategy more than the Pashto speaking group. The employment of different patterns of strategies provides a brief answer to each research questions

set for the study as the participants of both the groups employ linguistic means of their respective mother tongues while using the target language. For instance, a participant, Akram *responded in this manner, 'Sir, sinceI was busy in the hospital for the look after of my ailing mother who has been admitted last night. Sir, I have an interest in academics'*. The respondents from both the groups tended to incorporate in/direct discourse strategies of their mother tongue into English. Contrarily, the Pashto speaking community respondents preferred to remain indirect; however, the variance was not wide-ranging because Pashto speaking learners of English preferred to do the same by integrating sociocultural capital of their mother tongue into their target language usage; for instance, Bahadar *responded: 'No Sir, Sorry, I never thought of it…. I feel really sorry for being late.* Similarly, the effect of L1 cultural awareness provided a comfort for both the groups of English language learners in achieving a well-adjusted pragmatic competence in the use of target language. Therefore, it was obvious that both the Saraiki and Pashto speaking learners of English employed explanations as a preferred approach while performing the speech act of apology.

Additionally, the variation in the choice of strategies across the groups was apparent. For instance, Zarinasaid, *Oh!!!! I, I am sorry, sir! I thought of submitting an application. I will not repeat it ever.* 'On the other hand, Anmolheld, *'Uhhh…I, I feel really sorry am sorry sir.* The employment of an interjection as an expression of the feeling of extreme distress indicated remorse over the committed act which was indicative of the cultural traditions of Saraiki speakers. In the aforementioned examples, the respondents adopted a direct strategy which was most of the times repaired in the second clause. The way the apology was being sought from the professor also indicated that the offence was not great. The variation was most likely due to the Saraiki speaking group's cultural experience which evidently was not the same as that of the Pashto speaking learners of English language. Among them, three respondents from the Pashto speaking group had used repair as a strategy to lessen and remedy the committed threat. The capacityfor self-control as a strategy was used by the respondents from both the groups, the Saraiki learners of English indicated the lack of volition, and the Pashto speakers exhibited a greater passion in performing the speech act of apology. Generally, the Saraiki speaking participants employed indirect discourse strategies while communicating with their professor for the purpose of minimizing accountability and preferred to blame themselves for the committed offence. For instance, Gulab *uttered, 'It is not less than an execution of a huge blunder, feeling sorry for that…..!',* and Malala *said, 'I am ashamed of myself for why I got late?.* While analyzing these two situations, it has been observed that the participants' preference for blaming themselves was used as a discourse strategy with the purpose of offering a compensation for the committed offence. It further reveals that the participants' reliance on the available linguistic means of their mother tongue and the same were embedded in the target language. To sum up, it was observed that respondents from both the groups of English language learners had transferred explicit strategies through the means of pragmatic transfer

used as a resource in the execution of apology to lessen the effects of committed mistake.

The overall findings indicate that the speech act that is performed is neither face threatening nor belligerent. Nonetheless, the respondents have used in/direct discourse strategies that differ, and therefore point towards the transfer of their respective mother tongue resources embedded in English language. This difference in the selection of strategies across the two linguistic groups is a direct consequence of the effect of the participants' mother tongues' linguistic and cultural means incorporated in English language. This particular state is dissimilar from the later one in the way that the participants are directed to participate in a discursive situation which is likely to threaten the face of the professor involved in the situation as the mistake is of serious nature. The incidence of pragmatic transfer was obvious due to variation in the use discourse strategies that were transferred from the participants' respective mother tongue into the target language.

Situation 2: Both the interlocutors shared the same status and power relations in this situation as two old friends had met each other after a long time. A few drops of tea have been spelt over the clothes wherein regret is expressed and apology is sought in this situation.

With the purpose of using repair as a strategy for the committed mistake, the Saraiki speaking learners of English language had used it, for example, Gulab *exclaimed with great regret,'O Sorry my buddy, I was grossed somewhere else. Please don't take it anintentional act,'* it alsostand true with Bahadar who *uttered, 'Please pardon me for this mistake, my dear friend, I beg your apology,'*which have been less employed by the Pashto speaking participants; for example, Malala *said, 'I highly regret and say sorry for what has happened, actually…'* and Zarina*said, 'Sorry my dear friend, pardon me for that…. I don't know as why I couldn't hold ittightly, '*andthe respondent Mudassir expressed the same in this manner, *'Ooo… (feeling extremely sorry and condemns the wrong doing). I committed this blunder of making you untidy'.* Thus, it shows that a direct apology is wholeheartedly submitted to make an immediate repair for the loss. A huge difference was observed in taking responsibility where Pashto speaking participants had got an advantage on the Saraiki speaking group respondents. The Pashto speaking participants were found to bemore eager to take the blame in order to lessen the effects of their mistake; for example, Anmol *said, 'I feel sorry for making you upset as the drops of tea, I am sorry for that. O 'let me clean it on my own. Please accept my apology [sic],'*and Zarina *said, 'Iwholeheartedly seek your apology for all this,'* on the other hand, two Saraiki speaking participants did not consider it important to present an apology in this particular situation.

Dependence upon the cultural and social customs of L1 is indicative of the occurrence of the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer for which different strategies were adopted while performing the execution of apology in English. Furthermore, it was observed that pragmatic transfer was used as a resource for creating effortlessness in the process of learning that also helped to understand the pragmatic

customs of the target language. Consequently, the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer amplified the learners' ability in obtaining an advanced level of expertise in the use of English language. Moreover, the occurrence of pragmatic transfer was employed as a means to gain a well-adjusted awareness of the pragmatic standards of the target language. The findings attained from the investigation of this state of affairs showed that both the groups of language users, Pashto and Saraiki, employed certain specific discourse strategies which were reflective of their respective cultures. The Pashto speaking respondents had used both in/direct strategies whereas the Saraiki group had used lesser number of such strategies. These discourse strategies were transmitted either directly or indirectly from the first language by the respondents of both the groups since pragmatic transfer had been exploited as a means while performing the speech act of apology.

According to the norms of Saraiki group's culture, such a mistake is not considered a serious offence in a group of close friends as it indicates harmony among the participants. On the other hand, according to the norms of Pashto speaking learners of English language group's culture where an offence of this sort is negatively judged and a direct repair is sought for the misfortune even in a friends' gathering. Therefore, the findings tended to prove that the Pashto speaking participants indicated the existence of a characteristic inter language by using discourse strategies that were not observed in the target language usage of the Saraiki speaking learners of English language participants.

Semi-structured interviews

Eight interviews were conducted; all of the eight interviewees were taken from Saraiki and Pashto speaking learners of English equally in number as four participants from each group. The participants have been referred by the use of Pseudonyms. The thematic analysis is used for the interview analysis purposes as well as it is taken as for the analysis of interview data as theoretical framework. The structure of coding for the interview analysis consists of categories developing via recurrent data analysis despite of the application of preplanned categories over the data. Participants in the interviews were questioned about L 1 cultural norms by assigning a different L2 speech acts. The categories were developed from the interviews on the basis of the digital recordings, transcription and coding. Categories and coding of the data result nine sub themes which further developed two main themes as following:

➢ Impact of Sociocultural Assumptions

➢ Sociopragmatic transfer as a source of learning

Impact of sociocultural assumptions: In analysis of the theme, interviewees acknowledged the use of their mother tongues' cultural norms as core values that are embedded into English; be it an interlocutor with low status and a familiar setting. In this, the interviewees opined that English language can be spoken as formal means

of communication and handiness could also be felt if somehow the communication takes place with speakers belonging to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The learners counter problems in many events to express their feelings comfortably in English. It shows the influence of social norms in mother tongue embedded in English. Upon the cultural values significance, it was stated that every culture has some peculiar expressions that are almost impossible to present in English language with a hundred percent accuracy. That's why; it reflects that there occurs a transfer of negative socio-pragmatic which creates difficulty. From Pashto speaking learners of English language group, a participant, Zarina asserted that preference will be given to mother tongue for seeking an apology wherein an apology can be sought in a friendly manner and some key elements of politeness associated with my mother tongue can be easily expressed. She further stated that she can seek an apology from a stranger in English but this is what she thinks that due to limited pragmatic competence in the target language becomes difficult for her to seek an apology from the core of heart or the way she wants to seek an apology.

Moreover, she added that using social norms of the mother tongue creates an ease in the act of apologizing and it is found too hard exclaim the same in target language. The mother tongue interference influence pragmatic competence which results the learners' incompetence for achieving proficiency in Target Language. Regarding problem for the appropriate expressions in target language, it is assumed that the learners perform such acts by using an indirect strategy in L1 along with strictly following the prevalence of cultural norms in mother tongue. In the same series, it is surprising to find that from Pashto speaking group, with the same speech community, a participant named Malala preferred English language to make apologies. It is important to mention here that there found no dependence in using L1 because anyone can perform the speech act of apology directly or indirectly as it is very easy for her to say: "sorry" or "I am sorry", wherein she feels at ease as she thinks that she is fulfilling the required standards for seeking an apology.

Malala extended that it is not easy for one to apologize by using English. She stated that it helps to get avoidance from embarrassment and explanations in pursuance to rectify the offense committed. As part of Pathan's practice and culture, an act to ensure provision of the reasons pump the notion as degrading and insulting to the hearers. Therefore, the speaker takes a deliberate pause when interacting with interlocutors which shows that one feels regretful and desires for the compensation to save the hearer's face. A communication gap is here, as the interviewee is not aware of the concept of pragmatic competence. She elaborated further that she would be at ease in saying 'sorry' in English but if an apology is sought in the mother tongue, a lot needs to be done thereby ensuring the provision of explanation or an immediate remedy.

Following same series of the thought, Gulab an informant from Pashto speaking learner of English equally expressed the arguments and argued the same that if someone is given the opportunity to show the solidarity with L1, and then one

will definitely accomplish it by using mother tongue. Here, the data has been collected from participants in the academic setting and the instructions are provided through the use of English language. The preference can be observed upon the choice of strategies that creates ease in obtaining a pragmatic competence and proficiency in L2. The linguistic systems preferences show the learners' act of adopting mother tongue various strategies of indirectness and directness to accomplish communicative acts, which increase the competence in comprehension for L2 pragmatic knowledge. Therefore, the sociopragmatic transfer takes place when the English language is used to produce speech acts.

On the other side, from Saraiki speaking learners of English, a female participant Anmol acknowledged and extended the transfer notion that the speaker had taken help to translate the thought by using mother tongue resources wherein it becomes hard to say what they want exactly in English. For instance, it becomes vivid that the learners of English language do not depend on their mother tongue linguistic resources but there is an integration found into the target language cultural norms. Further, this also unveils that pragmatic transfer hampers L2 learners' ability when the social norms in L1 are followed in speech acts. Such speech acts are performed by using direct or indirect strategies apart from knowing too much about the allocation of strategies in interaction. Once the transfer process takes place, it becomes too hard to know about a suitable word to create some effects to save interlocutors' face. She views in the words as:

"I will prefer to seek an apology in my mother tongue as I will be able to associate and reflect all those social and conventional norms associated with my mother tongue during the execution of the speech act of apology. It becomes very difficult when I have to seek an apology in the target language as I will transliterate my feelings and emotions from one language to another. So, I will be moving between two poles of linguistic modes. Yes, it is true that an apology is sought with an affection, sincerity and wholeheartedness in the mother tongue".

Sociopragmatic transfer as a source of learning: In accordance with this thematic category, the theme revealed that the mother tongue cultural and social norms are accompanied in the speech acts realization to apologize in English. The informants opined that the pragmatic knowledge of L2 is not acquired apart from the dependence of mother tongue. Another male respondent from Saraiki speaking community acknowledged his incompetence for truly expressing his ideas vividly in English as L1 transfer and prevalence of linguistic values is integrated naturally in L2. It reveals the importance of interviewees' mother tongue which occupies a valuable account in L2 learning process. This argument made it clear that direct/indirect in both strategies, the mother tongue linguistic strategies integrate that can never ever be translated exactly to convey a thought or idea in English. He views as follows:

"The use of Saraiki language will be preferred but depends or may vary from situation to situation, I will also consider the nature or the intensity of the offence. If the matter is of serious nature, I will be using my mother tongue to seek an apology, if the case is otherwise, I will be using English as a formal means for seeking an apology.

Upon the mother tongue politeness which cannot be prominent in case the acts accomplish in target language. All is just because of the mother tongue interference which interrupts the learning process of English, advertently. An argument has been developed that the informant knows about the usage and use of mother tongue and does not think to transfer anything and feel relax. At other end, it is found true for this interviewee as other did have a balanced proficiency in the use of English same as the mother tongue is used. At this sociopragmatic level, for evaluating the situations in Target Culture the transfer was processed by means of the sensibilities of mother tongue's culture. Sociopragmatic directions of transfer for accomplishing different speech acts to the learners of EFL is reminiscent to Thomas' (1983)statement that could be culturally sensitive because it entails to implement a new belief system. Both of these styles show differences in cultures. The Pashtun practice and culture enforces the role of H in performing actions as a solidarity signal, involvements and proficiency which forms an interaction in English. In Saraiki cultural practices as bearer of the action for avoiding reference to H is typical for mitigating imposition.

Findings

The following sections present findings of the study in the light of themes derived from the data.

Written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs)

Findings of this tool show that the Saraiki and Pashto speaking group employed almost the same strategies for accomplishing the speech act of apology but still there is a remarkable difference. As for as the learners' learning progress is concerned, the transfer of sociopragmatic norms was clear from the adopted choice of strategies during the accomplishment of apology as a speech act in the target language. The Saraiki speaking learners of English mostly used the strategies as, explanations seldom repair; at other side the Pashto speaking learners of English employed mainly the direct strategies in case of high-status interlocutor as it is inherited part of their culture the only strategies as, excuse or inability. It was noticed that the respondents from Pashto speaking group carefully adhered to keep the social hierarchy into their consideration while they accomplish a speech act in presence of an elder as it is regarded an acquired practice of their culture. Further, it was found that the participants' cultures and mother tongues affected their production of the speech act of apology in English. Despite of employing an antecedent as salutation from English, many interviewees preferred to use Islamic greeting 'Asslam-u-Alaikum' in the opening their responses. Most of the informants

from both Pashto and Saraiki groups employed the honorific 'Sir' as professional title to convey reverence. The educators frequently use the same title in their academic contexts as a respect sign.

The Saraiki speaking group respondents' way to apology revealed the arrangements differently. In situation no. 2 responses, the Pashto group used an IFID as strategy and most of the time strengthened their apologies by using certain adverbs as 'so' or 'really' while Saraiki speaking respondents employed less IFIDs in their informal settings. Thus, the results inferred that participants of Pashto speaking learners of English language group employed more regrets and self-blaming when a close friend was offended. The reason possibly be the Pashto language's community grounded nature or strength of the private relationship and a very close acquaintance. In Saraiki speakers' case, it was observed that they employed less norms of their culture and somehow remained stick to apologetic ways of expression as mentioned in situation no.2.

To summarize the findings, it was found that learners from diverse cultural backgrounds depend more over Sociopragmatic norms of their mother tongues when they seek an apology in English Language. The dependence takes the pragmatic transfer form that keeps the speaker in such situation wherein one has to play a direct or indirect communicative act in target language by seeking assistance from his/her mother tongue cultural norms.

Semi-structured Interviews

Participants from Saraiki and Pashto speaking backgrounds show an influence of their mother tongues while apologizing in English either in informal contexts or to an interlocutor with lower status. In the same, participants of the Pashto group vocally prefer employment of the social norms of their mother tongue in English that was found in form of the sociopragmatic transfer. There are some occasions where learners encounter problems in exclaiming conveniently in target language which reflected an effect of the social norms in their language embedded in Target Language. On the cultural values significance, the Pashto speaking group interviewees show that there are some particular expressions available in each culture that is very hard to present accurately in English. So, the mother tongue interference influences the Pashto group participants' pragmatic competence that results the learners' inability for achieving proficiency in the use of English. In regard the problems faced to express suitably in foreign language, the Pashto group participant revealed that the learners' direct speech act strategy shows a direct effect of their mother tongue in the process of L2 learning. Further, the Pashto group participants are found to maintain that the mother tongue culture values can never be perfectly employed in vain of the target linguistic system norms. In nutshell, it was observed that the mother tongue cultural values interference not only disturbs but holds the learners' ability for achieving pragmatic proficiency in target language.

From the responses of second theme, it was realized from the group of Saraiki speaking that the mother tongue social and cultural norms accompany and are realized via speech acts in the language English. The interviewees opined that the L2 pragmatic proficiency cannot be learned independently. It also unveils the participants' native language significance that overwhelms a reasonable explanation in the development of L2 learning. It was evident that both direct and indirect strategies are designed via integrating cultural and linguistic elements of the mother tongues that cannot be solely translated for conveying a thought or an idea in English. The participants of Saraiki speaking participants further viewed upon the importance of languages; it was realized that apologizing in the mother tongue has a diverse kind of implication that binds a strong kinship attachment. In the same time period, English language is significantly found different because English non native speakers depend on the cultural and linguistic resources of their respective mother tongues that were not recognized accurately in L2 /other language and L1 pragmatic competence of the same kind cannot be found in the target language.

The conclusion is that interviewees from both the groups have employed cultural and linguistic expressions that evidently revealed the effects of their mother tongues and word-for-word translation that the interviewees endorsed in interviews. The level of sociopragmatic was mainly focused in the current research and by ways of the sensibilities of mother cultures the transfer was found effective to assess responses in target language.

Conclusion

Kecskes and nde Papp (2000) highlighted that the execution of speech acts varies across languages and cultures and, as a result not only affects the pattern of discourse as well the production and understanding in the target language. Thus, an effort was made to study the inter language traits of Saraiki and Pashto English language learners who were inclined and highly influenced to the use of sociopragmatic transfer as means of learning a second language. This truly goes in the same vein with that of Al-Eryani (2007) who found among Yemeni a different variation in the use of strategies during the execution of the speech act of apology and refusals, and Ghazanfari, Bonyadi&Malekzadeh(2013) conducted a cross-linguistic study to investigate the differences in performing the execution of speech acts among native Persian and English speakers. It was found that Pashto speaking learners of English language respondents were found acquired a lower proficiency in English than the Saraiki speaking learners of English language respondents as they were observed very little integrating social norms of L1.

To sum up, the respondents were observed transferring negatively their native cultural norms (i.e., the employ of reason/explanation indicates that respondents have opted for an indirect strategy in seeking the apology) into the L2. In sharp contrast to the results of this study, Chen & Li (2016) who studied the effects of transference of mother tongue in the learning process of L2 and consequently the output achieved in the target language matters. In the

aforementioned study, transfer was scrutinized in word, sentence and writing mechanism. Thus, both types of pragmatic transfer, which are negative and positive among Chinese learners of English as target language (Yarahmadi& Fathi, 2015).

This article explored the mother tongue influence of cultural norms amongst Pashto and Saraiki speakers learning English as target language in a Pakistani university. The deterrence posed by mother tongue was studied in the selected respondents belonging to different ethnicities in the realization (either acceptance or refusal) of the speech act of apology (Saleem& Anjum, 2018) while carrying out their discourses in English. Moreover, it seems that at the very outset, a greater attention has been paid to the linguistic form of the language whereas the pragmatic aspect related to the target language has been left unnoticed. That's why; the present study is a call for the stakeholders of language teaching to improve such teaching strategies which can assist the learners. Since the advent of communicative approach as teaching method is in vogue, therefore, an emphasis shall be made to improve the communicative competence comprising pragmatic competence of the learners. Let's hope so! Likewise, a longitudinal study can be conducted to investigate the im/politeness strategies related to the selected speech act of apology in a different linguistic and culture settings.

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