A Cross-cultural Investigation on the use of Apology Strategies by Native Persian Speakers, Native English Speakers and Iranian Intermediate/Advanced EFL Learners

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The present study is an investigation of the way native speakers of English, native speakers of Persian, and Iranian ESL learners use the speech act of apology. Persian speakers group included 20 BA and MA students, who were studying different majors, in Khorasgun University of Esfahan - in Iran. Native English speakers group consisted of 20 native English speakers, who were studying at Plymouth University, UK. Regarding the third group, they consisted of 20 advanced ESL learners from Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Esfahan, Iran. Regarding data collection for native English speakers, the questionnaire was emailed to them and the collected data were emailed to the researcher. This questionnaire consists of ten scenarios each of which involves a situation which requires an apology. These strategies were compared and contrasted against the strategies elicited in the same situations from these groups. Data were analyzed to determine the strategies used and the frequencies of their use. The results are expected to be conducive to cross-cultural comparisons. The use of apology strategies differed among the three groups in this study. The most evident differences among them were related to the frequencies and types of apology strategies. This study aimed to bridge a gap in the field of intercultural pragmatics, which deals with the role of culture in intercultural communication. It also aimed at providing indispensable insight not only for researchers, but also for Iranian learners of English.