

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, the writer intends to analyze the data collected upon watching a 16-episode South Korean TV series titled “*Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo*”. The obtained transcripts of conversations were classified in accordance with the existing taxonomies of compliments response strategies proposed by Pomerantz (1978) and rearranged by Spencer-Oatey and Ng (2001), in order to find out the common patterns applied in South Korea. Afterwards, the data were also put under the category of complimenting either Modesty or Agreement Maxim from the Politeness Principles by Leech (1983).

The writer found 108 conversations involving certain types of compliment response strategies from the respective TV series. However, there were 112 data used in the analysis as one part of conversation may include more than one strategies. Aside of the existing pattern proposed by Pomerantz (1978) and rearranged by Spencer-Oatey and Ng (2001), which had been used as a foundation of this research, the writer discovered three new categories, which are “Returning Compliment”; “Doubting”; and “No Answer”. Here the data were arranged in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1. Compliment Response Strategies in “Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo”

Type of Compliment Response		Fr	Percentage	Total
Acceptance	Appreciation (AAP)	21	18.7%	39.2%
	Agreement (AAG)	18	16.1%	
	Returning Compliment (ARC)	5	4.4%	
Rejection	Denial (RDE)	19	17%	17.9%
	Idiomatic Rejection (RIR)	1	0.9%	
Self-praise	Explanatory Comment (SEC)	4	3.6%	
Avoidance	Switch of Focus (SSF)	27	24.1%	42.9%
	Doubting (SDO)	4	3.6%	
	No Answer (SNA)	13	11.6%	
		112		

As seen in Table 1, Self-praise Avoidance becomes the most frequent response used by Korean speakers in the series, with the total frequency of 48. Acceptance was on the second place with 44 cases. Lastly, Rejection has the least frequency and only takes up 20 of the total data obtained.

4.1. Self-praise Avoidance Strategy in *Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo*

Self-praise Avoidance strategy is applied by Korean speakers in the series the most. It is also known as Acceptance with Amendment, in which the hearer attempts to maintain humbleness without necessarily turning down the compliment itself. Indirectness in communication is clearly integrated in order to neither accept nor reject the compliment. This strategy is divided into four categories, two of which were newly discovered by the writer.

4.1.1 Switch of Focus

A total of 27 data were gathered under Switch of Focus category, which account for the most number of frequency out of all categories. A lot of Korean speakers in this series switch the focus of conversation in order to avoid self-elevation, without directly disagreeing with the counterparts.

70. 00.15.05 – 00.15.18 EP2

JS : 와 나 진짜 연예인처음봐요, 지짜 신기하다. 와 진짜 잘 생겼다.
(Whoa this is my first time seeing a celebrity this is amazing. You're so handsome.)

Uncle : 원래 연예인들도 다 술먹고 방도귀고 뭐.. 막 똥도 사고 다하는거요. 뭐 네.. 왜그래 만화주인공처럼 생겼가지고. (Celebrities also do things normal people do, like drinking, passing gas, and also going to the toilet. Well you also look like a main character of a *manhwa*.)

The speaker is a cameo in the series as a reference of another character from a South Korean TV series *W*, produced by MBC in 2016. Playing as a high school-equivalent youngster, he complimented Bok Joo's uncle Dae Ho for his seemingly cool profession. Dae Ho altered the focus by mentioning the humane sides of celebrities and put away their perfect image, albeit he was also partly contented with the compliment. Finally, Dae Ho also returned the compliment to neutralize the contentment shown by his enthusiastic tone.

91. 00.34.41 – 00.34.47 EP15

BJ : 아 예쁘네 우리 애기.. (You're so cute, my baby.)

JH : 야, 내가 왜 네 애기야? 네가 나 낳았어? (Why am I your baby? Did you give birth to me?)

Another example is the conversation between Joon Hyung and Bok Joo, in which she was trying to make him feel better. As a response, Joon Hyung asked her why she thought of him as a baby. The Korean word was 애기 which

literally means “baby”. Therefore, it was not used as an equivalent of typical affectionate nicknames such as “honey”, “darling”, “sweetheart” etc. as how “baby” may function in English language.

93. 00.54.42 – 00.54.09 EP15

BJ : 잘했어, 정말 최곱였어 우리 준형이. (You did great. You were the best, Joon Hyung.)

JH : 팔만 조금만 더 길었어도 이번에 이길 수 있었는데. (I could've won if only my arms had been a little bit longer.)

In this part, Bok Joo was consoling Joon Hyung who did not make it to the top 3 of a swimming competition. At that time, he was not feeling the compliment since he was still disheartened due to the failure. Joon Hyung confessed his regret in front of her instead about the competition. Consequently, it complies with Switch of Focus category.

80. 00.25.09 – 00.25.15 EP8

BJ : 사장님, 피부가 왜 이렇게 좋아졌어? 너 지아 아닐꺼야, 나 언니라고 부른뻘했네. (What have you been doing to your skin? It's glowing. I thought you were my age.)

Boss : 알았어, 십오분 더 넣어줄게. (Alright, I will give you additional 15 minutes.)

As Bok Joo was complimenting the boss of the karaoke bar she was spending time in, the boss caught her utterance as an indirect request to extend the time limit for free. The implicature of Bok Joo's statement is an example of Pragmatics case, when the speaker often has intended meaning beyond what is uttered to the hearer. This can be referred to as “particularized conversational implicatures”, in which the conversation depends a lot on a specific context and

may not be clearly comprehended by other people unless they possess some background knowledge of the context (Yule, 1996, p. 42-44).

4.1.2 No Answer

Hearers also occasionally avoid self-praise by ignoring the comment itself, indicating neither acceptance nor rejection. This type of response emerges depending on the context of the conversation. In the series, the hearers gave no reaction as they were caught up in discomfort, anger, or sadness. It is also possible that they ignored the compliments that sound like teasing to them.

100. 00.26.29 – 00.26.33 EP1

Girl 1 : 수영선수죠? 축조 어깨 짱이다. (You're a professional swimmer, right? Your shoulders are broad.)

JH : (no answer) (brushing off her hands)

Joon Hyung received a compliment from a random girl he met on a club. However, she went as far as touching his shoulders out of curiosity. Feeling uncomfortable, Joon Hyung brushed her hands off and kept a distance afterwards.

106. 00.22.10 – 00.22.17 EP13

JH : 그렇게 생각 없다더니, 참 먹는 재주 하나 진짜 타고났어. 야 기네스북 같은데 한번 도전해보는거 어때, 우리되지? (You said you didn't have an appetite, but you are such a natural-born glutton. How about setting a new record on Guinness Book, Piggy?)

BJ : (holding back her anger)

This kind of remark is like a double-edged sword, which may possibly mean compliment or even a mockery. Joon Hyung wanted to tease Bok Joo for eating so well, while Bok Joo was not on her best mood at that time. As a result, she gave no response at all and kept on eating. In some occurring circumstances

from the data, a speaker is shown teasing an upset hearer with a compliment-sounding mockery in order to cheer him/her up, which is often neglected without any reaction at all. Such a reaction is completely acceptable as the remark itself aims not exactly to give a compliment but to uplift the mood, which is often failed in many instances.

Based on the data, it can be inferred that hearers may convey no answer at all during circumstances that involve feelings of discomfort, anger, sadness or being teased by the speakers.

4.1.3 Explanatory Comment

Comments explaining the situations which are being complimented are also thrown out in order to humble oneself in front of the counterparts. There are four cases of Explanatory Comment strategy, three of which occur when the hearer felt embarrassed upon hearing the comment. However, it indeed means that the hearer accepted what was uttered, albeit he/she still attempted to conceal the inner feelings.

68. 00.55.12 – 00.55.21 EP5

JY : 근데 진짜.. 완전 다른사람 같애요. 못 알아보겠어요. (By the way, you look like different person. I almost didn't recognize you.)

BJ : 조금 불편하긴한데, 그래도 사람이 때와 장소에 맞게 격식을 갖춰야하는거라고. (It's a bit uncomfortable for me, but people should dress up in accordance with the occasion.)

Bok Joo was actually very excited hearing such a compliment from her crush, Jae Yi, seeing that she immediately blushed and could not help smiling. Regardless, she tried not to reveal her inner feelings by explaining the reason

she was dressing more prettily than before. Her replying tone was very calm and far from enthusiasm.

4.1.4 Doubting

Doubting is usually expressed by asking the speaker again to reiterate his/her statement because the hearer is feeling unsure of how to respond the compliment. In some cases, it is also done by the hearer out of courtesy towards the speaker.

96.00.13.13 – 00.13.20 EP5

BJ : 진짜 선생님이 이만배도 잘생기셨는데. (You're really a million times more handsome than him.)

JY : (laughing) 그래요? (Really?)

Jae Yi initially confessed that he and everyone else thought that his younger brother Joon Hyung was way more handsome than him. Bok Joo, who liked Jae Yi, immediately retorted with a positive statement about him conveyed non-jokingly serious manner, making Jae Yi bewildered all of sudden. He decided to laugh it off and commented with a doubtful-sounding question.

4.2. Acceptance Strategy in Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo

The second most common strategy is Acceptance, where the hearers acknowledge the compliment itself and do not wish to argue any further with the speakers. Acceptance strategy complies with Western compliment responses, which has been adapted by Asian people in modern settings. This strategy is divided into three categories, one of which is newly discovered by the writer in the series.

4.2.1 Appreciation

There are various ways of expressing appreciation upon receiving compliments, such as through giving verbal gratitude and non-verbal gestures. Appreciation is most commonly in line with the hearer feeling satisfied and proud of what is being complimented. Besides, this expression conveys gratitude, forms of which are explained further below.

5. 00.50.34 – 00.50.35 EP16

Kid : 잘 어울리더라. (You two look good together.)

Coach : 고맙고. (Thankyou, guys.)

This part of conversation shows the most conventional type of appreciation, which is saying thanks to the speaker. It was a conversation between Coach Yoon and one junior student, all of whom come from the weightlifting department. Many students complimented on how well-suited he and Coach Choi were as a couple, to which he replied with a simple thank you before continuing the conversation.

6. 00.54.56 – 00.54.58 EP16

Mom : 치킨 장인이세요. (You're the master of fried chicken.)

Father : (bowing in gratitude)

Another way of expressing appreciation is by showing a thankful gesture. In South Korea, bowing is an important gesture which is often used during a formal situation between people of different levels of age and status. Joon Hyung's mom praised Bok Joo's father for his delicious chicken, and he responded with such a gesture to maintain politeness.

12. 00.05.59 – 00.06.03 EP4

Seller : 훨씬 여성스럽고 이뻐 보이는데. (You look much prettier and more feminine.)
BJ : (smiling)

The simplest way to show appreciation is by uttering a smile to the counterpart.

Bok Joo was complimented by an accessories street seller after trying on a ribbon hairpin. At first, she denied the compliment doubtfully. However, she gained confidence after the second positive remark and smiled to thank the seller.

4.2.2 Agreement

According to the data, 15.5 percent of the hearers agree with the compliments, which is mostly shown with verbal remarks. There are several implications of this strategy, which are courtesy, boasting and solidarity. 8 out of 18 data obtained in this strategy portray instances where the hearers show Agreement by self-elevating, or commonly known as boasting themselves. The rest express Agreement in order to maintain either courtesy or solidarity with the counterparts.

31. 00.56.57 – 00.57.03 EP12

JH : 잘했어. 너 역도부 있을때가 제일 김복주다. (You made a good decision. You really belong to weightlifting.)

BJ : 나도 그렇게 생각해. (I think so too.)

At that time, Bok Joo was encountering a slump period which is quite common for an athlete. She finally overcame the period and regained strength again. As a fellow athlete, Joon Hyung cheered her up and complimented her decision to

come back to weightlifting. Bok Joo agreed that she was indeed born to be a weightlifting athlete.

30. 00.42.04 – 00.42.12 EP11

Manager: 복주, 일 잘해. 아주 대단해. (Bokjoo, you did well. Very impressive.)

BJ : 그죠? 저희집이 치킨집 하는데, 우리 아버지가 저 일꾼으로 타고 났데요. (Right? My dad runs a chicken restaurant and he said that I am a natural worker.)

Expressing agreement can also be shown by making a rhetorical question in order to reassure the speaker about what is being complimented. Bok Joo used this method while replying to the manager in her workplace, who once underestimated her loads-lifting skill. While at it, she also slightly bragged herself with mentioning how her father also complimented her.

28. 00.38.30 – 00.38.36 EP8

JH : 짝사랑 한번 하더니.. 잘하면 시인되겠다. (You might become a good poet after an unrequited love.)

BJ : 몰라? 알고보면 감성적이야 왜이래. (You didn't know? I'm a lot more sentimental than you think.)

Agreement in compliment response strategy is often followed with semi-boasting statement. Joon Hyung and Bok Joo are close friends of the same age group. Hence, it is more likely for them to joke with each other without pressure. Bok Joo bragged that she was way better than what Joon Hyung was complimenting.

4.2.3 Returning Compliment

Returning Compliment strategy is uttered when the hearers wish to neutralize the acceptance they want to convey. The hearers are indeed happy to receive such compliments. Nonetheless, they do not clearly show to the feelings to the

speakers out of courtesy. In the series, Returning Compliment was often initiated with another strategy.

43. 00.11.22 – 00.11.26 EP7

Mom : 너무 예쁘다. (You're beautiful.)

AY : 아니에요 어머니, 어머니도 고우신데요 뭐. (No, you're more beautiful.)

Ah Young was invited to Jae Yi's family dinner. His mom complimented her looks, which was denied right away with a "no". Nonetheless, she politely continued right after with returning the compliment by adding a comparative degree. This statement reveals that Ah Young was actually agreeing with the remark "You're beautiful" from Jae Yi's mother.

40. 00.03.05 – 00.03.15 EP1

Teacher: 경기 잘봤어. 태릉에서 보자. (I watched the competition well. See you at the Taereung National Training Center.)

BJ : 제 롤모델입니다. 열심히 하겠습니다, 선생님. (You are my role model. I will work hard, Teacher.)

On the other hand, the above example shows the most common Returning Compliment method. Bok Joo was complimented by her teacher after winning the first place in a weightlifting competition. As a response, she enthusiastically returned the compliment by addressing the teacher as her role model.

4.3. Rejection Strategy in Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo

Rejection strategy is applied when the hearer does not wish to boast him/herself in a way that will bring discomfort to others. It is coherent with the Asian value of modesty that constrains people from exaggerating their own positive accomplishments. It supposedly became the strategy that represent

Asian people the most given the cultural values within. However, it turns out that rejecting compliments no longer dominates the society of Korean people, as represented by the number of data in this research. Rejection strategy includes bluntly denying the compliments and expressing idiomatic rejection.

4.3.1 Denial

There are 19 data found where the hearer openly declines the compliment given, ten of which are uttered out of embarrassment. There are also cases of talking back to the speaker in disagreement since the hearers definitely do not feel the same. Denial is also sometimes used when the hearer is depicted as having quite a low self-esteem.

63. 00.54.47 – 00.54.55 EP16

Father : 일전에 그 북주편으로 보내주신 비타민 잘 챙겨 먹어있습니다.
(Thank you for all vitamins that you sent. I've been taking them regularly.)

Mom : 애 통해서 보내주신 치킨에 비하면 아무것도 아니죠. 너무 맛있게 잘먹어있습니다. (It's nothing compared to chicken that you sent. They're very delicious.)

Above is the conversation between Bok Joo's father and Joon Hyung's mother.

This conversation took place during Bok Joo and Joon Hyung's graduation ceremony, where both parents met with each other and gave their utmost greetings. Grown-ups are often more restrained than young people in terms of maintaining social relationship, thus Joon Hyung's mother denied the compliment right away considering their social distance. This data also accounts for Returning Compliment category.

51. 00.17.49 – 00.17.55 EP6

Coach : 너 힘도 좋고, 비공식 기록으로는 63kg 타이까지 천적도 있고.
(You are strong. Off the records, you're tied with the best record from the 63kg class.)
BJ : 그건 컨디션 최고로 좋았을 때고. (But that's when I was in my best condition.)

In this part, Bok Joo received words of encouragement from her coach, with whom she is quite close. However, she denied the compliment since she did not feel good enough about her performance as remarked by her coach. On one side, it can be assumed that Bok Joo neglected the positive remark in order to show modesty and politeness considering their age and status differences. Nonetheless, another possibility is that Bok Joo rebutted her coach's statement instead since they are close enough to each other.

56. 00.49.17 – 00.49.24 EP9

JH : 근데 너는 애들이랑 잘놀고, 씩씩하고, 든든하고. (But you got along really well with others, brave and reliable.)

BJ : 별것도 아니구만. (That was nothing special.)

Bok Joo and Joon Hyung are on the same level of status and age. Joon Hyung complimented her positive characters, which was denied. Here Bok Joo was not attempting to show modesty, but she really did not consider all characteristics mentioned as an outstanding point of her.

4.3.2 Idiomatic Rejection

The expression of using Korean idiomatic phrase was found in the 6th episode between Woon Ki (a male weightlifter) and his male coach.

64. 00.26.14 – 00.26.19 EP6

Coach : 우리운기는 벌써 1,6kg 췌어. (Our Woon Ki has gained 1,6 kg.)

WK : 아닙니다. 아직 멀었죠, 근육까지 올려야해요. (Nope, I still have a long way to go. I have to increase my muscle mass as well.)

아직 멀었죠 is an idiomatic phrase which means “I still have a long way to go”.

As a student, Woon Ki might have felt burdened by the compliment spoken by his own coach that he neglected the compliment right away and slightly gave an explanatory comment. The writer is only capable of finding 1 datum due to the lack of sources concerning idiomatic phrases used in Korean language.

4.4. Maxims of Agreement and Modesty

After analyzing each strategy of compliment response, the writer classified the three strategies based on the maxims each complies with. Table 2 provides the data of frequency and percentage relating to the practice of Modesty and Agreement Maxims.

Table 2. Agreement and Modesty Maxims in “*Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo*”

Strategy	Maxim	Frequency	Percentage
Acceptance	Agreement	44	39.2%
Rejection	Modesty	20	17.9%
Self-praise	Modesty with	48	42.9%
Avoidance	Indirectness		

Acceptance strategy closely coheres with Agreement Maxim, and Rejection strategy with Modesty Maxim. Self-praise Avoidance strategy, can be included in Modesty Maxim as well, but with a strong sense of indirectness. This is because the hearer expresses neither a clear yes nor no in the response. It adheres to the Korean value of modesty about feeling the urge to show a seemingly humble side of themselves, not necessarily because they do not want to accept the compliments.

Given the data provided above, it is concluded that Modesty Maxim indeed still prevails in the Asian society, in this case South Korean people, with a total of 61.6 percent. Regardless, many hearers no longer give pure rejection of the compliments and do Self-praise Avoidance strategy instead to neutralize their responses. Acceptance strategy comes last with the total frequency of 44 out of 112 data. The relatively high number might subtly indicate how the modern society of East Asia, especially South Korea, is slowly perceiving a compliment as something to acknowledge and give thanks to. These responses are also influenced by age and status differences, as well as the degree of familiarity between the speaker and the hearer.

4.5. Discussion

Following the data analysis and interpretation provided above, the writer also discussed about Confucian values in this particular study. South Korea is one of the few countries in Asia to be highly influenced by Confucianism (Kim, 2003), the dominances of which are shown through the country's basic social and political values. There are four Confucian principles that became the state ideology of the old Joseon Dynasty in Korea (1392-1910); they are *In* (humanism), *Ui* (justice), *Ye* (propriety) and *Ji* (wisdom) (ibid, p. 94). Contradicting the communication patterns between East Asians and North Americans, Yum (2009) underlined their distinctive linguistic codes and level of directness/indirectness. Linguistic codes are used depending on several defining factors such as social class, age, gender and degree of closeness. Here the language use when directed to someone older or with higher status will certainly be

different due to the honorific terms. On the other hand, indirectness in Confucianism put “consideration for others and concern for proper human relationships” (ibid, p.383). This aims to maintain good relationships with others by avoiding remarks that could possibly lead to disagreement or disrespecting the speakers.

Looking back at the example from Idiomatic Rejection strategy will provide a more elaborative example of how linguistic codes interfere language use.

64. 00.26.14 – 00.26.19 EP6

Coach : 우리운기는 벌써 1,6kg 췌어. (Our Woon Ki has gained 1,6 kg.)

WK : 아닙니다. 아직 멀었죠, 근육까지 올려야해요. (Nope, I still have a long way to go. I have to increase my muscle mass as well.)

아직 멀었죠 is an idiomatic phrase which means “I still have a long way to go”.

Considering the status difference where Woon Ki is a student and Coach becomes his teacher, it is more likely that Woon Ki will use an honorific term while holding a conversation with him. He even went far as using an idiomatic phrase in order to soften the implicature of his sentence.

It can also be inferred from the data that the doctrines of Confucianism might still strong impacts in interpersonal relationships in South Korea, as represented by the TV series. Indirectness is visible in the excerpts of conversations under the category of Self-praise Avoidance, which accounts for almost half of the total data. Adding with those under Rejection category, the number reaches 60.8 percent.

Lastly, Confucianism might also apply in Acceptance strategy as well as expressed in the example below.

27. 00.01.21 – 00.01.28 EP4

JY : 복주씨 생각보다 건강하네요. (You're a lot healthier than I thought.)

BJ : 네, 제가 조금 건강하기는 하죠. (Yes, I think I am.) (looking awkward)

Bok Joo was actually put in confusion with the ambiguity in Jae Yi's statement, however she doubtfully expressed agreement in order to maintain her good image in front of him. Consequently, Bok Joo might be considered as upholding the Confucian values about avoiding disagreement with others.

In comparison with previously conducted studies, the writer found several similarities in terms of the findings. This research confirms Tang and Zhang (2009)'s study about CR responses between Chinese and Australian speakers, in that Chinese participants have bigger tendencies to use indirect Acceptance and Self-praise Avoidance. A little bit different result was discovered while comparing this study with that of Chen and Yang (2010). While Acceptance becomes the most frequently used response in their study on participants from Xi'an Chinese, this research shows that South Korean participants as represented in the TV series are more likely to use Self-praise Avoidance, which is followed by Acceptance. Both studies confirm that Rejection is used the least. On the other hand, a quite different result was emerged from He (2012) in terms of CR responses from different generations. The study conducted in China's mainland found that Acceptance and Amended Acceptance (Self-praise Avoidance/Indirect Acceptance) become the most and the least frequent response respectively, while this study identified how South Korean participants as represented in the TV series neglected Rejection over either direct or indirect Acceptance.

4.6. General Findings

Regarding the data of CR strategies and the frequency of maxims practice in the TV series “*Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo*”, the writer summed up the results into general findings.

Apart from the taxonomies of CR strategies proposed by Pomerantz (1978) and rearranged by Spencer-Oatey and Ng (2001), the writer found three other categories that are supposedly included while analyzing the pattern integrated in South Korea, as represented by the series. They are “Returning Compliment” from Acceptance strategy, as well as “Doubting” and “No Answer” from Self-praise Avoidance strategy. Hence, the strategies and categories of each are written down as follows.

1. Acceptance

- Appreciation, e.g. (No. 2) *Thanks,*
- Agreement, e.g. (No. 30) *I think so too,*
- Returning compliment, e.g. (No. 42) *You’re more beautiful,*

2. Rejection

- Denial, e.g. (No. 57) *That’s not true,*
- Idiomatic rejection, e.g. (No. 63) *아직 멀었어요 (I still have a long way to go),*

3. Self-praise Avoidance

- Explanatory comment, e.g. (No. 66) *Really? I just saw it on the floor and put it on,*
- Switch of focus, e.g. (No. 75) *This is the first time I’m told that I’m cute,*

- Doubting, e.g. (No. 97) *Do you think so?*
- No answer

With 42.9 percent, Self-praise Avoidance strategy becomes the most frequent response out of the three. It is used by hearers of compliment in order to avoid self-elevation without turning down the compliment itself. The strategy is highly related to indirectness in Asian politeness strategy. Acceptance strategy places the second with 39.2 percent, which means that it is also quite frequently put to use in holding conversations with other people. It partly adheres to the value of Agreement Maxim, in which the hearer agrees with what the speaker is saying. However, it does not only involve agreeing out of courtesy but also due to a strong personal feeling towards the compliment itself. Rejection strategy is only practiced 20 times in the data, which accounts for 17.9 percent out of the total percentage. This is the most conventional method of expressing modesty in front of the counterparts. Modesty Maxim has the least number of use, and it may indicate that the fact that politeness phenomena in modern East Asian culture do not completely comply with Confucian values regarding denying individual's achievement for the sake of collectivism.

Nonetheless, it is possible that South Korea still upholds the doctrines of Confucianism in terms of the daily communication. Besides direct and indirect modesty, Acceptance strategy also partly complies with the Confucian value of avoiding disagreement with others. In the end, what the data show might reflect Confucianism's degree of prevalence in the South Korean society as represented in the TV series "*Weightlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo*".