PROTOTYPING *SORRY* AS CHATTING FORMULA MISMATCHES ON WHATSAPP MESSENGER: A SOCIOPRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Witnessing the plethora of *sorry* as one of the apologetic strategies in daily conversation has enthralled scholars in pragmatics, compelling them to redefine and refine its usage. This study aims twofold: to investigate prototypes of chat formula mismatches of *sorry – which also includes maaf, maap, sori*, and *ngapunten* (Javanese) – derived from WhatsApp chats and to unravel contextual factors underlying those mismatches seen from a sociopragmatic perspective. We collected 300 chat conversations, with 65% of them displaying formula mismatches in its use. The findings reveal emergent prototypes of chatting formula mismatches of those apologetic expressions, which include sarcasm, insecurity, assertive power, self-blame, disrespect, resentment, and humor. These prototypes are influenced by the level of familiarity and equal status between the sender and recipient. Furthermore, discourse markers such as *ya, kan, deh,* and other word fillers play a role in transcending conventional apologies to foster intimacy and harmony. This research provides a nuanced understanding of contextualized apology strategies and contributes to future pragmatics studies.

Keywords: apologetic formula mismatches, sorry, sociopragmatics, WhatsApp chat

Abstrak

Menyaksikan banyaknya penggunaan permintaan maaf sebagai salah satu strategi penyesalan dalam percakapan sehari-hari telah menarik para ahli pragmatik, yang memaksa mereka untuk mendefinisikan ulang dan memperbaiki penggunaannya. Studi ini bertujuan dua hal: untuk menyelidiki prototipe ketidaksetujuan formula 'sorry' – yang meliputi maaf, maap, sori, dan ngapunten (bahasa Jawa) – yang diperoleh dari obrolan WhatsApp dan untuk mengungkap faktor kontekstual yang mendasari ketidakcocokan itu dilihat dari perspektif sosiopragmatik. Kami mengumpulkan 300 percakapan obrolan, dan 65% dari percakapan itu menampilkan ketidaksesuaian formula dalam penggunaan kata-kata tersebut. Temuan ini menunjukkan prototipe yang muncul dari ketidaksesuaian formula percakapan yang mengandung ekspresi permintaan maaf yang meliputi sarkasme, ketidaknyamanan, penegasan diri, menyalahkan diri sendiri, tidak hormat, kemarahan, dan humor. Prototipe ini dipengaruhi oleh tingkat keakraban dan status yang sama antara pengirim dan penerima. Selain itu, penanda wacana seperti ya, kan, deh, dan pengisi kata lainnya berperan dalam melampaui permintaan maaf yang konvensional untuk menekankan keintiman dan harmoni. Penelitian ini memberikan pemahaman nuansa strategi permintaan maaf yang kontekstual dan berkontribusi pada studi pragmatik di masa depan.

Kata kunci: *ketidaksesuaian formula permintaan maaf, sorry, sosiopragmatik, percakapan WhatsApp*

INTRODUCTION

Apologies are widespread and can be seen in a multitude of situations, including everyday interactions, business discussions (both domestic and international), social media platforms, and company websites when addressing customer grievances (Page, 2014). They serve as a means to alleviate or recognize the adverse effects experienced by the recipient (Holmes, 1990; Thomas, 1983), thereby safeguarding the dignity and reputation of both the speaker and the individual receiving the apology (Trosborg, 1987).

Apologies are prompted by the violation of social norms, irrespective of whether the offense has occurred or has the potential to occur (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983). They serve as a speech act to address unpleasant actions and enhance interpersonal connections. Brown and Levinson (1987) assert that contextual apologies can vary based on the power dynamics (Power), social distance (Distance), and cultural norms (Ranking) between the speaker and the interlocutor. The speaker's choice of utterance is influenced by the relationship between the individuals, the level of formality or informality, and the cultural values within a specific community as a scalar level of pragmatics (Karjo, 2011).

Sorry, or *maaf* in Indonesian, is widely employed by people as a means of expressing remorse and acknowledging personal wrongdoing. For Murphy (2015), it is a phrase commonly used in expressions of sympathy and apologies, leading to ambiguity regarding its role in conveying causality and creating potential confusion and ambiguity. Murphy further suggests that sorry is a generalized conversational implicature that can perform a challenging single function such as acknowledging wrongdoing. Likewise, the formulation of criteria must be completed for an apology to be regarded as effective and should meet the expectations of the speaker and the listener (Murphy, 2019). Wouk (2006) argues that Indonesian apologies, except for *sorry* or *maaf*, lack sufficient apologetic force due to their focus on *ampun* (pardon), with most apologies involving requests for forgiveness. Wouk's findings suggest regret serves as a supporting move rather than an apology in Indonesian society. The term *maaf* can be used in verbal constructions, such as *minta*, as the direct object of a verb of asking, or as the main verb in *saya minta maaf* 'I ask for forgiveness' as sincerity. These conditions of sincerity encompass aspects such as identification of the perpetrator, the speaker's belief that the action constitutes a violation, and the speaker's remorse for the action. These criteria aid in understanding why some speakers may perceive *sorry* as an appropriate apology, while others may not. By considering these conflicting conditions of the uses of 'sorry', we gain a better understanding of how speakers and listeners interpret and evaluate apologies, as well as why there is a prototype variation in how individuals respond to 'sorry' as a "genuine" apology.

This study explores the multifunctionality of prototyping *sorry* in communication, distinguishing it from conventional and explicit forms like Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) and Head Acts and Supportive Moves strategies encompassing the interwoven influence variables and expressing regret, offering an apology, or asking for forgiveness. While those forms elicit proper and genuine apologies, improper or verbal formula mismatches of *sorry* are apparent explicated in the socio-pragmatics framework. Murphy (2019) examined native speakers' use of proper utterances i.e., *sorry* followed by conventional forms and formula mismatches in "Sorry, you are such an arsehole", revealing that some were successful in recognizing and using appropriate forms, demonstrating their understanding of pragmatic language use. However, there were occurrences where

participants blurred the boundaries between apology constructs, leading to mismatches in specific situational contexts. These discrepancies in apology usage led to confusion and a lack of consensus regarding the conceptualization of apologies and the distinction between apology constructs and non-apology constructs concerning their socio-pragmatic uses. Culpeper (2011) emphasizes the use of conventional politeness formulas before impolite utterances as in "Could you just fuck off", highlighting potential mismatches of *sorry* between polite and impolite communication. Culpeper further examines the use of respect before offensive and disrespectful messages and proposes using *sorry* to preface impolite expressions, allowing listeners to comprehend the meaning despite potential verbal formula mismatches.

Furthermore, Kampf and Blum-Kulka (2011) explore the use of ambiguous apologies by politicians in public discourse, revealing that these apologies are not limited to quotidian conversations. The study examines Israeli public figures who use non-apologies or ambiguous excuses when they apologize, investigate reactions, and determine whether they are considered infelicitous. Likewise, Wouk (2006) found that Lombok people prefer to use *maaf* as an upgrading based on offense and relationship, with a slight gender difference. Males use more solidarity-oriented upgrading. Chang and Ren's (2020) socio-pragmatic study compares American and Chinese students, revealing that sensitivity to interlocutors' social status and familiarity influences the choice between apology and non-apology strategies. Genuine apologies are more common with higher-status individuals, while verbal formula mismatches explicated as non-genuine apologetic constructs are used by similar-status individuals.

The extant studies have demonstrated that listeners often perceive verbal formula mismatches of apologies as ineffective due to socio-pragmatic factors, discourse markers, and socio-cultural domains. These are related to Brown and Levinson's asymmetrical relationship, viewing that these mismatches are mere formalities lacking genuine expressions of regret or responsibility. However, the usage of *sorry* as a verbal formula mismatch is also intriguing (Culpeper, 2011; Kampf, 2009; Murphy, 2019). Hence, there is a need to expand our understanding, particularly in WhatsApp communication in the Indonesian context. WhatsApp Messenger, as an online social networking application, facilitates the exchange of naturally occurring conversations among users (Sampietro, 2019). It offers not only textual communication but also audio-video features and emojis, which contribute to establishing social intimacy, affiliation, and friendship (Perez-Sabater, 2019; Sampietro, 2017).

This study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge by examining the prototypes of *sorry* (including *maaf, maap, sori*, and *ngapunten* [Javanese]) as formula mismatches and identifying the contexts in which the use of the apology prototypes does not fully meet the expected requirements of a proper apology in WhatsApp chats. Specifically, our research objectives encompass two main aspects. Firstly, we seek to construct the emergent prototypes of the apologetic expressions as formula mismatches employed in WhatsApp chat, where conventional politeness formulas are incongruent with the intended message being conveyed. Secondly, we aim to elucidate the contextual domain, including discourse markers (Hamdani & Barnes, 2018; Thomas, 1983; Wouk, 2001; 2006) and the relationship between the sender and receiver, within each identified category (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Fadilah, 2022). Through this work, we seek to enhance our understanding of non-apology techniques such as chatting formula mismatched prototypes and their interpretations in WhatsApp discussions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Apology in the Contexts of Pragmatics

Pragmatics encompasses pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. Pragmalinguistics focuses on using linguistic resources effectively, while sociopragmatics involves understanding socio-cultural norms and contextual factors in language use (Leech, 2014). Pragmatics requires a comprehensive understanding of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, while sociopragmatics emphasizes the dynamic nature of pragmatic behavior, including linguistic competence and contextual adaptation (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Thomas, 1983).

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) proposed an approach using "Head Acts and Supportive Moves," emphasizing Searle's (1969) Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) and the external intensification of head acts. IFIDs, such as "I am sorry," "forgive me," and "pardon me," specifically signal apologizing. Supportive moves externally demand change, typified by comments like "sorry to bother you." Leech (2014) argues that "supporting moves" are apt when the head act is combined with a discrete speech act with its illocutionary power. Nonetheless, this distinction is somewhat relative because supporting acts frequently include more elaborate apologies. Likewise, Trosborg (1987) separated apology tactics into direct forms, including excuses and apologies, and indirect forms, such as acknowledging responsibility, reducing the offense, and offering forbearance. On the other hand, Molinsky (2016) categorizes apologies as empty, exaggerated, incomplete, and denial. Empty apologies lack sincerity; exaggerated ones are overly remorseful; incomplete apologies remove critical components; and denial apologies transfer blame or refuse responsibility.

Goffman (1971) contends that apologies involve two poles: the bad half that offended the recipient and the good half that acknowledges the offense and strives to correct it. Apologizing serves as a performative action, allowing the speaker to acknowledge their wrongdoing, accept the social ramifications, and restore the damaged connection with the recipient. It entails expressing regret and making promises to do better or avoid future mistakes. Apologies are not merely linguistic messages but also affect the social relationship between the speaker and listener, highlighting the necessity of apologizing to restore social peace and rebuild trust in interpersonal interactions.

Some studies have explored the pragmalinguistic features of *sorry*, focusing on linguistic use in the conventionalized form. Al-Rawafi et al. (2021), for example, discovered that regret and a pledge of patience were the most popular apologetic strategies among Indonesian students learning English and Arabic as foreign languages. They also discovered that students at Indonesian boarding schools achieved less pragmatic transfer in English than in Arabic, focusing on macro-negative transfer. Further, Abudin and Sundari's (2021) study on Indonesian public leaders' apologetic speeches in 2020 reveals that they utilize explicit, conventional, and non-conventional-indirect tactics. The most popular sorts of apology were movers, explanations, accounts, or reasons, followed by declarations about lack of purpose and statements of repair. Likewise, Chejnova's (2021) study on 200 Czech students' email apologies revealed that students use various strategies of saying *sorry*, including direct expressions of apology, explanations, and acknowledgment of responsibility, as well as creating a positive self-image when communicating via email with their teachers.

Pragmalinguistics and Sociopragmatics

Thomas's (1983) essential work addresses pragmalinguistic failure, a phenomenon when a speaker's pragmatic goals disagree with native speakers' interpretations of the target language. This arises when the assigned pragmatic force differs from the common interpretation within the target culture or when speech acts are wrongly transferred from one's native language (L1) to a second language (L2). Thomas argues that overcoming pragmalinguistic failure is trivial, as it essentially requires correcting conventionalized language usage patterns through training incorporated into grammatical frameworks.

However, there is a lack of research specifically examining sociopragmatic, which refers to the study of language use in socio-cultural contexts and its impact on communication. In other words, while some studies have explored the linguistic aspects of communication, there is a need for more research on the social aspects of language use. Thomas (1983, p. 99) argues that sociopragmatic failure occurs in 'social conditions placed on language in use'. It is more difficult than its counterpart for 'it involves the student's system beliefs as much as his/her knowledge of the language (p. 91). Thomas argues that sociopragmatics differs from other linguistic approaches as it does not rely on prescriptive rules but rather on social rules to interpret speakers' meanings based on textual and contextual factors. Context is often the primary factor in assigning the intended meaning, as seen in the utterance "Good luck!" which could be interpreted as "I wish you well" instead of "good fortune," while "bad luck!" is interpreted as 'commiseration' instead of 'malediction' requiring more than just linguistic cues but also comprehensive knowledge of socio-cultural domains.

Prototyping 'Sorry' as Chatting Formula Mismatches

Jucker & Taavitsainen (2008) argue that speech acts are "fuzzy concepts" that can be examined to nearby acts, changing cultural groundings, and realization mechanisms. Their fuzziness needs a prototype approach, as individual examples may differ in conformity to their archetypal manifestations. Modeling speech acts as prototype elements that can explain why specific *sorry* are considered more contrite and in different ways by different listeners. Jeffries' (2007) prototype suggests that an utterance can be like an apology based on several parameters including the type of expression, tense, the person used, the seriousness of the offense, and the responsibility of the apologizer. The tense of an utterance can significantly impacts whether it is a central exemplar of an apology or prevent it from being an apology at all. Changes in tense can change the act from being an apology to a report or commitment, and even phrasing changes can be treated as non-apology. Manipulating the tense is problematic as it still conveys a report of an apology. By contrast, Murphy (2019) highlights that there is no universal consensus on what constitutes an apology prototype, even verbal formula mismatches, and that there is a spectrum of how apology-like certain actions are perceived. This highlights the need for careful consideration and understanding in communication.

WhatsApp chatting formula mismatches are anchored to verbal formula mismatch that refers to a situation where a conventionalized polite formula, such as "I'm sorry," is used in conjunction with an impolite or offensive message, creating a contrast between the expected politeness of the formula and the negative content of the utterance. This phenomenon, as discussed by Culpeper (2011), showcases how speakers employ linguistic strategies to mask their impoliteness while still utilizing a polite formula. An example is the sarcastic use of "I'm sorry

you are such an arsehole," where the formula "I'm sorry" is employed insincerely to insult or criticize the recipient. This concept highlights the intriguing interplay between conventional politeness formulas and the actual intended message, allowing speakers to express their negative sentiments indirectly while maintaining a semblance of politeness.

For instance, when someone says "I'm sorry about that" as a non-apology by blurring the offense, it means that they are not directly addressing or acknowledging the specific wrongdoing. Instead, they express regret or sympathy without taking full responsibility for their actions. According to Kamph (2009), this type of apology allows the speaker to apologize in a general sense while avoiding admitting fault. By blurring the offense, the speaker avoids discussing the details of their wrongdoing, potentially minimizing their role or evading consequences. A non-apology is a technique that superficially conveys remorse without addressing the main issue or assuming full responsibility. In contrast, a good apology, such as "I'm sorry, I completely forgot to do it," recognizes responsibility for a specific crime or mistake, takes ownership, and exhibits accountability. A proper apology requires admitting the wrong, taking responsibility, expressing remorse, and frequently includes a willingness to make amends or learn from the error, reflecting the speaker's honest effort to seek forgiveness.

Discourse Markers Accompanying 'Sorry'

Wouk (2001, 2006) reported that discourse markers *ya* and *kan* were common utterances inserted in apology strategies. The observation states that the distinction between *iya* and *kan* are an agreement particle and a discourse marker is not solely based on their form, as there is some functional overlap between the two. However, the function of *ya/iya* and kan as agreement particles, similar to their counterparts in English, while the majority of "yes, isn't she/he, right?" serve as discourse markers, i.e., interrogative tags as shared agreements.

A discourse marker, such as *ya,* serves various functions in conversation. It is used for repairing speech errors, drawing conclusions, echoing previous statements, and most commonly, building solidarity by creating a sense of shared understanding (Wouk, 2001). In this vein, building solidarity of individuals is likely to share a similar perspective, feel at ease with each other, enjoy social interactions, and have a tendency towards friendship. The Javanese expression *gotong royong* 'collaborative work' is frequently mentioned in media and private discussions to explain the cultural contrast between Indonesian and Western behavior. Indonesians are often described as *ramah* 'welcoming' in contrast to Westerners, who are perceived as *sombong* 'arrogant'.

On the other hand, Hamdani and Barnes (2018) elucidate that the particle *ya* is employed in polar questions to signify the speaker's stance of being more knowledgeable or confident regarding the question at hand. In this case, the speaker believes that they possess a more comprehensive or accurate understanding of the matter being questioned. On the other hand, the particle *kan* is utilized in polar questions to indicate a more symmetrical or balanced distribution of knowledge between the speaker and the recipient. This implies that the speaker does not assume they possess more knowledge than the recipient but rather considers the knowledge to be shared or mutually supportive. The findings of this study make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the functions of final particles in both Colloquial Indonesian and Standard Indonesian.

METHOD

Data Collection

This study utilized a corpus consisting of 300 naturally occurring WhatsApp messages (during June-July 2022) written in Indonesian, Javanese, and English languages. The corpus was obtained conveniently from the researchers' WhatsApp platforms containing chat messages derived from a wide range of socio-cultural domains: family, school colleagues, business colleagues, and student chats. As a versatile platform, WhatsApp enables the exchange of multimodal texts through messaging using an internet connection. Additionally, the chats contained a number of apologetic words, i.e., *maaf* (Indonesian), *maap* and *sori* (Indonesian informal apologetic forms), sorry (English), and *ngapunten* (Javanese) followed by mono-language (Indonesian or English) and mixed languages (e.g., Javanese and Indonesian).

Consulting Sampietro's (2019) framework, WhatsApp is an ideal research platform for studying pictographs due to its unique features that encourage chatting. Firstly, users often send concise messages with a sense of immediacy, contextualization, and communicative effort. Secondly, like other forms of computer-mediated communication, WhatsApp is commonly used to communicate with individuals who are not physically present, requiring careful message contextualization. Thirdly, WhatsApp is predominantly used among acquaintances or individuals with face-to-face interactions, resulting in conversational interactions that reflect spoken language and a relaxed writing style. Lastly, WhatsApp users typically use everyday language for a wide range of socio-cultural contexts, readily accessible through the keyboard.

We rigorously searched for keywords associated with the apologetic word 'sorry' i.e., a generic term mostly used throughout this paper, encompassing formal expressions such as *maaf* and *ngapunten,* as well as informal expressions like *maap* and *sori* through the chat messages owned by the two researchers. The chat messages, initially obtained in plain text format, were subsequently transferred to a Microsoft Excel document through a subsequent process of copying and pasting. The data were then organized into categories, specifically focusing on the occurrences of "sorry" as WhatsApp chatting formula mismatches (Murphy, 2019) and as formula matches (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984; Trosborg; 1987) based on the parameters of apology.

Data Analysis

For comprehensive data analysis, we initially evaluated chatting formula matches (proper apologies) following Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) head acts and supportive moves anchored in Searle's (1969) Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID), which was expanded by Trosborg (1987). Trosborg's framework includes genuine apologies in direct and indirect forms, where congruence between "I am sorry" as a direct form following indirect forms of utterances like promises of forbearance ("I am sorry for being late; I promise it won't happen again"), taking responsibility ("I am sorry for losing your book; I will buy a new one for you"), and mitigating offense severity ("I am really sorry for my foolishness; it wasn't my intention to make you cry") is essential. Similarly, the formula for *maaf* was related to Wouk's (2006) framework, including *minta maaf, mohon maaf*, and *sori*. The term *ngapunten* was related to Javanese cultural values. In contrast, the examination of improper apologies in chat communication was related to Murphy's (2019) concept, which finds departures from the proper forms suggested by the aforementioned authors. This comparative method offers a comprehensive

assessment of the propriety and effectiveness of diverse apologetic utterances across cultural and language situations.

The analysis focused on both formula chatting matches and mismatches, with particular emphasis on the latter, viewed through a socio-pragmatic lens (Leech, 2014; Murphy, 2019). While the exploration of formula mismatches was infrequent, it yielded nuanced contextual apologies reflective of everyday interactions, particularly evident on platforms such as WhatsApp. Through data collection, utterances were coded to delineate chatting formula mismatches, which were subsequently categorized based on apology discrepancies. Furthermore, the examination extended to all utterances containing these mismatched apology forms, enhancing the contextual understanding of their impact.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 300 instances investigated in WhatsApp chat, 65% of apologetic words exhibit formula mismatches, 22% depict formula matches, and only 13% showcase empty and exaggerated formulas (Table 1). The formula matches are in line with the parameter (see e.g., Murphy, 2019) following Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) head acts and supportive moves . For instance, *Ms. Oki, Sorry. If I have time, I want to call you; Maaf ya, aku lagi piknik; I am sorry to hear that* are among occurrences expressed to match appropriate parameters. Interestingly, the chats containing the Javanese term *ngapunten* demonstrate formula matches that most possibly is influenced by the Javanese norm of politeness strategy. An example is *ngapunten mboten saget hadir* 'I am sorry I am not able to attend', which is expressed as an apology for not being able to attend an event. The use of this apologetic expression in this context conveys a sense of respect and serves as an expression of courtesy.

Table 1. Prototyped apologetic chats

Apologetic Chats	Prototype	Occurrences
Formula mismatches	Sarcasm	51 (17%)
	Insecurity	44 (15%)
	Humor	26 (9%)
	Assertive power	22 (7%)
	Resentment	20 (7%)
	Self-blame	17 (5%)
	Disrespect	15 (5%)
Formula matches	Explicit apology	23 (8%)
	Requesting apology	19 (6%)
	Explanation-responsibility	15 (5%)
	Promise for forbearance	9 (3%)
Emotional states	Exaggerated	22 (7%)
	Empty	17 (6%)

On the other hand, an empty formula such as solely *sorry* and an exaggerated formula *saya benar-benar minta maaf* 'I do ask for apologies', *I am really sorry,* and *sepurane sing katah* (literally: '(I beg for) lots of apologies') as a lack of clear remorse and sincerity for the former and excessive expressions (Molinsky, 2016). They emphasize more on the sender's feelings rather

than recipient's emotion. This indicates that a variety of WhatsApp chats functions as a genuine communication platform in daily language use (Sampietro, 2019).

'Sorry' Employed in WhatsApp Chat Formula Mismatches

A considerable number of chat-formula mismatches were detected within the dataset. Specifically, out of the total instances studied, 195 occurrences were found to stray from the apologetic formulaic patterns (see Table 1). These occurrences represent many communicative tones and emotional nuances, including sarcasm, insecurity, humor, assertive power, resentment, self-blame, and disrespect. This thorough categorization elucidates the multiple natures of formula mismatches, underscoring the complexity and heterogeneity inherent in apologetic forms.

Sarcasm

The statement found in a WhatsApp chat above falls under the category of verbal formula mismatch. Observe the following examples.

1. Sorry, it is bullshit.
2. *Sorry dia emang brengsek orangnya*. (Sorry, he's indeed the fucking guy).
3. *Sorry ya, emang si X itu bangsat kan.* (Sorry, but the X is a bastard, isn't he?).
4. *Saya sudah mengingatkan kemarin, maaf itu bukan salah saya*. (I warned you yesterday, sorry it wasn't my fault).

In Example 1, the word *sorry* does not align with its conventional meaning of expressing remorse or offering an apology. Instead, it appears to be used sarcastically or insincerely, as a way to dismiss or disregard the previous statement. Additionally, the sentence "It is bullshit" conveys a negative and dismissive sentiment toward the subject being discussed. It indicates a strong disagreement or disbelief. Such a verbal formula mismatch occurs because the word *sorry* is employed in a sarcastic or insincere manner, contradicting its typical function of expressing remorse or apologizing. Instead of offering a genuine apology, the statement dismisses or disregards the previous statement by labeling it as "bullshit." This mismatch creates a dissonance between the expected polite or apologetic nature of the formula and the offensive or dismissive message being conveyed.

Similarly, Example 2 exemplifies a chat formula mismatch. While the word *sorry* is used, indicating a potential apology, the subsequent statement *dia emang brengsek orangnya* (he's indeed the fucking guy) contradicts the expected polite or apologetic nature of an apology. Instead of expressing remorse or taking responsibility for a wrongdoing, the speaker uses *sorry* as a filler or a conversational marker, but the overall message conveys a negative judgment or criticism of the person in question. This verbal formula mismatch highlights a disconnect between the conventional understanding of *sorry* as an apology and its actual usage in this context, where it functions more as a conversational expression rather than a genuine expression of remorse.

In the context where the person being discussed does indeed have unpleasant or negative behavior, the use of the phrase *sorry, dia emang brengsek orangnya* in a WhatsApp conversation still falls under the category of verbal formula mismatch. Despite the inclusion of the word *sorry*, the context remains incongruent with the expectation that the expression is an apology or a statement of regret. Instead, the message represents a negative judgment of the person. In such

situations, the inappropriate or ambiguous use of s*orry* can lead to confusion or obscure the actual intention of the conversation (Aijmer, 2015; Murphy, 2019).

Example 3 "sorry, emang bangsat si X itu" does not align with a genuine apology (see e.g., Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984); Thomas, 1983; Trosborg, 1987). Instead, it is being used as a discourse marker to express an opinion or sentiment about someone referred to as "X." In this context, *sorry* is not functioning as an apology but rather as a conversational filler or an expression of agreement with the negative characterization of "X" as *bangsat* 'bastard'. It conveys a tone of agreement or support for the negative assessment of the person mentioned. The statement suggests that the speaker holds a negative opinion of "X" and uses *sorry* to emphasize their agreement with that assessment. However, it is important to note that the use of offensive language and derogatory terms is not appropriate or respectful in communication.

The word *maaf* can also be used in a sarcastic or insincere manner, deviating from its conventional meaning of expressing remorse or offering an apology. In this case, it is employed as a conversational filler or as a means to dismiss or belittle the other person's statements or actions. The inappropriate use creates a dissonance between the expected polite or apologetic nature of the formula and the negative or mocking message being conveyed (Culpeper, 2011; Murphy, 2015). Example 4 explains a way for the sender to distance himself from any responsibility or fault. By stating *sorry, it's not my fault*, the speaker attempts to deflect blame and avoid taking responsibility for the situation. This chat formula mismatch arises because the speaker uses the apology token *sorry* without actually accepting any fault or expressing genuine remorse. It can be seen as an attempt to dismiss or downplay their involvement or culpability in the matter. Furthermore, the phrase "I warned you yesterday" suggests a confrontational tone, emphasizing that the recipient was already given a warning. The use of *sorry* in this context can be perceived as insincere or even sarcastic, as it is used to undermine the recipient's position and shift the blame onto them. The use of "sorry" in this statement reflects a verbal formula mismatch where the speaker uses the term without conveying genuine remorse or taking responsibility for their actions, instead attempting to shift blame onto the recipient (Kamph & Blum-Kulka, 2011).

Insecurity

The chat formula mismatch arises from the discrepancy between the initial apology and the subsequent statements that deflect responsibility and dismiss the relevance of the issue. This use of *sorry* can be perceived as insincere, as it fails to address or acknowledge the concerns or feelings of the other party involved. It suggests a lack of genuine remorse or willingness to engage with the matter, potentially hindering effective communication and resolution. Observe the following examples.

5. *Sorry ya itu bukan urusan ku, gak penting.* (Sorry, it's not my business, it's not important).
6. *Maaf, doa jelek tidak manjur buatku, iya kan.* (Sorry, bad prayers don't work for me, is that right?)
7. *hahaha..maaf ya ..kebaikannya kamuflase,* bullshit. *(*Sorry, their goodness is camouflage, bullshit).

The use of *sorry* as in Example 5 implies an apology, suggesting that the speaker is acknowledging some form of wrongdoing or intrusion. While "it is not my business" contradicts the expected apologetic nature of the formula. Instead of taking responsibility or expressing

remorse, the speaker distances themselves from the situation, indicating that they consider it outside their realm of concern or involvement. Further, by saying that *gak penting*, the speaker further downplays the significance or impact of the situation, diminishing the importance of the matter at hand.

Additionally, *maaf* in Example 6 can be seen as a dismissive or insecure apology. The speaker utilizes it to mock or belittle the person's negative wishes or prayers towards them. Likewise, the phrase "doa jelekmu tidak manjur buatku" translates to " bad prayers don't work for me, do you?" By stating this, the speaker implies that they are unaffected by the ill intentions or negative wishes of the other person, further dismissing their attempts. The laughter at the beginning of the statement, represented by "hahaha," suggests a mocking or dismissive tone. The inclusion of *maaf ya* following the laughter appears to be sarcastic, implying that the speaker is not genuinely apologetic. In a similar vein, Example 7 indicates a perception that the other person's kindness or goodwill is deceitful or false. This undermines the sincerity of the apology and suggests a lack of genuine remorse or accountability for the speaker's actions. The use of *sorry* in this context is insincere, as it is accompanied by laughter, followed by a dismissive attitude, and an accusation of deceit (Culpeper, 2011).

Assertive Power

Sorry and *maaf* can be used to show power relationship between sender and recipient (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Trosborg, 1987; Chang & Ren, 2020). Observe the following examples.

8. *Sorry memang membuatmu sakit hati itu tujuan ku.* (Sorry, it hurts you. That's my goal).
9. *Maaf ya jangan samakan aku dengan dia, ndak level.* (Sorry, don't match me with him, he is not my level)

In Example 8, the sender uses the term *sorry* in a manipulative and hurtful manner, which is contrary to the conventional understanding of an apology. Likewise, the statement *Sorry memang membuatmu sakit hati itu tujuan ku* is intended to deliberately inflict emotional pain rather than express genuine remorse or seek reconciliation. This contradicts the empathetic and apologetic nature of a genuine apology, highlighting a clear mismatch between the expected function of an apology and the speaker's intention to assert power or control over the recipient (Page, 2014; Trosborg, 1987).

Example 9 expresses a desire to distinguish oneself from someone else. In this vein, the speaker is stating *maaf* to preface their disagreement with being compared or equated to another person, whom they consider to be of a lower level or quality. By using *maaf*, the speaker softens the tone of their statement and acknowledges that their words may be perceived as confrontational or offensive. Likewise, the phrase *jangan samakan aku dengan dia* indicates the speaker's desire to establish their individuality and emphasize their higher status compared to the person mentioned. This demonstrates a desire to assert their individuality and emphasize their perceived superiority, and at the same time request not to be associated with the person mentioned.

Self-blame

Example 10 exemplifies a verbal formula mismatch where *sorry* is used to express self-blame and acknowledgment of potentially causing sadness. However, the overall message conveys conflicting sentiments. On one hand, the speaker encourages the recipient to pursue their

happiness, assuring that they would also experience joy in the recipient's happiness. On the other hand, the speaker uses *sorry* to imply responsibility for potentially causing sadness, while acknowledging their limited ability to bring about sadness.

10. *Lakukan apa yang membuatmu bahagia, aku akan turut bahagia jika kamu bahagia, sorry, aku yang mungkin hanya bisa membuatmu bersedih.* (Do what makes you happy, I'll be happy if you're happy, sorry, I may be the only one who can make you sad).

This verbal formula mismatch arises from the contradictory nature of the statement. While the speaker expresses support and care for the recipient's happiness, they also acknowledge their role in potentially causing negative emotions (Aijmer, 2015, Murphy, 2015). The use of *sorry* in this context serves to downplay the speaker's responsibility while recognizing the possibility of inflicting sadness. The speaker attempts to reconcile their desire for the recipient's happiness with their perceived role in causing potential sorrow. This verbal formula mismatch reflects the complexities of interpersonal relationships and the nuanced expression of emotions.

Disrespect

Non-genuine apologies can also be used as a rhetorical device to express frustration or annoyance with the other person's behavior. Observe the following examples.

11. *Sorry ya, bisa ndak untuk tidak mengumbar kebodohanmu.* (Sorry, I can't tell you how stupid you are).
12. *Maaf ya ndk bermaksud apa-apa, tapi kamu sebaiknya ndak usah kontak saya lagi deh.* (Sorry, that doesn't mean anything, but you shouldn't contact me anymore).

Example 11 indicates that *sorry* is used sarcastically or ironically to convey a message of dissatisfaction or disapproval. The intention is not to offer a sincere apology but to highlight the perceived lack of intelligence or knowledge of the other person. The statement reflects a critical or condescending tone, suggesting that the speaker believes the other person is acting foolishly and should refrain from displaying their lack of wisdom. It is important to note that. In many cases, using derogatory language for mocking others is not a respectful or constructive form of communication.

Similarly, Example 12 can be regarded as a rude apology strategy. It is used in a non-genuine or sarcastic manner. This apology mismatch is followed by advice or directive for the recipient to remain away from the speaker's life. The speaker begins by saying *maaf ya*, suggesting an acknowledgment that their speech might cause pain or offense. However, the succeeding phrase suggests that the recipient should withdraw oneself from the speaker's life, expressing a desire for separation or avoidance. While the apology is present, it is followed by a direction that potentially undermines the sincerity of the apology. The entire tone of the message implies that the speaker wants the recipient to keep away from their lives, even though they may not have meant any damage (Holmes, 1990; Leech, 2014; Thomas, 1983). Hence, the use of *maaf* in this context serves to soften the statement and acknowledge a potential negative impact, but it is immediately followed by a directive that conveys a desire for distance or separation.

In everyday conversations, there are situations where conventional politeness formulas are used before conveying a rude or disrespectful message. This is in line with Aijmer's (2015) study that unravels the use of the politeness strategy *please* followed by impoliteness expression i.e., *will you fuck off.?* This shift serves different functions in communication, including

establishing rapport, providing entertainment value, and facilitating creative interactions. This creates tension between the expectations set by the politeness formula and the actual message being conveyed, which contradicts those expectations. These examples illustrate that in conversation, there can sometimes be a mismatch between conventional politeness language and the intended message, resulting in intriguing and perplexing situations (Culpeper, 2011).

Resentment

The use of "maaf ya" in the statement "maaf ya, semoga kamu dapat balasan yang lebih menyakitkan dari perbuatanmu" (Example 13) can be interpreted as a form of disguised aggression or a passive-aggressive comment. It is not a genuine apology but rather a sarcastic or insincere expression. The speaker uses it to appear polite while actually conveying a negative sentiment.

13. *Maaf ya, semoga kamu dapat balasan yang lebih menyakitkan dari perbuatanmu.* (Sorry. I hope you get a more painful reward for what you did).

The remaining part of the statement, "semoga kamu dapat balasan yang lebih menyakitkan dari perbuatanmu" translates to " I hope you get a more painful reward for what you did." This indicates that the speaker desires harm or negative consequences for the person they are addressing. Therefore, the use of "maaf ya" in this context can be seen as a thinly veiled aggression or insincere attempt at politeness, followed by a hostile statement. It reflects a passive-aggressive communication style where the speaker expresses resentment or seeks revenge through their choice of words.

Humor

Interestingly, *sorry* is also depicted as humorous expressions by providing the circumstances regarding the sender-recipient distance and power (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 2014). Such expressions are closely related to the circumstances underlying and the filler words inserted before or at the end of the utterance sorry.

14. *Maaf aku tak bisa hadir offline maupun online. Kapan lagi menikmati masa muda jalan-jalan ya. nanti kalau sudah tua bawa tetekkan gak bisa jalan nyesel wkwkwkwk.* (Sorry I can't be present offline or online. When are you going to enjoy your youth traveling? When you're old, bring the teat and you won't be able to travel, you'll regret it).
15. *Sorry cuk, salah pencet, hehehe* (sorry asshole, mistakenly pressed).

Maaf in Example 14 expresses an apology or regret for not being able to attend offline and online activities. The speaker acknowledges their unavailability and expresses remorse for any inconvenience caused. However, the subsequent statement humorously emphasizes the speaker's prioritization of enjoying their youth and engaging in leisure activities, reflecting a lighthearted tone. The statement contains humor and a lighthearted tone, using exaggerated language and humorously highlighting the consequences of aging. In other words, the speaker initially demonstrates a sense of apology or regret for not being able to participate, while the following statement reflects the speaker's playful and lighthearted attitude toward the situation, emphasizing the enjoyment of their youth.

Similarly, while the word *sorry* is present in Example 15, it is immediately followed by the derogatory term *cuk* 'asshole' which is highly disrespectful and offensive. Furthermore, the expressions *salah pencet* (mistakenly pressed) and *hehehe* (indicating laughter) suggest a lighthearted or humorous tone, rather than mocking or disrespectful. In this context, although *sorry* falls under the category of a chat apology mismatches, it shows a form of intimacy among colleagues (Culpeper, 2011; Jones & Adrefisa, 2017; Murphy, 2019).

Contextual factors

The use of discourse markers " ya", "kan", in the Examples above suggests an acknowledgment of a potentially offensive or impolite statement that follows the apologetic act *sorry*. It may serve as a mitigating strategy to soften the impact of the subsequent remark. Particle "ya" functions as a conversational marker that seeks confirmation or agreement from the interlocutor. In this case, it implies that the sender assumes the recipient shares the same negative opinion about person X invoking speaker-hearer orientation (Jones & Adrefisa, 2017). Those markers exemplify the sociopragmatic domain providing a richer analysis of contextual adaptation rather than solely pragmalinguistics that is tied heavily to linguistic competence (Aijmer, 2015; Fadilah, 2022; Leech, 2014; Murphy, 2015)

The polarization of *sorry* inserted by those filler words exhibits a strong epistemic stance to assert conformation between the sender and recipient (Hamdani *et al.,* 2018). Likewise, those words function as tag questions to seek agreement exerted by the sender to the recipient (Jones & Adrefisa, 2017). The less variation of Indonesian employing apology strategies by overwhelmingly relying on the use of *maaf* (sorry) is ubiquitous. It is in line with Jones and Adrefisa's (2017) findings explicating that Indonesian apologetic acts tend to be less varied compared to Australian Speakers. However, the use of discourse markers "ya, kan, deh" commonly used in the Indonesian context enables strengthening the confirmation or agreement regarding the apologetic acts expressed. In this context, it serves to reinforce the assumed common ground between the speaker and the listener regarding their negative perception of person X (Wouk, 2001; 2006). In other words, the combination of "sorry ya" and the use of "kan" suggests an attempt by the speaker to align their viewpoint with that of the listener and create a sense of shared understanding or agreement.

Likewise, the filler *cuk* and laughing expressions *wkwkwk, hahaha* explicate an intimate relationship between sender and recipient. These fillers enable a flexible expression to harmonize a social relationship regarding contextual factors: power, status, and distance (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Thomas, 1983). In other words, a symmetric status explicates the violation of genuine apology acts for seeking intimacy and friendship (Jones *et al.,* 2017; Kamph & Blum-Kulka, 2011; Wouk, 2006). In this vein, the sociopragmatic perspective exhibits a more genuine and flexible day-to-day communication than the genuine one i.e., IFIDs Moves in which it is commonly marked by transgressing the apology formula matches as seen from the pragmalinguistic perspective.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study undertakes a sociopragmatic perspective of the apologetic strategies: *sorry*, *maaf,* and *ngapunten* depicted in WhatsApp chats. The finding exhibits transgressing practices of genuine (formal) apologetic acts seen from a pragmalinguistic perspective. The contextual factors such as

sender-recipient statuses, power, and distance as well as discourse markers influence such practices by displaying dynamic language uses that fit the societal and cultural contexts (Fadilah, 2018). The epistemic stances exerted from the Examples portrayed a variation of registers albeit violating apology formula matches are utilized for expressing emotional states, exhibiting power status, and seeking social intimacy and harmony. These stances provide nuanced apology acts to shed more light on pragmatics study.

We acknowledge that there are some limitations found in this study. First, the data are only taken with a constraint period. Hence, it limits the variation of language uses expressed by the sender-recipient chats. Further studies may take a longer period of data collection to provide richer expressions of apologetic acts. Second, the data selected overall comprise verbal languages by leaving out non-verbal ones. Future research could take the analysis of pictographs e.g., emoticons, sound, or video available on WhatsApp platform (Sampietro, 2019). Such data are expected to provide contextual backdrops underlying the use of apologetic strategies. Third, this study only focuses on the apologetic act *sorry*, as expressed in Indonesian (e.g., *maaf, maap, sori*) and Javanese (*ngapunten*) within the WhatsApp platform. Future research could expand the scope to include other apologetic strategies from various ethnic expressions, such as Sundanese, Madurese, Balinese, and others. This broader scope would provide a more nuanced and comprehensive view of the diverse ways in which apologies are expressed across societal and cultural contexts.

NOTE

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