

The speech act of greeting in the interlanguage of Korean L1/Hungarian L2 speakers (in comparison with the utterances of Korean L1 and Hungarian L1 speakers)

Abstract:

This paper introduces the interlanguage realization of the speech act of greeting in the performances of Korean L1/Hungarian L2 speakers (30 persons who are at least at the B1 level in Hungarian) in comparison with the regular realization of this speech act in the performance of Korean L1 (25 persons) and Hungarian L1 speakers (40 persons). The research participants answered a simplified version of a discourse completion test (DCT) consisting of four different greeting situations. The observed greeting strategies had specific characteristics related to their culture-bound semantic-pragmatic features.

Our research revealed a two-element greeting structure in the three groups. The first element is the formulaic phrase of greeting (e.g. 'Hi!' or 'Good morning!' etc.), the second part is the phatic element (e.g. 'How are you?' or 'Nice weather, isn't it?') with specific culture-bound semantic-pragmatic features, which in Hungarian were represented by the expressions 'How are you?' or 'What's up?', while in Korean (including the interlanguage utterances), the following semantic-pragmatic categories were observed: (1) Where are you going? (2) 'It has been a long time (since we last met).' (3) What are you doing? (4) Have you eaten yet? / Will we have lunch together? (5) small talk (reflections) on the weather, (6) complaints about being tired.

Interlocutors with different cultural backgrounds feel comfortable only when they can manage their social interactions in their own culturally specific way. The transfer of the semantic formulas into the interlanguage utterances prove the interlocutor's need to fill certain semantic slots (e.g. a lunch invitation in Korean or in Korean L1/Hungarian L2 as part of the greeting).

Keywords: *Greeting strategies; Cross-cultural pragmatics; Interlanguage; Hungarian as a foreign language; Small talk; Invitation to lunch as greeting; Korean culture.*