

**APOLOGY AND NON-APOLOGY STRATEGIES IN THE EFL
CONTEXT OF IRANIAN AZERBAIJANI PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

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PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

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Title of Thesis ("This Work"):

Apology and Non-Apology Strategies in the EFL Context of Iranian Azerbaijani Pre-university Students

Field of Study: **Pragmatics**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore apology and non-apology strategies of Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students in EFL. Data were collected from 100 participants (50 males, 50 females) studying at advanced level of English ranging between 16 and 18 years of age. The research design was a qualitative method and an open questionnaire namely Discourse Completion Test (DCT), role play, and interview were used to triangulate the data. The variables under study were gender, social distance, and social dominance (power). The data collected through the methods were examined for statistical figures based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983) frameworks. The results revealed that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students were explicit in their apologies and intensified them to enrich the realization of apology act. Like two context-external variables namely social distance and social dominance (power), gender was a significant factor and there was an influence of Azerbaijani language (L1) on Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students' use of apologies. Although explicit, intensified and polite strategies were offered to strangers, less formal and non-apology strategies were used to close friends. Besides, IFIDs, apology, and fewer non-apologies were applied to people of higher social status.

STRATEGI KEMAAFAN DAN TIDAK KEMAAFAN DALAM KONTEKS EFL DI KALANGAN PELAJAR PRA-UNIVERSITI AZERBAIJAN IRAN

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk meneroka strategi meminta maaf dan tidak meminta maaf pelajar EFL pra-universiti Azerbaijan Iran dalam bahasa asing (Bahasa Inggeris). Data telah dikumpul daripada 100 orang peserta (50 lelaki, 50 perempuan) yang sedang belajar pada peringkat tinggi berumur di antara 16 dan 18 tahun. Rekabentuk kajian ialah kaedah kualitatif dan soal selidik terbuka (DCT), role play, dan temuramah telah digunakan untuk triangulasi data. Pembolehubah yang dikaji adalah jantina, jarak sosial, dan dominasi sosial (kuasa). Data yang telah dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kaedah di atas telah diperiksa untuk nilai statistik berdasarkan kepada kerangka Cohen dan Olshtain (1981) dan Olshtain dan Cohen (1983). Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa pelajar EFL Azerbaijan Iran mempunyai keinginan untuk menjadi lebih jelas dalam permohonan kemaafan dan ini mempergiatkan mereka untuk memperkayakan tindakan permohonan kemaafan. Berbeza dengan dua pembolehubah konteks-luaran iaitu jarak sosial dan dominasi wibawa kuasa (*power*), jantina merupakan faktor yang signifikan dan terdapat pengaruh bahasa Azerbaijani dalam penggunaan permohonan maaf mereka.

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Haleh Parsa

May, 2018

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Apology Strategy
DCT	Discourse Completion Test
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IFID	Illocutionary Force Indicative Device
IPS	Institute of Postgraduate Studies
N	Number
NAS	Non-apology Strategy
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching of English as a Second Language
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The fact that language use differs in speech communities is an appealing matter of study for researchers. Many scholars have realized the importance of pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning. According to Leung (2005), linguistic competence and pragmatic competence are two crucial constituents of communicative competence. Based on the main theory of the communicative competence, learners need to be linguistically, pragmatically, and socio-pragmatically competent so that they can communicate proficiently. Considering the notion of pragmatic competence, language learners need to express proper intent in different contexts.

Hatch (1992) stated that speech acts are real-life interactions that need both the knowledge of language and the appropriate use of it within a given culture. The cultural base of speech acts and cultural conceptualization differ from one language to another (Sharifian and Jamarani, 2011). Similar to other speech acts, apologies carry a particular cultural value and are performed in various patterns. Based on Cohen and Olshtain (1983) people apologize when they violate social norms. In this regard, Holmes (1990) claimed that apologies are politeness strategies to redress a violation. Similarly, Bergman and Casper (1993) believed that apology is a way to reestablish social relation harmony following a transgression.

Apologies are also face-threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1987). It means, accepting a violation by the speaker threatens his/her face, while refusing it undermines the victim's face. Therefore, using politeness strategies are necessary to decrease the face-threat. Face-threatening essence of apology strategies motives interlocutors to use some mitigating strategies to evade hurting each other.

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) asserted that there are some similarities and differences in using apologies across-cultures and L2 learners experience some linguistic difficulties when they communicate with English native speakers (Kasper, 1990; Beebe et al., 1990; Koike, 1989; Cohen and Olshtain, 1993).

Nevertheless, English is no longer perceived as the only standard language norm and the influence of non-native speakers' norms on their performance in English is inevitable (Mckay, 2002). Many non-native speakers recurrently communicate with other non-native speakers. It is significant for them to have enough intercultural communication competence to interact properly (Wiseman, 2002, p.208).

Understanding and producing speech acts seem to be among the most difficult aspects insofar as the socio-pragmatic competence of learners of a second or foreign language is concerned. Lacking the cultural, social, and pragmatic context in cross-cultural communication can lead to misunderstandings, both in producing the appropriate speech act and in perceiving the intended meaning of one uttered by somebody else. That is why it is important to know how speech acts are produced both in the native and target language of foreign or second language learners.

The importance of these issues is reflected in the numerous studies that have been carried out over the past few decades. These studies looked at English (Bharuthram, 2003; Butler, 2001; Deutschmann, 2003; Edmundson, 1992; Holmes, 1990) but also at many other individual languages like Akan (Obeng, 1999), German (Vollmer & Olshtain, 1989), Lombok (Wouk, 2006), and Japanese (Kotani, 1999; Suzuki, 1999; Tamanaha, 2003). Most of the studies had, however, an interlanguage comparative approach, mostly by looking at learners of English who spoke different native languages such as Danish (Trosborg, 1987), French (Harlow, 1990; Olshtain,

1989), German (Olshtain, 1989), Hungarian (Suszczyńska, 1999), Japanese (Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, & Kasper, 1995; Nagano, 1985; Rose, 1994; Sugimoto, 1999; Taguchi, 1991), Korean (Jung, 2004), Polish (Lubecka, 2000; Suszczyńska, 1999), Russian (Savina, 2002), Spanish (Cordella, 1992; Garcia, 1989; Márquez-Reiter, 2000; Mir, 1992), Thai (Bergman & Kasper, 1993), and Iranian (Parsa, 2012).

However, before discussing the approaches, findings, and interpretations of these studies, it is necessary to present an overview of the concept of speech acts and the different types of speech acts, as well as the speech act that is the focus of the present study, namely the apology. Hence, this study aimed at examining apology and non-apology strategies employed by Iranian Azerbaijani pre-university students.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Iranian students lack **pragmatic competence** covering apology strategies in English-speaking contexts. English teaching method in Iranian schools is not communicative. It only focuses on extensive memorization, readings and translation activities. It seems that Iranian students' weakness in spoken English is seriously due to the given emphasis on grammar and reading comprehension (Jahangard, 2007). Many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) text books seldom show cultural differences or explain rules that enable successful communication. Ghorbani (2009) states that Iranian English teachers and learners focus on grammatical and structural aspects of English with the aim to do well in the exams. Teaching communicative skills is ignored in many English classes and majority of tests and language exams are ineffectual at testing real communicative language content (Dahmardeh, 2012).

Additionally, communicative situations with native speakers of English are rare in Iran. In fact, there is no opportunity for Iranian students to contact and have daily conversations with them. Thus, speech act behavior is an area of concern for those who plan to study abroad, migrate, travel, and share information. Students are found to use speech acts inappropriately and transfer some pragmatic rules from L1 into English language which may result in serious offences and misunderstanding (Eslami-Rasekh and Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012).

Holmes (2001) and Wolfson (1989) deliberate the learners transfer their cultural values to L2 when socio-cultural rules vary in both native and second language. By the same token, El Samaty (2005) pragmatic transfer is inevitable and even linguistically competent learners transfer L1 pragmatic rules in L2 production. Although politeness is a universal feature which is directly in relation to culture and language, it is conveyed differently across nations. For example, acceptable and polite expressions, idioms, or even body language in a given society, might be impolite or insulting in another.

At this juncture, it is important to note that research into apology and non-apology strategies drawn on by Iranian Azarbaijani EFL pre-university students is lacking. Iranian Azerbaijanis or Azeris are the most dominant minority group in Iran (Bulent Gokay, 2003). According to Andrew Burke (2012) Azeris are prominently active in commerce, Persian literature, politics and clerical world. As Bulent Gokay (2003) states 17 million Azeris live in Iran. In 2003, they comprised 24% of country's total population. They speak a dialect of Turkic which is similar to Azerbaijani Turkic spoken in the Republic of Azerbaijan (see Figure 1.1).

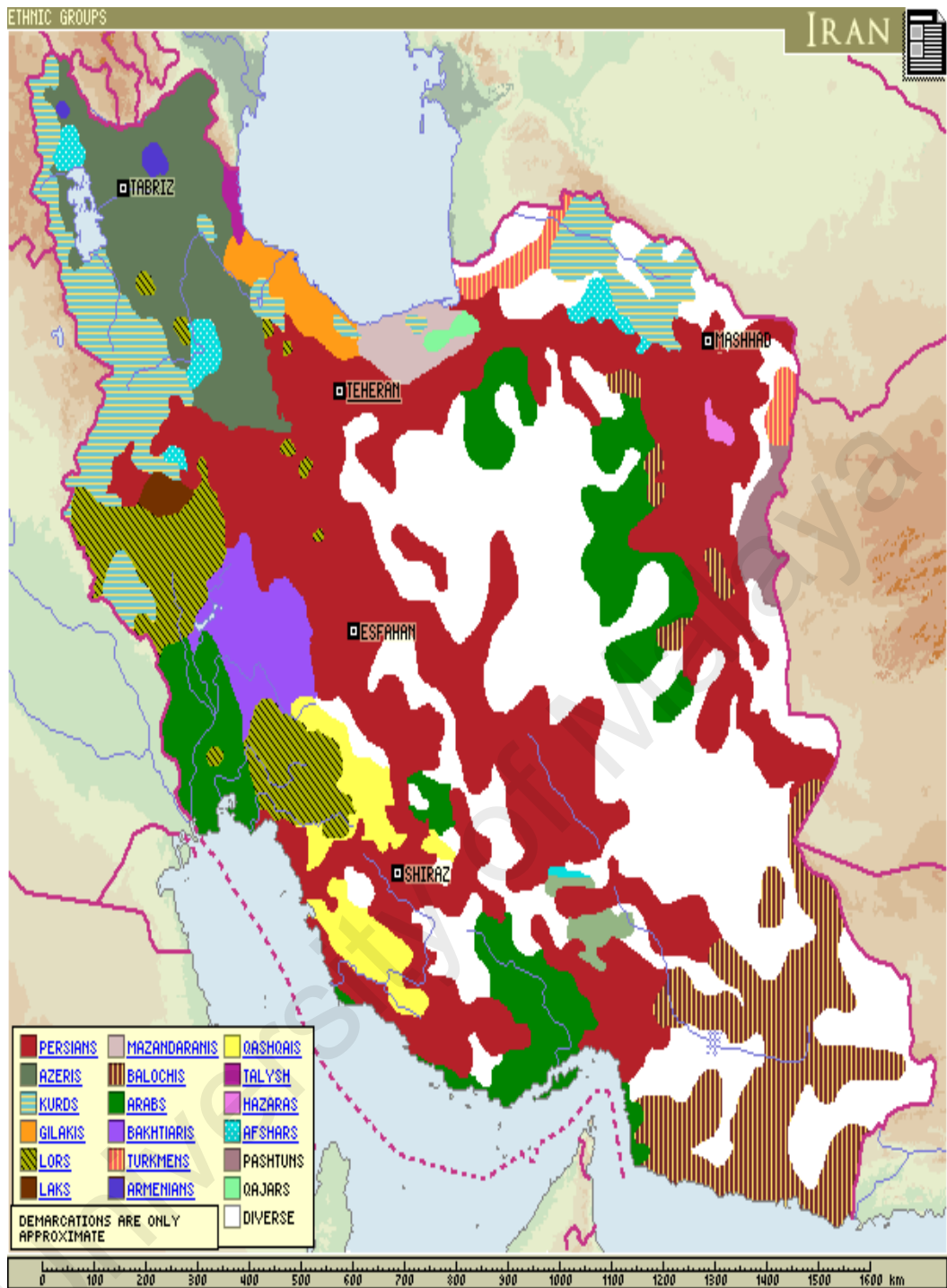


Figure 1.1: Ethnic Groups in Iran

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To investigate IFIDs (Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices), apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students.
- To examine the involvement of the variables of gender, social distance, and social dominance (power) in extending IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies.
- To explore the influence of Azerbaijani language (L1) on IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students?
2. How are the variables of gender, social distance, and social dominance (power) involved in extending the IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies?
3. How does Azerbaijani language (L1) influence the IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Realizing the differences existing in any culture helps language learners to share their culture and ideas in cross-cultural situations (Mackay, 2002). It is significant for them to be aware of their culture and reflect on it in the context of other cultures (Kramsch, 1993, p. 205). In this regard, the scrutiny of apology and non-apologies used by Iranian Azerbaijani pre-university EFL students help them to raise their pragmatic awareness to avoid possible misdeed in their interactions. This study further examines

the involvement of the variables of gender, social distance, and social dominance (power) in extending their apology and non-apology strategies.

The findings of this study should help Azerbaijani English teachers to realize the strengths and weaknesses in their students' use of apology in English. They will prepare better instructional lessons for the students and help them to conduct more contextually appropriate speech act in the target language. Besides, the results of this research are crucial for Iranian Azerbaijani students who plan to study in English overseas, university lecturers who have Iranian Azerbaijani students, university staffs, or any researcher who is interested in this area of research. Moreover, the results of the previous studies on apologies can be tested against the data collected in this study.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Although this study will fill a gap in the literature and present sufficient information on the use of the speech act of apology, there are some limitations that the researcher has to acknowledge:

- It only examines the speaker's apologies and the acceptance of apology by the hearer is beyond this study.
- The most efficient apology strategies resulting in the hearer's forgiveness are not considered and investigated.
- Supra segmental features like pitch and tone are neglected and the researcher has no insight on their role in using apology strategies.
- Learners with different levels of English proficiency are not compared and it is not a cross-cultural comparison of apologies by ESL and EFL learners.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the literature pertaining to the area of interlanguage pragmatics, speech act theory, speech act of apology, definitions of apologies, types of apologies, previous studies on apologies, a historical pragmatic study of apologies, studies on different languages, cross-cultural studies, methodological issues in the study of speech acts, apologies in Persian society regarding gender, social distance, and social dominance, and apology in Azerbaijani society.

2.1 Interlanguage Pragmatics

Kasper (1989: 13) believed that interlanguage pragmatics was an undeveloped field of study in comparison to interlanguage phonology, syntax, and semantics and a handful of studies examined different speech acts in the same class of learners, e.g. Walters (1980), Rintell (1979; 1981), Kasper (1981). Moreover, a few researchers showed the impact of variables such as age, sex, power, and situational restraints on learners' perception and production. Learner's pragmatic failures were claimed to result from overgeneralization, simplification and reduction of pragmalinguistics or sociopragmatic interlanguage information.

Coulmas (1978) and Kellerman (1977) were concerned about pragmatic interference and the aspects that could be transferred from L1 into the target language. Using written questionnaire (Discourse Completion Test) in many studies of interlanguage pragmatics which required limited communication behavior was a main concern to Trosorg (1987). He believed that the results of discourse completion test (DCT) revealed nothing about learners' skill to interact in real situations.

However, the field of interlanguage pragmatics has been significantly developed during the past few years (e.g. Barron & Warga, 2007; Felix-Brasdefer, 2007; Rose, 2000; Schauer, 2009; Chang, 2010, 2011). According to Scarcella (1979) adult learners' ability to change politeness strategies based on social context were limited and pragmalinguistic competence went ahead of sociopragmatics. Based on results shown by Blum-Kulka (1991), American immigrants to Israel used an intercultural method of speaking. Some aspects of adult learners' L2 pragmatic knowledge were universal but the others were transferred from L1.

2.2 Speech Act Theory

John L. Austin (1962) who presented the concept of speech acts has had a considerable influence on language philosophy. He argued that an utterance can perform three different acts at the same time. A locutionary act which comprises phonetics (uttering definite sounds), phatics (uttering special words), and rhetic (uttering those words with particular reference) concerns the literal meaning of an utterance. Some illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) such as intonation and performative verbs show the illocutionary force of an utterance. Verdictives, expositives, exercitives, behabitives, and commissives are five main illocutionary acts (Austin, 1962).

Saussure (1959) defined language as "a system of signs that express ideas" (p. 16), in what came to be known as semiology. In semiology, the unit of language is the sign, which consists of two inseparable parts, namely the signifier – what the speaker utters or writes – and the signified – the concept which is conveyed with the help of speech. Even though this theory is the basis of modern linguistics, Saussure's definition does not cover all aspects of language. Thus, language is not only used to represent concepts in isolation, but also to express different actions that speakers perform or require them to be performed by others (Austin, 1975). John Austin (1975) and John Searle (1969) are

the forerunners of speech act theory, which, according to them, encompasses the way people apologize, promise, request, and perform other linguistic acts.

More recent studies proposed definitions of speech acts that are more conversational (Geis, 1995; Wee, 2004) or socially and culturally oriented (Capone, 2005; Cutting, 2001; Mey, 1993). Geis (1995), for example, proposed what he called a “dynamic speech act theory” (p. 9), which needs to be an integrated part of conversation theory. Instead of viewing speech acts as the uttering of single expressions or sentences, it would define them as multitude interactions that perform requests, invitations, apologies, and other such actions.

By focusing on communication, Wee (2004) argued that the definition of speech acts needs to include other ways of communication, as well, not only linguistic ones. Thus, he suggested that a theory of communicative acts would be more useful and exhaustive than one of speech acts. If we were to apply this idea to Bach and Harnish’s (1979) speech act schema, one can easily substitute the utterance act with a behavior act, which would maintain the effect of all the other acts. Thus, the schema of a communicative act could be as follows, where b is behavior: In performing b [behavior act], S says something to H [locutionary act]; in saying something to H, S does something [illocutionary act]; and by doing something, S affects H [perlocutionary act]. However, not all researchers agree with this inclusion of non-verbal forms of communication, which convey the same action, but cannot be called speech acts (Geis, 1995).

The relationship between behavior, language, and social context was taken even further by Capone (2005). He drew on Mey's (1993) claim that speech acts need to be both situationally and socially oriented. Such a relationship would be more suitably termed a "pragmeme," which "is a situated speech act in which the rules of language and of society synergize in determining meaning, intended as a socially recognized object, sensitive to social expectations about the situation in which the utterance to be interpreted is embedded" (Capone, 2005, p. 1357). This view leads to a more integrated theory of speech acts in the larger frame of communication theory. One could go even further and claim that features of the behavior of both the speaker and the hearer during speech act production, as well as supra-segmental features of the utterance need to be taken into consideration in building the meaning that the speech act intends.

However, Wierzbicka (1991) claimed that most of the early definitions of speech acts are ethnocentric, and that thus they fail to take into consideration what she believed is one of the most important characteristics of speech acts, namely cultural specificity. She says that, cultural values and characteristics such as indirectness, objectivism, courtesy, and cordiality are reflected in the way speakers produce speech acts. Not taking this into consideration can have serious practical implications, especially in multicultural societies such as the United States or Australia, which have a great variety of cultures and thus a great variety of speech act production.

A perlocutionary act is the result of the speech act. Constructive rules of speech acts are imperative to make a speech act happen (Chapman & Routledge, 2009). Values that discern every illocutionary force are as follows:

- a) Illocutions must have proper positional content. For instance, the speaker must perform an action in the future regarding promises.

- b) The speaker must prepare the condition of the speech act before uttering it. For example, he must have the right and proper social power to marry a couple.
- c) This deals with the psychological state of the speaker. For instance, the speaker's honesty must be apparent in his speech act. For example, the speaker's sincerity must be obvious in his refusal.
- d) The speaker must feel an obligation which goes beyond his intention to perform the action.

According to Allan (1998) there are two ways of classifying speech acts. One is what he calls a lexical classification, which distinguishes among speech acts according to the illocutionary verbs they express. The second approach classifies them according to the act they express, such as requesting, apologizing, promising, and so on. Consequently, over the years, many researchers have attempted to devise taxonomy of speech acts that would be generally accepted. Communicative approaches to speech act theory mostly categorize speech acts according to what they communicate to the hearer. Thus, Searle (1976) proposed five types of speech acts, namely: representatives/assertives (present the way things are), directives (instruct somebody to do something), commissives (when one commits oneself), expressives (express feelings and attitudes), and declarations (that bring about changes with the use of utterances). Following this classification, Leech (1983) distinguished speech acts by the verbs that express them, as he believed that it was impossible to create a taxonomy of illocutionary acts. Thus, speech act verbs can be divided into the following categories: assertive verbs, directive verbs, commissive verbs, ergative verbs, and expressing verbs.

A very similar taxonomy, but one that differentiates more subtly between the types of illocutions the acts entail was given by Bach and Harnish (1979). They classified speech acts in terms of the illocutionary act entailed into four major types. The first three have several subcategories, but the last one has some specific verbs attached: constatives (assertives, predictives, retrodictives, descriptives, ascriptives, informatives, confirmatives, concessives, retractives, assentives, dissentives, disputatives, responsiveness, suggestives, supportives), directives (requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, advisories), commissives (promises, offers), and acknowledgements (apologize, condolence, congratulate, greet, thank, bid, accept, reject).

The most important problem with these early taxonomies is that, again, they are too closely linked to the verb that expresses the respective illocutionary act. However, as will be made clear in the following part in the case of apologies, speech acts can be expressed by other means as well, not only by illocutionary verbs. Also, not all illocutionary verbs express the speech act that one would expect from their basic meaning. Thus, Searle (1979) found that a certain illocutionary act can be “performed indirectly by way of performing another” (p. 31). Searle called this type of illocutionary act an indirect speech act, as opposed to a direct speech act. While in the case of a direct speech act the content of the utterance is the same as the intention of the speaker, in indirect speech act content and intention are different. Holtgraves (1986) has clarified this difference even further by claiming that indirect speech acts not only use a certain illocutionary act to express another, but rather provide multiple meanings, as opposed to only one meaning expressed by direct speech acts.

On the other hand, Geis (1995) has argued against a distinction between direct and indirect speech acts. He believes that, due to the fact that it is impossible to create what he called a mapping between the verbal forms and the speech act they convey, such a distinction is not useful at all. However, I believe that such a distinction is important, because it is the only way one can account for the use of certain apology strategies that apparently might seem inappropriate, but which are used to actually suggest something different from their literal meaning. This is the case with the present study as well; the chapters presenting the results will discuss examples of indirect speech acts.

Another approach to classifying speech acts is from the perspective of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, more precisely according to the way the function that the speech act expresses threatens face, as well as according to the relationship that the act has with the speaker or the hearer (Staab, 1983). Thus, Staab differentiated between four categories of face threatening acts: (a) threats to a speaker's negative face: expressing thanks, excuses, or the making of an unwilling promise or offer, (b) threats to a speaker's positive face: apologies, self-contradicting, or confessions, (c) threats to a hearer's negative face: orders, requests, suggestions, and warnings, and (d) threats to a hearer's positive face: criticism, insults, contradictions, and complaints (p. 27).

Based on many of the taxonomies presented earlier, Cohen (1996b) devised his own classification of 14 speech acts grouped into 5 major categories. The first category is representatives and contains the speech acts assertions, claims, and reports; the second is represented by directives: suggestions, requests, commands; the next one is under expressives: complaint, and thanks; commissives represent the fourth group that contains promises, threats, and offers; finally, decrees and declarations are classified under declaratives. While the names of these groups may vary in other classifications given by

different scholars, the names of the speech acts from Cohen's taxonomy seem to have been more widely accepted.

As this section has shown, there are many ways of classifying speech acts by making use of different criteria. As with defining speech acts, there is no taxonomy which is considered the best, each of them having advantages and disadvantages. For example, it seems to be clear that speech acts can be expressed by other means as well, not just using the illocutionary verb that conveys the respective act. Also, I believe it is necessary to account for non-verbal ways to expressing speech acts, as communication is much more than the use of verbal language; it also involves body language, the use of which can influence the meaning of the respective speech act. Consequently, elements such as illocutionary verbs, indirect speech acts, and even non-verbal elements should all be included when devising a good taxonomy of speech acts. This situation has led to scholars creating their own categorization of speech acts that best fits the specific needs of their study.

2.3 Speech Acts and Politeness

Speech act theory is also closely related to the concept of politeness. Early studies on politeness claimed that this concept is universal (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Lakoff, 1973). According to Lakoff (1973), there are three main rules of politeness, namely "don't impose," "give options," and "make [the hearer] feel good – be friendly" (p. 298). Answering objections to the universality of politeness, Lakoff (1973) claimed that her theory does not contradict the fact that different cultures have different customs. She believed that what creates differences in the interpretation of politeness across cultures is the order these rules take precedence one over the other.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), all members of a society tend to keep a certain image of themselves, an image that they call “face.” Brown and Levinson distinguish between two types of face, namely “negative face” and “positive face.” While the first one is defined as one’s desire that nobody impede his or her actions, the second one implies that people expect their needs to be desirable to others, as well. So, those functions of language that are expressed with the help of speech acts are intended either to prevent a threat to the speaker’s or hearer’s face – by being polite when requesting something, for example – or to recover, or save face – in the case of apologies, for example (Staab, 1983). Insofar as apologies are concerned, Lubecka (2000) claimed that they are face threatening, as apologizing means admitting that the speaker has done something wrong, but also face saving, because if accepted, the apology is supposed to alleviate the offense of the speaker.

However, many scholars still do not agree with the theory that the notion of face is universal. Studies have shown that Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of face does not apply to Japanese (Matsumoto, 1988) or Chinese (Gu, 1990) speakers, which leads to the conclusion that the notion of face is also culture specific. So, according to Matsumoto (1988), the Japanese, unlike Europeans, do not define themselves as individuals, but as belonging to a group based on rank relationships. Thus, saving face, for example, means something else than caring for the individual’s well-being.

Similar claims have been put forward by Gu (1990), as well. In the Chinese culture, politeness is more than what Brown and Levinson (1987) mean, in that it is a social norm whose infringement brings along social reprimand. This leads to the fact that for the Chinese negative face is never threatened, as speech acts such as offering or inviting will never be considered as threatening to one’s face. According to Gu (1990), for the Chinese “politeness exercises its normative function in constraining individual

speech acts as well as the sequence of talk exchanges” (p. 242). Consequently, as speech acts are linked to this concept of face, using the wrong speech act in cross-cultural communication can have as a cause the differences in the perception of face that each culture has.

In light of such findings, Nwoye (1992) believed that it is necessary to sub classify the concept of face into “individual face” and “group face.” Thus, individual face “refers to the individual’s desire to attend to his/her personal needs and to place his/her public-self image above those of others”, while group face “refers to the individual’s desire to behave in conformity with culturally expected norms of behavior that are institutionalized and sanctioned by society” (p. 313). Nwoye (1992) has also shown that in some cultures, in light of this reclassification of the notion of face, speech acts such as requests, offers, thanks, and criticisms are no longer face threatening acts. For example, in the culture of the Igbo, people follow a system where the sharing of goods and services is a norm. The idea of a “group face” was also put forward by Obeng (1999), who gave the example of the Akan language, where acts are threatening the face not only of the speakers, but of the entire ethnic group.

More than that, politeness is not only culturally, but also contextually determined. Fraser (1990) has argued that language functions and actions that are considered to be polite under normal circumstances in human interaction may not be so under contextually determined factors. For example, people who are being much more polite than the social norms would call for could be considered arrogant, disrespectful, and even impolite.

Another problem that speech acts raise in connection with politeness is the fact that some speech acts seem to be impolite by their nature, such as orders or commands, while others are polite by nature, such as offers or invitations (Leech, 1983). Thus, according to Leech, when we talk about speech acts, we must distinguish between positive politeness, which increases the politeness in the case of inherently polite speech acts, and negative politeness, which reduces the impoliteness of inherently impolite speech acts. He also argued that one has to pay attention to the relativity of politeness, as this depends, as it is believed by authors of studies presented above, on the culture of the speakers.

The desire to be polite also influences what kind of speech act one decides to use. Thus, one may choose an indirect speech act instead of a direct one in order to be more polite (Leech, 1983). Leech called this the metalinguistic use of politeness in speech acts. The relationship between politeness and speech acts seems therefore very much similar to that between direct and indirect speech acts. It is very difficult to label a certain speech act as polite or impolite, and use these labels as rules. Whether the meaning a certain speech act conveys is polite or impolite is very much dependent on the contextual circumstances in which they are uttered.

To sum up this section on speech acts, speech act theory is a widely disputed field and issues such as what speech acts are and how they are classified seem to be culture specific, and not as universal as some of the studies presented above have described. Evidence on speech act perception and realization from different cultures have demonstrated that more research needs to be done in order to provide a theory that has an integrated approach to speech acts. Thus, besides carefully defining the term used in the research and creating an appropriate taxonomy, social, cultural, and pragmatic

influences on the meaning, perception, and production of speech acts need to be considered.

2.4 Speech Act of Apology

The speech act of apology has been the object of numerous studies that attempted to clarify what exactly an apology is and how the different ways of apologizing can be classified. Different scholars define apologies in different ways. There are different types or categories of apologies, as well. Some of these categories are similar in the different studies, yet some others are unique to certain studies because of the specific features of the different populations used.

As Olshtain (1989) states apology is expected to support the victim since the wrongdoer accepts the fault and takes responsibility for it. This definition is mainly considered in the current study. Cohen and Olshtain (1981), who introduced the notion of ‘the speech act set of apology’, identified the following apology strategies:

1. An Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)
 - An expression of regret, e.g. I’m sorry
 - An offer of apology, e.g. I apologize.
 - A request for forgiveness, e.g. excuse me/ forgive me/ pardon me.
2. Explanation or accounts, e.g. There was a heavy traffic.
3. Taking on responsibility:
 - Explicit self-blame, e.g. It’s my mistake.
 - Lack of intent, e.g. I didn’t do it on purpose.
 - Expression of self-deficiency, e.g. I totally forgot it.
 - Expression of embarrassment, e.g. I feel ashamed.
 - Self-castigation, e.g. It was very stupid of me.

- Justify the hearer, e.g. You are right to be angry and disappointed now.
 - Refusal to acknowledge guilt
 - Denial of responsibility, e.g. It wasn't my fault.
 - Blame the hearer, e.g. It's your own fault.
 - Pretend to be offended, e.g. I'm the one to be offended.
4. Concern for the hearer, e.g. I hope I didn't upset you/Are you alright?
 5. An offer of repair, e.g. I'll pay for the damage.
 6. Promise of forbearance, e.g. It won't happen again.

According to Long (2009), the interaction between regret and expectedness affect the apology use and the boundaries of relationships are marked by using general apology strategies. It also works as catalysts to dispel conflict and bring about forgiveness. In fact, apologies which are conform to victim's self-construals speed up in forgiveness (Fehr & Gelfand, 2010).

2.5 Definitions of Apology

Bergman and Kasper (1993) defined an apology as a "compensatory action to an offense in the doing of which S was casually involved and which is costly to H" (p. 82). The cost can be in terms of losing face or even a severe misunderstanding. It is clear that different cultures have different degrees in perceiving the necessity of an apology. An action is considered very serious in one culture and may not require an apology at all in another culture. Also, the severity of such a face threatening act seems to be in a direct relationship with the type of apology chosen to defend face.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that all speakers choose the same strategy under the same conditions, and tried to demonstrate this by looking at three different languages, namely English, Tzeltal (a Mayan language), and South Indian Tamil. However, this theory has been challenged by several researchers who claim that different individual factors are involved in both considering an act as face threatening, and the strategy used in apologizing (Trosborg, 1987). According to Trosborg, these factors are determined by one's social and cultural patterns, and by the behavioral norms of one's culture. This leads to the assumption that not only do speakers of different languages perceive the necessity of an apology differently, but also use different ways of apologizing.

Differences in apology strategy use have been demonstrated to be correlated with cross-cultural differences by both interlanguage studies and studies that looked at the way speakers of different languages apologize in their own language to give a clearer view on the relationship between speech acts and cultural factors (Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Suszczynska, 1999). The choice of apology strategies is also determined by social differences such as sex, age, and social status. Holmes (1993) has shown in a study on New Zealanders that there are significant differences in the distribution of apologies between men and women, and that women apologize more than men.

A definition that limits very much the concept of an apology is the one given by Owen (1983) who indicated that apologies are remedial moves that follow what he called a priming move on the part of the person who expects the apology, which is a move that triggers the apology. While such an approach makes sense, the problem with Owen's definition is that he restricts the use of the term apology to only those utterances that actually contain the explicit phrases "I'm sorry" or "I apologize" and variants of these.

Leech (1983) viewed apologies as an attempt to recreate an imbalance between the speaker and the hearer created by the fact that the speaker committed an offence against the hearer. According to him, it is not enough to apologize, this apology needs to be successful in order for the hearer to pardon the speaker, and thus reestablish the balance.

Trosborg (1995) narrows down the definition even further by claiming that apologies have a remedial function which differentiates them from thanking, congratulating, and other convivial acts. Thus, Trosborg (1995) follows Owen's (1983) definition of apologies but broadens it by including other utterances that express apologies, not just the ones that are explicit apologies.

Finally, Holmes (1990) defined apologies as "social acts conveying affective meaning" (p. 155), and believes they are politeness strategies meant to remedy an offense on the part of the speaker. Thus, when defining apologies, one must take into consideration the possibility of a speaker to apologize for somebody else's behavior. This leads to the conclusion that "the person takes responsibility for the offense rather than the offender" (p. 161).

In order to cover all the possible aspects of apologies, a study should use combination of definitions, or take account of the features of all the definitions mentioned earlier. Most importantly, what an apology is varies across cultures, and therefore it is even impossible to use one and the same apology to study the way apologies are produced in different cultures. However, no matter what features one includes in a definition, what should be present in any definition is the fact that an apology is given not only when there is a behavior (be it an action, the lack of an action,

or a verbal behavior) that violates the social norms of the respective culture, but also as an anticipation in case a future or proposed behavior may violate such norms.

2.6 Types of Apologies

The way apologies are classified depends very much on the way they are defined. Thus, the diversity in definitions of apologies also brings about diversity in classification. There are certain types of apologies that are common across different categorizations, while other types are unique.

Bergman and Kasper (1993) distinguished seven different apology categories. According to them, the most commonly used seems to be the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) such as in “I’m sorry.” The other strategies are intensified IFIDs (“I’m terribly sorry”), taking responsibility (“I haven’t graded it yet”), giving an account of the reasons that led to the action that requires an apology (“I was suddenly called to a meeting”), minimizing the effects and severity of the action (“I’m only 10 minutes late”), offering repair or compensation (“I’ll pay for the damage”), and verbal redress (“It won’t happen again”). The last one seems to be very close to the minimization category, if we take into account the example used by the authors, “I hope you didn’t wait long” (Bergman & Kasper, 1993, p. 86).

A categorization of apology strategies that would be constantly revisited by many other scholars was made by Olshtain and Cohen (1983). They proposed seven categories, as well, but divided into two parts. The first part contains five main categories of apologies in cases where the offender feels the need to apologize, namely an expression of apology, an explanation or account of the situation, an acknowledgement of responsibility, an offer of repair, and a promise of forbearance. Each of these categories has several sub-categories in order to make a further

delimitation of strategies. The second part contains two strategies for the case when the speaker does not feel the need to apologize. These are a denial of the need to apologize and a denial of responsibility. This categorization is a very important one and useful for the present studies because, unlike Bergman and Kasper's (1993) taxonomy, it takes into account situation when even though the hearer believes the speaker should apologize, the latter does not.

A very similar taxonomy was the basis of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), and it comprises seven strategies to perform apologies: using an illocutionary force indicating device, taking on responsibility, explanation or account of what happened, offer to repair the offending act, promise of forbearance (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989b; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). These strategies can be used, according to the authors, by themselves, or in any combination or sequence.

Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) taxonomy was also modified by Holmes (1990), who believed that it was necessary to rearrange these strategies in order to make them clearer. Thus, Holmes (1990) divided apologies into four main categories. The first category is "an explicit expression of apology" and contains the subcategories "offer apology/IFID," "express regret," "request forgiveness." The second main category is represented by "an explanation or account, an excuse or justification."

The third category, "an acknowledgment of responsibility," contains "accept blame," "express self-deficiency," "recognize H as entitled to an apology," "express lack of intent," "offer repair/redress." Finally, the last category is "a promise of forbearance" (p. 167). While most of these categories are present in other taxonomies, as well, one can

note that most of the ones in the “acknowledgment of responsibility” group are unique to Holmes.

A slightly different taxonomy was proposed by Trosborg (1995) that distinguished five categories divided according to whether the speaker considers an action that requires an apology occurred or not. The first two categories come from the speaker’s not accepting that an apology is necessary, and are explicit denial and implicit denial. The remaining three categories are the result of the speaker accepting the fact that there is a need for an apology: giving a justification, blaming someone else, or attacking the complainer. In accordance with his own definition of apologies discussed earlier in the section on definitions of apologies, Owen (1983) classified apologies by the type of utterance they incorporate. He identified three types of apologies: one that incorporates “apology,” “apologies,” or “apologize;” one that incorporates “sorry;” and finally, the one that is created by the phrase “I’m afraid” followed by a sentence. Owen incorporated apologies in the broader context of primary remedial moves. There are seven strategies for primary remedial moves: “assert imbalance or show deference,” “assert that an offence has occurred,” “express attitude towards offence,” “request restoration of balance,” “give an account,” “repair the damage,” and “provide compensation” (Owen, 1983, p. 169). The first four are grouped under non-substantive strategies, giving an account is considered a semi-substantive strategy, while the last two are substantive strategies.

Similarly, Fraser (1981) designed a categorization of apologies based on the intent of the speaker. He distinguished nine categories, namely “announcing that you are apologizing,” “stating one’s obligation to apologize,” “offering to apologize,” “requesting the hearer accept an apology,” “expressing regret for the offense,” “acknowledging responsibility for the offending act,” “promising forbearance from a

similar offending act,” and “offering redress” (p. 263). While some of the strategies are recurrent in several studies on apologies, what makes Fraser’s taxonomy different is that he distinguishes several categories that other scholars consider under the category illocutionary force indicating device (IFID). While this might be useful when studying IFIDs, a very minute differentiation of the different types of IFIDs may not be too useful when studying all the categories one uses in order to apologize.

The importance of cultural influence on apologizing also needs to be reflected in the taxonomy of this speech act, and this can sometimes lead to some categories that would seem surprising, or even strange, to western cultures. Thus, Barnlund and Yoshioka (1990) interviewed native speakers of Japanese and American English to create the following set of 12 modes of apologizing: “not saying or doing anything,” “explaining the situation,” “apologizing ambiguously,” “apologizing nonverbally,” “casually saying ‘sorry’,” “acting helpless,” “saying directly ‘I am very sorry’,” “writing a letter,” “apologizing several times in several ways,” “offering to do something for the other person,” “leaving or resigning,” and “committing suicide” (p. 198). What is interesting in this classification is the inclusion of non-verbal ways of apologizing. Barnlund and Yoshioka are the only ones to include the categories in a study on apologies. Even though non-verbal strategies account for only 8.6% of the responses in the case of the Japanese subjects, and 6.1% in the case of the American ones, these categories are nevertheless used, with the exception of the strategy “committing suicide,” which yielded results only in the case of the Japanese subjects.

Finally, a completely different approach to creating taxonomy of apologies has been attempted by Deutschmann (2003). After analyzing The British National Corpus he proposed three main categories of apologies according to the function they express: real apologies, which were the most frequent ones such as “I apologize for this”; formulaic

apologies, which consist of simple IFIDs as in “I’m sorry”; and “face attack” apologies, which were intended, according to the author, to “disarm” the hearer as in the following example: “Excuse me David, I’m talking to Chris” (p. 75).

In sum, there are many different categorizations of apologies. However, as already mentioned in the section on Definitions of Apologies, this speech act is culture specific, and not all the categories in these taxonomies would work for all the cultures. Thus, when creating the taxonomy for a study one should choose those categories that are used in the respective culture. Further, one should account both for explicit and implicit apologies. Finally, categories such as avoiding and postponing apologies should also be part of the taxonomy, as choosing not to apologize or apologize later is also a strategy used when an apology is required.

2.7 Previous Studies on Apologies

Speech act of apology and the way it is performed in different cultures has been subject of myriad number of studies around the world. Speakers of different languages vary not only in way of apologizing, but also in considering the necessity of apology. Wouk (2005) examined Lombok Indonesians’ apologies. The study showed that they mainly opted for request for forgiveness and their desire to use a single form of apology was similar to native English speakers. Their modification of apologies was more confined to upgrading the remediation than downgrading the offence. Male respondents used more solidarity oriented upgrading compared to females. On the other hand, higher status addressees applied more deference strategies, while solidarity strategies used with social intimates.

Bataineh and Bataineh (2006) conducted a study on EFL students in Ibrid. Results showed that both groups applied similar strategies in various order. They tried to explain, show regret, repair, compensate, and promise. Regarding non-apology strategies, males tried to accuse the victim, while females refrained from discussing the offence.

Marlyna Maros (2006) scrutinized apology strategies used by adult Malay speakers. The respondents in the study were all Islamic religious officers ranging between 30 to 50 years at a Muslim College in London. A questionnaire including six apology situations was used for data collection. According to the findings, they all used negative politeness strategies similar to English native speakers. Besides, their L1 norms influenced their socio pragmatic competence negatively. The researcher believed that English learners should be more proficient in sociopragmatics in order to perform English apologies.

Abu Amoud (2008) investigated apologies by students in Hebron University using Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) classification. The results indicated explicit apologies were mostly used by female participants. Although females used just *one expression of regret and three intensifiers*, males opted for *three expressions of remorse and three expressions of remorse with two intensifiers*. Males applied *accounts, compensated, showed lack of intent, promised, requested hearer not to be angry, and assessed responsibility*, while females used *accounts, promised, repaired, revealed lack of intent, and assessed responsibility*. In addition, Jordanian women put the blame on themselves and used less non-apology strategies.

İstifçi (2009) probed speech act of apology with participants from two levels of English proficiency. Respondents were 20 intermediate level, 20 advanced level, and 5 native speakers of English. Data were collected via a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which comprised of eight apology situations. The data were analyzed and coded based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981). The findings revealed that both groups' apology strategies were influenced by their native language. However, intermediate level respondents tended to transfer more L1 norms into English.

Balci (2009) compared apology and request strategies used by teenager Turkish and American speakers of English. Data were collected via Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and were coded according to Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). The outcomes expressed that both groups applied the same strategies presented by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), but they differed in the distribution of the strategies. Although Turkish participants' apologies were as appropriate as Americans, their requests were not suitable.

Thijittang (2010) investigated the apologies in Thai and English by Thai undergraduate students. The methodology included two phases. First, the data from past studies was analyzed, and then the data was gathered by using questionnaire and interview techniques. 15 scenarios with varying sociolinguistic factors constituted the DCT. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was done based on the strategies stated by Holmes (1990). The results revealed that although universality and culture-specificity co-existed in apologies in both languages, there were more apologies in English compared to Thai. Besides, sociolinguistic factors like social distance, social status and severity of offense influenced the apologies.

Alfatah (2010) reviewed apologies by Yemeni EFL students. Data was collected via a written questionnaire and analysis showed that participants opted for IFIDs specially expression of regret. They used this expression as a main component followed by other strategies.

Özyıldırım (2010) investigated apology strategies of 80 native Turkish speakers from low and high education levels. A written role play consisted of eight apology situations was applied to collect data. Researcher used Pearson Chi-Square and Mann Whitney U tests to analyze the data. The findings indicated that low and high education participants used different apology strategies. High education group opted for direct apology strategies, but low education group preferred indirect strategies.

Todey (2011) examined apologies of native and non-native speakers of English. A discourse completion task based on Sugimoto (1999) and Bataineh & Bataineh (2006) was used to collect data. 85 participants between ages of 17 and 23 were participated in this study. The results showed that the apologies between both groups were not dramatically different.

Canli (2013) looked over apology strategies in Turkish and English used by three Turkish EFL teachers. A Discourse Completion Test consisted of eight apology situations was employed to gather data. The results showed no significant difference in their apology strategies because they transferred their native language norms (L1) into English (L2) and their apologies were mostly controlled by their L1.

Berg (2015) studied apology strategies of 57 Taiwanese EFL college students using both written and online DCTs adapted from Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984). The data were coded and analyzed based on Tuncel (2011). The findings indicated that except for some individual strategies, there was no significant difference between male and females and online DCT was as strong as written DCT.

Also, Chang (2011) employed a cross-cultural approach in the study and four age groups with different proficiency level were involved to write down their responses in English for each situation that warrants apology. The researcher used a coding scheme to analyze the data and the results revealed the effect of social status on their apologies. Advanced L2 learners varied their apology strategies and using wrong Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices like “pardon me” showed that lack of pragmalinguistic may lead to an inappropriate manifestation of sociopragmatic competence.

Over the recent years, there has been a large diversity of studies on the speech act of apology. The greatest number of these studies looked at the way one apologizes in English, both with native and non-native speakers. Nonetheless, there are other studies that investigated the perception and production of apologies in different languages.

Finally, more recent studies take a comparative approach, by mostly examining the way learners of foreign and second languages use and perceive apologies in both their native and target language. The next sections of this chapter will present some of these studies, without trying an exhaustive presentation, but rather an overview of the ones that are relevant for the purpose of the present study. However, as Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989a) have very well asserted, many of the important issues are still unanswered, mostly because the fact that the studies used different methodological approaches and are based on different theories of speech acts.

2.8 Studies on Apologies in Different Languages

Even though most of the studies on apologies take either a comparative approach between a certain language and English, or investigate the way speakers of different languages apologize in English, there are also studies that investigated how apologies are produced in other languages. Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) attempted to replicate in German the study of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989b). The authors used a discourse completion questionnaire on 200 German speaking students. One of the problems that Vollmer and Olshtain encountered when attempting to code and analyze the data was that the CCSARP methodology could not be used adequately for the combinations of different strategies that the German speakers used. According to Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) the categories used by the CCSARP were too broad and unspecific, while in the German data sometimes what would be a single category following the CCSARP methodology could actually be considered a combination. Therefore, the study analyzed in more depth the way illocutionary force indicating devices (IFID) are realized in German, as this strategy and assuming responsibility were by far the ones used most often.

A study on a much larger scale was conducted on Akan, a language group spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. This study was based on data collected through natural interactions over a period of thirteen months (Obeng, 1999). As such, apologies in this culture are closely linked to the social rules of power relations, as the speakers have to use high degrees of politeness when interacting with each other. Thus, a superior would rarely apologize to a subordinate, as the superior could be considered too humble. The results revealed that in Akan, apologies rarely consist of single strategies; most of the time they are either complex or compound. Complex apologies combine explicit and implicit strategies, while compound ones combine two or more implicit apology strategies.

Another language that was investigated is Lombok, spoken on the island with the same name in Indonesia. Wouk (2006) has found that in most situations, speakers in Lombok use a single phrase to apologize, in which they ask for forgiveness. Unlike other languages presented above, Lombok seems to employ more standalone strategies, combinations being rarely used. However, the author drew attention to the limitation of the study, the small number of situations used for data collection, which does not allow for a generalization of the findings.

Finally, one of the more extensively studied languages insofar as apologies are concerned is Japanese. Kotani (1999) has found that there is a special category of apology which is prevalent with Japanese speakers, namely what she called the “feel good” apology. This type of apology is used in situations when the speaker does not feel responsible for an offense, but shows empathy with the person who suffered the offense. The data the author collected by interviewing Japanese students in a university in the United States has shown that many of the apologies used were intended to make the listener feel good. Kotani concluded that even though there are many other types of apologies, this type is very important in the Japanese apologetic discourse, and it is representative for the Japanese culture, even though it may not always be an effective apology. Suzuki (1999) also agreed that culture is deeply reflected in the Japanese discourse of apology. Thus, social rank is an important factor in determining even the need for an apology. Also, according to Suzuki, it is not as much how an apology is uttered that matters, but who the speaker and the hearer are.

2.9 Cross-cultural Studies on Apologies

Research focusing on interlanguage pragmatics started only in the 1980s, but has been seriously increasing ever since, with more and more speech acts being investigated (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989a). According to Blum-Kulka et al., the way this speech act is both perceived and produced by a group of learners in their native and the target language. Also, most of the studies focus on communication and pragmatic competence as compared to the way native speakers use this speech act (Jordá, 2005), and less on how this competence is to be taught.

Nonetheless, such studies are very important as they contribute to a better understanding of the differences between cultures that lead to the differences in the production of apologies in particular, and of speech acts in general. Whether it is called pragmatic competence (Harlow, 1990; Jordá, 2005), sociocultural and sociolinguistic abilities (Cohen, 1995), or sociocultural choices (Cohen, 1996a), this ability or competence determines the use of the speech act that is appropriate to the situation, in accord with the social and cultural norms of the target language. This concept is the focus of most of the interlanguage studies, whose findings try to give an insight into what learners need to do in order to acquire this competence.

One of the most important interlanguage studies on apologies is the Cross-cultural Speech Act Realization Project, or CCSARP (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989a; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984), which examined the differences in the realization of requests and apologies across eight languages. Besides the crucial insight that the results of this project provide for the study of apologies across cultures, this study is especially important because its methodology and coding system was used and replicated by many other studies on different languages. The study used a discourse completion test which

contained a description of the situation followed by incomplete discourse sequences. The data were analyzed using a coding scheme developed for this study that was discussed in the section on Types of Apologies.

One of the studies that used the CCSARP methodology was conducted on speakers of Hebrew, Australian English, Canadian French, and German (Olshtain, 1989). The aim of the study was to examine the differences and similarities in the way apologies are produced across the four languages. Even though the authors' hypothesis was that the strategy selected by speakers of different languages is culturally influenced by social distance and power, the results rejected this hypothesis. The authors place the reasons for this on the fact that the instrument used was a universal one rather than specific to the needs of each language. More precisely, the situations used in the instrument were collected in order to represent situations which would be similar across western cultures.

This study shows the importance of using the appropriate methodology in studying apologies across cultures. This was not the case, however, with a study conducted on Japanese and American speakers. Barnlund and Yoshioka (1990) have shown that there are some "critical cultural variables" (p. 197) that influence the way speakers apologize. Thus, the study has shown that Japanese speakers used more direct and extreme apologies, while Americans were more indirect. The methodology used was, however, different than the one in the CCSARP, which could also be one of the reasons that the findings differed. The authors used a scale type response questionnaire of 14 situations that were selected after conducting semi structured interviews with native speakers of both cultures. These findings were also confirmed by other studies (Nagano, 1985; Taguchi, 1991) and even on a much larger scale by a study conducted on 200 American and 181 Japanese students (Sugimoto, 1999).

Moreover, Sugimoto (1999) claimed that Japanese speakers seem to have a greater likelihood of apologizing than American students, and also that Japanese speakers would expect an apology in far more situations than the American ones would. For example, in four out of the twelve situations in the survey, the difference between the percentages of Japanese speakers who considered that an apology was expected and that of the American speakers was greater than 10%. The conclusion is that such differences in apology styles are the result of significant cultural differences between the two cultures.

Similar findings have been reported by another study that compared speakers of American English and Japanese. However, the focus of the investigation was comparing American learners of Japanese to both native speakers of English and of Japanese (Tamanaha, 2003). According to the study, native speakers of English used more rational strategies, while native speakers of Japanese more emotional ones. For example, the Japanese speakers would express remorse and use explicit expressions of apology, while the American speakers would give an explanation or justification to the offense and then use an explicit apology. Tamanaha (2003) has attributed these results to the fact that there are important underlying differences between the American and Japanese cultures.

Significant cross-cultural differences in the selection of apology strategies were also found in the case of Spanish learners of English as a foreign language from Spain when compared to American native speakers of English (Mir, 1992). The results of this study have shown that native speakers of English use a greater variety of strategies when apologizing as compared to the ones used in English by the Spanish learners. As such, the Spanish learners would mostly use IFIDs when apologizing in English, as opposed to the native speakers of English which would combine different strategies. In addition,

significant differences in the use of explicit apologies and offers to repair suggest that the Spanish learners are not aware of when these strategies are required in the target language, and therefore transfer their pragmatic competence from their native language.

This is the case with speakers of Spanish from other cultures, as well. In the case of Uruguayan speakers of Spanish compared to British English speakers differences in the use of apologies have also been demonstrated to be caused by cultural differences. Although intensified illocutionary indicating devices were expected to exist in most apologies in British English, they were considered inappropriate in the case of the Uruguayans (Márquez-Reiter, 2000). Differences exist in other types of apologies as well. For instance, speakers of British English give more explanations when apologizing. Márquez-Reiter believed that these differences arise from the fact that the British English speakers place a greater importance on saving face.

Venezuelan speakers of Spanish had less preference for deference politeness strategies when apologizing to native speakers of English as compared to Americans (Garcia, 1989). This situation has even led to miscommunication, with the person expecting an apology being offended by the attitude of the offender. This was the case even though, as compared to Márquez-Reiter's (2000) study, Garcia believed that the American conversational style is considered to be less formal than the British one. According to Garcia this is not an indication that Venezuelans are impolite, but a clear demonstration of the fact that social and cultural rules have a significant influence on the choice of apologetic strategies. She claims that Venezuelans prefer to establish an attitude of equality in such situations rather than one of deference.

Finally, a study that compared the way native speakers of Australian English and Chilean speakers of Spanish use explanations in their apology strategies also attributed the differences on cross-cultural differences (Cordella, 1992). The author claimed that the most important reason for the differences lies in the fact that Chilean culture places a much greater emphasis on family than the Australian one, and thus their explanations were mostly related to family matters. However, insofar as the complexity of the explanations is concerned, the study found no significant differences.

Not all scholars agree, however, with the importance placed on social and cultural factors in strategy selection. Harlow (1990) showed that social variables such as age, familiarity and relationship between the speakers do not have an effect on apologizing in the case of French learners of English. However, she admitted that these results may also be the effect of a certain ambiguity in the instrument used for collecting data. Nonetheless, she agreed that pragmatic competence is what decides the correct use of these speech acts, even if this competence is not influenced by age or familiarity of the speakers.

There are also studies that investigate the proficiency of the speakers and also pragmatic competence transfer from one's native language to the target language. In her study on Danish learners of English as a foreign language, Trosborg (1987) concluded that in most of the cases the learners transferred their sociopragmatic competence regarding the type of apology used from their native language to the target language.

Trosborg's findings were confirmed in the case of other languages, as well. In a study conducted on Korean learners of English, Jung (2004) has also found that even though in some situations more advanced learners avoided transfer from their native language, most of the differences in their use of apologetic strategies from those of

native speakers of English were due to transferring the strategies from their native language. In most cases, this is due to the fact that the students are not aware of the social and cultural differences between their language and the target one. This is also the case with Japanese learners of English (Maeshiba et al., 1995) as well as with American students learning Japanese (Tamanaha, 2003).

Finally, insofar as the use of multiple strategies is concerned, both Korean and Japanese students were found to provide multiple strategies for an apology as opposed to Americans in Japanese, which confirms previous findings on Japanese (Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990) and other languages, as well (Vollmer & Olshtain, 1989). Maeshiba et al., (1995) have also concluded that the proficiency level of learners of English as a foreign language has an influence on the way learners apologize in the target language.

Such findings are also similar to the ones on Thai as investigated by Bergman and Kasper (1993). They used an assessment questionnaire and a dialogue construction questionnaire to compare apologetic strategy use across three groups, namely Thai native speakers, American native speakers, and Thai-English interlanguage speakers. From all the strategies used, the three groups differed mostly in downgrading the severity of the offense that triggered the apology. The authors attributed about 55% of these differences to pragmatic transfer from the speakers' native language to the target language.

Transfer from the first language to the target language is not, however, the only type of pragmatic transfer that takes place. Savina (2002), in her study on native speakers of Russian living in the United States, has shown that the strategies speakers choose to apologize in their native language are also influenced by the target language

and culture. The most conclusive example the author gave to illustrate these findings was the incorporation by the Russian native speakers of “sorry” as an apology for accidentally touching someone. This is, according to her, clearly a result of cultural transfer; as such a situation does not require an apology in the Russian culture.

Finally, a comparative study that, instead of comparing the way the same subjects apologize in their native and target language, investigated native speakers of English, Hungarian, and Polish to compare the way apologies are realized across these languages was conducted by Suszczynska (1999). As a methodology, she used a combination of taxonomies from previous studies, including the CCSARP study. Suszczynska found both similarities and differences across the three languages. For example, in the case of all the three languages, the speakers began a remedial apology with an IFID. However, differences seem to be more significant. Thus, with the Hungarian apologies, there is a high percentage of assuming responsibility, which is the most often used strategy after the IFID. As far as Polish apologies are concerned, 85% of the respondents used the Polish expression equivalent to “I’m sorry,” which was always intensified. Lubecka (2000) called it the “super apology” (p. 190), and claimed that it is a product of the Polish culture being based on the power-distance relationship between people.

To conclude this section on comparative studies on apologies, it seems to be clear that, in spite of some of the studies presented, the speech act of apology is very much influenced by socio-cultural factors. Also, in the case of inter-cultural communication, the choice of apology strategies depends on both the cultural background of the speaker and that of the hearer. Additionally, since most of the studies presented in this section focus on comparing the way speakers of different languages apologize in English to the way native speakers of English do, it has been shown that the

choice of apologies is very much shaped by both language proficiency and the pragmatic competence of the speakers in case they are apologizing in a second or foreign language. Even though the differences between one's native language and the target language depend very much on one's culture, all of the studies presented demonstrate the fact that such differences do exist, and that these differences correlate with the sometimes inappropriate use of apologies in the target language. Finally, the studies presented concur in the pedagogical implications of their results in that learners should be made aware of such differences in how apologies are produced in their native language and in the target language, and that this would improve their pragmatic competence in the target language.

2.10 Methodological Issues in the Study of Speech Acts

As can be seen from the studies on apologies, there are significant differences, and even contradictions, from one study to another. There can be many reasons that would account for such a situation, ranging from the differences in the size and composition of the population under scrutiny, the way the scholars defined and categorized apologies, to cross-cultural differences in the comparative studies. What is even more significant is that such differences can be influenced by the methodology used to carry out the study. The only consensus across studies seems to be concerning the fact that the data collected for the study should be authentic (Beebe & Cummings, 1995; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989a; Cohen & Olshtain, 1994; Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989).

This brings into discussion the validity and effectiveness of the instruments used in speech act research. Cohen and Olshtain (1994) discussed the benefits and drawbacks of different instruments used in collecting data, emphasizing the fact that a combination of instruments is the ideal situation. Thus, the main instruments used for speech act

production are, according to Cohen and Olshtain, the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and role-play interviews. The DCT has also a sub-variant that has been used less in studies, namely one that includes the response of the hearer to the presumed speech act. However, no significant differences in results have been found when comparing the two methods of DCT (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989a; Rose, 1992).

The concerns that the DCT raises is that it may not be an accurate representation of what the speaker would say in naturally occurring situations. This seems to be directly related to whether the situations selected for the DCT are authentic themselves. If the subjects could not picture themselves in the respective situations, they would, indeed, merely speculate on what they would do, and they might act differently if actually put in those situations. Selecting such situations that are not only authentic, but also situations that the subjects would often find themselves in, would lead to more accurate responses on their part. Another concern is that the subjects may use portions of the written situation in their responses. Again, this can be overcome by phrasing the situations carefully so that the possibility of using them in the responses is minimized. From these points of view, role-plays seem to be more effective; however, role-plays can sometimes result in unnatural behavior on the part of the subjects (Jung, 2004). In addition, not all role-plays are the same. While open role-plays provide a wider context in which the speech act is produced as opposed to closed ones, they are more difficult to transcribe and code and offer less control of the variables involved in the study (Kasper & Dahl, 1991).

Furthermore, research has found that role-play interviews produce a wider range of speech act production strategies than discourse completion tests do (Sasaki, 1998), as well as considerably longer responses (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989). They also produce different responses on the part of the subjects as opposed to DCTs. However, as the

results of Rintell and Mitchell's study on non-native speakers of English could not be replicated on native speakers, the difference may not necessarily be due to differences in the methodology used. While Rintell and Mitchell (1989) believed that written questionnaires are as valid for gathering data on apologies as oral instruments, Sasaki (1998) claimed that one cannot choose which one of the two is better; while DCTs are more appropriate for studying the main types of strategies in speech act production, role-plays seem a better choice when the interaction between the speaker and hearer are also important for the study.

There are also studies that claim that data collected by written questionnaires do not reflect accurately speech that occurs in natural conditions. One of the reasons for this is that, unlike short dialogues, for example, questionnaires do not provide the necessary context for the situation that elicits the apology or for the persons involved (Wolfson, Marmor, & Jones, 1989). Also, some of the possible strategies to apologize, such as avoiding or postponing an apology could be left out in written questionnaires (Beebe & Cummings, 1995). This seems to be the cause of the fact that such instruments induce in the respondent the need to provide an apology to all the situations in the survey. Beebe and Cummings (1995) support, nonetheless, the use of the DCT as a data collection instrument for apologies, as, even though it has some shortcomings, it is not better or worse in this respect from other types of instruments. All the data collection methods have both positive and negative aspects, and thus one cannot clearly state which one is the best and most accurate.

Besides DCT and role-plays, there are also other types of instruments appropriate to collect naturally occurring samples of apologies. These would support Manes and Wolfson's (1981) claim that the best way to collect data is by eliciting spontaneous speech without the subjects knowing that they are studies. One such instrument is

collecting telephone conversations. Beebe and Cummings (1995) compared this instrument to the DCT in order to see whether it is actually a better data collection method. As in the case of role-plays discussed, telephone conversations offered longer and more complex responses, but, as the scholars conclude, there were more similarities between the two methods of collecting data than differences.

The most exhaustive study of data collection methods is, nonetheless, Kasper and Dahl (1991), which analyzed the methods used in 39 studies of interlanguage pragmatics. Besides the ones already described in this chapter, they also mention multiple choice surveys and interview tasks, which they placed at the lowest end of the continuum, and suggested that should be used only for studying the perception of speech acts. The highest position in the continuum is taken by the observation of authentic discourse, which the authors considered the best way of collecting data on the production of speech acts. However, this does not mean that using naturally occurring data does not have its disadvantages. There might be an observer affect, as the participants may be more or less consciously influenced by the simple fact that somebody is observing them. Moreover, it is more difficult to control variables in this kind of data, and therefore it is more difficult to establish the exact causes that lead to the particular results of the study. Finally, it is very difficult to collect enough examples for analysis. The DCT, as a production instrument, is considered to be in the middle of this continuum, which would suggest a position of balance between the two extremes presented above. Nevertheless, the conclusion of the authors was that each method has advantages and disadvantages, and a combination of instruments is the best approach. This confirms findings of other studies discussed earlier.

The inter-instrument validity and reliability of these collection methods are not the only issues to be taken into consideration. One should also consider the appropriateness of any of the instruments used to the socio-cultural context of the target population. According to Wolfson, Marmor and Jones (1989), the most important problem of studies on apologies across cultures is that their authors assumed that the apology as a concept represents the same social act no matter what the culture of the subjects is. However, this is far from being the case, as concepts like offense and obligation are very much culture specific. Thus, Rose (1994) claimed that the discourse completion test is not appropriate for collecting speech act data in the case of Japanese speakers, and extrapolates his findings to non-western cultures. However, Rose's use of multiple choice questionnaires as a means of testing the validity of DCTs raises methodological issues in itself, more research being needed in order to support his claims. Nonetheless, when comparing apologies across cultures, one needs to be careful what situations are selected when preparing any types of data collection instruments by making sure that the underlying behavior in the situation would be in violation of the social norms in all the cultures that are compared (Cohen & Olshtain, 1985).

Consequently, the study of speech act production in general, and that of apologies in particular, are a complex endeavor, and much care needs to be taken in designing and administering data collection instruments, and also in analyzing the results. In the absence of a unanimously accepted and reliable instrument, the best solution is, as Cohen and Olshtain (1994) stated, to use a combination of instruments. The conclusion that one can draw from the discussion on the different types of instruments, is that one should choose the one that is most appropriate to the specific purpose of the study. Thus, insofar as the study of apologies is concerned, whereas written questionnaires would be appropriate for studying perception of apologies, the DCT or role-plays would be appropriate for studying their production. Finally, if the

situations are carefully chosen, the DCT seems to have more advantages than disadvantages when compared to role-plays, as variables can be more easily controlled when studying what triggers the use of specific strategies in apologizing.

2.11 Apologies in Persian Society

S'æxsiæt (pride) and *ehteram* (honor) are two crucial constituents of the Persian concept of face that mark an individual's self-respect. *s'æxsiæt* (pride) is represented as social standing, honor, personality, self-respect, and character which are rooted in the person's background (Koutlaki, 2000). Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of positive face is comparable to *s'æxsiæt* (pride). It is of great importance to behave following societal values and loss of face happens when a speaker behaves in an offensive way that affects his family's public face and his social standing. Although Brown and Levinson's notion of face relies on individual and not group values, they are the same in Persian. Iranians put the needs of others first. Politeness in Persian culture means to behave in accordance with social conventions and considering personal and group face wants (Koutlaki, 2002). Besides, any offer or invitation must be rejected once or more by the initiator as sign of cordiality, respect, and concern for the guests' need.

Shariati and Chamani (2009) examined 500 Persian apologies that occurred naturally via observation. The results showed that explicit apology with a request for forgiveness was the most common apology and mentioned strategy with taking on responsibility was the most recurrent combination. In Persian culture, the effectiveness of direct instruction on the use of apology strategies was investigated by Eslami-Rasekh and Mardani (2010). The outcomes showed that Persian L2 students used more intensifiers because of less sociopragmatics proficiency. Their study aimed at helping teachers and learners realize the reason of failure in communication with the awareness of socio-cultural and sociolinguistic differences. They stated that implicit teaching is not

necessarily inferior to explicit teaching and pragmatic competence and grammatical competence are not correlated. Besides, Iranian L2 students would refuse transferring 'excuse me', if they expose to native like apologies. For this reason, material developers and teachers should focus more on apology speech act.

Farashaiyan and Amirkhiz (2011) also carried out a research to compare and describe apologies of Malay ESL and Persian EFL students. Participants were 15 Persians and 15 Malay students of more or less the same level of proficiency. An open questionnaire (DCT) was used to collect data. Findings revealed that apologies were the same in eleven out of seventeen situations. However, four types of apologies such as *justify hearer*, *denial of responsibility*, *blame the hearer*, and *pretend to be offended* were only used by Iranian students.

Allami and Naeimi (2011) studied Persian EFL learners and American speakers' pragmatic norms. In terms of using semantic formulas such as frequency, shift and content, there were contrasts between both groups. The results showed that Persian respondents, especially low proficiency learners attempted to transfer pragmatic norms which signified the positive interaction between L2 proficiency and pragmatic transfer.

Babai and Sharifian (2013) investigated Iranian English Language learners' refusals to invitations, offers, suggestions, and requests. According to the results, Focus Group Interview (FGI) responses related particular Persian Cultural Schemas like *tā'ārof* and *ru-dar-bāyesti* in both First (Persian) and Second (English) languages.

Rastegar & Yasami (2014) conducted research into the influence of various proficiency levels namely elementary, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced level on Iranian EFL students' apology strategies. A total of 16 students participated in

this study and the data were collected via Discourse Completion Test (DCT) employed by Tuncel (1999). Researchers' functional analysis based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981) revealed that learners' proficiency level mainly influenced the type of strategies used; proficient students used different apology strategies.

2.11.1 Social Distance and Social Dominance

Afghari (2007) believed that apologies in Persian are really formulaic and two variables such as social distance and social dominance influence the frequency of apology intensifiers in different scenarios. Iranians use intensified apology strategies to their close friends and the less intensified ones to strangers.

2.11.2 Influence of Gender

Shahrokhi (2011) investigated request and apology strategies among Persian males regarding context-external and context-internal variables. Strategies categorized based on a modified coding schema. The findings revealed Persian males used the most direct request strategy, namely an imperative and a new request strategy that is *Challenging Ability*. They applied *Intensifying Adverbial*, *Emotion*, and *Double Intensifier* to support main apologies. Persians used *offer of apology*, and *request for forgiveness* to perform an explicit apology. *Taking on the responsibility*, *Explaining the situation*, *offering to repair* and the new strategy *underestimating the offence by humor* were recurrent apology strategies performed by these respondents.

Similarly, Parsa (2012) employed an open questionnaire (DCT) as a controlled data elicitation method based on Cohen and Olshtain's model (1981). One designated group of 40 Iranian postgraduate ESL students constituted the sample of the foregoing research. The sample included 20 males and 20 females ranging between 24-35. The results revealed that females were oriented towards using more Illocutionary Force

Indicating Device (IFID) and apology strategies in order to maintain their successful interactions with the victim. In general, there was no significant difference between both groups and gender did not have an important role in using strategies.

Yeganeh (2012) studied apologies by Kurdish-Persian bilinguals in Iran. Findings revealed that although people of Ilam mainly used IFIDs and explanations in their apologies, they did not incline to use denial of responsibility and concern for the hearer. Men and monolinguals used fewer apologies than women and bilinguals. In addition, males tried to compensate the damage more.

Kuhi and Jadidi (2012) examined Iranian EFL students' politeness strategies in request, refusal, and apology speech acts. The results indicated indirect strategies were used in refusing and requesting, while direct strategies were applied in apologies. Iranian EFL students were opted for negative politeness and gender influenced the face saving strategies.

Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam (2015) examined apology strategies of 120 EFL learners (60 males, 60 females) from various proficiency levels namely elementary, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced. Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and Oxford Placement test were used to collect data and the data were analyzed using Cohen and Olshtain's (1983) framework. The findings evinced that IFIDs, offer of repair, taking on responsibility, and accounts were the most frequent apology strategies used. Although females showed a tendency to intensify strategies and differed in order of the secondary strategies, proficient females used less intensifies apology strategies.

2.11.3 Apologies in Azerbaijani Society

According to Garibova and Blair (2000), all communities have verbal methods of conveying apology and sorrow, but Azerbaijani repeatedly apologize in situations that people in other cultures such as Westerners view it unnecessary. They psychologically refrain from hurting or offending others and apology has been an essential part of their social behavior. They rely on long-term relationships, so they do whatever it takes to keep it. *Bağışlayın* and *uzristeyirem* are the only common apology words used for *Sorry*, *I beg your pardon*, *excuse me*, and *I apologize*. *Forgive me* is the literal translation of *Bağışlayın* and *excuse me* is the literal translation of *uzristeyirem* in Azerbaijani language.

Azerbaijanis usually apologize for using the words that may underestimate others or are deemed as taboo. If they use a rude word to give details of a person or a situation, they apologize before using it. For example, “She is – excuse me – a prostitute.” They also apologize when they refer to particular parts of body such as legs, feet, or back in conversations with strangers or even with doctors. For instance, “I feel pain -excuse me- at my back.” Traditional men, especially in some country regions apologize when they mention to their wife. For example, “my wife-excuse me- is at work.” They also apologize if they refer to someone in the shower or mention to their bathroom or bedroom. They never enter a private room without saying *Bağışlayın* (*forgive me*) or *uzristeyirem* (*excuse me*).

In Iran, it is usual for women to apologize when they apply make up in the presence of elderly people or men. Similarly, men apologize for smoking in front of senior people or women. Azerbaijani men apologize if they cannot give their seat to an old person on public transportation. For example; “The shower curtain – excuse me- in the bathroom.” It is worth noting that young people are not likely to follow these rules.

However, children have to apologize for their misdeeds. Azerbaijanis' response to an apology usually lessens the anxiety of the offender. As it is difficult for them to say no to requests, they try to mitigate the annoyance of rejection or refusal with an apology. Since studies on Iranian Azerbaijani pre-university EFL students are scarce and nearly all the researches reviewed have been done in Persian, Arabic or other Western languages, this research addresses the research gap in the field of apology.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an insight on the theoretical framework of the study, instrument to collect the data, the types of data collected, and the rationale underlying the selection of them. Further, the procedure to analyze the data, ethics, and the pilot study is discussed in details.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework of the study is based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981: 113-134) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983: 22-23). This theoretical framework includes *Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)*, apology strategies and non-apology strategies. *Taking on responsibility* implies apology strategies, while *refusal to acknowledge guilt* indicates non-apology strategies.

1. An Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)
 - An expression of regret, e.g. I'm sorry
 - An offer of apology, e.g. I apologize.
 - A request for forgiveness, e.g. excuse me/ forgive me/ pardon me.
2. Explanation or accounts, e.g. There was a heavy traffic.
3. Taking on responsibility:
 - Explicit self-blame, e.g. It's my mistake.
 - Lack of intent, e.g. I didn't do it on purpose.
 - Expression of self-deficiency, e.g. I totally forgot it.
 - Expression of embarrassment, e.g. I feel ashamed.
 - Self-castigation, e.g. It was very stupid of me.

- Justify the hearer, e.g. You are right to be angry and disappointed now.
 - Refusal to acknowledge guilt
 - Denial of responsibility, e.g. It wasn't my fault.
 - Blame the hearer, e.g. It's your own fault.
 - Pretend to be offended, e.g. I'm the one to be offended.
4. Concern for the hearer, e.g. I hope I didn't upset you/Are you alright?
 5. An offer of repair, e.g. I'll pay for the damage.
 6. Promise of forbearance, e.g. It won't happen again.

3.2 Sample of the Study

A total of 100 Iranian Azerbaijani pre-university EFL students (50 males and 50 females) comprised the sample of the study. The students were advanced level EFL learners studying at Pardis-e-Goldis English language institute in Tabriz, Iran. The participants ranged between 16 and 18 years of age. It should be noted that the classes from which the students were purposefully sampled were not co-ed. The participants, however, were homogenous in terms of cultural background and academic/linguistic experiences (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Profile of Participants

Female		Male	
Advanced level		Advanced level	
Class	Number	Class	Number
1	11	1	14
2	9	2	7
3	8	3	10
4	10	4	7
5	12	5	12
Total	50		50

3.3 Research Instrument

As the findings of written discourse completion tasks inform us of the learners' competence in controlled situations and say nothing about their ability to communicate in real operating conditions, the researcher will use three types of methods like an open questionnaire (DCT) as a controlled data elicitation technique, role play, and interview to gather data.

3.3.1 Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Discourse completion test (DCT) and multiple choice are two forms of the questionnaires. It is widely used in inter language pragmatics research as it gathers a lot of data in a short time and costs low. It is capable of controlling different variables namely age, gender, social distance, social status and imposition of the situation. Comparing data cross-culturally or cross-linguistically is possible in the control of social variables.

In the same vein, Tan (2004b) indicated that it just provides what participants think they need to say rather than what they really say in reality (Boxer, 1996). Cohen (1996) criticized questionnaires because they fail to show nonverbal features in interaction, prosodic features of speech, conversation sequence organization, repetition, and elaboration.

Discourse Completion Test (DCT) is classified into five categories. The classic format is the initial form that “the prompt is ended by a response and/or initiated by interlocutors’ utterance”.

Example:

“Walter and Leslie live in the same neighborhood, but they only know each other by sight. One day, they both attend a meeting held on the other side of town. Walter does not have a car but he knows Leslie has come in her car.

Walter: Can you give me a lift?

Leslie: I’m sorry but I’m not going home right away”.

(Blum Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989)

Dialogue construction is the second classification that may start by a respondent.

Example:

“Your advisor suggests that you take a course during summer. You prefer not to take classes during the summer.

Advisor: What about taking a course in the summer?

You : _____

(Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1993)

Open item-verbal response is another type. In its format, “participants are free to respond without any limitation from an interlocutor initiation and rejoinder”. However, they are supposed to provide verbal reply.

Example:

“You have invited a very famous pedagogue at an institutional dinner. You feel extremely hungry, but this engineer starts speaking and nobody has started eating yet, because they are waiting for the guest to start. You want to start having dinner. What would you say?”

(Safont-Jordà, 2003)

Open item free response construction is the forth form. In this case, “participants are free to give verbal response or non-verbal response and even allowed not to respond at all”.

Example:

“You are the president of the local chapter of a national hiking club. Every month the club goes on a hiking trip and you are responsible for organizing it. You are on this month’s trip and have borrowed another member’s hiking book. You are hiking by the river and stop to look at the book. The book slips from your hand, falls in the river and washes away. You hike on to the rest stop where you meet up with the owner of the book.

You: _____

(Hudson, Detmer, and Brown, 1995)

The final form of DCT is the recent version of DCT formed by Billmyer and Varghese (2000). It is a variation of third type. In this format, “situational background is provided in details”.

Example: Old version

“A student in the library is making too much noise and disturbing other students. The librarian decides to ask the student to quiet down. What will the librarian say?”

(Billmyer and Varghese, 2000)

Example 6: Recent version

“It is the end of the working day on Friday. You are the librarian and have been working in the University Reserve Room for two years. You like your job and usually the Reserve Room is quiet. Today, a student is making noise and disturbing other students. You decide to ask the student to quiet down. The student is a male student who you have often seen work on his own in the past two months, but today he is explaining something to another student in a very loud voice. A lot of students are in the library and they are studying for their midterm exams. You notice that some of the other students are looking in his direction in an annoyed manner. What would you say?”

(Billmyer & Varghese, 2000)

Discourse Completion Test of this study includes five apology situations influenced by social distance and social dominance (power) variables (see Appendix C). Table 3.2 shows the variables across the DCT apology situations.

Table 3.2 Variables across Situations I

DCT Apology Situations Social Distance and Power Relationships

AS1. Student accidentally bumps into a student	SD+
AS2. Student spills coffee over the books	SD = Neutral
AS3. Student forgets to do the assignment	S < H
AS4. Student receives a call from a company	SD -
AS5. Teacher forgets to come to class	S > H

AS= apology situation, SD= social distance, S= speaker , H= hearer

In AS1 (SD+) interlocutors are not familiar and there is no social dominance (S=H). While in AS4 (SD- & S=H) the speaker and the hearer are close roommates. In AS3 the speaker and the hearer know one another and the hearer dominates the speaker (S<H). In AS5 there is power relation between the interlocutors in a way that the hearer is superior to the speaker.

3.3.2 Role Play

Based on Kasper and Dahl (1991), DCT and role-play are two important data collection instruments in pragmatic research. Tan (2005) also defines role plays as social interactions in which described roles are acted by participants in specific situations. According to Mitchell's (1989), the data obtained from DCT and closed role-play presented very similar results and there were no significant differences in results comparing both methods. Variables of social distance and social dominance control the

apology situations of the study in role play (see Appendix D). Table 3.3 shows the variables across the role-play situations.

Table 3.3 Variables across Situations II

Role Play Apology Situations Social Distance and Power Relationships

AS1. Student hits a student's forehead making it bleed	SD+
AS2. Speaker spills water over a pile of papers	S < H
AS3. Student arrives late to play basketball	SD -
AS4. Student takes a shot and hits one of the students	SD -
AS5. Customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying	S > H

AS= apology situation, SD= social distance, S= speaker , H= hearer

In AS1 (SD+) interlocutors are not familiar and there is no social dominance (S=H). While in AS4 (SD-) the speaker and the hearer are close classmates. In AS3 the speaker and the hearer are familiar and there is no social dominance. In AS5 speaker dominates the hearer and the speaker and the hearer do not know one another. In AS2 there is power relation between the speaker and the hearer and the hearer superiors to the speaker.

3.3.3 Interview

As maintained by Merriam (1991) and Creswell (1994), an interview is essential when behavior, intent, thoughts, feelings cannot be discerned directly. Thijittang (2010) believes that employing both perception (interview) and production (DCT) methods can overcome the limitations of the methodology. According to Kitao (2012), apologies can

be studied employing speech corpora. An unstructured format is used for open ended interview questions in the study (see Appendix E).

3.4 Method

The research design employed in this study is a qualitative method, but quantitative data is used to support as evidence. The researcher uses an open-ended questionnaire, role play, and interview to triangulate the data. The data collected through the qualitative methods is also examined for statistical figures to answer the research questions of the study. The results are defined as frequency counts and percentages, and the significant values are calculated. The repeated presence of strategies in apologizing is mostly considered in this research.

As stated by Willig (2001), qualitative research deals with meaning and how people experience facts from their point of view. Griffin (2004) argues that qualitative method can be the only method that permits in-depth analysis for some research questions. It is not unscientific, but presents insights into participants' outlook, which may be depicted invisible by quantitative method. However, unwillingness of many academics, expensive and time consuming essence of it, and dependence on small number of respondents are limitations of qualitative research.

3.5 Ethics

In view of ethical norms, the researcher asked for permission to conduct the research in Pardice-e-Goldis English Language Institute in Iran (see Appendix A). Student information sheets, and consent form were also provided and distributed to students prior to conducting this research (see Appendix B).

3.6 Data Collection

The data collection was carried out within 30 days in December 2014. The open questionnaire included a section for participant's background information and five apology situations which were elaborated based on social distance and social dominance (power) variables. A total of 100 advanced-level pre-university participants (50 per gender) studying at Pardis-e-Goldis English Language Institute in Tabriz, Iran were ranging between 16 and 18 years of age. They were asked to identify themselves in the apology situations and give their normal responses in English. For example, when they were asked to respond to a situation in which their school teacher was involved, they were asked to think of their school teachers out of Iran with whom they speak in English. In the second stage, sixty of them (30 males, 30 females) acted out other five apology situations as role plays which were also developed based on social distance and social dominance (power) variables and participated in an interview which carried on for ten minutes (See Appendix D). An unstructured format was used in the interview which included four open ended questions correlated to the situations in the DCT and role play considering the aim of the research.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected was examined for statistical figures based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981, pp. 113-134) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983, pp. 22-23). One-way ANOVA was applied and the findings were stated precisely as frequency counts and percentages as well as significant values. The recordings were also written out, and text-documents were coded and analyzed. The repeated presence of strategies in apologizing was mostly considered in this research and significant values were also calculated.

3.8 Pilot Study

As mentioned by Hundley and Graham (2001), the approach of doing a pilot test for the research instrument is the most significant stage of the study. In order to upgrade methodological excellence and probe certain issues in this research, a pilot study was conducted to examine viability and clarity of the DCT questions, role plays, and interview questions.

The samples were eight Iranian Azeri EFL pre-university students studying at Maz International School in Malaysia. In view of ethical norms, student information sheet, consent form, and parental information sheet were sent to the students. Following attained permission, the researcher employed an open questionnaire (DCT), role play, and interview to gather data. In the first stage, participants were supposed to imagine themselves in 10 situations and give their real responses. They were also asked to comment on the instructions and clarity of the situations in advance. Then, four students (2 males, 2 females) acted out the same situations as role plays. In order to draw light on their roles and setting, ample explanation was given by the researcher. The collected data were examined for statistical figures according to Cohen and Olshtan's (1981).

Although DCT and role-play are both important data collection techniques in pragmatic research on the report of Kasper and Dahl (1991), to overcome the weakness of methodology, an interview was employed in addition. As maintained by Creswell (1994) and Merriam (1991), an interview is essential when behavior, intent, thoughts, feelings cannot be discerned directly. Accordingly, an unstructured format was employed in the interviews and questions were written correlated to the situations in the DCT considering the aim of the research. It included 4 open ended questions which were proven for language correctness based on supervisor's hints. Four participants (2 males,

2 females) were subsequently involved in one voice-taped interview which carried on for ten minutes.

Their responses to the open questionnaire were coded. Subsequently, the role play responses were transcribed, and transcriptions were analyzed and coded. Considering main focuses in study, Iranian Azeri EFL students' viewpoints empowered the interpretation of information. The results obtained from the pilot test revealed worthwhile information on the use of apology and non-apology strategies by the respondents. Despite some contrasts, several comparable IFIDs, apologies, and non-apologies were distinguished in the data collected from DCT, role play, and interview.

The outcomes gained from DCT revealed that female respondents opted for explicit expressions of apology, namely *IFIDs* and *intensified IFIDs* such as *one expression of regret*, and *one expression of regret and one intensifier*, but males offered an apology instead of asking for forgiveness. Despite the fact that *offer of repair*, *accounts*, and *justify the hearer* were frequently applied by male respondents, females used more *self-castigation*, *expression of embarrassment*, *expression of self-deficiency*, *lack of intent*, *explicit self-blame*, and *concern for the hearer*. In addition, *promise of forbearance* was not used by any respondent. With reference to the non-apology strategies, the analysis reveals that *avoidance* was mainly used by male respondents, while *denial of responsibility* and *blame the victim* were frequently applied by females (see Figure 3.1).

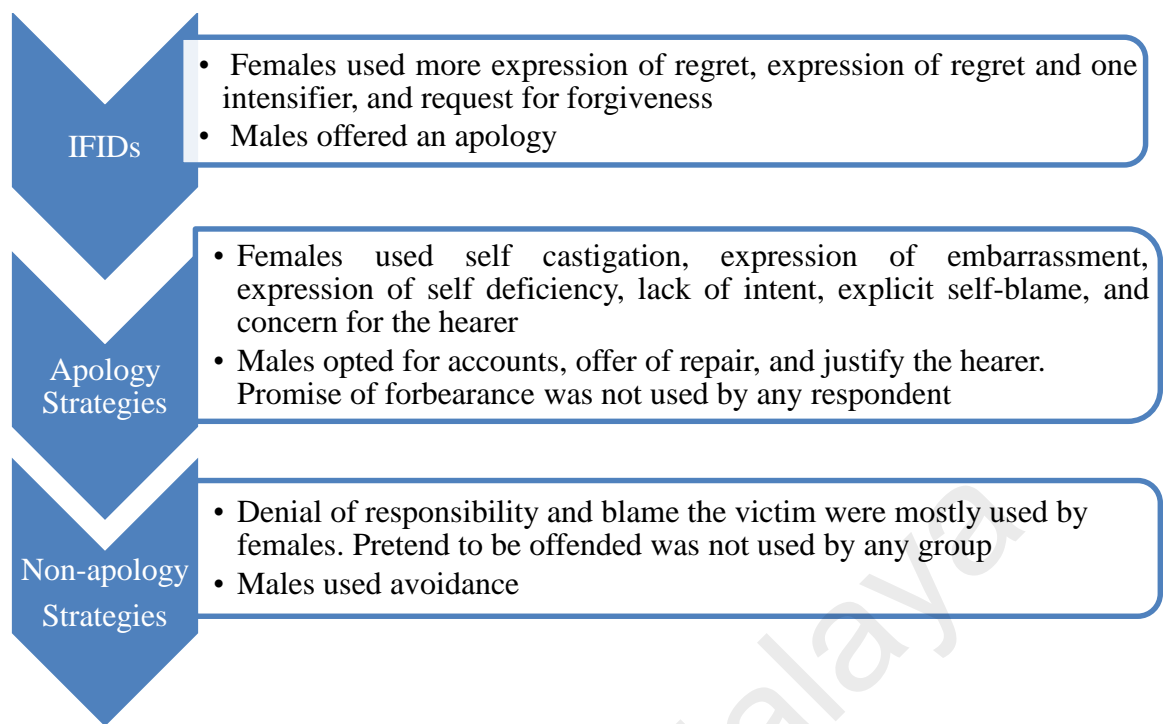


Figure 3.1 The data collected from DCT based on Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) categorization

Considering the results acquired from role plays, *one expression of regret and one intensifier* was repeatedly used by females, but male respondents opted for *one expression of regret and one expression of regret and two intensifiers*. On the other hand, females used more *accounts, expression of self-blame, offer of repair, and invoking God's name*, however male respondents opted for *expression of self-deficiency, lack of intent, justify the hearer, and concern for the hearer*. In addition, *expression of embarrassment, self-castigation, and promise of forbearance* were not used by any group. Regarding non-apology strategies, both groups used less non-apology strategies in role plays. Although *denial of responsibility* was only used by females, *avoidance* was applied by both groups (see Figure 3.2).

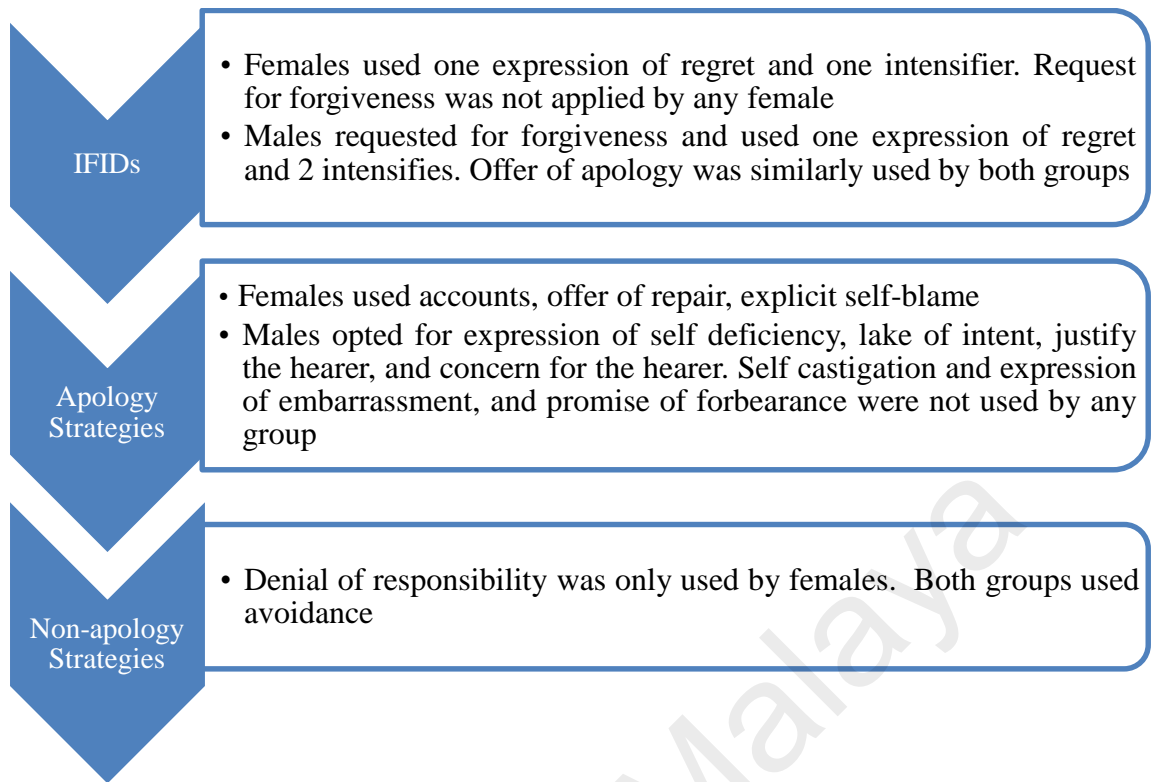


Figure 3.2: The data collected from role play based on Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) categorization

Based on the researcher's categorization, *invoking God's name*, *asking victim not to be angry*, and *using idiom* were the new strategies. Although females used more *idioms*, males mainly used *God willing* in their responses to DCT. In contrast, females used *God willing* more than males, and *using idioms* and *asking victim not to be worried or angry* were not seen in any responses in role plays.

Despite the fact that all female participants apologized to hearers of higher or lower distance, males tried to be more polite and used more formal strategies to hearers of higher distance. For the most part, the outcomes of the interview confirmed the results from questionnaire and role play (see Figure 3.3).

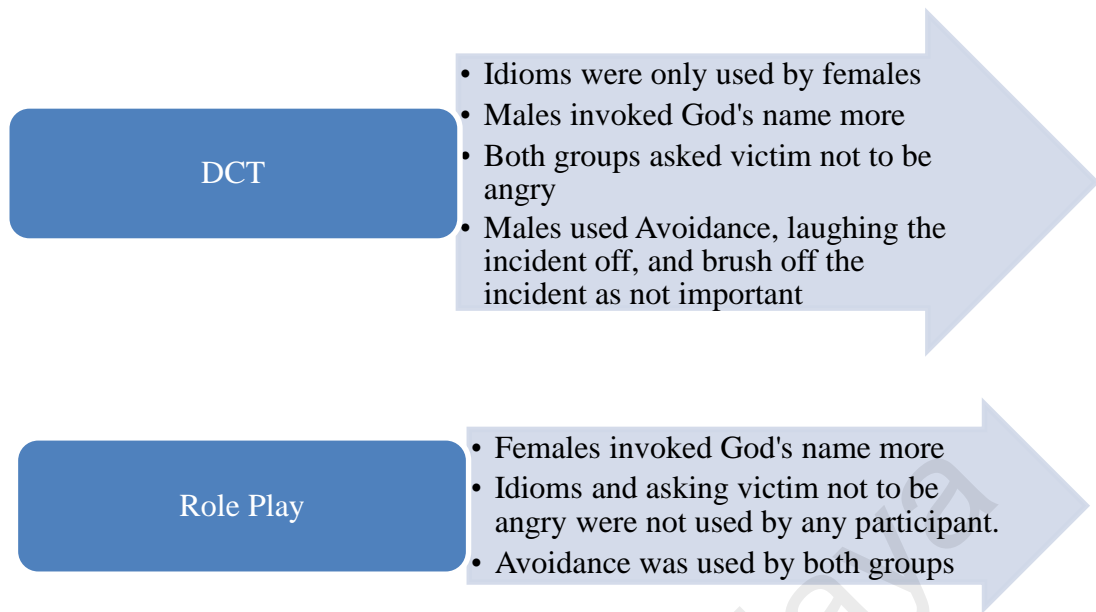


Figure 3.3: The data collected from Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and role plays

Ultimately, different apology situations were considered in role-play to avoid giving any hints to the participants and some interview questions were revised to achieve more effectual upshot in final research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of data analysis based on the framework of Cohen and Olshtain (1981). Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), apology and non-apology strategies of the respondents in Discourse Completion Test (DCT), role play, and interview are shown in the following sections. Frequency counts and percentages are defined, analyzed and explained. Further, the influence of context-external variables namely gender, social distance and social dominance (power) on the choice of the respondents for realizing apologies are discussed. The findings aim to provide answers to the three research questions presented in Chapter 1.

4.1 Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in DCT

This section presents the data obtained from the DCT in order to identify the IFIDs, apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students.

4.1.1 Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

In respond to the situations in the questionnaire (see Appendix C), male and females applied IFIDs to express their regret. As shown in Table 4.1, *one expression of regret, one expression of regret and one intensifier*, and *a request for forgiveness* are the most frequent IFIDs being used in the situations. *One expression of regret and two intensifiers* is the least IFIDs used.

Table 4.1: Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in DCT

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
One expression of regret	M	30	18	21	15	23	107	25.2
	F	19	15	19	13	15	81	19.1
One expression of regret & 1 intensifier	M	16	18	3	18	3	58	13.7
	F	22	23	12	15	8	80	18.9
A request for forgiveness	M	9	6	9	8	8	40	9.4
	F	7	3	5	8	7	30	7.1
An offer of apology	M	0	1	3	2	3	9	2.1
	F	0	5	4	3	4	16	3.8
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	M	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.2
	F	1	0	1	0	0	2	0.5
	N	104	89	77	83	71	424	
	%	24.5	21	18.2	19.6	16.7	100	

Male and female respondents used the following IFIDs (in descending order of occurrence):

1. One expression of regret: In 25.2% of the situations (n = 107), male respondents used *one expression of regret* like *sorry*, while in 19.1% of the situations (n= 81), female respondents used it. This was apparent in responses to Situation 1 (student bumps into a student), Situation 2 (student spills coffee), Situation 3 (student forgets to do the assignment), Situation 4 (student receives a call from a company), and Situation 5 (teacher forgets to come to class) to express regret. Some examples are as follows:

M: "I'm sorry [Situation 1]".

F: "Sorry [Situation 2]".

M: "I m sorry [Situation 3]".

F: "I m sorry [Situation 5]".

M: "I'm sorry [Situation 4]".

F: "I'm sorry [Situation 2]".

2. One expression of regret and 1intensifier: In 13.7% of the situations (n = 58), male respondents used *one expression of regret and one intensifier* such as *really sorry*, *terribly sorry* and *too sorry*. In 18.9% of the situations (n = 80), female respondents used one expression of regret and one intensifier like *so sorry*, *really sorry* in response to all questionnaire situations to show regret. Responses to items 4 (student receives a call from a company) and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class) showed examples of this strategy as is evident from the following examples:

M: "I'm so sorry [Situation 4]".

F: "So sorry [Situation 4]."

M: "I'm so sorry [Situation 4]".

F: "I'm so sorry [Situation 4]".

M: "Guys, I'm so sorry [Situation 5]."

F: "I'm so sorry [Situation 5]."

3. A request for forgiveness: In 9.4% of the situations (n = 40), male respondents used *a request for forgiveness*, for instance, "excuse me", "forgive me" and "pardon me" in response to all questionnaire situations to show regret for the offence. Female respondents, on the other hand, used "a request for forgiveness" such as "please forgive me", "excuse me", and "please pardon me" in 7.1% of the situations (n = 30), in response to all questionnaire items portrayed the use of this strategy as are shown in the following examples:

M: "Excuse me teacher, I really forgot to do my assignment [Situation 3]".

F: "I beg your pardon [Situation 3]".

M: "Forgive me [Situation 2]".

F: "Excuse me dear [Situation 2]".

M: "Pardon me [Situation 1]."

F: "Excuse me; I hope you will excuse me because I was in hurry [Situation 1]."

M: "Pardon me [Situation 4]."

F: "Please forgive me [Situation 5]."

4. An offer of apology: In 2.1% of the situations (n = 9), male respondents used "*an offer of apology*", for example, "I do apologize" in all situations except 1; while females applied *an offer of apology* such as "please accept my apologies", "I apologize", and "I do apologize" in 3.8% of the situations (n = 16) in response to all items except items 1 to show remorse. Responses to items 4 (student receives a call from a company) and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class) reflected the use of this strategy, as shown in the following examples:

F: "Please accept my apologies, it wasn't on purpose [Situation 5]."

M: "Pardon me [Situation 5]."

F: "Please accept my apologies Sir [Situation 4]."

M: "I apologize [Situation 4]."

M: "Accept my apology [Situation 4]."

5. One expression of regret and two intensifiers: In only 0.2% of the situations (n = 1), male respondents used *one expression of regret and two intensifiers* such as *really really sorry* just in response to situation 4 to show regret for the violation. On the other hand, in 0.5% of the situations (n = 2), female respondents used *one expression of regret and two intensifiers* such as *so so sorry* just in response to situations 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student) and 3 (students forgets to do the assignment). Examples are as follows:

F: “I’m really really sorry [Situation 3]”.

M: “I’m really really sorry [Situation 4]”.

F: “I’m so so sorry [Situation 1]”.

The results reveal that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students tend to be explicit in their apologies. *An expression of regret which* is the most direct apology strategy applied with one or two intensifiers to enrich IFIDs. IFIDs are mostly used in situation 1 (student bump into a student) where the speaker and the hearer are not close (SD+). Both male and female students intensify their responses, but females use more intensifiers to express their remorse. *One expression of regret and one intensifier* is mainly used in responses to situation 4 (student receives a call from a company) which yields expressions such as really sorry by males and so sorry by females. One expression of regret and two intensifiers is used in situations 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student and 3 (student forgets to do the assignment) by females, but in situation 4 (student receives a call from a company) by males. Expressions include “really really” and “so so” (Austin, 1962; Levinsons, 1978; Searle, 1979; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Taguchi, 1991; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shahrokhi, 2011; Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015).

4.1.2 Apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

In their attempt to respond to the situations given in the questionnaire, male and female respondents used apology strategies. Table 4.2 illustrates that *an offer of repair*, *expression of self-deficiency*, and *accounts* are the most frequent apology strategies used. But, *lack of intent*, *explicit self-blame*, *expression of embarrassment*, *promise of forbearance*, *self-castigation*, and *concern for the hearer* have been rarely used.

Table 4.2: Apology Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in Discourse**Completion Test (DCT)**

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
An offer of repair	M	14	25	27	16	27	109	22.1
	F	14	33	15	12	22	96	19.4
Expression of self-deficiency	M	6	6	20	14	12	58	11.7
	F	7	5	24	20	7	63	12.8
Accounts	M	13	1	19	5	8	46	9.3
	F	21	1	15	6	11	54	10.9
Lack of intent	M	5	5	0	1	0	11	2.2
	F	1	3	0	3	4	11	2.2
Explicit self-blame	M	0	1	0	4	2	7	1.4
	F	0	1	2	5	5	13	2.6
Expression of embarrassment	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	2	3	6	2	13	2.6
Promise of forbearance	M	0	0	3	0	1	4	0.8
	F	0	0	4	1	2	7	1.4
Self-castigation	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.2
Concern for the hearer	M	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Justify the hearer	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	N	82	83	132	94	103	494	
	%	16.6	16.8	26.7	19	20.9	100	

Male and female respondents used the following apology strategies (in descending order of occurrence):

1. An offer of repair: In 22.1 % of the situations (n = 109), male respondents used *offer of repair*, but female respondents used it in 19.4 % of the situations (n = 96) in response to all situations as shown in the following responses to items 2 (student spills coffee over the assignment), 3 (student forgets to do the assignment), and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class) yielding responses such as:

M: "I do it next session [Situation 3]".

F: "I must buy you from that book [Situation 2]".

M: "I'll teach you next time [Situation 5]".

F: "I can compensate the damage [Situation 2]".

M: "I promise to compensate with a makeup class [Situation 5]".

F: "I'll make it up [Situation 5]".

2. Expression of self-deficiency: In 11.7% of the situations (n =58), male respondents used *expression of self-deficiency* in their responses, but females applied it in 12.8 % of the situations (n = 63). Responses to items 3 (student forgets to do the assignment), 4 (student receives a call from a company), and item 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student) got responses that displayed reparation as shown in the following examples:

M: "I forgot that [Situation 4]".

F: "I completely forgot about it [Situation 4]".

M: "Oh, dude, I didn't see you [Situation 1]".

F: "I forgot to do it [Situation 3]".

M: "I didn't see you; I was in hurry [Situation 1]."

F: "Sorry teacher, I forgot it [Situation 3]."

3. Accounts: In 9.3% of the situations (n = 46), male respondents used *accounts* in response to all situations, but female respondents used accounts in 10.9 % of the situations (n = 54). This was apparent in responses to items 4 (student receives a call from a company), and 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student), and 5 (teacher forgets to come to the class) as shown in the following:

M: "I was so busy [Situation 4]".

F: "I'm too late [Situation 1]".

M: "I'm late to class [Situation 1]".

F: "I had an accident [Situation 5]".

4. Lack of intent: In 2.2% of the situations (n = 11), male respondents rejected intending to hurt the victim in response to all situations except 3 (student forgets to do the assignment) and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class); similarly females applied *lack of intent* in 2.2 % of the situations except situation 3 (student forgets to do the assignment) as is evident in the following examples:

M: "It happened accidentally [Situation 2]".

F: "I didn't have any intention [Situation 4]".

M: "I didn't do it intentionally [1]".

F: "It was just an accident [Situation 1]".

M: "I didn't want it to happen to you [Situation 1]".

F: "I didn't want this happen [Situation 4]".

5. Explicit self-blame: In 1.4% of the situations (n = 7), male respondents accepted their fault. This is clear in responses to all situations except 1 and 3. At the same time, in 2.6% of the situations (n = 13), female respondents accepted their fault. This is obvious in responses to all situations except 1. Responses to items 4 (student receives a call from a company) and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class) showed examples of this strategy as is evident from the following examples.

F: "It was my mistake [Situation 5]".

M: "It's my fault [Situation 4]".

M: "I must have asked some of you to remind me, but I didn't [Situation 5]".

F: "I know I did the worst thing to you [Situation 5]".

M: "I know that I's my fault [Situation 4]".

6. Expression of embarrassment: In only 2.6% of the situations ($n = 13$), female respondents *expressed their embarrassment* in response to all items except 1, but this strategy was not applied by any male respondents which resulted in utterances to items 2 (student spills coffee over the books) and 4 (student receives a call from a company) as shown in the following examples:

F: "I'm really shy [Situation 2]."

F: "I'm ashamed [Situation 4]."

F: "I'm really embarrassed [Situation 4]."

7. Promise of forbearance: Iranian Azerbaijani male respondents promised not to repeat the offence in the future in 0.8% of the situations ($n = 4$) in response to situations 3 and 4. On the other hand, in 1.4% of the situations ($n = 7$), female respondents promised not to repeat the offence in future, in response to items 3 (student forgets to do the assignment, 4 (student receives a call from a company), and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class). Examples are:

F: "It's my first and last time [Situation 4]."

M: I promise it's the last time [Situation 5]."

F: "I don't repeat this [Situation 3]."

M: "I do that next session [Situation 3]."

8. Self-castigation: Only female respondents used self-castigation in only 0.2% of the situations ($n = 1$) in response to situation 4 (student receives a call from a company). Response came as follows:

F: "I have a memory like a sieve [Situation 4]".

9. Concern for the hearer: In 0.2 % of the situations (n = 1), only male respondents used concern for the hearer in response to situation1 (student accidentally bumps into a student). Example is:

M: "Are you OK?"

Overall, males incline towards *offer of repair* and *concern for the hearer*, but females use more *Expression of self-deficiency*, *accounts*, *explicit self-blame*, *expression of embarrassment*, *promise of forbearance*, and *self-castigation*. It is worth noting that "justify the hearer" has not been used by any respondent. Females intensify expression of embarrassment in situations 2 (student spills coffee) and 4 (student receives a call from a company) which yields responses such as "I'm really shy" and "I'm really embarrassed". Accounts are also intensified by males and females. In situations 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student) where the speaker and the hearer are not close (SD+) females use too as an intensifier, but in situation 4 (student receives a call from a company) where the social distance is low (SD-) males opt for so. It should be noted that most apology strategies are applied in situation 3 where the hearer dominates the speaker (S<H).

4.1.3 Non-apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

In respond to the situations in questionnaire male and female respondents applied non-apology strategies. As shown in Table 4.3, *avoidance of subject or person*, *denial of responsibility* and *blaming the victim* are recurrently used. The least frequent strategy is *pretend to be offended* which is mainly applied by male respondents.

Table 4.3: Non-Apology Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
Avoidance of subject or person	M	1	0	0	4	0	5	21.7
	F	1	0	0	2	3	6	26.1
Denial of Responsibility	M	0	0	0	1	3	4	17.4
	F	0	2	0	0	0	2	8.7
Blaming the victim	M	1	2	0	0	0	3	13.0
	F	1	0	0	1	0	2	8.7
Pretend to be offended	M	0	1	0	0	0	1	4.3
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	N	4	5	0	8	6	23	
	%	17.4	21.7	0	34.8	26.1	100	

Male and females used the following non-apology strategies (in descending order of frequency):

1. Avoidance of subject or person: In 21.7 % of the situations (n = 5), male respondents used *avoidance of subject or person in all situations* except 2, 3, and 5, but female respondents applied it in 26.1 % of the situations (n = 6) in response to situations 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student), 4 (student receives a call from a company), and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class). Examples of the use of this strategy are:

M: "I don't do anything [Situation 4]"

F: "I don't give the message [Situation 5]"

2. *Denial of Responsibility*: In 17.4 % of the situations (n = 4), male respondents denied responsibility, but female respondents used it in 8.7 % of the situations (n = 2) in response to all situations. This was apparent in response to items 2 (student spills coffee over the books) and 5 (teacher forgets to come to class):

F: “*Oh*, that’s not my fault [Situation 2]”.

M: “It wasn’t what I planned [Situation 5].”

F: “It is not my fault [Situation 2]”.

M: “It wasn’t what I planned yesterday [Situation 5]”.

3. *Blaming the victim*: Male respondents mentioned *Blaming the victim* in 13 % of the situations (n= 3), but females blamed the victim in 8.7% of the situations (n= 2) as shown in the following responses to items 2 (student spills coffee over the books) and 1 (student accidentally bumps into a student).

F: “I was hoping you might be able to let me come in [Situation 2]”.

M: “Be careful; watch your way [Situation 1]”.

Pretend to be offended was not applied by any females, but males used it in 4.3% of the situations to respond to situation 2. It reveals that females opt for *avoidance of subject or person*; however males utilize *denial of responsibility*, *blaming the victim*, and *pretend to be offended* more than females. Applying non-apology strategies by males and females does not imply their impoliteness. This might be due to the fact that female respondents wanted to avoid the hard situation of apologizing and avoid making more mistakes toward the offended. By contrast, male respondents tried to assure the victim that what happened was totally out of their control in order to keep and save their relationship with the victim.

4.2 Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

This section presents the data obtained from the role play to identify the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students.

4.2.1 Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) in Role Play

In respond to the situations in the role play (see the Appendix D), male and females applied IFIDs to reveal their sorrow. As shown in Table 4.4, *one expression of regret and one intensifier, one expression of regret, and a request for forgiveness* are the most frequent IFIDs used. Females prefer *one expression of regret and one intensifier* (22.8%) and *a request for forgiveness* (12.9%), whilst male respondents opt for *one expression of regret* (14.6%) and *an offer of apology* (6.2%). *One expression of regret and two intensifiers* is the least IFIDs used in 0.6 % of the cases.

Table 4.4: Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in Role Play

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
One expression of regret & 1 intensifier	M	23	18	11	15	12	79	22.2
	F	31	15	6	18	11	81	22.8
One expression of regret	M	8	11	15	7	11	52	14.6
	F	9	9	11	4	4	37	10.4
A request for forgiveness	M	6	2	7	1	3	19	5.3
	F	5	8	8	12	13	46	12.9
An offer of apology	M	2	4	1	8	7	22	6.2
	F	0	7	3	2	6	18	5.1
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	1	0	0	1	2	0.6
	N	84	75	62	67	68	356	
	%	23.6	21.1	17.4	18.8	19.1	100	

Male and female respondents used the following IFIDs (in descending order of occurrence):

1. One expression of regret & 1 intensifier: In 22.2% of the situations (n = 79), male respondents used *one expression of regret and one intensifier* such as *really sorry*, *terribly sorry* and *too sorry*. In 22.8% of the situations (n = 81), female respondents used one expression of regret and one intensifier like *so sorry*, *really sorry* in response to all questionnaire situations to show regret. This was apparent in responses to items 1 (student hits a student's forehead making it bleed) and 3 (student arrives late to play basketball) as shown in the following examples:

M: I'm extremely sorry [Situation 1]".

F: I'm so sorry [Situation 1]".

M: "I'm so sorry [Situation 3]".

F: "I'm really sorry [Situation 3]".

2. One expression of regret: In 14.6% of the situations (n = 52), male respondents used *one expression of regret* like *sorry*, while in 10.4% of the situations (n= 37), female respondents used it in response to all questionnaire items. Responses to items 3 (student arrives late to play basketball), 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying), and 1 (student hits a student's forehead making it bleeds) showed examples of this strategy yielding responses such as:

M: "Sorry [Situation 3]".

F: "I'm sorry [Situation 5]".

M: "Sorry for not paying for it [Situation 5]".

F: "I'm sorry [Situation 1]".

M: "I'm sorry [Situation 3]".

F: "I'm sorry [Situation 3]".

3. A request for forgiveness: In 5.3% of the situations (n = 19), male respondents used a request for forgiveness, for instance, "excuse me", "forgive me" and "pardon me" in response to all role play situations. Female respondents, on the other hand, used "a request for forgiveness" such as "please forgive me", "excuse me", and "please pardon me" in 12.9% of the situations (n = 46). This was apparent in items 3 (student arrives late), 4 (student hits a student's forehead making it bleed), and 2 (speaker spills water over a pile of papers) as shown in the examples below:

M: "I appreciate if you forgive me [Situation 3]".

F: "Please forgive me [Situation 4]".

M: "Excuse me manager [Situation 2]."

F: "I beg a pardon [Situation 4]."

M: "I beg your pardon [Situation 4]".

F: "Excuse me teacher [Situation 3]".

4. An offer of apology: In 6.2% of the situations (n = 22), male respondents used "an offer of apology", for example, "I do apologize" to show sorrow; while females used an offer of apology such as "please accept my apologies", "I apologize", and "I do apologize" in 5.1% of the situations (n = 18) in response to all items except item 1 (student hits a student's forehead) to show their sorrow yielding responses such as:

F: "I apologize you [Situation 2]".

M: "I apologize for hitting the ball [Situation 4]".

M: "I apologize [Situation 1]".

F: "I apologize [Situation 3]".

5. One expression of regret and two intensifiers: This strategy has only been used by females in 0.6% of the situations (n=2) in response to item 2 (speaker spills water) as shown in the following:

F: "I'm really so sorry [Situation 2]".

The findings show that *one expression of regret and one intensifier* is the most frequent *IFIDs* used in role play. *An expression of regret* which is the most explicit apology strategy is used with one intensifier to show repentance. *IFIDs* are mostly used in situation 1 (student hits a student's forehead making it bleed) where the speaker and the hearer are not close (SD+) and situation 2 (speaker spills water over a pill of papers) where the hearer dominates the speaker (S<H). Intensifiers such as really and so are used by both male and female respondents. *One expression of regret and two intensifiers* is only used by females in response to situation 2 (speaker spills water over a pill of papers) where the hearer dominates the speaker (S<H).

4.2.2 Apology Strategies in Role Play

In their attempt to respond to the situations given in the role play, male and female students applied apology strategies. As shown in Table 4.5, *expression of self-deficiency*, *an offer of repair* and *accounts* are the most frequent apology strategies used. But, *lack of intent*, *promise of forbearance*, *concern for the hearer*, *expression of embarrassment*, *explicit self-blame*, and *justify the hearer* are the least preferred strategies.

Table 4.5: Apology Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in Role Play

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
Expression of self-deficiency	M	4	17	1	1	2	25	8.1
	F	22	26	1	9	3	61	19.9
An offer of repair	M	17	17	4	3	5	46	15.0
	F	10	5	5	3	8	31	10.1
Accounts	M	1	16	7	3	0	27	8.8
	F	1	20	7	0	2	30	9.8
Lack of intent	M	0	2	2	16	14	34	11.1
	F	0	1	0	7	4	12	3.9
Promise of forbearance	M	2	0	8	1	0	11	3.6
	F	0	1	3	1	0	5	1.6
Concern for the hearer	M	2	0	0	3	0	5	1.6
	F	1	0	1	1	0	3	1.0
Expression of embarrassment	M	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.3
	F	2	0	2	2	1	7	2.3
Explicit self-blame	M	1	0	0	1	0	2	0.7
	F	1	0	0	3	1	5	1.6
Justify the hearer	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	0	1	0	1	2	0.7
Self-castigation	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	N	64	106	42	54	41	307	
	%	20.8	34.5	13.7	17.6	13.4	100	

Male and female respondents used the following apology strategies (in descending order of frequency of occurrence):

1. Expression of self-deficiency: Expression of self-deficiency: In 8.1% of the situations (n =25), male respondents opted for *expression of self-deficiency* in their responses, but females used it in 19.9 % of the situations (n = 61) in response to item 1 (student hits a student's forehead), and item 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying) as shown in the following:

F: "I forgot all about the money [Situation 5]".

M: "I didn't notice you were behind [Situation 1]".

M: "I forgot to pay [Situation 5]".

F: "Forgot your money [Situation 1]".

2. An offer of repair: In 15 % of the situations (n = 46), male respondents applied *offer of repair*, but female respondents stated it in 10 % of the situations (n = 31) in response to almost all situations especially item 2 (speaker spills water) and item 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore) as shown in examples such as:

M: "I pay for it [Situation 5]".

F: "I'll pay you [Situation 5]".

M: "I would make it up to you [Situation 2]".

F: I can give you a tissue [Situation 2]".

M: "I can give you money right now [Situation 5]".

F: "I can help you to fix it [Situation 2]".

3. Accounts: In 8.8% of the situations (n = 27), male respondents used *accounts* in response to all situations except 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying), but female respondents used accounts in 9.8 % of the situations (n = 30) except situation 4 (student takes a shot) as shown in the following examples:

M: "I was talking with my friend [Situation 1]".

F: "I was very excited [Situation 5]".

M: "I had a class and I couldn't come early [Situation 3]".

F: "I was so busy [Situation 3]".

M: "I just wanted to have a goal [Situation 4]".

F: "I've been looking for this book for 5 years [Situation 5]".

4. Lack of intent: In 11.1% of the situations (n = 34), male respondents rejected intending to hurt the victim in response to all situations except 1; similarly females applied *lack of intent* in 3.9 % of the situations (n=12) except situation 1 (student hits a student's forehead) and 3 (student arrive late). Examples of the use of this strategy are:

M: "I didn't mean it [Situation 4]".

F: "It was an accident [Situation 4]".

M: "It wasn't intentionally [Situation 2]".

F: "It wasn't on purpose [Situation 2]".

5. Promise of forbearance: Male respondents promised not to repeat the offence in the future in 3.6 % of the situations (n =11) in response to all situations except 2 and 5. On the other hand, in 1.6% of the situations (n = 5), female respondents promised not to repeat the offence in future, in response to items 2 (speaker spill water), 3 (student arrives late), and 4 (student takes a shot) as is shown below:

M: "I'll be on time next session [Situation 3]".

F: "I will be on time [Situation 3]".

M: "I will not do it again [Situation 1]".

F: "I promise not to repeat that [Situation 5]".

M: "I I will not do it [Situation 5]."

F: "I promise next time [Situation 3]."

1. Concern for the hearer: In 1.6% of the situations (n =5), male respondents opted for *concern for the hearer* in their responses, but females used it in 1 % of the situations (n = 3) as shown in the following examples:

M: "Are you OK? [Situation 4]"

F: "Are you OK? [Situation 1]"

2. Expression of embarrassment: In only 0.3% of the situations (n = 1), male respondents *expressed their embarrassment* in response to situation 1 (student hits a student) only, but females used it in 2.3 % of the situations (n= 7) in response to

situations 1 (student hit a student), 3 (student arrives late), 4 (student takes a shot), 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore). Examples are:

F: "I feel embarrassed [Situation 3]".

M: "I feel ashamed [Situation 1]".

3. Explicit self-blame: In 0.7% of the situations ($n = 2$), male respondents accepted their mistake in response to all situations except 2 (student spills water), 3 (student arrives late), and 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore), but in 1.6% of the situations ($n = 5$), female respondents used it in response to all situation except 2 (speaker spills water) and 3 (student arrives late) as is evident in the following examples:

M: "I made a mistake [Situation 1]".

F: "I spilt the water on your piles [Situation 2]".

M: "It was my fault [Situation 3]".

F: "It was my fault [Situation 4]".

F: "It was my fault [Situation 1]".

4. Justify the hearer: Just female respondents in 0.7% of the situations ($n=2$) used this apology strategy. Responses to items 3 (student arrives late) and 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore) reflect the use of this strategy, as shown in the following example:

F: "You're right [Situation 3]."

On this account, *expression of self-deficiency* and *an offer of repair* are the most frequent apologies used. females would rather to use *expression of self-deficiency*, *accounts*, *expression of embarrassment*, *explicit self-blame*, and *justify the hearer*, but males go for *offer of repair*, *lack of intent*, *promise of forbearance*, and *concern for the hearer*. It is worth noting that *self-castigation* has not applied by any respondent in role play. Apology strategies are frequently expressed in Situation 2 (speaker spills water over a pile of papers) where the hearer dominates the speaker and in Situation 1 (student hits a student's forehead making it bleed) where interlocutors do not know one another. Intensifiers such as *so* and *very* are mainly used in Situations 3 (student arrives late to play basketball) where the speaker and the hearer know each other and situation 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying) by both males and females.

4.2.3 Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

In response to the situations given in the role play, male and female students also used non-apology strategies. As shown in Table 4.6, *denial of responsibility*, *avoidance of subject or person*, and *blaming the victim* are repeatedly used in the situations.

Table 4.6: Non-Apology Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents in Role Play

Strategies	Gender	Items					N	%
		1	2	3	4	5		
Denial of Responsibility	M	0	0	14	2	0	16	25.8
	F	0	1	25	3	0	29	46.8
Avoidance of subject or person	M	0	1	0	4	3	8	12.9
	F	0	0	0	0	3	3	4.8
Blaming the victim	M	4	0	0	0	0	4	6.5
	F	2	0	0	0	0	2	3.2
Pretend to be offended	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
	N	6	2	39	9	6	62	
	%	9.7	3.2	62.9	14.5	9.7	100	

Male and female respondents applied the following apology strategies (in descending order of frequency of occurrence):

1. Denial of Responsibility: In 25.8 % of the situations (n = 16), male respondents denied responsibility in response to all situations except 1 (student hits a student's forehead), 2 (student spills water), and 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore), but female respondents applied it in 46.8 % of the situations (n = 29) in response to all situations except 1 (student hits a student's forehead) and 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore without paying). Examples of the use of this strategy are:

M: "It wasn't me [Situation 4]".

F: "It wasn't my fault [Situation 3]".

M: "History teacher prolonged it [Situation 3]".

F: "Professor held me in the class [Situation 3]".

M: "My teacher prolonged the class Situation [3]".

F: "It wasn't my mistake [Situation 3]".

2. Avoidance of subject or person: In 12.9 % of the situations (n = 8), male respondents used *avoidance of subject or person* in all situations except 1 (student hits a student's forehead) and 3 (student arrives late), but female respondents applied it in 4.8 % of the situations (n = 3) in response to situations 5 (customer rushes out of the bookstore) which resulted in utterances such as:

M: "I run away [Situation 2]".

F: "I don't say anything [Situation 5]".

M: "I keep quiet and don't say anything [Situation 4]."

F: "I just go home without saying anything [Situation 5]."

3. Blaming the victim: Male respondents mentioned *Blaming the victim* in 6.6 % of the situations (n=4) in response to situation1, but females blamed the victim in 3.2% of the situations (n= 2) in response to situation 1 (student hits a student's forehead) as shown in the following:

M: "It was your fault [Situation 1]"

F: "It's your fault [Situation 1]"

M: "Be careful, why were you standing behind the door? [Situation 1]"

In sum, apologies of Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students are formulaic and culture specific. They mainly use IFIDs in combination with *accounts*, *taking on responsibility*, and *offer of repair*. Using *offer of repair* indicates their trustworthy behavior and *expression of self-deficiency* reveals cultural feature of Iranian families (Afghari, 2007). All members of the family, particularly children, should be responsible if they do wrong thing, so taking the responsibility and expressing of self-deficiency is easier for Iranians (Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015).

Regarding non-apology strategies, male respondents use more *avoidance of subject or person*, and *blaming the victim* than females, but females apply more *denial of responsibility* to show remorse. *Pretend to be offended* has not been selected by any respondent. It is worth noting that the results of the interview confirmed the results from questionnaire and role play. The examples are as follows:

F: "I'm so sorry; I just found this book and forgot all about the money, I can pay you all you want."

IFIDs + accounts + taking on responsibility + offer of repair

M: “ Sorry boy, I forgot, I had a class, that’s the reason I’m late, I’m so sorry , if you have time we can continue playing basketball, if not we could keep it for the next session.”

IFIDs + taking on responsibility + accounts + offer of repair

M: “Sorry teacher, I forgot about it because I was busy, what can I do? [3]”.

IFIDS + taking on responsibility + accounts + offer of repair

F: “I’m so sorry, I had to write a note, but I forgot, I can talk with them to solve this problem 4]”.

IFIDs + accounts + taking on responsibility + offer of repair

4.3 Results Obtained from Interview Regarding the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDS), Apology and Non-apology Strategies Used by Male and Female Respondents

The findings from the interview data revealed that both male and female Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students opted for explicit apology strategies (IFIDs). 15 of the 30 male respondents and 9 of the 30 female students used *sorry* as an expression of regret in their answers that indicated males more preference for *an expression of regret* than females. However, females used more intensified IFIDs than males. 14 of the 30 females used *so sorry*, while 8 of the 30 males employed *really sorry* in their responses.

(A) One expression of regret & 1 intensifier

F: “I usually say rrr... I’m so sorry!”

M: “I would say I’m really sorry!”

This suggests that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students desire to be more explicit in their apologies and use intensifiers to save face. Intensification is very important in Iranian culture, so more intensifier users are presumed more polite. This result is compatible with past studies that found that apologies are mainly direct (Austin, 1962; Levinsons, 1978; Searle, 1979; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Taguchi, 1991; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shahrokhi, 2011; Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015).

Considering non-apology strategies, most male respondents said that they prefer to avoid when they do not want to apologize. But, female students said that they use *denial of responsibility*. The examples are as follows:

A. Denial of responsibility

F: "I would say it wasn't my fault".

F: "It was not on purpose".

F: "It was not my mistake".

F: "It happens for anyone".

F: "I 'm not guilty".

F: "It was inadvertently".

B. Avoidance

M: "I look at the person and say nothing".

M: "I keep silent".

M: "I look at the person and go away".

M: "I keep quiet".

M: "I say nothing".

M: "I pretend that it was not me".

M: "I look at downside".

M: "I try to look at the person and say nothing".

M: "I do not say anything".

M: "look around".

M: "run away".

M: "say no words".

M: "pay no attention".

M: "I avoid it".

M: "just ignore".

M: "I prefer to keep quiet and say nothing".

This is consistent with the one suggested in literature review (Parse, 2012) that Iranian males try to avoid the subject or person but females want to deny their responsibility. The results from the interview data strongly support the findings from the role-play data regarding IFIDs, apologies, and non-apology strategies. Following examples were found in the questionnaire and role-play data.

Situation 1 (Questionnaire):

M: "Oh, I'm really sorry, I didn't see the cup."

F: "I'm so sorry; I can clean it for you".

Situation 2 (Questionnaire):

F: "I'm sorry, please forgive me".

M: "I'm sorry."

Situation 3 (Role-play):

F: "It wasn't my fault, my teacher prolonged the class".

M: "History teacher as usual prolonged the class".

Situation 4 (Role-play):

M: "I keep quiet and don't say anything".

F: It was an accident, I didn't mean it".

4.4 Variables involved in Extending, Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in DCT

This section presents the involvement of variables namely gender, social distance and social dominance (power) in realizing Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in DCT.

4.4.1 Gender-based Differences in DCT

4.4.1.1 Illocutionary Force Indicative Devices (IFIDs) in DCT

In this section, five usages of Illocutionary Force Indicative Devices (IFIDs) in DCT are analyzed to find out whether there are significant differences between male and female, through Chi-square analysis. Based on Table 4.7, all five usages of IFIDs in DCT show significant difference between male and female. To elaborate, the *IFIDs* of *one expression of regret*, *one expression of regret & 1 intensifier*, *one expression of regret and two intensifiers*, *an offer of apology* and *a request for forgiveness* obtain the p-values of .087, .101, .090, .174, and .205 respectively ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4.7: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

IFID	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
One expression of regret	107	56.9	81	43.1	188	100	.087
One expression of regret & 1 intensifier	58	42	80	58	138	100	.101
A request for forgiveness	40	57.1	30	42.9	70	100	.090
An offer of apology	9	36	16	64	25	100	.174
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100	.205

*significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.4.1.2 Apology Strategies in DCT

As shown in Table 4.8, there is no significant difference between male and female in 2 of the apology strategies in DCT. Based on the result of the Chi-square, the 6 strategies that show significant difference are the accounts ($p=.051$; $p>0.05$), *explicit self-blame* ($p=.186$; $p>0.05$), *expression of embarrassment* ($p=.500$; $p>0.05$), *promise of forbearance* ($p=.170$; $p>0.05$), *self-castigation* ($p=.500$; $p>0.05$) and *concern for the hearer* ($p=.500$; $p>0.05$). Two of the strategies, which are *an offer of repair* and *expression of self-deficiency* show no significant difference between male and female with the p-value at .040 and .026 respectively ($p<0.05$). Also, to note, no p-value is obtained for the lack of intent strategy because there is no standard deviation. As for justify the hearer strategy, there is no occurrence at all.

Table 4.8: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Strategies	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
An offer of repair	109	53.2	96	46.8	205	100	.040*
Expression of self-deficiency	58	47.9	63	52.1	121	100	.026*
Accounts	46	46	54	54	100	100	.051
Lack of intent	11	50	11	50	22	100	-
Explicit self-blame	7	35	13	65	20	100	.186
Expression of embarrassment	0	0	13	100	13	100	.500
Promise of forbearance	4	36.4	7	63.6	11	100	.170
Self-castigation	0	0	1	100	1	100	.500
Concern for the hearer	1	100	0	0	1	100	.500
Justify the hearer	0	0	0	0	0	0	-

*significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.4.1.3 Non-apology Strategies in DCT

Based on Table 4.9, all 4 non-apology strategies in DCT reveal significant difference between male and female. To elaborate, the strategies of *avoidance of subject or person*, *denial of responsibility*, *blaming the victim* and *pretend to be offended* obtain the p-values of .058, .205, .126 and .500 respectively ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4.9: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Non-apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Strategies	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Avoidance of subject or person	5	45.5	6	54.5	11	100	.058
Denial of Responsibility	4	66.7	2	33.3	6	100	.205
Blaming the victim	3	60	2	40	5	100	.126
Pretend to be offended	1	100	0	0	1	100	.500

**significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

4.4.2 Effect of Social Distance in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Considering social distance variable, IFIDs of Iranian Azerbaijani respondents are predominantly exchanged among strangers. In S1 (SD+) in which interlocutors are not familiar and there is no social dominance (S=H), respondents apologize frequently through IFIDs (24.5%) including one *expression of regret* and one *expression of regret and one intensifier*. While, in S4 (SD-& S=H) in which the speaker and the hearer are close roommates, social distance makes the respondents use less IFIDs (19.6%). One *expression of regret* and one *expression of regret and one intensifier* register the highest frequencies in S1 (Bumping into a student) and S4 (Forgetting a message).

With regard to apology strategies, 16.6% of the apologies are used among strangers, but 19% of the apology strategies are applied in S4 (SD- & S=H) in which speaker and hearer know one another well and there is no social dominance. *Accounts* register the highest frequency in S1 and *expression of self-deficiency* is most frequently realized in S4. Although *concern for the hearer* is the least apology strategy used in S1, *promise of forbearance* and *self-castigation* are least apologies applied in S4. Similarly, non-apology strategies are mainly used among close friends (34.8%). *Avoidance of subject or person* registers the highest frequency in S4.

4.4.3 Effect of Social Dominance in Extending the IFIDs, Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

The results reveal that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students use more explicit strategies to people of higher social status. In S3 (Forgetting to do the assignment) in which the speaker and the hearer know one another, the social dominance between the speaker and the hearer (S<H) makes the speaker use more IFIDs (18.2%). *One expression of regret, one expression of regret and one intensifier, and one expression of regret and two intensifiers* register the highest frequencies, where the hearer dominates the speaker. In S5 (S>H & SD-), the power relation between the interlocutors makes the speaker use less IFIDs (16.7%). *One expression of regret and one expression of regret and two intensifiers* register the highest frequencies in S5.

Regarding apology strategies, 26.7% of the apologies are used in S3, but 20.9% of the apology strategies are employed in S5, where speaker dominates the hearer. *Expression of self-deficiency, offer of repair, and accounts* register the highest frequencies in S3 and *offer of repair* is most frequently realized in S5.

With regard to non-apology strategies, 26.1 % of non-apology strategies are used in S5 (S>H & SD-), where speaker dominates the hearer. However, in S3 (S<H & SD-) non-apology strategies were not used by any respondents. Consequently, participants match their IFIDs, apology strategies, and non-apology strategies to the status of the hearer and their strategies are mainly influenced by the variable of social dominance. These results are in harmony with other studies (Kim, 2001; Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Afghari, 2007; Wulandari, 2009; Shahrokhi, 2011).

4.5 Variables Involved in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

This section presents the involvement of variables namely gender, social distance and social dominance (power) in realizing Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Role Play.

4.5.1 Gender-based Differences in Role Play

4.5.1.1 Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) in Role Play

Based on Table 4.10, 4 of the 5 usages of IFIDs in role play show significant difference between male and female. The 4 IFIDs are the *one expression of regret* ($p=.106$; $p>0.05$), *a request for forgiveness* ($p=.251$; $p>0.05$), *an offer of apology* ($p=.063$; $p>0.05$) and *one expression of regret and two intensifiers* ($p=.500$; $p>0.05$). Only one usage of IFIDs in role play shows no significant difference with the p-value at .008 ($p<0.05$).

Table 4.10: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs) in Role Play

IFID	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
One expression of regret & 1 intensifier	79	49.4	81	50.6	160	100	.008*
One expression of regret	52	58.4	37	41.6	89	100	.106
A request for forgiveness	19	29.2	46	70.8	65	100	.251
An offer of apology	22	55	18	45	40	100	.063
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	0	0	2	100	2	100	.500

*significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.5.1.2 Apology Strategies in Role Play

As presented in Table 4.11, there is no significant difference between male and female in one of the apology strategies in role play. Based on the result of the Chi-square, the p-values for the *expression of self-deficiency*, *an offer of repair*, *lack of intent*, *promise of forbearance*, *concern for the hearer*, *expression of embarrassment*, *explicit self-blame* and *justify the hearer* are .252, .122, .284, .228, .156, .410, .258 and .500 respectively ($p > 0.05$). Only one strategy, which is the *accounts*, shows no significant difference between male and female with the p-value at .033 ($p < 0.05$). Also to note, no p-value is obtained for the *self-castigation* strategy because there is no occurrence at all.

Table 4.11: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Apology Strategies in Role Play

Strategies	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Expression of self-deficiency	25	29.1	61	70.9	86	100	.252
An offer of repair	46	59.7	31	40.3	77	100	.122
Accounts	27	47.4	30	52.6	57	100	.033*
Lack of intent	34	73.9	12	26.1	46	100	.284

Promise of forbearance	11	68.7	5	31.3	16	100	.228
Concern for the hearer	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100	.156
Expression of embarrassment	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100	.410
Explicit self-blame	2	28.6	5	71.4	7	100	.258
Justify the hearer	0	0	2	100	2	100	.500
Self-castigation	0	0	0	0	0	0	-

*significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.5.1.3 Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

As displayed in Table 4.12, there is significant difference between male and female in using all non-apology strategies in role play. To elaborate, the p-values obtained from the Chi-square for the *denial of responsibility*, *avoidance of subject or person* and *blaming the victim* are .179, .272 and .205 respectively. No p-value is obtained for the *pretend to be offended* strategy because there is no occurrence at all.

Table 4.12: Statistical Comparison of Male and Female Respondents in Using Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

Strategies	Male		Female		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Denial of Responsibility	16	35.6	29	64.4	45	100	.179
Avoidance of subject or person	8	72.7	3	27.3	11	100	.272
Blaming the victim	4	66.7	2	33.3	6	100	.205
Pretend to be offended	0	0	0	0	0	0	-

*significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.5.2 Effect of Social Distance in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

With regard to social distance variable, explicit strategies (IFIDs) are frequently utilized among strangers. In Situation 1 (SD+) in which interlocutors do not know one another and there is no social power (S=H), respondents apologize mainly through IFIDs

(23.6%) including one *expression of regret and one intensifier* and one *expression of regret*. However, in Situation 3 (SD- & S=H) in which the speaker and the hearer are close classmates; social distance makes the respondents use less IFIDs (17.4%). One *expression of regret and one intensifier* in Situation 1 (Hitting a student) and one *expression of regret* in S3 (arriving late) register the highest frequencies.

Considering apology strategies, 20.8% of the apologies are used among strangers, but 13.7% of the apology strategies are used in Situation 3 (SD-), where speaker and hearer are familiar and there is no social dominance (S=H). *Expression of self-deficiency* registers the highest frequency in Situation 1 and *Accounts* is primarily applied in Situation 3. Although *Accounts*, *promise of forbearance*, *expression of embarrassment*, and *explicit self-blame* are the least apology strategies utilized in Situation 1 (SD+), *justify the hearer and concern for the hearer* are least apologies employed in Situation 3 (SD-). Accordingly, non-apology strategies are frequently used among close friends (62.9%). *Denial of responsibility* registers the highest frequency in Situation 3, but *blaming the victim* is among the linguistic choice of the respondents in Situation 1.

4.5.3 Effect of Social Dominance in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies in Role Play

The findings show that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students use more IFIDs to people of higher social status. In Situation 2 (Spilling water) in which interlocutors do not know one another (SD+), the social dominance between the speaker and the hearer (S<H) makes the speaker apply more explicit apologies (21.1%). One *expression of regret and one intensifier and one expression of regret* register the highest frequencies where the hearer dominates the speaker. In Situation 5 (S>H) in which speaker dominates the hearer and the speaker and the hearer do not know one another (SD+), the speaker uses

less IFIDs (19.1%). *One expression of regret* and *request for forgiveness* register the highest frequencies in Situation 5.

Regarding apology strategies, 34.5% of the apologies are utilized in Situation 2 (S<H & SD+), but 13.4% of the apology strategies are used in Situation 5 (S>H & SD+), where hearer dominates the speaker. *Expression of self-deficiency*, *accounts*, and *offer of repair* register the highest frequencies in Situation 2, but *lack of intent* and an *offer of repair* are most frequently used in Situation 5. In addition, *justify the hearer*, *explicit self-blame*, *expression of embarrassment* and *accounts* are considered as the least frequent apology strategies in Situation 5. With regard to non-apology strategies, 9.7 % of non-apology strategies are used in S5, where speaker dominates the hearer. However, in Situation 2 only 3.2% of non-apology strategies are used. *Denial of responsibility* and *avoidance* register the highest frequencies in Situation 2. Therefore, respondents match their IFIDs, apology strategies, and non-apology strategies to the status of the hearer and their strategies are chiefly controlled by the variable of social dominance. These results are in line with other studies (Kim, 2001; Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Afghari, 2007; Wulandari, 2009; Shahrokhi, 2011).

4.5.4 Results Obtained from Interview Regarding the Variables Involved in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies

With regard to social distance variable, IFIDs and apologies of Iranian Azerbaijani male and female respondents were mostly exchanged among strangers. Most male and female respondents said that they desire to apologize to strangers. They also use less formal apology expressions and more non-apology strategies to their close friends. Examples are as follows:

F: "Strangers are more important because they don't know me".

M: "Strangers may think the offence was deliberate".

F: "Friends forgive us easily".

M: "I seldom apologize my friends because they know me for years".

F: "I'm comfortable with my friends".

M: "It's important to apologize strangers".

F: "My friends understand me and know my problems".

M: "I sometimes apologize my friends".

F: "My friends know that I never hurt them on purpose".

This finding is in line with apologies in English (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Holmes, 1990; Intachakra, 2001). The results from the interview data support the findings from the questionnaire and role-play data. Following examples were found in the questionnaire and role-play data.

Situation 1 (Questionnaire):

F: "Oh, I'm so sorry. I will help you to pick them up".

M: "I'm really sorry about this, I', late for the class, I didn't see you"

Situation 1 (Role-play):

M: "I'm extremely sorry; we should take you to the hospital."

F: "I'm sorry, I didn't notice you were behind the door; let me take you to the hospital"

Situation 4 (Role play):

F: "Please, sorry!"

M: "I escape."

Situation 2 (Questionnaire):

M: “I’m sorry and I will buy a new one for you if you want”.

F: I’m so sorry! I didn’t want to do it! Let me buy you a new one”.

Besides, the results of the interview data revealed that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students used more formal and polite strategies to people of higher social status. Most male and female respondents said that they match their apology strategies to the status of the hearer and their strategies are mainly influenced by the variable of social status. Examples are as follows:

M: “Yes, social status of the hearer affects my apologies”.

F: “Of course someone of higher status is more import to apologize”.

Thus, it can be justified that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students transfer some cultural norms from L1 to English. The results of the study are completely in harmony with other studies (Kim, 2001; Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Wulandari, 2009; Shahrokhi, 2011).

4.6 Influence of Azerbaijani Language (L1) on Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology, and Non-apology Strategies

The expressions of *excuse me* and *forgive me* were frequently used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL respondents. Some examples from DCT are as follows:

M: “I apologize Sir, please forgive me! [Situation 3]”

F: “I forgot to tell you about the interview, please forgive me! [Situation 4]”

M: “Oh, excuse me! I should buy a new book for you [Situation 2]”.

F: “Excuse me! I’ll pick them up [Situation 1]”.

M: “Excuse me! I was so busy [Situation 4]”.

F: “I hope you forgive me! [Situation 4]”

M: “Excuse me Sir! I have forgotten to do the assignment [Situation 3]”.

F: “Please forgive me! I’ll make it up [Situation 5]”.

M: “Excuse me for this session [Situation 5]”.

F: “Excuse me! I’m so sorry! I was in a hurry [Situation 1]”.

M: “I’m busy these days, excuse me! [Situation 3]”

F: “I forgo, forgive for this time, I’m sorry! [Situation 3]”

Some examples from role play are as follows:

M: “Excuse me! I didn’t want to do it on purpose [Situation 1]”.

F: “Please forgive me! I didn’t recognize that [Situation 5]”.

M: “So sorry, hope you excuse me! [Situation 3]”

F: “Please forgive me [Situation 4]”.

M: “I beg your pardon [Situation 2]”.

F: “Excuse me teacher [Situation 4]”.

M: “Excuse me because I’m not punctual [Situation 3]”.

F: “I shot in bad way, excuse me [Situation 4]”.

M: “I appreciate if you forgive me [Situation 1]”.

F: “Excuse me! I was very happy [Situation 5]”.

M: “I didn’t mean it believe me, excuse me! [Situation 1]”

F: “I was so excited, please forgive me! [Situation 5]”

M: “Excuse me! How can I make it up? [Situation 4]”

F: “Please forgive me! It wasn’t deliberately [Situation 2]”.

The expressions *Bağışlayın* and *uzristeyirem* are the only common words used for *Sorry*, *I beg your pardon*, *excuse me*, and *I apologize*. *Forgive me* is the literal translation of *Bağışlayın* and *excuse me* is the literal translation of *uzristeyirem* in Azerbaijani language which were transferred from Azerbaijani into English. **Regarding DCT situations, these expressions are mainly used in Situation 1 (SD+) in which**

interlocutors are not familiar. Considering role play situations, they are mostly applied in Situation 5 (S>H) in which speaker dominates the hearer. This is in line with what stated in literature review that Iranian ESL and EFL students tend to over use or misuse “excuse me”. This over use can cause misunderstanding or be offensive in certain situations (Garibova & Blair, 2000; Eslami Rasekh and Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012). Eslami Rasekh and Maedani (2010) believed that “the syllabus designers need to expose Iranian English learners to the patterns mostly used by English native speakers. This can help them to avoid using repetitive Persian apology “excuse me” which is a result of negative transfer”. According to Bell (1991) translation occurs when the source language is transferred into the target language (English). Since two languages differ in forms, it is beyond the bounds of possibility that any of each language communicate the very same messages (Bell, 1991, p. 6; Dunnet *et. al.* 1986, p. 148)

4.7 Results Obtained from Interview regarding the Influence of L1 on the Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology, and Non-apology Strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL Pre-university Students

From the interview data, almost all female and male respondents said that they translate their apologies from L1 (Azerbaijani) to English. Examples are as follows:

F: “Yes, I usually translate my apologies from Azerbaijani to English because we always speak Azerbaijani language”.

M: “Yes, I often translate my apologies from Azeri to English”.

F: “Yes, translation’s inevitable”.

M: “Yes, because I think in Azerbaijani”.

F: “Yes, My mother tongue influences my apologies”.

M: "Translation happens unconsciously".

F: "Yes, I do".

M: "I use excuse me a lot".

F: "I usually use forgive me".

M: "Yes, because excuse me is the translation of *uzristeyirem*".

F: "I say what I exactly say in Azerbaijani".

M: "Yes, usually".

F: "Yes, most of the time".

F: "Yes, because we don't speak English a lot".

Only three of 30 females said that they never translate their apologies. See the following examples:

F: "No, I never translate because there are no equivalents for some Azerbaijani words in English".

F: "No, never".

F: "I don't translate".

Further, one of thirty males said that he never translates his apologies.

M: "No, not at all".

According to the results, almost all male and female respondents translate their apologies and transfer them from Azerbaijani into English. On that account, *forgive me* (the literal translation of *Bağışlayın*) and *excuse me* (the literal translation of

uzristeyirem) are recurrently appear in their responses (Bell, 1991; Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2009; Eslami-rasekhand Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012). The results from the interview data support the findings from the questionnaire and role-play data. Following examples were found in the questionnaire and role-play data.

Situations in questionnaire:

M: "I apologize Sir, please forgive me! [Situation 3]"

M: "Excuse me Sir! I have forgotten to do the assignment [Situation 3]"

M: "I'm busy these days, excuse me! [Situation 3]"

F: "I forgo, forgive for this time, I'm sorry! [Situation 3]"

M: "Please forgive me. I have forgotten my assignment [Situation 3]"

F: "Forgive for this time [Situation 3]"

M: "Excuse me [Situation 3]"

F: "Please forgive me; excuse me [Situation 3]"

F: "Please forgive me, it's the first and last [Situation 3]"

M: "It's better to say excuse me in a very polite way [Situation 3]"

Situations in role play:

M: "I beg your pardon [Situation 2]"

F: "Please forgive me! It wasn't deliberately [Situation 2]"

F: "Oh, it's a very bad happening; I'm so sad for it, excuse me [Situation 2]"

F: "Pardon, I don't know what should I say [Situation 2]"

M: "Oh my God, excuse me, I cannot say anything, sorry any way [Situation 2]"

F: "I'm so sorry about it, excuse me [Situation 2]"

M: "Excuse me and goodbye [Situation 2]"

F: "It was not on purpose, excuse me, and please forgive me [Situation 2]"

According to DCT and role play responses, *excuse me* and *forgive me* are mostly used in Situation 3 (student forgets to do the assignment) where the hearer dominates the speaker (S<H) and Situation 2 (speaker spills water over a pile of papers) in which the hearer dominates the speaker. Both situations are controlled by the variable of social dominance (Bell, 1991; Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2009; Eslami-rasekh and Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012).

To sum up this chapter, the analysis of apologies elicited from Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students through Discourse Completion Test (DCT), role play and interview resulted in classification and identification of different strategies used to realize an apology. In addition, the findings showed the influence of context-external variables namely gender, social distance, social dominance (power) and Azerbaijani language (L1) on the choice of apologies. The findings aimed to provide answers to the three research questions presented in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter will summarize the conclusions from data analysis results and discussions. The limitations of the study are referred to and a few recommendations for future research will be provided. Considering previous chapters of the present study, various cultural researches have shown that applying pragmatic and linguistic strategies in apologies differ from one language and culture to another, revealing diverse socio-cultural norms controlling them. Furthermore, realization of apologies varies according to some cultural, social, individual, and situational factors. In view of the fact that many cultural groups lean on dissimilar norms in their verbal interactions, there is a mighty feasibility of misunderstanding (Nardon, Streers, & Stone, 20012; Wierzbicka, 2003, 2010).

Hence, an investigation of pragmatic strategies used by diverse cultural groups while performing speech acts is crucial in mitigating cultural misapprehension and assisting English speakers to cope with intercultural confrontation more efficiently. Moreover, as non-native speakers of English comprise a large group, it is essential to scrutinize the way they apply language and how their local cultural norms and language influence their English production (Brumfit, 2002). **These norms are common beliefs and rules acquired from parents, friends, teachers, and others leading behavior of people in a society.**

Apology strategies of Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students as well as some controlling variables and Azerbaijain language (L1) were viewed in this study. For data collection, an open ended questionnaire, role play, and interview were used to

triangulate the data. The research design employed was a qualitative method, but quantitative data was used to support as evidence. The first research question scrutinized the IFIDs, apology, and non-apology strategies used by respondents. The second research question addressed the involvement of the variables of gender, social distance, and social dominance in extending IFIDS, apology, and non apology strategies. And, the last research question explored the influence of Azerbaijani language (L1) on IFIDs, apology, and no-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students. The results obtained from triangulation of data provided a base for answering the research questions of the study. In this chapter, research questions of the study will be reviewed and the conclusions from data analysis findings and discussions will be provided. Subsequently, the limitations of the study with a few recommendations for further research will be presented.

5.1 Illocutionary Force Indication Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-Apology Strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students

The results obtained from DCT revealed that *one expression of regret, one expression of regret and one intensifier, and a request for forgiveness* were the most frequent IFIDs used. Male respondents opted for *one expression of regret and a request for forgiveness* whilst females preferred *one expression of regret and one intensifier and an offer of apology*. *One expression of regret and two intensifiers* was the least IFIDs used. With regard to apology strategies, *an offer of repair, Expression of self-deficiency, and accounts* were the most frequent apology strategies used. Besides, *lack of intent, explicit self-blame, expression of embarrassment, promise of forbearance, self-castigation, and concern for the hearer* were rarely used. Viewing non-apology strategies, *avoidance of subject or person and denial of responsibility* were recurrently used. The least frequent strategy was *pretend to be offended*.

Considering the results acquired from role plays, *one expression of regret and one intensifier, one expression of regret, and a request for forgiveness* were the most frequent IFIDs. *One expression of regret and two intensifiers* was the least IFIDs used. *Expression of self-deficiency, an offer of repair, and Accounts* were the most frequent apology strategies used. But, *lacks of intent, promise of forbearance, concern for the hearer, expression of embarrassment, explicit self-blame, and justify the hearer* were least preferred strategies. *Self-castigation* was not applied by any respondent. Regarding non-apology strategies, *denial of responsibility, avoidance of subject or person, and blaming the victim* were repeatedly used.

The results show that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students desire to be more explicit in their apologies and intensify them. *An expression of apology* which is considered as the most direct apology in the list of apology strategies frequently applied by all the respondents. Males try to be more explicit than females, but females intensify their strategies. Women appreciate the benefit of reconnecting with someone whose feeling has been hurt by *requesting for forgiveness*, whereas males *offer an apology*. Males consider *request for forgiveness* as a loss of face and letting go of resentment and bitterness is a difficult challenge for them. Obviously, expression of embarrassment, explicit self-blame, expression of self-deficiency, self-castigation, and accounts are easier for females. Regarding real situations, *lack of intent, explicit self-blame, concern for the hearer* and *promise of forbearance* are recurrently used. In contrast, *accounts, self-castigation* and *expression of embarrassment* are evident in DCT responses (Austin, 1962; Levinson, 1978; Searle, 1979; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Taguchi, 1991; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shahrokhi, 2011; Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015).

Besides, in order to enrich apology act and be more polite, Iranian Azerbaijani respondents frequently use combined strategies. IFIDs are used mainly in combination with accounts, taking on responsibility, and offer of repair. Using *offer of repair* indicates their trustworthy behavior as they are sensitive to others' belonging and right. Besides, *expression of self-deficiency* reveals cultural feature of Iranian families. All members of the family, particularly children, should be responsible if they do wrong thing (Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015). It is worth noting that the results of the interview confirmed the results from questionnaire and role play.

Considering non-apology strategies, male respondents use more *avoidance of subject or person*, and *blaming the victim* than females, but females apply more *denial of responsibility* to express remorse. *Pretend to be offended* is not seen in role play responses. It implies that Iranian male and female participants do not tend to pretend the offence and try to use other non-apology strategies to deal with the real situations.

5.2 Results Obtained from Interview Regarding the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies

The results obtained from the interview data shows that both male and female Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students apply explicit apology strategies (IFIDs). A total of 15 of the 30 male respondents and 9 of the 30 female students used *sorry* as an expression of regret in their answers that indicated males more preference for *an expression of regret* than females. In contrast, females use more intensified IFIDs than males. 14 of the 30 females used *so sorry*, while 8 of the 30 males employed *really sorry* in their responses.

This reveals that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students want to be more explicit in their apologies. This is compatible with past studies that stated apologies are mostly direct (Austin, 1962; Levinsons, 1978; Searle, 1979; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Taguchi, 1991; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shahrokhi, 2011).

Regarding non-apology strategies, male respondents said that they prefer to avoid when they do not want to apologize. But, female students stated that they use *denial of responsibility*. This is consistent with the one suggested in literature review (Parsa, 2012). It is worth noting that the findings from the interview data strongly support the results from the role-play data. Following examples were found in the questionnaire and role-play data.

5.3 Variables of Gender, Social Distance and Social Dominance involved in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies

The results obtained from DCT showed that all 5 usages of IFIDs in DCT show significant difference between male and female. Two of the strategies, which were *an offer of repair* and *expression of self-deficiency* showed no significant difference between male and female with the p-value at .040 and .026 respectively ($p < 0.05$). Also, all 4 non-apology strategies in DCT reveal significant difference between male and female. Considering social distance variable, IFID of Iranian Azerbaijani respondents were predominantly exchanged among strangers. But, apology and non-apology strategies were frequently used among close friend. Besides, they matched their IFIDs, apology strategies, and non-apology strategies to the status of the hearer.

Regarding the results gained from role plays, 4 of the 5 usages of IFIDs in role play show significant difference between male and female. Only one strategy, which was the *accounts*, showed no significant difference between male and female with the p-value at .033 ($p < 0.05$). So, there was significant difference between male and female in using all non-apology strategies in role play.

Examining social distance variable, explicit strategies (IFIDs) and apology strategies were frequently utilized among strangers, but non-apology strategies were frequently used among close friends. Moreover, IFIDs, apology strategies, and non-apology strategies matched to the status of the hearer and their strategies were chiefly controlled by the variable of social dominance (Kim, 2001; Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Ahangar and Akbari, 2002; Afghari, 2007; Wulandari, 2009; Chamani, 2014; Shahrokhi, 2011). Apologies in this culture are closely linked to the social rules of power relations, as the speakers have to use high degrees of politeness when interacting with each other. Thus, a superior would rarely apologize to a subordinate, as the superior could be considered too humble (Obeng, 1999).

To sum up, most explicit, intensified and polite strategies are offered to strangers, yet less formal and non-apology strategies are used to close friends. Besides, IFIDs, polite apologies, and less non-apology strategies are mainly offered to people of higher social status ($S < H$ & $SD+$). Similar to two context-external variables namely social distance and social dominance (power), gender has also been a significant factor. (Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Shahrokhi, 2011; Chamani, 2014).

It is worth noting that the results of this study advocated the idea that Iranians put the needs of others first. Politeness in Persian culture means to act in line with social conventions and considering individual and group face wants. Pride and respect are two important features of the Persian concept of face that forms an individual's self-respect (Koutlaki, 2000). Similar to Afgari (2007), Iranian Azerbaijani EFL pre-university students' apologies were formulaic and variables of social distance and social dominance influenced the use of apology strategies (Afgari, 2007). They transferred cultural and pragmatic norms from their L1 (Azerbaijani) into English (Naemi, 2011) and used more intensifiers (Shariati & Chamani, 2009). Furthermore, IFIDs, taking on responsibility, and compensation were the most frequent strategies used (Bagerinejad & Jadidoleislam, 2005). But, what differentiated Iranian Azerbaijani speakers from Iranian Persian speakers was that Iranian Azerbaijani speakers used intensified strategies to strangers and less intensified ones to close friends and gender was a significant factor in using apology strategies (Parsa, 2012).

5.4 Results Obtained from Interview Regarding the Variables Involved in Extending the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology and Non-apology Strategies

With regard to social distance variable, IFIDs and apologies of Iranian Azerbaijani male and female respondents were mostly exchanged among strangers. Most male and female respondents said that they desire to apologize to strangers. They also use less formal apology expressions and more non-apology strategies to their close friends. This finding is in line with apologies in English (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Holmes, 1990; Intachakra, 2001). The results from the interview data support the findings from the questionnaire and role-play data.

Besides, the results of the interview data revealed that Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students used more formal and polite strategies to people of higher social status. Most male and female respondents said that they match their apology strategies to the status of the hearer and their strategies are mainly influenced by the variable of social status. Regarding non-apology strategies, interview results shows that males try to avoid the situation, but females denied the responsibility. The results of the study are completely in line with other studies (Kim, 2001; Ibrahim Muhammed, 2006; Wulandari, 2009; Shahrokhi, 2011).

5.5 Influence of Azerbaijani Language (L1) on the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology, and Non-apology Strategies Used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL Pre-University Students

The expressions of *excuse me* and *forgive me* were frequently used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL respondents. The reason is that the expressions *Bağışlayın* and *uzristeyirem* are the only common words used for *Sorry, I beg your pardon, excuse me,* and *I apologize*. *Forgive me* is the literal translation of *Bağışlayın* and *excuse me* is the literal translation of *uzristeyirem* in Azerbaijani language which were transferred from Azerbaijani into English. This is in line with what stated in literature review (Garibova and Blair, 2000; Parsa, 2012).

According to Bell (1991) translation occurs when the source language is transferred into the target language (English). Since two languages differ in forms, it is beyond the bounds of possibility that any of each language communicate the very same messages (Bell, 1991: 6; Dunnet et. al. 1986: 148). This is in line with the ones stated in literature review (Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2009; Eslami-rasekh and Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012).

5.6 Results Obtained from Interview Regarding the Influence of L1 on the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), Apology, and Non-apology Strategies Used by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL Pre-University Students

From the interview data, almost all female and male respondents said that they translate their apologies from L1 (Azerbaijani) to English. Only three of 30 females said that they never translate their apologies. The results from the interview data support the findings from the questionnaire and role-play data. Thus, the literal translations of *uzristeyirem* (excuse me) and *Bağışlayın* (forgive me) are extremely evident in students' responses which is in harmony with the ones stated in literature review (Bell, 1991; Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2009; Eslami-rasekh and Mardani, 2010; Parsa, 2012).

5.7 Implications of the Study

Understanding and producing speech acts seem to be among the most difficult aspects insofar as the socio-pragmatic competence of learners of a second or foreign language is concerned. Lacking the cultural, social, and pragmatic context in cross-cultural communication can lead to misunderstandings, both in producing the appropriate speech act and in perceiving the intended meaning of one uttered by somebody else. That is why it is important to know how speech acts are produced both in the native and target language of foreign or second language learners.

Recognizing the differences existing in any culture assists language learners to share their culture and ideas in cross-cultural situations (Mackay, 2002). It is crucial for them to know their culture and reflect on it in the context of other cultures (Kramsch, 1993, p. 205). The results of this study reveal the universality of the apology speech act. Both Iranian Azerbaijani EFL male and female students use the strategies applied in other languages (e.g., IFIDs). The findings highlight the significance of cultural norms

and rules in any theory dealing with the use of apology speech act. Using *an expression of regret*, *expression of self-deficiency*, and *offer of repair* by Iranian Azerbaijani EFL students show the existence of culture specific apology strategies in Azerbaijani.

Thus, further attention should be paid to culture specific strategies to reduce the communication failures and misunderstandings that may occur cross-culturally. Investigating pragmatic strategies of Iranian Azerbaijani pre-university EFL students raises their pragmatic awareness to avoid any possible misdeed in their interactions. The results of this study show their feasible problems in using apology and non-apology strategies in English.

Azerbaijani English teachers will share the findings to realize the strengths and weaknesses in their students' use of apology in English. They will prepare better instructional lessons for the students and help them to use more contextually appropriate speech act in the target language. The results of this research is also important for Iranian Azerbaijani students who plan to study in English overseas, university lecturers who have Iranian Azerbaijani students, university staffs, or any researcher who is interested in this area of research. The implications of this study can be helpful in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the Azerbaijani community.

5.8 Limitations and Recommendations

The results of this study still embrace limitations that require further investigation. The findings of this study are restricted to a particular group (pre-university EFL students), so the need to more studies still stands. Moreover, other speech acts like requests, refusals, complements, and suggestions regarding context-internal and context-

external variable can be scrutinized. A similar study is also applicable to ESL students to explore the likely influences of L1 on L2.

Furthermore, research into the expression of non-verbal politeness can offer a comprehensive image of politeness. Gestures, facial expressions, body contacts such as hand-shaking, embracing are related to politeness and are used differently across cultures. Therefore, the impact of context-internal and context external variables on the performance of non-verbal politeness can be examined.

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