



Apology Strategies in Selected Conversations

(Linguistics Study)

استراتيجيات الاعتذار في محادثات مختارة (دراسة لغوية)

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Abstract

An apology, according to Leech (1983), is a considerate act whose main goal is to mend the damage to the speaker-interlocutor relationship. "Apologizing" is the act of expressing regret or remorse, whereas "apology" refers to a gesture of sympathy or regret, a confession of regret, or any other words or actions that indicate regret or remorse for deeds. You can use "sorry" in informal situations. Choosing the right kind of apology, how to offer it, and to whom is the difficult part.

This study investigates apology strategies in selected Conversations, the goal of this study is to present and debate the apology strategies, types of apologies and the functions of apologizing in conversations. It's hypothesized that remorse and harmless error are most often used in conversations, and we employ the act of apologizing on a daily basis.

Based on the data analysis results, the researcher deduces that social harmony and remorse are the most frequently used apologies in everyday conversations. People use these apologies to keep others at peace, avoid conflict, and help mend relationships by encouraging communication and restoring a sense of comfort between them.

Key words: Speech Act, apology, apology strategy



الملخص

الاعتذار، وفقاً لليتش (١٩٨٣)، هو فعلٌ مُراعٍ للمشاعر، هدفه الرئيسي هو إصلاح الضرر الذي لحق بالعلاقة بين المتحدث والمُحاور. "الاعتذار" هو التعبير عن الندم أو الندم، بينما يُشير "الاعتذار" إلى لفظة تعاطف أو ندم، أو اعتراف بالندم، أو أي كلمات أو أفعال أخرى تُشير إلى الندم أو الندم على أفعال. يُمكن استخدام كلمة "آسف" في المواقف غير الرسمية. يكمن الجزء الصعب في اختيار نوع الاعتذار المناسب، وكيفية تقديمه، وللمن.

تبحث هذه الدراسة في استراتيجيات الاعتذار في محادثات مختارة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى عرض ومناقشة استراتيجيات الاعتذار، وأنواعه، ووظائفه في المحادثات. يُفترض أن الندم والخطأ غير المؤذي هما الأكثر استخداماً في المحادثات، وأننا نستخدم فعل الاعتذار يومياً. بناءً على نتائج تحليل البيانات، يستنتج الباحث أن الانسجام الاجتماعي والندم هما أكثر الاعتذارات استخداماً في المحادثات اليومية. يستخدم الناس هذه الاعتذارات للحفاظ على السلام بين الآخرين، وتجنب الصراع، والمساعدة في إصلاح العلاقات من خلال تشجيع التواصل واستعادة الشعور بالراحة بينهم.

كلمات مفتاحية: فعل الكلام، الاعتذار، استراتيجية الاعتذار

Section one

Introduction

1.1. The Problem

According to Leech (1983), an apology is a kind gesture with the primary objective of mending the rift in the speaker-interlocutor relationship. "Apology" refers to a gesture of sympathy or regret, a declaration of regret, or any other words or deeds conveying regret or remorse for deeds; on the other hand, "apologizing" is the act of expressing regret or remorse. Saying sorry can be used in casual settings. The challenge is in determining the appropriate apology type, how to deliver it, and to whom. The following questions are brought up here:

1. What are apology strategies which used in the selected conversations?
2. What types of apology are used in conversations?
3. what are the functions of apology use in conversations ?

1.2. The Aims

The study aims at:

1. To find out the apology strategies.
2. Examining the Types of apology that use in the selected conversation.



3. Describing the functions of apology use in the selected conversations.

1.3. The purpose of the study

This study aims to illustrate the various forms of apology and the ways in which we utilize the act of apologizing in our daily lives.

1.4. The Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that:

1. Remorse and Social Harmony Apologies are the mostly used in the chosen conversations.
2. The majority of the chosen conversations use Honest apologies.
3. We use the act of Apologizing every day.

1.5. Procedures

The following steps are to be adopted:

1. Outlining the definitions and types of apologies.
2. Illustrating the function of apology.
3. Examine the act of apology in the chosen conversations.
4. Composing a research summary in the conclusion.

1.6. The limits

The study focus is on the analysis of the apologies strategies used in the conversations.

1.7. The value

1. Those with an interest in linguistics will find this study useful.
2. The study should be helpful to academics and students who want to understand more about various apologetic approaches.

Section two

Literature Review

2.1. Speech Act of Apologies

A speech act is a communication aspect that is commonly used in day-to-day activities. The most fascinating aspects of language use research are the speech act (Blum-Kulka 1989). In daily life, speech act is inextricably linked. It will undoubtedly occur in social situations. Speech acts fall complaining, requesting, refusing, congratulating and



apologizing. Apologies are among the speech acts we perform most frequently in our daily interactions with others.

When one engages in behavior that deviates from social norms, one should apologize. When one or more people feel that they have been insulted as a result of an action or utterance, the responsible person or people must apologize. Therefore, there are two parties involved in this situation: the apologizer and the apologized. But we only receive the act of apology if the one who committed the transgression believes that they are an apology. To "set things right," one must take a step or say something as part of the apology process (Olshtain, 1983:235).

The purpose of Speech Act Theory is to describe language interchange in terms of how it affects both speakers and listeners. Austin (1962) proposed the speech act theory, arguing that there are two primary acts of speech: performatives and constatives. Constatives do not elicit actions since they are statements that can be evaluated for veracity. Performatives, on the other hand, are assertions that can be assessed according to their actions or according to their felicity. The classification of language that resulted in a more thorough examination of the language is based on these two categories of speech activities. With a methodical approach, Searle (quoted in Aydin, 2013) divided speech acts into five primary categories: directives, expressive, declarative, assertive, and commissive.

The explanation below was adopted from Verschueren (1999).

Assertive: is expressing a belief and pledging oneself to the veracity of the assertion.

Directives: Wishing something, trying to persuade the hearer to act, such as making requests

Commissive: Indicating a desire or commitment on the part of the speaker to take a future action, such as making an offer or a promise.

Expressive: Capable of conveying a range of emotional states, such as regrets.

Declaration: Use words to effect change.

Apology speech acts fall within the expressive category and are crucial to human communication since they can save face-saving act of speech. Therefore, it is imperative that people comprehend the meaning and purpose of an apology. An apology is seen as a remedial act of communication, in which the speaker is attempting to preserve their reputation following a particular action. According to Cohen & Olshtain (1983), an apology is a speech act in which one of the parties expects or believes they are entitled to recompense or an explanation for the other's wrongdoing. One of the participants can



choose to accept blame or downplay the seriousness of the action, or they can choose to apologize. (Ja'afreh, 2023)

2.2. Apology Strategy

There has been a lot of research done on apologies. There are a lot of disagreements over apologies strategy. The diversity in classification is derived from the distinction of arguments. Olshtain and Cohen (1983) state that if the perpetrator acknowledges guilt for the offense, he or she may choose one of five approaches for expression of regret:

1. An expression of regret

- a) An expression of regret, e.g., I'm sorry.
- b) An offer of apology, e.g., I apologize
- c) A request for forgiveness, e.g., forgive me

2. An explanation or narrative of what happened, such as "The bus was running late."

3. An admission of guilt.

- a) Assuming responsibility, such as "It was my fault."
- b) Expressing self-deficiency, such as "I was confused."
- c) Recognizing the other person as deserving apology, e.g., you are right.
- d) Saying anything without meaning to, like "I didn't mean to"

4. A repair offer, such as "I'll help you get up."

5. A pledge of patience, such as "It won't happen again"

2.3 Types of Apologies

The different ways people tend to acknowledge that they wounded someone and feel that what they did was wrong are reflected in the types of apologies that follow. (2019, Robinson)

2.3.1. Remorse Apology

Usually, when someone considers offering an honest apology, they picture a remorse apologies. For an apology to be considered sincere, the giver must admit that their actions caused harm to another person and must also believe that their actions were wrong. An example : someone might apologize for their actions is if they accidentally spilled a drink on someone while not paying attention to their surroundings, by getting into a car accident as a result of driving distractedly. (2019, Robinson)

2.3.2. Empathy Apology



When someone apologizes with empathy, it indicates that they do not think their actions were wrong and reject the idea that they hurt someone else. This apology is mostly used to express empathy, as suggested by its name. Even though they were not a part of the incident that caused the suffering, the apologizer in this instance wishes to demonstrate kindness and concern to the person who is in need.

Offering an apology to someone who has lost a loved one is one way to do this. In this instance, the apologizer probably had nothing to do with the loved one's passing but still wants to show them compassion. (2019, Robinson)

2.3.3.Social Harmony Apology

If the apologizer does not believe their cruel behavior was wrong and does not admit that it has hurt someone else, then their apology for social harmony satisfies the standards of the empathy apology. Underlying motives, however, distinguish an apology for empathy from one for social harmony. A social harmony apology is frequently used by people to diffuse tension or maintain harmony with others. (2019, Robinson)

For instance, a coworker misinterprets an email you sent them. They feel offended by the way they read the email, so they talk to you about it. But you don't think you did anything to offend them, so you don't feel horrible about it. However, in order to maintain harmony between the two of you and resolve the issue, you choose to apologize. (2019, Robinson)

2.3.4.Harmless Error Apology

A harmless error apology is characterized as follows: the giver acknowledges that their harmful actions were wrong, but they do not believe that the other person was harmed. Another way to express it is when someone apologizes and denounces their actions even though they did not cause harm to the other person.

For instance, you might discover that your friend removed their shoes at the front house while still wearing yours. You could be wondering if you ought to have removed your shoes at the door as well.

Your companion did not mention taking off your shoes when you entered, so you convince yourself that your shoes are not too dirty. However, you still regret not having questioned them earlier. When you apologize for not taking off your shoes, your friend says it's okay because their family occasionally wears shoes indoors. In this instance,



you apologized for a harmless mistake since you felt awful about your actions even if they did not do harm to your friend.

2.3.5. Regret Apology

A regret apology, in contrast to a remorse apology, indicates that the giver does not admit that their hurtful actions caused harm to another person but nevertheless feels that their actions were wrong. This kind of apology is usually offered by someone who feels that what they did was the correct thing to do, but who also regrets the pain that their actions have caused to other people. (2019, Robinson)

2.4 Functions of Apologizing

According to Holmes (1990), an apology serves as an effort to make amends and reestablish equilibrium in daily life.

Holmes contends that by expressing regret, the victim and the culprit can mend and reconcile their damaged relationship. It can help the perpetrator and the injured party reconcile.

Section three

Research Methodology

The present investigation aims to ascertain and evaluate the apologies strategies utilized in the selected conversations. It also seeks to pinpoint the types that are used in the conversations.

3.1. Model of Analysis

The analysis model that was used is Cohen and Olshtain (1983).

Apologizing strategies	
An expression of apology.	a) An expression of regret. b) An offer of apology. c) A request for forgiveness.
2. An explanation or account of the situation.	-----
3. An acknowledgement of responsibility.	a) Accepting the blame. b) Expressing self-deficiency. c) Recognizing the other person as deserving apology. d) Expressing lack of intent.
4. An offer of repair.	-----
5. A promise of forbearance.	-----



3.2. Data

The data selected for analysis from everyday conversations is examined by the researcher in this section. The researcher also provided an explanation of apology types. These include Apologies for Harmless Errors, Social Harmony, Empathy, Regret, and Remorse. Based on the aforementioned data, the researcher examines five distinct types of apologies that were identified in the selected conversations for analysis, including the following:

Conversation 1

Paul: Noelia! I am so sorry! Are you OK?

Noelia: I think so. That was lucky.

Paul: I'm really sorry! I didn't see you!

Noelia: That's all right. I shouldn't have been running.

Paul: No, no, I should have been paying attention.

Noelia: And they teach you not to run inside at school!

Paul: Still, it was my fault and I'm sorry.

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/speaking/a2-speaking/apologising>

Conversation 2

A: Sorry I'm late. I was held up at the airport.

B: That's OK. I've just arrived myself.

<https://www.linguahouse.com/learning-english/general-english/apologies-excuses-and-promises>

Conversation 3

A: I apologize for my behaviour. I was under a lot of stress.

B: Never mind. I understand.



<https://www.linguahouse.com/learning-english/general-english/apologies-excuses-and-promises>

Conversation 4

A: Sorry to keep you waiting. It won't happen again.

B: Don't worry about it.

<https://www.linguahouse.com/learning-english/general-english/apologies-excuses-and-promises>

Conversation 5

A: We sincerely apologize for the late delivery.

B: I'm afraid that's not good enough! I expect some sort of discount.

<https://www.linguahouse.com/learning-english/general-english/apologies-excuses-and-promises>

Conversation 6

Mary: I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. I know you were badly hurt by my thoughtlessness.

Katrina: Forget about it. I wasn't annoyed at all. I know these sorts of things can happen from time to time.

Mary: That's so kind of you.

<https://www.englishpractice.com/improve/apologizing-sample-conversations/>

Conversation 7

Samuel: You've broken my window. Can't you see?

Jack: We're so sorry, uncle. We were playing cricket. We never thought that the ball would hit the window

Samuel: Haven't I told you not to play in the street? Why don't you go to the park?

Jack: We know we shouldn't have played here. We're really sorry. We won't repeat this mistake.



Samuel: That's okay, but I don't want you to play in the street again.

<https://www.englishpractice.com/improve/apologizing-sample-conversations/>

Conversation 8

Mother: What was that terrible noise? Did you drop anything?

Stella: I'm sorry, mom. I dropped a glass on the floor and it broke.

Mother: Were you hurt?

Stella: No, but I'm really sorry.

Mother: I'm glad that you aren't hurt, but why did you drop it? Haven't I told you not to handle glassware?

Stella: I couldn't help it. The glass was too slippery.

Mother: It's okay, but you've got to be careful next time!

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3.3 Results

The number of apologies strategies employed in the chosen conversations is shown in this section. It also lists the types of apology that are employed in these conversations.

According to the analysis conducted, the following results have been reached:

- 1.** Items 3, 6, and 7 are remorse apology when the person apologizing fully understands that their cruel actions caused harm to another person and feels that they were wrong.
- 2.** Social Harmony is covered in items 4 and 5. apology given by someone who does not think their damaging actions were incorrect and does not accept that they have harmed someone else. A social harmony apology is frequently used by people to diffuse tension or maintain harmony with others.
- 3.** Items 1, 2, and 8 are harmless error apology given by someone who feels that their harmful actions were wrong but does not accept or believe that the other person was harmed. Another way to express it is when someone apologizes and denounces their actions even though they did not do harm.



Table (1): The number of the conversation, all the strategies of apology, the types of apology and the speech act.

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Number of conversation	Types of apology	Strategies of apology	Speech act
1	Harmless error	An expression of apology	Expressive
2	Harmless error	An explanation or account of the situation	Declaration
3	Remorse	An acknowledgment of responsibility	Declaration
4	Social harmony	An expression of apology	Assertive
5	Social harmony	An acknowledgement of responsibility.	Commissive
6	Remorse	An expression of apology	Expressive
7	Remorse	An expression of apology	Directives and commissive
8	Harmless error	An explanation or account of the situation.	Directive

Section four

Conclusion, suggestions and recommendation

4.1.Conclusion

The conclusions from the analysis of the number of conversations in the section before are provided in this section.



The researcher draws the conclusion that remorse and harmless error apologies are the most frequently used forms of expression in daily conversations because they help people avoid conflict or maintain harmony with others and facilitate relationship repair by encouraging communication and a return of comfort.

4.2. Recommendations and suggestions

1. This work may serve as a foundation for additional research in the same area. It is advised that researchers carry out further research on apologizing and other functions using various subjects and scenarios.
2. It is advised that English teachers, instructors, and students understand, be conscious of, and put the tactics of apology into practice.

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