Culture and First-Person Pronouns

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Priming research has shown that repeated exposures to first-person singular pronouns (I, my, me, mine) activate an individualistic orientation, whereas first-person plural pronouns (we, our, us, ours) activate a collectivistic orientation. However, little research has been done to explore the opposite direction of influence such that one’s cultural orientation determines one’s choice between first-person singular versus plural pronouns. The authors conducted three studies to examine the effects of one’s cultural orientation on one’s use of first-person possessive pronouns. Results show that, compared to their individualistic counterparts, participants who have a collectivistic orientation, chronically or temporarily by priming, preferred to use first-person plural possessive pronouns.

Keywords: cultural differences; self-concept; priming; language; pronouns

Recent priming studies have repeatedly demonstrated that exposure to first-person singular pronouns (I, my, me, mine) induces an individual to adopt an individualistic self-view, whereas exposure to first-person plural pronouns (we, our, us, ours) leads an individual to adopt a collectivistic self-view, albeit temporarily (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Gardner, Gabriel, & Lee, 1999; Kühnen & Haberstroh, 2004). Such a primed self-view, in turn, affects one’s values, behavior, and even general thinking style (for a comprehensive review, see Oyserman & Lee, 2008). For example, a primed individualistic self-view activates an analytic way of thinking, and a primed collectivistic self-view activates a holistic way of thinking, creating performance differences in tasks such as the Embedded Figures Test (Hannover & Kühnen, 2005; Kühnen, Hannover, & Schubert, 2001). It is remarkable that the pronoun-priming technique works not only in English (Gardner et al., 1999) but also in German (Kühnen et al., 2001), in Dutch (van Baaren, Maddux, Chartrand, de Bouter, & van Knippenberg, 2003), and in Korean (Cha, 2006).

So far, the empirical demonstrations of a link between cultural self-views and first-person pronouns have been one-directional. Namely, researchers have exposed participants to a certain class of first-person pronouns and then observed the effect on self-views and reasoning style. If the relationship between one’s cultural orientation and first-person pronouns is robust, then we should be able to observe the opposite direction of influence as well. For example, it could be demonstrated that priming one’s cultural orientation affects one’s use of first-person pronouns. Such a demonstration will deepen our understanding about how culture and pronouns are deeply intertwined.

Linguistic Constraint in Use of First-Person Pronouns: English Versus Korean

There appears to exist a good reason why researchers have not tried to demonstrate the influence of cultural orientation on the use of first-person pronouns: grammar. For example, in English one must use my, not our, when referring to one’s wife or husband. To native English speakers, choosing between my and our in such a case is not a matter of one’s self-view; rather, it is a matter of one’s English competence. The same is also true for most languages in which the pronoun-priming technique

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proved to be successful in activating a particular self-view (e.g., German and Dutch). Very fortunately, however, Korean is an exception.

In Korean, there are two first-person possessive pronouns: *nae* and *wuri*. *Nae* is a first-person singular possessive, equivalent to *my* in English, whereas *wuri* is a first-person plural possessive, equivalent to *our* in English. Very interestingly, however, Korean grammar allows both *nae* and *wuri* in the places in which English only allows *my*. Although *wuri* indicates that something belongs or relates both to oneself and to one or more other people (just as *our* does), *wuri* is also used in place of *nae* to show one’s intimacy to something or someone (usually one who is not higher in social status; see the National Institute of the Korean Language, www.korean.go.kr/08_new/index.jsp). Hence, Koreans can say either *nae wife* or *wuri wife* without conveying the impression that the speaker is either incompetent in Korean or unconventional in marriage. Thus, the Korean language provides an ideal setting in which we can examine whether one’s cultural orientation determines one’s preference for the first-person possessive pronoun. Specifically, we examined whether Korean collectivists, chronic or primed, would prefer *wuri*, and whether Korean individualists, chronic or primed, would prefer *nae* as the first-person singular pronoun.

**Psychological Closeness, Self, and Wuri**

Our basic assumption is that one’s choice of first-person pronouns (possessive, in the present research) reveals one’s self-view. A fundamental difference in self-view between collectivists and individualists is the extent to which others are included into one’s self-concept. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the interdependent self-view typically possessed by collectivists includes others as a significant component, whereas the independent self-view possessed by individualists does not. An individual views himself or herself as independent of and unique from others in the independent self-view but as interdependent with and connected to significant others in the interdependent self-view (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, those with an interdependent self-view would like to experience and signal psychological closeness between their significant others and themselves. Such signaling of closeness can be achieved by various ways, such as claiming more commonality (Kitayama, Markus, Tummala, Kurokawa, & Kato, 1990) and less uniqueness and superiority (Heine et al., 1999; H. S. Kim & Markus, 1999) and by favoring ingroup members (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, & Asai, 1988). In addition to these methods, we argue that the use of *wuri* is another (probably simpler) way that Korean collectivists can signal their psychological closeness to others. By referring to one’s brother as *wuri brother* rather than *nae brother*, one can effectively communicate one’s closeness to his or her brother to the audience, which potentially includes the reference person (brother). In addition, one may intentionally use *wuri* to invite the reference person to a closer relationship. For example, after a fist fight, one may refer to his brother as *wuri brother* in public as a gesture of reconciliation. In fact, in his analysis of *wuri*, J. N. Kim (2003) argued that *wuri* signals intimacy when it is used as a first-person possessive pronoun.

Our argument is basically in line with past research on language and interpersonal relationship among English speakers. For example, partners who are highly committed to their relationships and close to their partners used a greater number of the plural pronoun (*we*; Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, & Langston, 1998). Furthermore, Fitzsimons and Kay (2004) demonstrated that the use of *we* could produce greater interpersonal intimacy. In addition, Pennebaker and his colleagues found that people expressed a greater sense of community by using *we* more frequently and dropping *I* as a reaction to shared grief (Stone & Pennebaker, 2002) or crisis (Cohn, Mehl, & Pennebaker, 2004). For example, Mehl and Pennebaker (2003) found that the use of the first-person plural increased and that of first-person singular decreased following September 11 in natural conversations among college students.

**STUDY 1**

Study 1 was conducted to test our hypothesis at the individual-difference level by examining whether Korean collectivists would prefer to use *wuri* (*our*) and whether Korean individualists would prefer to use *nae* (*my*) as the first-person singular possessive pronoun. Participants were asked to translate a short essay written in English into Korean. The essay described a family of four members (father, mother, older brother, and younger brother), and the essay writer (younger brother) consistently used *my* in the essay when referring to his family (“my family”) and family members (e.g., “my brother”). We hypothesized that Korean collectivists would translate *my* into *wuri* more frequently than Korean individualists would.

The reason we asked participants to translate an English essay about someone else’s family into Korean, rather than to write about their own families in Korean, was that the choice between *nae* and *wuri* might be affected not only by one’s self-view but also by the number of siblings when writing an essay about one’s own family. Suppose that Participant A has two siblings and Participant B has only one sibling. Then, Participant...
A would be more likely than Participant B to refer to his or her brother as “wuri brother,” not necessarily because Participant A is more collectivistic but because Participant A and another sibling of his or hers may call the target brother “wuri brother” to represent co-sharing. In other words, to Participant A, wuri brother can mean a brother of his or her and another sibling. This confounding does not occur for Participant B. To avoid this confounding between one's cultural orientation and one's family size, we asked participants to translate into Korean an English essay about someone else's family in which the number of siblings is held constant.

Method

Participants. One hundred Korean undergraduates (54 males; 45 females; 1 unidentified) participated in Study 1 in return for partial course credit.

Procedure. The cultural orientation of participants was assessed in a large pretest session at the beginning of the semester by a version of the INDCOL scale (Triandis, 1996). The INDCOL scale consists of 28 items, 14 of which measure one's collectivistic orientation (e.g., “My happiness depends very much on the happiness of those around me”), and 14 of which measure one's individualistic orientation (e.g., “I am a unique person, separate from others”). Participants indicated the degree of their agreement with each item on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). Each participant's INDCOL score was calculated by subtracting the sum of responses for the individualism items from the sum of responses for the collectivism items. A high score reflects a collectivistic orientation, whereas a low score suggests an individualistic orientation. We also used the individualism score and the collectivism score separately for data analysis.

Upon arrival at the laboratory, participants were told that they would be translating a short English essay into Korean. The cover story was that the experimenter was investigating college students' linguistic styles. The participants were assured that their English skills were not the focus of the study. The participants in the family essay condition (n = 58) were provided with an English essay in which a younger son introduced his family, which consisted of his parents, his older brother, and himself. The word my appeared 16 times in total throughout the essay, including the title. Our hypothesis was that Korean collectivists would use wuri as a translation of my more frequently than Korean individualists would.

However, an alternative explanation requires our careful consideration. One might argue that, for some reasons, Korean collectivists are less fluent in English and hence would be more confused with the distinction between my and our than their individualist counterparts. This alternative view argues that collectivists mistakenly, not purposefully, use wuri as a translation of my. To examine this alternative hypothesis, we added a second condition where participants received an English essay in which a target person described his room, not his family. The essay in the room condition (n = 42) was nearly the same length as the family essay. The word my was also used 16 times in the room essay. In all 16 cases, my was used to refer to the essay writer's own belongings, not shared by any other person (e.g., “my CDs”). Therefore, if poorer English proficiency by collectivists was the main reason, then they would use wuri as a Korean translation of my more frequently than individualists would, even in the room essay condition.

Results and Discussion

We calculated the proportion of wuri (PW) for each participant—the number of uses of wuri as a translation of my over the total number of translations of my. Then, we performed a 2 (cultural orientation: collectivists vs. individualists) × 2 (condition: family essay vs. room essay) ANOVA on PW. For this analysis, participants were divided into collectivists and individualists based on the median score of the INDCOL scale. We hypothesized that PW would be greater for collectivistic Koreans than for individualistic Koreans but only in the family essay condition, hence an interaction between cultural orientation and essay condition.

Consistent with our hypothesis, we found a significant interaction effect between cultural orientation and condition, F(1, 95) = 7.38, p < .01, η² = .072. Collectivistic Koreans (M = 0.56, SD = 0.33) used wuri more frequently than did their individualistic counterparts (M = 0.30, SD = 0.30) in the family essay condition, t(56) = 3.24, p < .01, Cohen's d = .85. Importantly, PW was not different between individualists and collectivists in the room essay condition, t < 1. In fact, no participant used wuri in the room essay condition (i.e., PW = 0 for all participants). This result speaks against the alternative view. If Korean collectivists were more confused between my and our than Korean individualists because of their poorer English skills, the former should have used wuri more frequently than the latter as a Korean translation of my, even in the room essay condition.

The above pattern was also obtained with regression analysis. Instead of treating INDCOL score as a dichotomous variable, we ran regression analysis using INDCOL score as a continuous variable and obtained the same pattern of results (pertinent βs shown in Table 1). We further examined whether the target word associated with my mattered. Because my was used in reference to family, parents, and brother in the family essay...
condition, we ran a 3 (target: family vs. parents vs. brother) × 2 (cultural orientation: collectivists vs. individualists) ANOVA with the target as a within-subject factor. It turned out that the Target × Cultural Orientation effect was not significant, \( F(2, 70) = .25, p = ns \), indicating that collectivistic Koreans used wuri more frequently than individualistic Koreans did, regardless of the reference target (see Table 2 for more detailed analyses for each target).

Taken together, Study 1 provides initial evidence suggesting that one's cultural orientation is associated with one's choice of first-person possessive pronouns among Koreans. However, because Study 1 is correlational, it was important to conduct an experiment to establish the causality.

**STUDY 2**

To establish a causal relation, it is necessary to demonstrate that a manipulation of one's cultural orientation affects one's choice of first-person possessive pronouns, such that those who receive an individualism priming would translate my into wuri more frequently than those who receive a collectivism priming. Study 2 was conducted to achieve this goal. We manipulated participants’ cultural orientation by using the priming procedure developed by Trafimow and his colleagues (Trafimow, Silverman, Fan, & Law, 1997; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991).

**Method**

Participants. Forty-eight Korean undergraduates (20 males and 28 females) participated in Study 2 in return for partial course credit. Twenty-five students were randomly assigned to the individualism priming condition and the remainder was assigned to the collectivism priming condition.

Procedure. Participants were told that they would take part in two separate studies. They were informed that the first study would survey how college students thought about themselves in comparison with their significant others and that the second study would investigate college students’ linguistic styles.

In the first phase, participants received either an individualism or a collectivism priming manipulation. Following Trafimow et al. (1991, Experiment 1), we asked participants to “think of what makes you different from your family and friends and write it down” (individualism prime, I-prime) or to “think of what you have in common with your family and friends and write it down” (collectivism prime, C-prime). Then, in the second

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**TABLE 1:** Standard Coefficients From Regression Predicting Proportion of Wuri (PW) as a Function of Cultural Orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PW for Family</th>
<th>PW for Parent</th>
<th>PW for Brother</th>
<th>PW Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IND/COL scale</td>
<td>.253*</td>
<td>.350**</td>
<td>.318*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p < .100 \). ** \( p < .05 \). *** \( p < .01 \).

**TABLE 2:** Means and Standard Deviations of Proportion of Wuri (PW) in Studies 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1</th>
<th>Study 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic (29)</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectivistic (29)</td>
<td>0.60**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic (24)</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectivistic (25)</td>
<td>0.52***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic (19)</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectivistic (19)</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic (29)</td>
<td>0.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectivistic (29)</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Independent \( t \) tests between individualists and collectivists were conducted for each of the target words. The number of participants is provided in parentheses. The analysis included those who translated at least one case within each category, so the number of participants varies across targets.

**p < .05. *** \( p < .01 \).
phase, participants received the same family essay used in Study 1 and were asked to translate it into Korean.

**Results and Discussion**

The PW was calculated in the same way as in Study 1. Consistent with our hypothesis, C-prime participants translated *my* into *wuri* more frequently ($M = 0.72$, $SD = 0.29$) than did I-prime participants ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.39$), $t(46) = 2.17$, $p < .05$, Cohen’s $d = .63$. To investigate a possible context effect, we ran 2 (priming: collectivism vs. individualism) × 3 (target: family vs. parent vs. brother) ANOVA with the target as a within-subject variable. Consistent with Study 1, the Priming × Target interaction effect was not significant, $F(2, 58) = .52$, $p = ns$, indicating that the priming effect occurred regardless of the target word (see Table 2).

Study 2 is important in two aspects. First, it establishes a causal relation between one’s cultural orientation and one’s choice of the first-person possessive pronoun among Koreans. Second, it completely rules out the alternative, English-competence explanation mentioned in Study 1, because there is no a priori reason to believe that thinking about similarities or differences between self and significant others decreases or increases one’s English competency.

**STUDY 3**

Studies 1 and 2 confirmed the proposed relation between one’s cultural orientation and use of first-person possessive pronouns among Koreans. However, both studies used a within-culture design. As we mentioned at the outset, it was inevitable to use only Koreans because out of all the languages where the pronoun-priming technique has been used only the Korean language allows speakers to freely choose between first-person singular and plural possessive pronouns. Nonetheless, a growing body of literature indicates that within-culture (or individual) differences might not necessarily correspond to between-culture (or cross-cultural) differences (Cohen, 2007; Shweder, 1973). Therefore, it seems necessary to present truly cross-cultural evidence for the relationship between culture and first-person pronouns.

Because it is impossible to use the methodology we used in Studies 1 and 2 for a comparison between Koreans (collectivists) and Americans (individualists), Study 3 used a different task. Specifically, participants were asked to guess the meaning of unfamiliar foreign pronouns. We expected that, faced with unfamiliar foreign pronouns, Korean students would be more likely than American students to guess them as first-person plural pronouns, indicating that first-person plural pronouns would be chronically more accessible to Koreans than to Americans.

**Method**

Thirty-three American and 38 Korean students were recruited for the study. We used a task developed by Davis and Brock (1975), with slight revisions. Participants were told that earlier research had shown that while reading a foreign language, people were sometimes able to guess the correct translation of pronouns. They were further told that they would be presented with a short story in Wezwe, a language spoken only in New Guinea. Participants were then given a short story in Wezwe with 15 pronouns underlined (see the appendix and Stapel & Tesser, 2001, for more information). Some pronouns appeared more than twice in the essay. For each pronoun, a list of six alternatives (i.e., three first-person singular pronouns: *I, my, me*; three first-person plural pronouns: *we, our, us*) were provided to participants. We also administered the Self-Consciousness Scale (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975) as a potential covariate because prior research had demonstrated that enhanced self-awareness was related to the use of first-person pronouns (Stapel & Tesser, 2001).

In Study 3, we did not measure individualism and collectivism in either Korea or America. Instead, we assumed that Koreans are collectivistic and Americans are individualistic based on the previous literature. There has been a great deal of empirical evidence showing that Koreans are more collectivistic and less individualistic than Americans. This was the case not only in the classic study of Hofstede (1980) but also in recent empirical studies (H. S. Kim & Markus, 1999; H. S. Kim & Sherman, 2007; Suh, 2002). Most notably, one of the authors recently recruited participants from the same universities as in Study 3 in unrelated research and found that Korean students were indeed more collectivistic and less individualistic than American students (Na & Kitayama, 2009).

**Results and Discussion**

We calculated the proportion of first-person plural pronouns being chosen. In our final analysis, we excluded participants’ choice of first-person possessive pronouns because, as seen in Studies 1 and 2, the Korean first-person plural possessive pronoun *wuri* can be used as both first-person singular and plural. Therefore, it is impossible to tell whether a Korean participant meant singular or plural by *wuri*.

We expected that plural pronouns are chronically more available to Koreans than to Americans, and hence Korean participants would guess unfamiliar foreign pronouns as first-person plural more than American participants would. This was indeed the case. Korean
participants chose plural pronouns as the correct translation of unfamiliar pronouns more than their American counterparts did (0.45 vs. 0.38), $t(69) = 2.65, p < .05$, Cohen’s $d = .62$. We believe that this difference is due to Koreans having a more collectivistic orientation than Americans have. Study 3 suggests that first-person plural pronouns are more readily available to collectivists than to individualists.

A couple of alternative explanations deserve further analysis. First, one might argue that Koreans simply guessed singular and plural pronouns with an equal frequency. In other words, they might have tried to be balanced in their guessing. However, the ratio of choosing plural pronouns for Korean participants was significantly different from 0.5, $t(37) = 3.14, p < .05$. The other alternative hypothesis suggests that the Korean–American difference might have derived from a difference in self-consciousness. However, the cultural difference was still significant even after controlling for self-consciousness scores, $F(1, 66) = 5.44, p < .05$, $\eta^2_p = .076$.

Study 3 extended Studies 1 and 2 in two important ways. First, Study 3 demonstrated the link between culture and first-person pronoun use at a between-culture level. Second, Study 3 provides evidence suggesting that not only first-person plural possessive pronouns but also the other forms of first-person plural pronouns are chronically more salient to those who have a collectivistic orientation than to those who have an individualistic orientation.

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

Our goal was to demonstrate that one’s cultural orientation affects one’s choice of first-person pronouns, such that collectivists would prefer plural pronouns whereas individualists would prefer singular pronouns. To achieve this goal, in Studies 1 and 2 we took advantage of a unique feature of Korean grammar that allows Korean speakers to use both first-person singular (nae) and plural (wuri) possessive pronouns as a first-person singular possessive pronoun. As expected, we found that collectivistic Koreans preferred to use wuri as a first-person singular possessive pronoun more than Korean individualists did. Importantly, such a relationship between one’s cultural orientation and one’s preference between wuri and nae among Koreans was not only correlational (Study 1) but also causal (Study 2). Studies 1 and 2 also demonstrated that these results could not be interpreted as a function of one’s fluency in English.

Although we found a significant difference between the two priming conditions in Study 2, one might further wonder which priming condition produced the difference. To answer this question, a neutral control group was necessary. Unfortunately, the control group was not included in Study 2. However, we can get a clue about this question by comparing the means of the two priming conditions in Study 2 with the means of Study 1. One of the most common control groups in the priming literature is a no-prime control group where participants perform a task without any priming (Oyserman & Lee, 2008), and our participants in Study 1 were not primed and performed the same task as those in Study 2. As seen in Table 3, the difference between the C-prime condition in Study 2 and the control condition (Study 1) was marginally significant, whereas there was no significant difference between the I-prime condition in Study 2 and the control condition. So it appears that collectivism priming made the difference. Consistent with this, only collectivism was a significant predictor when collectivism and individualism were entered as separate predictors into a multiple regression in Study 1. Yet, we are reluctant to make a strong argument that only collectivism, not individualism, is associated with first-person pronoun use, for a couple of reasons.

First, it is still an empirical question whether individualism and collectivism are orthogonal or opposite ends of the same dimension (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener, 2005). Second, recent meta analysis showed that $I$-priming and $W$-priming techniques are equally effective in producing individualistic and collectivistic mind-sets, respectively (Oyserman & Lee, 2008). Hence, future research should be conducted to provide a clearer answer.

In Study 3, we examined whether the relationship between cultural orientation and first-person pronoun use would exist at the between-culture level. When faced with unfamiliar foreign pronouns, Koreans were
more likely than Americans to guess that the foreign pronouns would be first-person plural pronouns, indicating that first-person plural pronouns are chronically more salient to collectivists than to individualists.

The most significant contribution of the present research is that it establishes a truly bidirectional relationship between cultural orientation and first-person pronouns. As we discussed at the outset, previous studies examined only whether exposure to first-person singular versus plural pronouns would activate an individualistic or a collectivistic orientation. However, the present research confirms the existence of the relationship in the opposite direction, by demonstrating that an individualistic or a collectivistic orientation, either chronic or primed, affects one’s use of first-person pronouns.

A demonstration of the bidirectional relationship between cultural orientation and first-person pronoun is particularly important in that it provides a justification for why pronoun priming should be effective. The temporary activation of individualism and collectivism by first-person singular and plural pronouns is now well established. But why should priming work? Unless there is a link from cultural orientation to first-person pronoun use, the pronoun-priming technique is not easily explainable. For example, previous studies showed that first-person pronouns (i.e., I vs. we) could induce focused or diffused attention (Hannover & Kühnen, 2005; Kühnen et al., 2001). These priming effects might be attributed to the direct association between first-person pronouns and attention systems. Alternatively, the findings could suggest that first-person pronouns cause activation of either individualistic or collectivistic self, and the induced self, in turn, primes the corresponding attention system. Although we favor the latter possibility, it would not be easy to prove the active involvement of the self in the entire process without a true bidirectional relationship between first-person pronouns and self.

Furthermore, the present research demonstrates again that pronoun use reveals important characteristics of culture. Kashima and Kashima (1998) discovered that the ease of dropping pronouns in a language is an important indicator of individualism and collectivism. They found that it was easier and more frequent to drop a pronoun in the languages of collectivistic cultures than in the languages of individualistic cultures. Highlighting pronouns, especially first-person pronouns, is underappreciated in cross-cultural research. The individual-difference approach should not be looking at individual differences among Koreans. In this respect, the individual-difference approach should not be underappreciated in cross-cultural research.

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NOTE: Adapted from Stapel and Tesser (2001).

NOTES

1. We excluded a total of four items from the original version because of their irrelevance to Korean culture.

2. There were three options for participants to translate my to Korean: wuri versus nae versus omission. Because the number of omitted instances of my is contingent on the number of translated ones, the omitted cases were not analyzed. In fact, the number of omissions was not correlated with the INDCOL scores, r = .07, p > .59.

3. Although individualism and collectivism were traditionally seen as opposite ends of a single dimension (Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener, 2005), empirical studies often found independence between them (see Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002, for a review). We ran a series of multiple regressions with individualism and collectivism as separate predictors for each target word. As expected, the results
showed that individualism was negatively associated with proportion of wuri (I), whereas collectivism was positively associated with PW. However, only collectivism reached statistically significant level, standardized $\beta = .422$, $p < .001$ and $-1.19$, $p = ns$, collectivism and individualism, respectively.

4. As we were concerned, the difference became nonsignificant if we included wuri in the analysis.

5. The Self-Consciousness Scale consists of three subscales, each of which measure private, public self-consciousness, and social anxiety. Public and private self-consciousness but not social anxiety were higher in Korea than in the United States, Public: $M_{KOR} = 22.18$, $SD = 4.37$ vs. $M_{US} = 19.18$, $SD = 4.83$, $t(69) = 3.04$, $p < .01$, $p = ns$, Cohen’s $d = .72$; Private: $M_{KOR} = 30.34$, $SD = 4.78$ vs. $M_{US} = 26.06$, $SD = 4.37$, $t(69) = 3.92$, $p < .01$, $p = ns$, $d = .93$; Social Anxiety: $M_{KOR} = 12.97$, $SD = 4.09$ vs. $M_{US} = 12.64$, $SD = 3.21$, $t(69) = .30$, $p = ns$. All three components were entered into the ANCOVA analysis as covariates.

6. This last point was raised by David Trafimow.

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