AN ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENT POLITENESS EXPRESSION IN SHOWING APOLOGIZING

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Abstract

This study supposes to know the different expression of the students when they showing apologizing and also analyze more deeply about their culture background. It is affected their apologizing expression or not. It analyzed by descriptive qualitative approach with 19 students from different culture as participant in Postgraduate State University of Semarang. The results of analysis are; every culture differs from each other in their politeness of showing apologizing even though not really significant. Different background of culture is one of the important things that make people differ in particular expression.

Key words: *politeness, apologizing, expression, and expressive speech act.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Searle (1969) as cited in Mey L J (1993: 151) affirms that when we speak we are performing speech acts, acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises and so on. He suggests that these acts are performed in accordance with certain rules for the use of linguistic elements. Still, according to Searle the goal of spoken interaction is to communicate things to the hearer by getting him/her to recognize the intention that one has to communicate those things. The speaker then must achieve the intended effect on the hearer by allowing him/her to recognize his/her intention to achieve that

effect. Once, the hearer recognizes the intention of the speaker to achieve an effect this is generally achieved. What the speakers intend to achieve related to hearers's response has strong relation with how speakers deliver the speech in what we called politeness.

Terms "politeness" has became an issue since 1970s. This term represents the action and willingness to be pleasant to one and other. Basically, there was no written standard of level in politeness, and how to judge people more polite than other. Sometimes we found one group more emphasis in their talk rather than other groups. As example in Indonesia, different culture of Indonesia might

appears too much different belief about politeness itself. It can be concluded that something that we only can assess is about to what speakers say and to how their hearers react. That is why "politeness" then become one of the important field in pragmatic, especially in speech act discourse (Thomas, 1995: 150).

In the early discussed, politeness focused on investigating the utterances performed by the speaker. It refers to how much politeness can be delivered by the speaker in expressing "*the hierarchy of politeness*". Based on Brown and Levinson (1987: 93) clarify two strategies in expressing the level of politeness. First, involve *organization* and *ordering* of the expression in utterances. Example (1) *if you don't mind me asking, where did you get the dress?*. (2) *where did you get the dress, if you don't mind me asking?*. We may observe that according to the organization and ordering, the first uttarance may more polite than the second utterance. Second, is about the performance of the speaker (*face effort*), the more speakers' face expends in face-maintaining behaviour, the more speakers' communicate his sincere desire.

The act of communicating such an acknowledgment is politeness. Face (Brown and Levinson, 1987) is assumed to be of two types: positive face, or they want to be approved of by others, and negative face or they want to be unimpeded by others. Acts that run contrary to these wants threaten the face of the speaker (e.g. apologies) or the hearer (e.g. requests). Certain acts of politeness, such as orders or requests, are intrinsically face-threatening (FTA) and thus require strategic redress. The choice of appropriate polite expressions in a given context depends on a number of factors which Brown and Levinson have reduced to a simple formula: P = Distance (D) of the speaker and hearer, the relative power (P) between them, and the absolute ranking (R) of the imposition in the particular culture.

Politeness conducted in some kinds of speech act and utterances, and apology is the most frequently utilized speech acts (Farashaiyan & Amirkhiz, 2011). Brown and Levinson (1987: 187) stated that an apology is the expression showed by the speakers to the hearers in order to requires the speakers to admit the responsibility for the same behaviour. Goffman (1971) as cited in Farashaiyan

& Amirkhiz (2011) defines apologies as remedial interchanges used to reestablish social harmony after a real or virtual offence. He further claims that a successful apology has several felicity conditions the most important of which are for the apologizer to acknowledge an offense has taken place, to take responsibility for that offense, and, finally, to offer some compensation for reparation.

The reason of the writer for choosing this topic is because with the rapid development of globalization, cross-cultural communication has been a more and more important part in people's ordinary life. It becomes rather important about how to communicate properly and politely with people in different cultural backgrounds. Moreover in Indonesia that have too much cultural background. It indicates that different background of culture will impact in how people express their apologizing when they are trying to ask sorry to another. Class C or Rombel 3 conducted of students from different background of culture, they have own language and many differences in showing some expressions, in this case, the writer suppose to know the different expression showed by the students in Rombel C when they ask apology in their classmates, and also if there are any different expression, what are the background of those expressions. So that, this paper try to investigate more about politeness in showing apologizing. The statements of problems stated as follows: (1) Is there any different politeness showing by students in apologizing expression? (2) Why students differ from each other in their showing apologizing expression?

Many researchers had conducted previous study that related to this research, cross cultural studies of apologies have been carried out by many researches: Firsly, Apology Strategies of Iranian Undergraduate Students done by Dadkhah Tehrani & Omid Rezaei, et al (2012). This study investigated the different primary and secondary strategies the Iranian EFL students use in different situations and the effect of gender on this. The results showed that the Statement of remorse was the strategy most frequently used by male and female respondents across the sample, and female participants used this strategy more frequently than male participants. Moreover The four primary strategies used by the male respondents were

accounts, compensation reparation, negative assessment of responsibility (30%, 20%, 15%, 15%, respectively), while those used by female respondents were compensation, Showing lack of intent to do harm, accounts, reparation (20%, 20%, 15%, 10%, respectively). Male respondents tended to use negative assessment of responsibility more than their females, counterparts (15% and 5%, respectively). Female respondents used the strategy of promise not to repeat offense in 10% of the situations, while their male counterparts did not use this strategy at all.

The second study conducted by Wagner, L. C. (2012). This is an ethnographic investigation of naturally occurring apologies and politeness strategies in Cuernavaca Spanish was accomplished. The basic strategies and sub-strategies used by members of the Cuernavaca speech community to apologize for a wide range of offenses were identified and discussed. Both positive- and negative- politeness strategies within the apology acts were noted. Finally, the findings from this sample were compared with the findings of previously conducted studies on apologizing and politeness in other varieties of Spanish. Results from this investigation dispel Brown and Levinson's claim that negative politeness is the universally preferred approach for doing facework, and it is advocated that additional investigations of (FTAs) and politeness using culturally-sensitive models of interaction be used.

The third study was A Descriptive-Comparative Analysis of Apology Strategies: The case of Iranian EFL and Malaysian ESL University Students, carried out by Farashaiyan & Amirkhiz (2011). This paper describe and compare the apology strategies utilized by Iranian EFL and Malaysian ESL learners in confronting identical apology situations. For this purpose, data were elicited from 15 Iranian and 15 Malaysian students through a *Discourse completion tasks* questionnaire. The participants were of the same language proficiency. Results of the study showed certain similarities and differences in terms of frequency and typology of strategies used by Iranian and Malaysian students. The findings of this study might be of pedagogical help and significance to teachers, students and those interested in pragmatics in general and apology speech act in particular.

Zhu and Bao (2010) also studied about *The Pragmatic Comparison of Chinese and Western "Politeness" in Cross-cultural Communication*. This paper analyzes the similarities and differences of Chinese and western cultures from the aspects of connotation of "politeness", its choice preference and the way of expression and clarifies that only by correct use of politeness principles can people get the best effect of communication.

Strategies of Apologizing

Generally speaking, human beings apologize when they commit a transgression under a low or high obligation. To offer an apology one needs to use one or a combination of apology strategies in order to be impressive in a remedial exchange. They are the available devices of the apology exchangers in order to maintain the social equilibrium. Brown and Levinson (1987) imply that apologetic strategies are specific methods of approaching an offence, modes of operation for confirming or assuring of mutual solidarity and "planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain" speech acts.

In the course of an ongoing interaction, apology makers recognize the degree of the offence, the relative power of the addressee over the addressor, the social distance, and the relative circumstance in order to revitalize the position of the previous event. Fraser (1980) cited in A. Eslami-Rasekh & Mehdi Mardani (2010) said that apologies are rule-governed. For example, uttering "*I'm really sorry*". It means that the offended person may either admit the apology or sorry for persuing person.

The denial or acceptance of excuse may involve a set of strategies. If you apologize, you are respected and answered; if you are apologized, the rule states that you respond politely. In that case, you will be reverenced. The ability to interpret, give and respond to apologizing appropriately is a social skill which can add greatly to the language learners' opportunities to enter into friendly relationship with native speakers and incidentally gain needed practice in using the target language.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study using descriptive qualitative approach, the qualitative research is research which purposes for understanding the phenomena about what the subject feels, for example; habitual, perception, motivation, action, etc. This study is a non-experimental research. There was no administration or control group as it found in an experimental research and it was not directed toward hypothesis testing either. Instead, it just attempted to get the information about something. Apologies for instance, due to the fact that they appear to be context dependent, are very hard to record as natural talk. Another disadvantage is the difficulty in controlling variables such as power, status, gender, and age difference between the participants.

These apologies were also analyzed and compared according to the following variables: type of apology, degree of politeness in each cultural background, power relationship between hearer and speaker (symmetrical or asymmetrical), social distance, and settings. All of postgraduate students from Class C PPs Unnes participated in this study as respondents. All were university students majoring in English. The writer observed directly about the interaction happened in the classroom. There were 19 students in Rombel 3, they were come from Kupang (NTT) 3 students, Lombok (NTB) 2 students, Padang (Sumatera) 1 student, Lampung 1 student, and other were Javanese.

This observation result analyzed descriptively based on some notes made by the writer when observed each student from different city. The apologizing expressions that investigated in this observation could be Short Massage Send (SMS), conversation and interaction happened in the classroom weather among student and other student in formal situation, also students' interaction in formal situation such as discussion or presentations.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the observation, the writer would like to present the result of observation in descriptive analysis related to the politeness of showing apologizing in Rombel 3 Postgraduate State University of Semarang as follow:

Disarming apologies

Disarming apologies are those apologies that anticipate an offence and they are often issued in both sets of data before formulating a question, asking for

repetition of what has been said or before making a statement that is contrary to the one already formulated by the speaker. Edmondson (1981) as cited in Fahey, M. P (2005) sserts that disarming apologies are issued before a speech act that could be considered by the speaker inconvenient for the hearer or contrary to the hearer's views. These apologies play an important politeness role because they soften the threat to face and aim to maintain harmony with the hearer. Disarming apologies are often easier to convey than remedial apologies because the latter involves a higher cost of face for the speaker. Disarming apologies that showing by students from each city present in range 10%-100% on the table below:

Table 1 Disarming Apologies

Students from	Degree of disarming in percentage	Explanation
Javanese	90%	Very high
Lampung	80%	Intermediate
Padang	85%	High
Kupang, NTT	75%	Enough
Lombok, NTB	75%	Enough

Remedial apologies

Remedial apologies are those apologies that are uttered after an offence has been committed. They are

retrospective, supportive of the hearer and self-demeaning (Aijmer, 1996: 99). The apologizer's main concern is the reestablishment of harmony with the hearer. The choice of a particular strategy or combination of strategies for conveying remedial apology supposes the consideration of the following variables: seriousness of the offence, relationship of power between the participants, and the consideration of setting. (Fahey, M. P: 2005). The following table shows the findings regarding types of offences in both sets of data:

Table 2 Type of Offense

Student's cultural background	Seriousness of the offence	Relationship of power between the participants	The consideration of setting
Javanese	85%	95%	80%
Lampung	85%	90%	80%
Padang	85%	90%	80%
Kupang, NTT	85%	90%	80%
Lombok, NTB	85%	90%	80%

Degree of politeness

Expressive speech acts are associated with positive politeness, which may be explained referring to the approval and modesty maxims of politeness. The agreement maxim requires 'minimizing dispraise of *other*' and 'maximizing

praise of *other*'; the modesty maxims requires 'minimizing praise of *self*' and 'maximizing dispraise of *self*'. The expression of politeness in showing apologizing seen from intonations, stressing, and the language choose in utterance to express "*sorry, excuse me, I beg your pardon etc*", the different expression also shown from the way of telling and the face performance. Based on the observation that the writer done, the writer presents that in percentage as follow:

Table 3 Degree of Politness

Cultural background	Intonation and stressing	Language choose	Expression
Javanese	Very soft	Very High	Polite
Lampung	Soft	High	Polite
Padang	Soft	High	Polite
Kupang, NTT	Soft enough	High enough	Polite
Lombok, NTB	Soft enough	High enough	Polite

4. CONCLUSIONS

According to the data presented above, it could be conclude that:

1. There are some different expressions from each student who came from different city in the Rombel C; students from Javanese usually more soft in intonation, stressing and language choose when they are ask sorry to one another. Students from Lampung and Padang almost the same in their politeness and apologizing expression. Then Kupang and Lombok found little bit differ from other city. Even they are the same language choose in showing apologizing, but they differ when they use language especially in stressing and intonation. Kupang and Lombok sounds harder than other cities.

2. The differences of each students perform in their apologizing expression cannot separate from the background of culture which where they come from. Java which is known well as cultivated people with the gentle language use, make the students and people from Java are really soft in their expression generally. Then other cities which are come from other culture such as Kupang and Lombok are little bit harder in their intonations and words stressing.

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