

ABSTRACT

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Apology is one of universal social phenomenon which commonly familiar in some cultures. It is used when an offence or violation of social norm has taken place to bring back harmonious situation after something bad happened. Some students in Indonesia use English utterance to express their apology. Thus, this study attempts to find how Indonesian EFL students ask for apology in English, which is broken down into the two research questions: (1) what strategies used by Indonesian EFL students in asking for apology in English, and (2) how those strategies reflect their pragmatic competence in English.

Qualitative method was employed as the research design in this study. The participants involved were 33 students from English Department of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in different level of years. A questionnaire in the form of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and an interview were used as the instruments in collecting the data. Then, the data were analyzed by using some semantic formulas in asking for apology (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; and Trosborg, 1995) to find the strategies and using the categories of failure or deviations (Olshtain & Cohen, 1989, 1985) to describe their pragmatic competence in English especially in asking for apology.

The findings show that Indonesian EFL students mostly used IFID as a direct expression of apology than other strategies. Based on the two classifications of mistakes, the strategy of justification and concern for hearer are mostly appear in intentional wrongdoing and the strategy of explanation and expressing lack of intent mostly appear in accidental wrongdoing. The use of internal modifications appear in some utterances in typical situations to differentiate among social distance, social power, and degree of imposition. Besides, saving face is considered as a quite important for Indonesian EFL students to conceal their bad act in front of the hearer. Meanwhile, difference cultural background and linguistic knowledge bear some failures or deviations, which were categorized in two categories: (1) deviation due to strategy and situation, and (2) deviation due to grammatical and lexical factors. The findings in every category described their pragmatic competence in English.

In conclusion, Indonesian EFL students have various strategies in asking for apology in English. There were not many differences between native and non-native speakers in using the main strategies in asking for apology. The two categories of failures in their utterances show that the pragmatic competence of Indonesian EFL students in asking for apology in English is not quite well, because of lack of sociolinguistic ability and sociocultural ability.