

The Organising Committee of the 1st Auckland
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Certificate

to

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for presenting a paper "Responding to apology: A Study of
Australian and Indonesian Speech Act Behaviors" at the
1st Auckland Postgraduate Conference on Linguistics and
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We very much appreciate your contribution.

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Conference Chair



Auckland University, NZ: 2011

“Responding to Apology: A Study of Australian and Indonesian Speech Act Behaviours and their EFL Pedagogical Implications”

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Objectives

- To investigate apology responding behaviours of Australians and Indonesians with respect to gender and situation variables.
- To explore and compare the strategy use patterns (Overall and Extended).
- To analyse socio-pragmatic features of the responses in both languages.
- To discuss possible pedagogical implications into EFL teaching.

Theoretical Framework & Background

Apology:

Common, frequent, has deep and wide social and psychological significance

Culturally specific and reveals many linguistic, pragmatic, and socio-cultural variations

(Holmes, 1995; Harris & Grainger, 2007).

- Firstly studies in 1980s (Wouk, 2005). CCSARP Project (1984): apology in 8 languages (Universality and Variability: situational & cross-cultural variability).
- Has been investigated in various social constraints: situations; age; including Brown & Levinson's (1978/87) PDR politeness principles.

TF & Background (Cont)

- ❑ Investigated most in western languages – very few in Eastern & Asian languages (Nureddeen, 2007).
- ❑ Interests have increased recently in Asian languages (Wouk, 2005).
- ❑ Little attention given to ARs

Prior studies on ARs:

- ❑ Holmes (1995) – NZ English
- ❑ Robinson (2004) – American & British English
- ❑ Agyekum (2006) – African Language

TF & Background (Cont)

However

- ❑ Studies were subsidiary parts of apology
- ❑ They remain inconclusive eg: linguistic, pragmatic aspects; strategies; social constraints (age, gender, situations); and politeness (PDR).
- ❑ No studies in AE and BI either specifically or cross-culturally.

Both Societies differ in various aspects:

- ❑ Cultural variability (West and East; Individualistic and Collectivistic; Low Context and High Context) (see Hofstede, 1980)
- ❑ Speech act realization and communication patterns

TF & Background (cont):

- Prior studies on SA responses have been aimed largely at “compliment responses” (CRs) (see Tran 2008; Yuan 2001; Farghal & Al-Khatib 2001; Golato 2003; Lorenzo-dus 2001; Tang & Zhang 2008).
- Recent CR study by Chen and Yang (2010) classifies strategies into Macro (Accept; Evade; and Reject) and Micro (Thanking; Deflecting; Disagreeing; Explaining; Returning; etc)

What about ARs? --- Very Few

Holmes, 1995 in NZ English

Types	Expressions
Accept	<i>That's OK</i>
Acknowledge	<i>That's OK, but</i>
Evade	<i>Let's make another time</i>
Reject	<i>Silence</i>

Women tend to accept apology more than men

Other Studies:

- ❑ Robinson (2004) reveals that "*That's alright*" and "*That's okay*" are the two most common responses to apology in US – "ABSOLUTION"
- ❑ Norrick (1978) proposes a few more expressions: "*It's nothing*", "*Forget about it*" or "*never mind*". (basically aimed to dismiss the matter by denying its importance).
- ❑ ARs are complex; higher volume of words or expressions
- ❑ Apology and AR are face-threatening; both interlocutors in a difficult circumstance

Methodology

Subject: 120 NS of AE and BI (M & F)
Age 20 – 30 years old

Procedures:

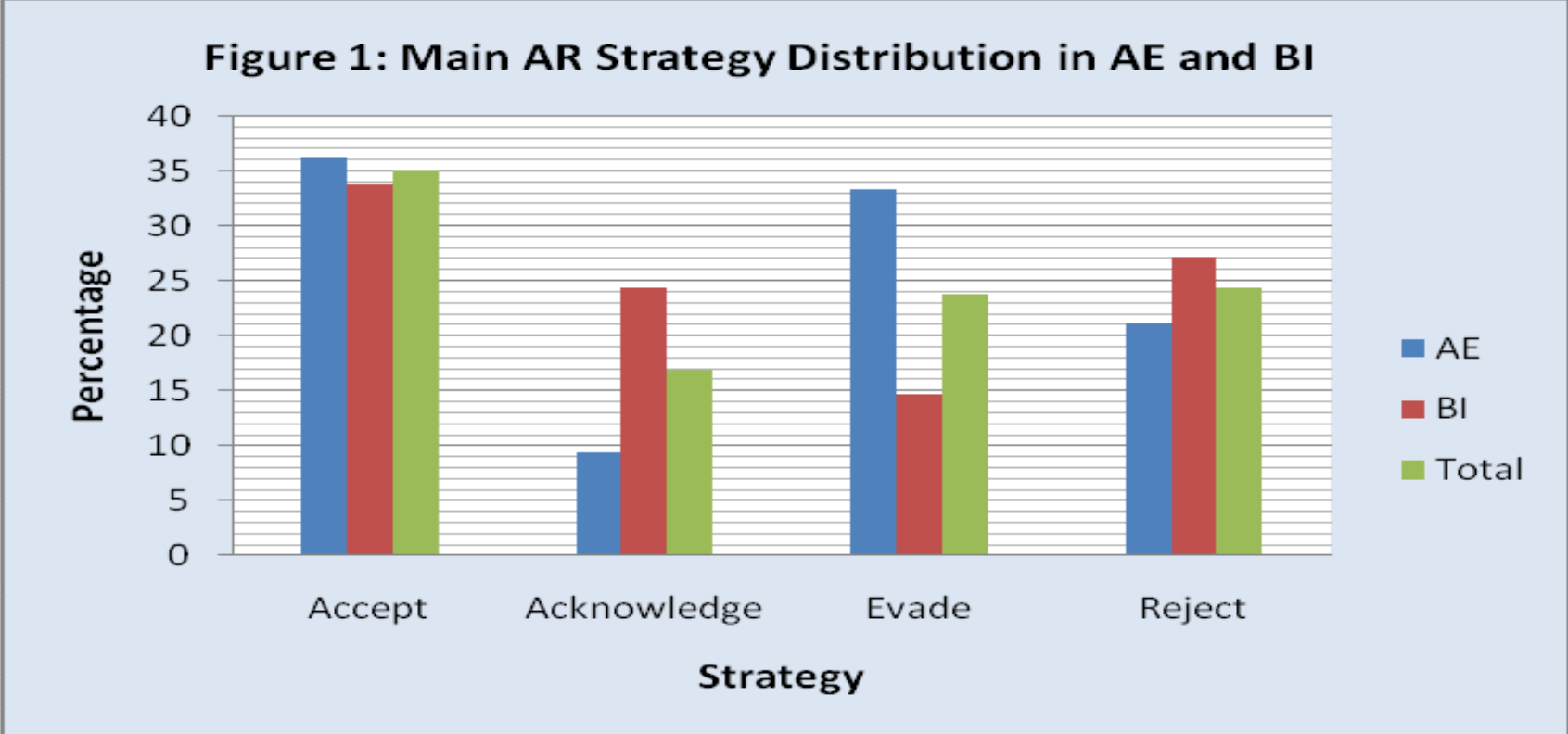
1. Pilot (Informal) – Survey/Interviews
2. Recording Apology Expressions (Prompts) - ODCTs
3. Recording Responses - ODCTs

Responses Recorded (360):

Table2: The Distribution of ARs Recorded from AE and BI Speakers

N o	Situation	AE		BI		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Birthday	30	30	30	30	120
2	Job Application	30	30	30	30	120
3	Book Return	30	30	30	30	120
	Total	90	90	90	90	360

Findings:



AE: N=180 BI: N=180 Total = 360

Subsidiary Speech Acts: Acceptance

Table 4: Acceptance with Subsidiary Acts and Expressions

No	Extended Acts and Expressions	AE			BI			Total
		M	F	Sum	M	F	Sum	
1	ACCEPTANCE							
	Absolution (That's OK/alright/fine)	34	22	56	0	0	0	56
	Negation (AE: Don't worry about that; No worries/problem; It doesn't matter – BI: Nggak apa-apa; Jangan dipikirkan)	12	7	19	40	29	69	88
	Formal (I forgive you; I accept your apology – BI: Saya maafkan /maafin kamu)	4	5	9	15	13	28	37
	Thanking	9	3	12	3	3	6	18
	Expressing empathy	3	5	8	3	1	4	12
	Advice/Suggestion	13	17	30	11	18	29	59
	Expressing emotion	2	4	6	7	7	14	20
	Questioning/Surprise	2	1	3	3	3	6	9
	Request	3	3	6	2	3	5	11

Acknowledgement

Table 5: Acknowledgement with Subsidiary Acts and Expressions

No	Extended Acts and Expressions	AE			BI			Total
		M	F	Sum	M	F	Sum	
2	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT							
	Absolution +	1	9	10	0	0	0	10
	Negation +	0	2	2	16	16	32	34
	Formal +	0	2	2	9	8	17	19
	Advice/Suggestion	2	4	6	17	17	34	40
	Warning/Threatening	0	2	2	0	3	3	5
	Expressing emotion	1	6	7	6	9	15	22
	Evaluating	0	1	1	0	1	1	2

Evasion

Table 6: Evasion with Subsidiary Acts and Expressions

No	Extended Acts and Expressions	AE			BI			Total
		M	F	Sum	M	F	Sum	
3	EVASION							
	Clarifying/Explaining/Deflecting	15	4	19	7	7	14	33
	Thanking	4	8	12	1	2	3	15
	Questioning/Surprise	4	3	7	6	4	10	17
	Request	12	14	26	5	7	12	38
	Advice/Suggestion	14	9	23	9	7	16	39
	Expressing emotion	6	7	13	5	2	7	20

Rejection

Table 7: Rejection with Subsidiary Acts and Expressions

No	Extended Acts and Expressions	AE			BI			Total
		M	F	Sum	M	F	Sum	
4	REJECTION							
	Refusal	0	3	3	9	8	17	20
	Questioning/Surprise	1	4	5	6	9	15	20
	Advice/Suggestion	1	7	8	1	5	6	14
	Request	4	6	10	3	3	6	16
	Warning	1	0	1	1	2	3	4
	Blaming	0	4	4	6	4	10	14
	Swearing	0	1	1	1	0	1	2
	Asking for compensation	1	0	1	2	3	5	6
	Expressing emotion	4	13	17	16	19	35	52
	Evaluation	2	3	5	0	1	1	6
	Non-Apology "Sorry"	0	4	4	1	3	4	8
	Thanking	3	2	6	2	3	5	11

Hedges in AE:

Table 23: The Use of Hedges AE

N o	Type of Markers	Male	Female	Total
1	You know	27	9	36
2	Kind of	5	5	10
3	Sort of	5	0	5
4	I guess	22	5	27
5	I (don't) think	1	6	7
6	Probably	5	4	9
7	Maybe	9	5	14
8	Like	5	10	15
9	A (little) bit	13	17	30
	TOTAL	92	61	153

Hedges in BI:

Table 24: The Use of Hedges BI

No	Type of Markers	Male	Female	Total
1	Kayaknya (it seems that)	1	9	10
2	Mungkin (maybe/possibly)	28	10	38
3	Sedikit (a bit)	3	1	4
4	Jadi (ya) (so)	11	11	22
5	Sepertinya (it seems/ it's like)	1	0	1
6	Gimana ya (how can I say)	9	10	19
7	Agak (rather/ a bit)	1	2	3
	TOTAL	54	43	97

Fillers in AE:

Table 25: The Use of Fillers AE

N o	Type of Markers	Male	Female	Total
1	Well	17	18	35
2	Um	66	97	163
3	Er	77	16	93
4	Yeah	76	26	102
	TOTAL	236	157	393

Fillers in BI:

Table 26: The Use of Fillers BI

N o	Type of Markers	Male	Female	Total
1	(H)mm/Emm	8	12	20
2	Ee	34	25	59
3	Aa	27	12	39
	TOTAL	69	49	118

Intensifiers in AE:

Table 27: The Use of Intensifiers AE

N o	Intensifiers	Male	Female	Total
1	Pretty	9	4	13
2	Very	2	2	4
3	Really	47	61	108
4	A (little) bit	13	17	30
5	Too	4	5	9
	TOTAL	75	89	164

Intensifiers in BI:

Table 28: The Use of Intensifiers BI

N o	Intensifiers	Male	Female	Total
1	Banget/bangat/sangat	13	47	60
2	(Se)kali	11	1	12
3	Nian	1	5	6
4	Benar-benar	3	0	3
	TOTAL	28	53	81

General Findings:

- ❑ Both language communities tend to be accepting in their ARs (Other-Oriented/Self-Demeaning).
- ❑ Responses are complex, embracing subsidiary speech acts & Expressions – Good Pedagogical Implications – show politeness/indirectness; reduce face threats
- ❑ AE more evasive than BI; BI more acknowledging than AE in their ARs; contradict previous studies.
- ❑ Gender variations occur according to situation variable-Interlanguage analysis displays that gender difference can be seen clearly in AK, EV, and RJ.
- ❑ Indonesians are more direct and face-threatening than Australians

Sample Responses

Acceptance

- ❑ *That's OK, that's alright. Don't worry about it, I understand stuff like that happens.*
- ❑ *Oh that's fine er thanks for telling me. I guess I appreciate that you're telling me. Cheers.*
- ❑ *OK, that's **no worries**. I can understand um if you had something else on er something else more important to do. Um I really appreciate your apology as I really wanted you to come, but um **that's fine**, we'll we'll make another time to meet up then.*

Acknowledgement

- *Well, as long as nobody er none of these people tell anyone about the job and keep it to themselves um **I guess it's OK** but I told you that in confidence so **I don't know if I can tell you any more secrets.***
- *Won't hate you forever, but I feel upset how you've done that and um **don't do it again!***

Evasion

- *Er I just wanted to know um when I would be able to get the book I um I really need it as soon as possible because it's for an assignment, now I really need it to make a start so **if you could arrange a time as soon as possible um to drop it off that would be very good.** Cool, thanks.*
- *Um I told you that in confidence hoping you wouldn't actually tell anyone else because I wanted to see if I could actually get the job or not, so I could tell people and yeah like you could actually keep my secret.*
- ***How how could you forget?!** I told you ages ago. I gave, rang you and told you. And um you know I thought you knew about it. **How could you forget it was on?** Um you know I got everything ready and yeah yeah **I'm just surprised that you forgot.***

Rejection

- ❑ ***I don't think dinner's gonna do much now.** I really wanted you there last night. I'll talk to you when I'm not so mad.*
- ❑ *Well you say you forgot my birthday, so you like mean to be my good friend but you forgot like that shows how much you actually care and I'm really really disappointed that you're forgetting something that was important to me and **no I'm too angry to go out for a dinner with you at the moment.***
- ❑ *Er it's pretty stupid I don't know why you did that you know, I trusted you to say that um in the future you know **just try to keep your mouth shut!***

Pedagogical Perspectives:

Cohen (1996): 2 important abilities

- ❑ Sociocultural (skill at selecting appropriate strategies; culture; age & sex; social status; etc) – B & L (1987)
- ❑ Sociolinguistic (skill at selecting appropriate linguistic forms)
- ❑ Apologies are problematic. Raise socio-cultural and pragmatic differences in the classroom (Kim, 2008 & Bataineh and Bataineh (2008).

Pedagogical Implications:

- ❑ Need to increase awareness of cross-cultural pragmatic differences (Kim, 2007; Bataineh and Bataineh, 2008).
- ❑ The teaching of socio-cultural; pragmatic; politeness aspects explicitly in the classroom (Liddicoat, 2000; Cohen, 2006)
- ❑ Incorporation of social aspects: situations; re'ships; power status/distance; degree of offence; age; gender – politeness
- ❑ The teaching of socio-cultural; pragmatic; politeness aspects explicitly in the classroom (Liddicoat, 2000; Cohen, 2006)

Implications:

- Techniques of eliciting learners' language production: ODCTs; RPs; Video clips