Apology: Its Nature and Patterns

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1. Introduction

This paper is an outline of what apology is. Examples from English and Bahasa Indonesia—mostly taken from a study carried out among Australian and Indonesian undergraduate students in Canberra University (Moehkardi, 1993)—are given in order to have a clearer picture of the realization of apologizing. It will focus on the discourse situation which usually calls for apology of which realization does not only deal with utterances but also with the notion of face. It is also necessary to bear in mind the need of understanding the semantic formulas—word, phrase or sentence which meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy, and any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question" (Fraser, 1983 in Wodson and Judd, 1983:27)—that would be appropriate in performing apology, especially in the setting of the two languages mentioned above.

2. The Nature of Apology

2.1. Speech Acts

Austin (1962:6) has observed that performance of some sentences can be treated as the performance of an act or even several simultaneous acts, and thus they are considered as having illocutionary force (Austin, 1962:93). Some verbs, referred to as performative verbs or the performance, name the act which is being performed, but as Searle (1979) points out, the same speech act may be brought about indirectly by semantically different verbs, such as, instead of saying I hereby request you to open the door, one can say Please, open the door. Similarly, an utterance can express more than one illocutionary force, such as Would you sit down could be either a request or an offer.

Apologize in I apologize according to Austin is the explicit performative, precisely is behavior of performative in which the verb performs the act of apologizing which can also actually be achieved by the utterance of I am sorry and other verbs expressing regret. On the other hand, I am sorry is not an explicit performative but it is rather a primary performative in which it can in some way be used to perform the speech act of apologizing, but in some other way its use is only a report, for example in I am sorry to have to say that today is Monday. (Austin, 1962: 66). However, by recent researchers, such as Ohtain, Blum-Kuika and others, such utterances are considered as the explicit or direct apology.

Furthermore, Searle argued that the verb apologize does not always carry the illocutionary force. It is restricted to certain conditions in order to perform apologizing act, that it is "present indicative active, with a first person subject" (In Owen, 1983:116). So I apologized or I apologized is beyond the speech act of apologizing, they are merely a report or apologizing act. Besides, this performative must have the following propositional contents (Searle in Owen, 1983:116-7):

a. It must concern an act, rather than a state of affairs;
b, the act described in the propositional content must be an act of the speaker;

c, the act of the speaker must be a past act

For items b Owen adds that the speaker may apologize for an act done by other people she is in charge of or responsible for. In item c she adds that apology may be realized in the course of a potential violation.

Whereas performative apology and be sorry are speaker-oriented in which the verbs show that the speakers regret the offence they have committed, forgive is hearer-oriented and it is a response to apology. Thus the function of forgiving is to show that an apology has been accepted and indeed the offence, forgiven. Please forgive me, and its variants, in some way a request in which the speaker asks the hearer to do something for the speaker. Therefore, this verb is often labeled in the study of apology as request for forgiveness. This is another example of how one speech act functions as other speech acts.

Speech act of apologizing is among the common routine formulae in most languages, including English and Bahasa Indonesia. As verbal interaction it often calls for polite realization. The use of politeness in an interaction is intended to ensure that an individual satisfies the face wants of the other, while at the same time making sure that this satisfaction does not in any way clash with his own interests” (Bayraktaroğlu, 1991:9).

2.2. Face, Politeness and Apologies

According to Goffman (1971 in Bayraktaroğlu,1991:6) “social order is maintained if each individual is respectful to others’ rights as much as he is to his own rights.” In other words, a successful member of a society is someone who is sensitive to his own and others’ needs to preserve their face. Brown and Levinson (1978:66) define the term ‘face’ as ‘the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself.’ Face is thus something that can be lost, damaged, maintained, or enhanced and must be attended to constantly in an interaction. Therefore people tend to conduct themselves in an interaction so as to maintain both his own face and the face of the other participants. This results in face preserving behavior which falls as positive ‘approach’ aspect and a negative ‘avoidance’ aspect, known as ‘politeness’ (Owen, 1983:15). Although the degree of politeness in linguistic realization are culturally relative, the notion of politeness seems to be universal to all language pragmatics. The idea of politeness is related to face, because politeness can function as face saving before and after a damage to face occurs. It can prevent the damage—as in introducing a request—as well as wipe the effects of it (Goffman, 1972 as quoted by Bayraktaroğlu, 1991:8).

Brown and Levinson (1978:73-5) list five categories of politeness strategies in relation to face threatening acts (FTA): a) back-on-record is a strategy in which the speaker wants to do the FTA with maximum efficiency using the least complicated, direct, unambiguous realization of the communication act; b) positive politeness is hearer's positive-face oriented and conveys the speaker's desire to be kind; c) negative politeness is oriented toward the hearer's negative face; d) other record depends on the addressee's power; e) after the speaker's utterance expressed to avoid awkwardness toward the hearer; e) not doing the FTA (silence).

When the healer's negative face is damaged, a speaker would be considered polite if she redresses the damage directly. By saying I apologize the speaker unambiguously expresses the FTA of apologizing. Thus, apology tends to be direct (Kinnes, 1993:160) or hearer supportive (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989:12). Other apology strategies may strengthen or weaken the
politeness and thus the sincerity of the apology. For example, expression of responsibility is more face-saving for hearer but minimization in face-saving for speaker, and thus weakens the apology realized.

Goffman's notion of face covers the participants' efforts not only in preserving face in which the participants prevent a damage to face from occurring, but also in saving face after a damage occurs. Brown and Levinson's (1978) idea of politeness strategies do not only preserve face but also maintain face while a damage is occurring by reducing the impact of the offence being committed. As an individual and at the same time social being, people want to keep their privacy and freedom of movement and speech unimpeded by others and at the same time they want to contribute to the social world surrounds them, and hoping their contributions are desirable to others. And this gives each individual a double face (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61):

Negative face: the basic claims to territories, personal preserves, rights to nondisturbance, i.e., freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

Positive face: the positive consistent self-image or personality claimed by participants.

In other words, when someone offends someone else, whether the offended realizes it or not, it is considered polite if the offender initiates remedial work to set things right again. However, this remedial activity risks not only the offender's face due to his/her pointing out the offence and the risk should the remedy fail, but also the offender's face becomes, as he/she has to preserve the face of the apologist unless he/she is considered unsympathetic for being unable to accept the apology. Therefore both "the offender and the offended simultaneously attempt to initiate an apology" (Goffman in Owen, 1983:18).

In the case of apologizing, it damages the apologist's positive face for admitting the cause of regret imposed on the apologist, at the same time the cause of regret has damaged the apologizer's negative face. Apologizing is regarded as negative politeness strategies because it is "oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) hearer's negative face" (Brown and Levinson, 1979:78) and thus also help saving the apologist's positive face.

In relation to preserving the positive face in this remedial interchange, the apologist tend to embed his/her explicit apology with other elements of apology to make his/her apology sincere and thus satisfy the other party's positive face. At the same time the apologist must save their own face by putting the blame on something or somebody else as to reduce the seriousness of the offence they have committed. This kind of interaction is what Goffman (in Owen 1983) calls remedial interchange in which activity the apologist and the apologiznee simultaneously reassert their positive face needs.

Remedial interchange includes apology and request. Whereas apologizing usually occurs after an offence has been committed and mostly burden the apologist, remedial work is shared by both parties: the speaker who imposes on the hearer to do him/her the favor, and the hearer who may feel the unfavorable face(s) doing something s/he does not want to do. Thus in request, offence potentially occurs before the request for the speaker and after the request should the hearer does not comply to the request.

Goffman (1967: in Owen, 1983:17) refers to the apologist as the remedy or remedy and remedial face which comprises "the offence, the offender, and the victim." Further he observes that the interchange provides a remedy for an offense and restores social equilibrium or harmony. (in Holmes, 1996:159). Similarly, Holmes defines apology as "a speech act addressed to B's face needs and intended to remedy an offence for which A takes
responsibility and thus to restore equilib-
rium between A and B (where A is the
apologist or who is responsible for the
offence, and B is the person offended)
(1990:159).

The act of apologizing is needed
when there is some behaviour, or which
has violated social norms (Olstain and Co-
hen, 1983:20) or is intended to give sup-
port for a hearer who has actually or
potentially been affected by a 'face
threatening act' (FTA) (Olstain, 1989:156.) By apologizing the speaker
acknowledges the offence and admits to
the fact that s/he is 'at least partially
involved in its cause" (Blum-Kulka,

Initially the need to apologize de-
pends on how the offender perceives the
FTA. A sensitive one would directly
apologize when s/he, for example, acci-
dentially stepped on someone feet in a
crowded bus whereas the lesser one
would prefer silence. The apology would
lose its strength of felicitousness if the
course of apologizing is reversed. It hap-
pens if the supposed offender does not
apologize because s/he is ignorant of the
FTA or because they opt for silence so as
to avoid the risk of losing face. The of-
fended who recognizes the FTA de-
mands apology, in this situation the apol-
ogy realized by the speaker does not
actually satisfy both parties. The speaker
suffers from the humiliation for being de-
manded to recognize and admit the FTA
and the offended realizes that the apol-
yogy is half-hearted. In short, this kind of
remedial exchange is lack of sincerity
and the harmony is thus half-heartedly
restored or not at all. Even sometimes the
offender denies the need to apologize and
to be responsible for the effect of an
offence, and s/he would rather blame the
other participant, for example by saying:
'It's your fault.

The degrees of FTA determines the
realization of apology. The more serious
the violation, the more apologetic ges-
tures may be employed by the apologizer
in order to make his/her apology felici-
tious. Olstain and Cohen found that
the politeness and the sincerity of the apol-
yogy also depend on the tone of delivery
and the word choice (1983:29). They
also agreed that the social status of the
participants also determine the remedial

In a spoken setting, a remedial ex-
change that follows an apology may re-
store simultaneously the positive face
needs of both speaker and hearer (Hol-
mes, 1990:162). However, in the written
setting, where the remedial exchange is
delayed, the writer who apologizes will
provide elements accompanying his/her
apologies to soften his/her own offence
and at the same time to redress the dam-
age to the victim's positive face (Olstain,

In its wider range, however, the func-
tions of some semantic formulas of apol-
yogy may extend to the bosom of express-
ing sympathy (as in: 'I'm sorry in offering
condolence or other inconvenience
caused by nature or Institutions, and re-
quest (as in Pardon me or Excuse me). In
the former case the apologizer is not
necessarily the one who breaks the equi-
lbrium, s/he may apologize for the of-
ference or inconvenience done by some-
thing or someone s/he is in charge of, for
example, inconvenience caused by ani-
mal or children, or s/he represents another
for example, a subordinate who gives a
letter of dismissal from the board of direc-
tive to his employee. In the latter case, the
apologizer automatically expects the
apologizee to do something in his/her
favor, for example, in expressing Excuse
me or Pardon me the speaker expects
the hearer to repeat what s/he has said.
Apologies are also produced before an
offence occurs but in this case the
speaker is sure that his/her action is go-
ing to offend the hearer, like in request,
Apologies are also used when someone
asks for permission or consent or simply
to show someone's intention to his/her
hearer.
Based on the work of Gilman and Cohen (1983:22-3) apology can be real-
ized using explicit or direct multiformula-
form, the IFR (Illocutionary Force Indi-
cating Device)—a term formulated by
Searle (1969:64) and indirect apology
strategies of which are realized by refer-
ence to set of specific proposition, con-
sisting of: expression of responsibility,
explanation or account of the situation,
offer of repair, a promise of forbearance.
However, in verbal realization these di-
rect and indirect strategies are not sepa-
rately independent. They are sometimes
uttered in the same sentence. For exam-
ple: I am sorry that I haven’t been able to
repay any of the money that you loaned
me. In this sentence there are two strate-
gies of apology. The I am sorry that/can
be classified as the direct or explicit apology
which is followed by another strategy, i.e.
the explanation I haven’t been able to
repay any of the money that you loaned.

3.1 Direct apology

As the term implies, the strategies
included in this category use the perfor-
mative verbs, they are: a. an offer of
apology; b. request for forgiveness; c. an
expression of regret. From earlier studies
on apologies (Gilman and Cohen, 1983), it seems that there are "language
specific scales of conventionality which
determine preferences for IFR realiza-
tion" in every language community. In
English, for example, the most common
expression is be sorry, in Hebrew is
mesh which means literally forgiveness
and in Bahasa Indonesia is maaf equal to
be sorry or minta maaf equal to apolo-
gize or ask for forgiveness.

Most of the examples cited in this
paper are taken from the writer’s previous
research on similar subject, in this study
the respondents (age 15-25) responded to
a given situation which had different
degrees of offensiveness. A written set-
ting was chosen in order to give the re-
grouping different degrees of severity/functional

In offer of apology the English perfor-
mative verb apologize represents this
strategy, for example: I apologize for be-
ing late. The phrasal verb apologize for
is subject to a gerundive nominalization
and according to Searle it does not take
Another variation derived from similar verbs, like Please accept my
apology or Would you accept my
apology are also included in this strat-
ey. However, according to Barrett (in
Owen, 1983:129) I offer you my apo-
logy(ies) and/or I offer to apologize cannot
be considered as apology. The verb offer
introducing the apology is a "type of
promise, committing the speaker to some
future action, and apology does not do this".
These expressions are considered as
committing the speaker to apologize not
as apology itself.

The realization of expression I apolo-
gize is not frequently used in spoken
interaction, it is usually used in formal
written communication, like in an
announcement. In a research investigating
the use of this apology in written interac-
tion, the occurrence of this strategy was
very low (Moekhardt, 1993). The serious-
ness of offence and the distant relation-
ship of the participants seemed to deter-
mine the choice of this strategy. From
the same study there was a case of an inde-
pendent Australian student who was un-
able to return the money he borrowed
from his parents and he saw this as em-
arrassing and offensive. In his letter to
his parents he chose I apologize rather
than the more common expression I am
sorry.

Whereas English separates lexical
meanings of apologize and request for
forgiveness, Bahasa Indonesia includes
the meaning into the lexical phrase minta
maaf—preceded by first personal sub-
ject— which is included into the request
for forgiveness in this apology frame-
work. This phrase and its variants seems to be the most common explicit sub-
strategy used in Bahasa Indonesia. This assumption was justified in a research
carried out in a circle of Indonesian stu-
dents (aged 18-25 year old) in Canberra
by Moehuirdo (1995) in which the Indo-
nesian respondents preferred using this
sub-strategy. As the term says, the Eng-
lish version that equal to this sub-strategy
are forgive, excuse, and pardon (Norrick
in Owen, 1983: 138) and all of these verba
are followed by first personal ob-
tect.
Although they belong to the same
framework, Indonesian maaf or Saya
minta maaf, and English Excuse me, For-
give me, and Pardon me have different
features. Indonesian maaf and its vari-
ants are speaker oriented indicating of-
ference which has been committed, for-
give, excuse and pardon are hearer ori-
ented, as in Would you forgive me, in-
tended to end the impact of an offence.
Unlike minta maaf which can cover all
the functions of excuse me, forgive me
and pardon me before or after the of-
fence, these English verbs are slightly
different from each other, although, in some
cases they are sometimes inter-
changeable. Forgive me is commonly
called for after a violation and aimed at
reducing the impact of it. Apologetic ex-
pressions Excuse me, Pardon me or I beg
your pardon are to redress the off-
ence the speaker is surely going to make
soon. In other words these expressions
are usually produced before the occur-
rence of potential offence. Furthermore,
with excuse me the speaker can also
announce the inconvenience s/he is go-
ing to make and expects the hearer to do
him/her a favor. For example, the speaker
wants the hearer to repeat what s/he has said, s/he could introduce his/her request with either excuse me or pardon me. In the study of request these
sub-strategies of apology are considered
alerters (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper,
1989:17). In formal setting, excuse me
may also be used to introduce asking for
permission or consent, for example: Ex-
cuse me, may I leave the room? In other
cases it is simply a polite way to inform
the hearer of the speaker’s intention, for
example: passing in front of someone in
a theatre. In this case excuse me is pos-
ilably Javanese nusun sewu and not nyi-
wan panggupen which is closely to
sorry. Expressions of Pardon me or I beg
your pardon are usually limited in its us-
age as a request for the hearer to repeat
his/her talk of which case expression ex-
cuse me is also possible.
The semantic formulas of English Re-
quest-for-Forgiveness strategy is as vari-
ous as its Indonesian counterpart. There
are structural variations with forgive me
for example a more polite way Would you
forgive me, or Excuse me or Would you
excuse me or Pardon me or I beg your
pardon. Because excuse me may intro-
duce the speaker’s intention of asking
the hearer to do something, the speaker
must add his excuse with the request.
Similarly, Indonesian minta maaf has
many variations of which each may de-
termine the degree of politeness of the
expression. From the explanation
Maafkan or Maafkan saya to the com-
plete lexical phrase; Saya minta maaf
there are variations of subject saya, of
the verb mendoakan of maf which has also
an internal variant by adding a prefix ‘me-
’ and an external one which is the syno-
ymy mohon and for by adding ’me’ to it
which intensifies the degrees of formality.
So, Saya mohon/memohon maaf was
considered more polite and formal than
Saya minta/meminta maaf. Using mo-
hon/memohon also makes the apology
sound intense and serious and thus is
more force threatening to the speaker.
However, intention plays an important
role as well in determining the serious-
ness of using these verbs. Moreover,
maaf and its variation can be followed
by kpadha (to) and followed by a noun or
noun phrase as an object; alas or untuk
(to) followed by a noun or a noun
In English apology, the speaker usually tries to soften the offense or compensate the offended person. This can be done by expressing regret, offering an apology, or making a promise to improve. In Indonesian, the speaker may use similar expressions but with a different emphasis. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bahasa Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am sorry</td>
<td>Maaf saya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sorry for the inconvenience</td>
<td>Maaf atas ketentraman saya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sorry for the delay</td>
<td>Maaf atas ketidaksyenatannya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I promise</td>
<td>Saya janji</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In both languages, the apologies are often followed by a promise to improve or make amends. This is why apologies are often seen as a way to prevent further offense and to show remorse for past actions.
Apology by repeating the apology and usually by adding again or once again. The Bn Multiple Apology usually takes the form of sebelum kau dan sebelum kau sa-
stutuhkan atau sekaal lagi indicating that the apologizer simultaneously acknow-
ledges directly or indirectly that the of-
ence has occurred. The external inten-
sification is also called concern for the 
hearer and is considered as an indirect 
apology strategy.

In addition to Osthain’s and Cohen’s 
frameworks, Owen (1983:58) includes the 
phrase I am afraid but this phrase is only 
considered apology in certain situation, 
for example, in this utterance: I’m afraid I 
can’t offer you work but not in this I’m 
afraid he’s going to fail. It is similar to Bn 
expression saya ngganti saya sekali 
and also khawatir which is also situational 
specific. In Saya ngganti saya ikut 
bisa kehancuran but not in Saya 
saya sekali paham and Saya khawatir 
mainan ini tidak memuaskan Anda 
la apologize but not this Saya khawatir 
dengan kesehatan satria. I’m afraid and 
saya function as informing hearer that 
offence has occurred without speaker ex-
plicitly expressing responsibility.

3.2 Non Explicit Apologies

Unlike direct apology, which is readily 
interpreted, the non explicit strategies are 
usually more difficult to interpret because 
explanation, offer of repair, promise of 
forbearance are very situationally spec-
cific and will semantically reflect the con-
ten of the situation. Exression of re-
ponsibility, although it is a non-explicit 
strategy, relates to speaker’s explicit 
willfulness to admit fault (Osthaiin, 1989: 
157). In addition to the above mentioned 
non explicit strategies, Osthain (1989:158) 
adds ways in which the ad-
resser could implicitly or minimize the 
apology. Intensifying the apology is when 
the addressee gives more support to the 
addresser (Concern for the hearer) and 
thus, legitimizes the former more; or, 
when the addressee intemizes or repeats
their job. So it is understood if they use either strategy following the direct one in order to intensify their apology. For example, a waiter who spills the soup over the guest’s lap used an IFID and support it with offer of repair rather than using expression of responsibility: Oh Maaf, Pak. Akan segera saya ambilkan kain kering dan sup baru. Whereas to a manager coming late to a meeting or a professor unfinished correcting the student’s paper, expression of responsibility do not harm them their job.

Explanations or account is a common reaction to the need to apologize by explaining the source of the offence as caused by external factors over which the speaker does not have control and it almost always immediately follow direct apology. In some cases explanation can act as an apology by referring to either the specific event that causes the offence, for example in the case of being late: I had a flat tire or by a general statement which is implicitly brought forth as relevant to the situation: The traffic is congested (Blum-Kulka, Huse and Kasper, 1989:21).

Although expression of responsibility and account are likely to occur similarly frequently, their lexical patterns of realization are different. Account or explanations is usually a loose expression in which context reflects the situation (Olthoff, 1989:187). Here is an example following a direct apology when the speaker admitted that he broke his arrangement to meet his friend: I wanted so much to go with you but something really important came up, I couldn’t avoid it, you know; there’s unusually co-occurrence of similar syntactic nor semantic pattern in the same or other situations.

Olthoan and Cohen (1983:23) expect that offer of repair is highly predictable in a situation where “physical injury or other damage has resulted”. In other words, if the speaker thinks that the offence or inconvenience can be compensated for, s/he can choose to offer repair. Thus this strategy is immediate promise to repair the damage or to compensate the inconvenience. This expectation was justified in the earlier study (Moehnardi, 1993) which most of the Australian and Indone- sian respondents chose this strategy in a situation where they spoiled the leather jacket they had borrowed: I’ll get you another jacket as soon as I get the one that suits you or even an invitation to dinner. Nevertheless offer of repair can also be vague and distant promises, as also found in the study: ... hopefully someday I’ll be in a position to spoil you guys like you spoil me to a parent whom the respondent had apologized for being unable to repay the money she had bor- rowed and, despite this, had requested more.

Whereas Offer of Repair is an implicit promise of which the hearer must be able to deduce the utterance as so, Promise of Forbearance explicitly uses the performative “I promise” and thus, it is more face threatening to the speaker. It seems that the former strategy, offer of repair, is preferable to the adult apologizer because by expressing offer of re- pair s/he shows their intention of not be- ing ignorant of the inconvenience they have caused. With the latter strategy, the speaker seems to avoid the conse- quence or punishment of the inconvenient they have made. Therefore in ear- lier studies, this strategy was adopted by children or teenager (Mutia et al, 1985 in Olthof, 1989:162 and Moehnardi, 1993). This strategy resembles explicit apologies and acknowledgement of re- sponsibility in that it is likely to be lexically fixed but its meaning expressed by promise that s/he will never happen again.

Using Concern for the Hearer the speaker or apologizer intensifies the illo- cutionary force of her/his apology. This can be done within the IFID or direct apology using intensification such as very, so, etc. and for using multiple strate- gies, such as again. Besides, concern for the hearer can be expressed explicitly
outside the direct strategy. Its realization depends on the situation where the of-
cence occurs. For example: Ihope you didn’t wait for too long was expressed
when the speaker came late to an ap-
pointment or Kami sudah marah bukan? (Mochtar, 1995). In other words, by
using this strategy the apologizer gives
more support to the apologizee, usually
by claiming the inconvenience or the
problem the apologizer has caused.

Unlike for the hearer which
satisfies hearer’s face wants, Minimiza-
tion intends to downplay the offence
(Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper-
1989:21). The apologizer can either
minimize the offence, for example, when
arriving late, saying: Sorry, but we never
start on time anyhow, or downplay or
soften the effect of the offence: Sorry, but
you shouldn’t get so upset. Included in
this strategy is also the apologizer’s re-
quest of the apologizee’s understanding
for what has happened, for example: I
hope you understand my situation in-
dicating that the offence has happened
beyond the speaker’s control. Whereas
concern for the hearer strengthens the
apology, minimization may make the
apology sound insincere.

The realization of apology does not
necessarily contain all these indirect
strategies, nor the use of the IFID. The
use of either IFD with one or more indi-
rect strategies, or IFID with one or
more indirect strategies may create
higher norms of apology, however the
decision to choose the strategies is de-
termined very much by a number of dif-
ferent factors. Besides situational con-
text, i.e. the seriousness of the offence
and the speaker’s perception of apolo-
gize, social distance, social power, and
age, determine the choice of apologizing
strategies made by the speaker. Blum-
Kulka, House, and Kasper (1999:21) ad-
vises that socio-cultural factors also decide
the types of strategy commonly used in a
particular culture.

in contrast to choosing one or more of
these strategies, the speaker may deny
the need to apologize: There is no need
for you to get irritated or deny the respon-
sibility, such as It was your fault. Gisela
tain and Cohen. 1983:23) In this case the
speaker thinks the FTA is so unbearable
that she is the blame on the hearer. In the
same case the speaker may prefer
silence pretending the violence did not
occur or silence yet her body move-
ment indicates that she regrets the vio-
lence.

4. Summary

The act apologizing is called for when
there is some behavior which has vio-
lated social norms. And thus in apology-
izing there are elements of the violence,
the offender—who equates and takes the
responsibility for the violence, or does not
cause the violence but takes the reason-
ability—and the offended. Apologizing
needs an action or utterance to restore
the harmony broken by the violence be-
tween the parties.

There is a set of semantic formulas in
apologizing which can be expressed di-
rectly—is using the performatives, includ-
ing the semi-performative, such as Sorry
and execute indirectly—is utterances
which are mostly situation-specific. The
decision to select some elements of apolo-
gize is the speaker’s positive face at risk.
She loses face for already admitting the
violence, a greater loss when she recog-
nizes the responsibility for the offence,
and even greater damage to face should
her attempt to apologize fail. There-
fore in an understanding social interac-
tion where a remedial work occurs, the
hearer should cooperate in restoring the
imbalance.

Whereas the common apology sub-
strategy in English is sorry, in Bahasa
Indonesia is maaf which can cover the
whole range of the English FIT. There
are some other expressions of regret in
Bahasa Indonesia, though. Moreover,
conventionally, maaf is much more flex-
ible in most discourse situations where
apology is called for than its English
counterparts. Even sorry in some situa-
tions is not as appropriate as maaf in the
same situation. Maaf also has internal
politeness elements, ie. the verb and
its variants accompanying the sub-
strategy which does not exist in English
performatives of apology.

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