



RESEARCH PAPER

**A Gender Based Pragmatic Analysis of English Apology Strategies
used by EFL Learners at University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir**

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ABSTRACT

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The present study is an attempt to explicate the influence of gender and social status in the selection of English apology strategies in different communicative situations. The sample for the study consists of forty-two EFL learners. Data were collected and analyzed through Discourse Completion Tasks and Interviews. Statistically, no significant difference is observed in the use of English apology strategies among gender; but the result exhibits that both male and female use apology strategies while keeping in mind the interlocutor's social status. The findings indicate that the most frequently used apology strategies by male and female respondents are 'Explicit expression of apology' especially 'Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account', 'Expressing regret + Explanation or account' and 'Intensifier'. Interestingly, none of the respondents used 'Recognizing interlocutor as deserving apology' and 'Expressing lack of intent'. This study is helpful to reconnoiter social and cultural differences in the use of apology strategies.

Introduction

Teachers of English especially (as a foreign or second language) have always confronted a very difficult task i.e., how to teach communicative competence in the target language. It has become obvious that with linguistic competence, the teaching of pragmatic competence is very indispensable. Pragmatic competence is defined as the capability to comprehend and produce a communicative act (Kasper, 1997), which contains an understanding of the cultural knowledge such as politeness, social distance and social status between the speakers involved and the implicit and explicit linguistic knowledge. Doubtlessly the speech acts are culture specific more than any

other feature of language. The speech act apology is investigated in the present study. In a broad view, an apology is required when the social values of politeness claim the fixing of an attitude or when a linguistic expression has been disregarded by another person (Trosborg, 1995).

Researchers and expertise have put great stress that in order to increase intercultural communicative competence learners must not only attain syntax and phonology of the target language but correspondingly have the understanding of how language is used pragmatically in a specific culture (Lee, 2002). As no study is carried out in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to check the pragmatic competence of L2 learners so, it will be very hard to say with assurance about the pragmatic competence and proficiency of English learners in using proper English apology strategies. This study is an initiative that tries to fill the gap by reconnoitering the use of English apology strategies by EFL learners at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. This study will explicate different types of English apology strategies and their selection amongst gender. It will also elucidate the most frequently used apology strategies by EFL learners and the effect of social status in the selection of these strategies.

Literature Review

In the field of sociolinguistics, apologies as compared to other speech acts have obtained a very special consideration (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In Holmes' (1995) idea speech act of apology is proposed to sustain the social relationship between the speaker and the offended person/interlocutor with the intention to rebalance the offence for that the apologizers take responsibility. The speech act of apology is complicated in the sense that it may employ diverse possible strategies.

Gender is one of the most important variables which is used in the research of apology strategies. Many researchers (Fraser, 1981; Schlenker; Holmes, 1989; Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989; Aijmer, 1995; Márquez, 2000; Deutschmann, 2003; Pejman, 2004; Bataineh and Bataineh, 2005, 2006, 2008) have examined the effect of gender on apologies, and in this regard still, there is a little harmony among their views. Holmes (1989) observed a broad range of gender differences in the apologetic behavior of native speakers of English in the United States and New Zealand respectively.

Different studies have also provided support for the effect of power and social distance on apologies (Fraser, 1981; Holmes, 1989, 1990; Olshtain, 1989). Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, (1989) have also argued that variation in the realization patterns of apologies might be the effect of a variety of social factors like power and social distance.

The study conducted by (Chamani, 2014) highlights the gender difference in the use of speech act of apology. The research highlighted that there isn't any significant difference occurs in the use of apology strategies among gender. The study also shows that socio-linguistic variables like social status, power, and age are the

factors that affect the selection of apology strategies. As Al-Sobh (2013) researched on Jordanian University students revealed that respondents use apology strategies keeping in mind the status and rank of interlocutors. The researcher claimed that the respondents did not seem able to use comprehensible apology expressions in particular situations because they may not learn them in school textbooks.

Hadijah and Kusumyanthi (2012) tried to find out the similarities and variations between men and women participants in the realization of apology terminologies. The study examined that, because of the consideration of power between participants realizations of apologies were higher in women than men.

A comparative study conducted by Farashaiyan and Amirkhiz (2011) figured out both variations and similarities in the usage of various apology expressions. It highlights that in most of the situations both Malaysian and Iranian exhibited an expression of regret, however, the frequency of the usage is observed higher in Malaysian learners. The study conducted by Thijttang (2010) revealed that as compared to the Tahitian language English is rich in apologetic expressions. The apologetic expressions like “explicit expressions of apology” and “explanation and account” are the most frequently used apologetic expressions by Tahitian learners of English. Socio-linguistic factors like status and distance and harshness of situation influence the choice of apology expressions.

Material and Methods

In the present study, Homles (1990) and Blum-Kulka’s (1989) classification model were used to investigate the use of English Apology Strategies by EFL learners at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Discourse Completion Tasks (Blum-Kulka, 1982) and interviews were used to collect the data.

Discourse Completion Task

In DCT tests the 12 situations were categorized according to the social position of the speaker and listener.

Table 1
According to the social status classification of each (DCT) situation
S =speaker, H= hearer; < Lower, > higher, = equal

Situations	Social Status	Explanatory variables
You could not submit your friend assignment	Equal	S= H
You broke an expensive glass set and blamed your younger sister	Higher	S>H
You were using a cell phone during class	Lower	S<H

You borrowed a USB from your friend and didn't return it for three weeks	Equal	S=H
You forgot to pass an urgent document to your junior colleague	Higher	S > H
You copied an essay from a website and your teacher found out	Lower	S < H
You mistakenly erased the important data for your elder brother's laptop	Equal	S=H
You borrowed some money from your junior fellow	Higher	S > H
While driving a child came in front of your car and got hurt	Lower	S < H
You promised to meet your friend, but you failed to meet him	Equal	S=H
Being a lecturer, you forgot to grade the assignments of your students	Higher	S > H
You bumped to an elderly lady on the way because you were in a hurry	Lower	S < H

Table 1 shows that the speakers and listeners in the situations (1, 4, 7 and 10) were at equal status whereas the speakers in situations (2, 5, 8 and 11) were at higher status and hearers were at lower social status. The social status of the speakers in situations (3, 6, 9 and 12) was treated to be lower than hearer.

Interview Questions

The second tool used to collect the data was the interview in the form of a class discussion questionnaire to support the DCT tests. All the questions were open ended.

Participants

The sample of the study was the 42 EFL learners of the same cultural background. Forty-two participants (21 males and 21 females) were randomly selected for the study.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Data Analysis

This section also highlights the choice of English apology strategies by both male and female respondents while responding to the same situations.

Situations 1, 4, 7, 10

Table 2
Selection of apology strategies by male students in situations 1, 4, 7 and 10

Strategies	Situations				Total
	1	4	7	10	
Explicit expression of apology	3	1	1	1	6
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	4	2	4	5	15
Explicit expression of apology + Offer of repair	3	-	1	-	4
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	2	-	-	2
Explicit expression of apology + Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	1	1
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency + Promise of forbearance	-	1	-	-	1
Express regret	1	1	1	-	3
Express regret + Explanation or account	1	-	1	1	6
Express regret + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	1	-	1
Expressing regret + Promise of forbearance	-	-	1	-	1
Express regret + Intensifier	1	-	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Explanation or account	1	-	-	-	1
Explanation or account	2	4	3	7	16
Explanation or account + Explicit expression of apology	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Express regret	-	1	2	-	3
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	-	-	-	1	1
Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Intensifier	-	-	-	1	1
Explanation or account + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	-	1	1
Accepting the blame	-	-	-	1	1
Accepting the blame + Explanation or account	-	1	-	-	1
Accepting the blame + Promise of forbearance	-	2	-	-	2
Expressing self-deficiency + Express regret	-	1	-	-	1

Expressing self-deficiency + Promise of forbearance	-	3	-	-	3
Demonstrating a sense of shame	-	-	1	-	1
Intensifier	3	-	-	1	4
Intensifier + Explanation or account	2	-	2	1	5
Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	1	-	1
Total Categories	10	13	12	11	28

Table 3
Selection of apology strategies by female students in situations 1, 4, 7 and 10.

Strategies	Situations				Total
	1	4	7	10	
Explicit expression of apology	2	1	1	1	5
Explicit expression of apology + A request for forgiveness	-	-	1	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	5	3	-	4	12
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account + Intensifier	-	1	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account + offer of repair	-	1	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Offer of repair	1	-	1	-	2
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	2	-	-	2
Explicit expression of apology + Intensifier + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	1	-	-	-	1
Offer of apology	-	-	1	-	1
Express regret	4	1	-	-	5
Express regret + Explanation or account	2	1	-	-	3
Express regret + Offer of apology	1	-	-	-	1
Expressing regret + Expressing self-deficiency	-	1	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Offer of repair	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account	1	4	5	5	13
Explanation or account + Explicit expression of apology	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Offer of apology	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account + Express regret	-	2	-	-	2
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	-	1	-	1	2
Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	1	1	-	-	2
Explanation or account + Intensifier	-	1	-	-	1

Explanation or account + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	-	1	1
Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	-	3	3
Expressing self-deficiency + Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	1	1
Intensifier	2	-	2	1	5
Intensifier + A request for forgiveness	-	-	2		2
Intensifier + Explanation or account	1	-	5	1	7
Intensifier + Accepting the blame	-	-	1	2	3
Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	-	1	1
Total Categories	11	14	11	11	29

Tables show that the combination of direct and indirect apology strategies “Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account” is used by both male and female speakers while responding to the hearer at equal social status in situations 1 and 7 with the highest ratio. Both male and female respondents express their apology by combining direct and indirect apology strategies to minimize the severity of offence done by them. So, they apologize not only by saying “sorry” but also by explaining or clarifying things to maintain their relationship.

Table 4
Selection of apology strategies by male students with people of lower status.

Strategies	Situations				Total
	2	5	8	11	
Explicit expression of apology	5	4	1	1	11
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	1	1	-	1	3
Explicit expression of apology + Accepting the blame	1	-	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	1	6	1	8
Offer of apology	-	-	-	1	1
Offer of apology + explanation or account	-	2	-	-	2
Express regret	1	-	1	1	3
Express regret + offer of repair	-	2		-	2
Express regret + Explanation or account	-	-	-	2	2
Request for forgiveness	2	-	-	1	3
Request for forgiveness + Explanation or account	2	-	-	-	2
Request for forgiveness + Expressing self-deficiency	-	1	1	-	2
Request for forgiveness + promise of forbearance	-	2	-	-	2
Explanation or account + offer of apology	1	2	2	6	11
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	1	-	-	-	1

Explanation or account + Expressing self-deficiency	-	1	1	1	3
Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	-	1	1	-	2
Explanation or account + offer of repair	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Intensifier	1	1	-	-	2
Accepting the blame	-	2	-	-	2
Accepting the blame + Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	1	1
Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	4	4	8
Expressing self-deficiency + Intensifier	-	-	2		2
Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	1	1
Demonstrating a sense of shame + Intensifier	1	-	-	-	1
Intensifier	4	1	-	-	5
Intensifier + Explanation or account	-	-	2	-	2
Total Categories	11	14	10	12	27

Table 5

Selection of apology strategies by female students with people of lower status.

Strategies	Situations				Total
	2	5	8	11	
Explicit expression of apology	5	-	-	2	7
Explicit expression of apology + request for forgiveness	-	1	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	1	1	1	5	8
Explicit expression of apology + Accepting the blame	1	-	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	1	2	-	3
Explicit expression of apology + Promise of forbearance	-	1	1	-	2
Offer of apology + Explanation or account	-	1	-	-	1
Offer of apology + Promise of forbearance	-		-	-	1
Express regret	-	2	-	1	3
Express regret + Explanation or account	1	2	-	-	3
Express regret + A request for forgiveness			1	-	1
Express regret + Accepting the blame	4	1		-	5
Express regret + Expressing self-deficiency + Promise of forbearance	-	-	2	-	2
Expressing regret + Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness	1	-	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Explanation or account	1	-	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Explanation or account	-	1	3	7	11

Explanation or account + Explicit expression of apology	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	1	-	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Accepting the blame	-			1	1
Explanation or account + accepting the blame + promise of forbearance	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	-	2	-	2	4
Explanation or account + Offer of repair	-	-	-	1	1
Explanation or account + intensifier	-	1	-	-	1
Expressing self-deficiency	-	3	1	2	6
Expressing self-deficiency + Express regret	-	-	1	-	1
Expressing self-deficiency + Promise of forbearance	-	-	1	-	1
Demonstrating a sense of shame + Intensifier	1	-	-	-	1
Intensifier	-	1	1	-	2
Intensifier + A request for forgiveness	1	-	1	-	2
Intensifier + Explanation or account	-	1		-	1
Intensifier + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	2	-	2
Intensifier + Offer of repair	2	-		-	2
Refusal to acknowledge guilt		-	1	-	1
Refusal to acknowledge guilt + Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	1	-	1
Total Categories	12	16	16	8	37

The data demonstrates that both male and female respondents used the direct apology strategy “Explicit expression of apology” to express their apology with the same highest ratio. The male respondents at higher status also look consistent as they chose the same direct apology strategy (Explicit expression of apology) to apologize which they have selected in situation 2. The differences and similarities are also present in the selection of other apology strategies across gender as shown in the above tables.

Table 6
Selection of apology strategies by male students with people of higher status.

Strategies	Situations				Total
	3	6	9	12	
Explicit expression of apology	5	2	-	3	10
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	3	4	2	4	13

Explicit expression of apology + Expressing regret + Explanation or account	-	-	-	1	1
Explicit expression of apology + Accepting the blame	-	-	2	-	2
Explicit expression of apology + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Promise of forbearance	1	1	-	-	2
Explicit expression of apology + Demonstrating sense of shame	-	-	-	1	1
Explicit expression of apology + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	4	-	4
Offer of apology	1	-	-	-	1
Offer of apology + Accepting the blame	-	-	2	-	2
Express regret + Explanation or account	-	2	1	2	5
Express regret + A request for forgiveness	2	-	-	-	2
Express regret + Offer of repair	-	-	1	-	1
Expressing regret + Promise of forbearance	2	-	-	-	2
Express regret + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	1	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	-	-	1
Explanation or account	3	8	-	-	11
Explanation or account + Explicit expression of apology + intensifier	-	-	-	1	1
Explanation or account + regret	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	-	-	-	1	1
Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	-	-	-	-	1
Explanation or account + Offer of repair	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account + Intensifier	-	3	1	-	4
Explanation or account + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	1	-	1
Accepting the blame + Explicit expression of apology	-	-	1	-	1
Demonstrating a sense of shame	-	-	-	1	1
Intensifier	1	-	-	-	1
Intensifier + A request for forgiveness	-	-	1	-	1
Intensifier + Explanation or account	-	-	-	5	5
Intensifier + Promise of forbearance	2	-	-	-	2
Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	2	-	2
Refusal to acknowledge guilt + Explanation or account	-	-	2	-	2
Total Categories	9	7	14	9	32

Table 7

Selection of apology strategies by female students with people of higher status					
Strategies	Situations				Total
	3	6	9	12	
Explicit expression of apology		3	1	1	5
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	-	5	2	2	9
Explicit expression of apology + Accepting the blame + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Explicit expression of apology + Promise of forbearance	3	-	-	-	3
Offer of apology + Explanation or account	-	1	-	-	1
Offer of apology + Promise of forbearance	1	1	-	-	2
Express regret		-	-	1	1
Express regret + Explanation or account	1		2	1	4
Express regret + A request for forgiveness + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Express regret + Accepting the blame	1	-	-	-	1
Express regret + Accepting the blame + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Express regret + promise of forbearance	-	1	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness	-	1	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Request for forgiveness + Intensifier	-			1	1
Explanation or account	-	3	1	1	5
Explanation or account + explicit expression of apology	-	1	-	-	1
Explanation or account + A request for forgiveness	-	2	-	2	4
Explanation or account + Intensifier	-	-	1	-	1
Explanation or account + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	3	-	3
Accepting the blame	-	-	-	2	2
Accepting the blame + A request for forgiveness	-	-	-	1	1
Demonstrating a sense of shame + Offer of apology	1	-	-	-	2
Intensifier	-	-	1	2	3
Intensifier + explanation or account	-	3	-	-	3
Intensifier + A request for forgiveness	-	-	-	1	1
Intensifier + Explanation or account	1	-	1	7	9
Intensifier + Explanation or account + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Intensifier + Offer of apology + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1

Intensifier + Accepting the blame + A request for forgiveness	-	-	-	1	1
Intensifier + Accepting the blame + Promise of forbearance	1	-	-	-	1
Intensifier + Promise of forbearance	6	-	-	-	6
Intensifier + Refusal to acknowledge guilt	-	-	1	-	1
Refusal to acknowledge guilt + Explanation or account	-	-	7	-	7
Total Categories	14	10	10	13	34

The strategy used by male respondents with the highest frequency while responding to situation 3 is the direct apology strategy "Explicit expression of apology" whereas, female respondents used a combination of direct and indirect apology strategies "Intensifier + Promise of forbearance" with the highest ratio. From this, it can be implied that as compared to male respondents female respondents at lower status chose intensifier and promise of forbearance to redress the mistake because they perceived that the mistake done by them is very serious.

Table 8
Most frequently used apology strategies by male and female respondents according to Holmes (1990) and Kulka (1986) framework.

Apology Strategies	Frequency of occurrence
Explicit expression of apology	44
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	60
Expressing regret + Explanation or account	25
Explanation or account	56
Intensifier + explanation or account	28

From the above results, it can be inferred that cross-cultural variations may affect the way EFL learners. Results also display that the EFL learners didn't use "Recognizing interlocutor as a deserving apology", and "Expressing lack of intent". One of the reasons for not selecting these strategies is that Kashmiri people are very status conscious and such type of behaviour (acknowledging responsibility for the offense, or regarding interlocutors as a deserving apology) is treated as a demonstration of low social status.

Social Status

In the following section use of apology strategies with regard to social status is observed.

Table 9
Selection of apology strategies by male and female students with people of equal status

Situations	Categories used by Male respondents	Categories used by female respondents	Categories used by male and female respondents
1	10	11	27
4	13	14	
7	12	11	29
10	11	11	
Total	46	47	

Table 9 reveals that there are 27 combinations of categories used by male respondents whereas 29 by the female while responding to situations 1, 4, 7 and 10.

Table 10
Selection of apology strategies by male and female students with people of lower status

Situations	Categories used by Male	Categories used by female	Categories used by male and female respondents
1	11	12	27
4	14	16	
7	10	16	37
10	12	8	
Total	47	52	

It is clear from Table 10 that male respondents use a combination of 27 categories whereas female respondents use 37 categories while responding to situations (2, 5, 8 and 11).

Table 11
Selection of apology strategies by male and female students with people of higher status

Situations	Categories used by Male	Categories used by Female	Combination of categories used by male and female respondents
1	9	14	32
4	7	10	
7	14	10	34
10	9	13	
Total	39	47	

Table 11 highlights that the male speakers use a combination of 32 categories and female use 34. Here the social status of the speakers is lower than hearers.

Table 12
Most frequently used apology strategy by male and female respondents according to interlocutors' social status

Apology Strategies	Equal		Lower		Higher	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Explicit expression of apology	6	5	11	7	10	5
Explicit expression of apology + Explanation or account	15	12	3	8	13	9
Expressing regret + Explanation or account	6	5	2	3	5	4
Explanation or account	16	13	-	11	11	5
Explanation or account + Offer of apology	-	1	11	-	-	-
Expressing self-deficiency	-	-	8	6	-	-
Intensifier + explanation or account	5	7	2	-	5	9

Table 12 shows that out of 15 different apology strategies the most exclusively used strategies by EFL learners are: "Explicit expression of apology" and "Explanation or account".

One of the possibilities of the exclusive use of "Explicit expression of apology" is that the respondents feel the need to be explicit and direct. Another reason may be, this is the kind of expression, which is heard or "overheard" in daily conversation. This finding is constant with the findings of studies (Thijittang, 2010; Farashiyan, 2012) that the strategies given by EFL learners are mostly explicit and direct. "Explanation or account" is the second highly used apology strategy by EFL learners.

Table 13
Performance of male and female participants in the whole questionnaire

Situations	Male		Female		Total Categories	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(1, 4, 7 and 10)	46	35.6	47	32.1	93	33.8
(2, 5, 8, and 11)	44	34.1	52	35.6	96	34.9
(3, 6, 9, and 12)	39	30.2	47	32.1	86	31.2
Total	129	46.9	146	53	275	100

Table 13 shows the difference in the selection of apology strategies as, males employ less categories (129, 47.1%) in apology than female speakers (146, 53%) out of 275 instances. To check whether the difference is significant or not two sample t-test is being applied.

Table 14
Two sample t-test.

	Paired Differences						T	df	P-value
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pair 1 male-female	-5.66667	4.04145	2.33333	-15.70619	4.37286	-2.429	2	0.136	

To test this hypothesis that there is a no significant divergence between male and female participants regarding the selection of apology strategies we applied two sample t-test (Table 16). As the result shows that in the above table the P-value is higher than the level of significance (0.05). The finding supports the findings of Mills (2003), who found out that gender speech variations are diverse, depending upon several aspects such as context, politeness, audience, and aims of the conversation.

Qualitative Data Analysis

To find out the use of apology strategies three different questions were asked in an interview.

1. As result reported earlier, five participants said that they never translate apology from their native language to English only one said that they do. The data obtained through DCT tasks do not support this result because the pragmatic transfer is seen in the data as the majority of the respondents used “its Allah’s will” while apologizing in English.
2. As far as, the second-class discussion question related to the change of apology strategies to match respondents’ social status is concerned, all six participants agreed that they change apology strategies keeping in mind the interlocutors’ social status because social status plays a very important role in their everyday interaction.
3. Almost all the respondents agreed that explicit apology instructions will help students in better understanding of any language and its culture.

Conclusion

The results of the obtained data show that the apology strategies used by male and female respondents are mostly a combination of direct and indirect apology strategies. As result displays that out of 275 apology strategies male have used 129 apology strategies and female used 146 apology strategies. The data also shows that out of fifteen different apology types, participants are found using only four English apology strategies exclusively. There are also some strategies that are totally neglected by both male and female respondents. This shows the participants’ lack of L2 pragmatic competence and there is a need to enhance the L2 pragmatic ability of university students of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

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