Abstract

Public figures have offered more public apologies since the past two decades. However, very little research efforts have been made to study the use of apology strategies in public apologies. This study aims to find out how Chinese and English public figures use apology strategies to publicly apologize, and highlight the similarities and differences in their use of apology strategies. This study used a modified model that was based on Cohen & Olshtain (1981), Olshtain & Cohen (1983), and Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and identified a total of 11 apology strategies. 8 Chinese and 8 English public apologies over infidelity were collected and analyzed using the model and the use of apology strategies was compared. It was found that, in general, the Chinese subjects used apology strategies more often than the English subjects. The most frequently used and least frequently used strategies were the same for both groups of data, which were accepting the blame and expressing a lack of intent respectively. One of the significant differences was found in the preference of IFIDs where the Chinese data preferred an expression of apology while the English data preferred an expression of regret. It was also found that 3 of the Chinese apologies used the strategies expressing self-deficiency and offering an explanation or account together. Since the latter was found to be inappropriate in the case of apologizing over infidelity, the concurrent use of these 2
strategies might be a unique feature of Chinese public apology. Since this study is a pioneering attempt to study the use of apology strategies in public apologies, further research efforts are much encouraged. It is hoped that this study could serve as a reference for further studies on apology strategies in public apology.
摘要

過去 20 年，公眾人物開始更頻繁地公開道歉。可是，很少有關於公眾人物公開道歉時使用道歉策略的研究。本次研究的目的是對比中國和西方公眾人物公開道歉時使用道歉策略的情況，找出兩者使用道歉策略的異同。本次研究使用的模型是根據 Cohen & Olshtain (1981), Olshtain & Cohen (1983) 和 Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) 的模型修改而成的，共分 11 個道歉策略。本次研究收集了 8 篇中文及 8 篇英文公開道歉，使用上述模型分析資料，並比較使用道歉策略的情況。結果發現，總括來說，使用中文的道歉者比使用英文的道歉者使用較多道歉策略。而兩組道歉者最常用和最不常用的道歉策略都是相同的。最常用的道歉策略是承認控制，而最不常使用的道歉策略是表示並非有意。其中一個較特別的發現是兩組道歉者使用直接道歉語的偏好。中文道歉者偏好使用表示道歉，英文道歉者則偏好表示歉意。另外，有三篇中文公開道歉同時使用了表示自身不足和解釋原因。由於後者較不適用於出軌性質的道歉，同時使用此兩個道歉策略有可能是中文公開道歉的特點。因為本次研究屬於開拓性地研究公開道歉使用道歉策略，希望能吸引更多對此主題有興趣的研究，也希望本次研究能作為日後同類研究的一大參考。
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