AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECH ACT OF APOLOGY AND ITS ASSOCIATED SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS

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LANGUAGE is part of social life; in fact, they are interdependent. Through language, culture becomes part of individual and group experience. Through daily social interaction, linguistic aspects of social structure, cultural values and beliefs in turn become internalized. One important means of studying the social roles, status, structure of a community, therefore, would be to study its speech behavior (Hymes 1964: 215).

To efficiently describe speech behavior and its linguistic forms one needs to have a restricted focus. Hymes's (1972) proposed distinction of *speech situation, speech event,* and *speech act* is a useful framework for such a purpose. His framework provides a hierarchy with the speech situation at the top and speech act at the bottom. (See also Olshtain and Cohen 1983: 19).

The *speech situation* has the broadest scope and Hymes posits that one finds many speech situations within a speech community such as meals, parties, conferences, and auctions which in themselves are not governed by consistent rules. The *speech event* takes place within the speech situation and, unlike it, is restricted to activities that are directly governed by rules of speech—e.g., lectures, introductions, advertising, and two or more party conversations. The *speech act* has the narrowest scope and is the minimal term on the scale. It refers to the acts we perform when we speak. As such, it is defined in terms of discourse *function*.

Speech acts can still be further restricted. The Speech Act Theory of John Searle is valuable in delimiting the study of speech behavior suggested at the beginning of the paper. It is also useful in coming up with a narrower and more efficient theoretical framework within which to describe and analyze it. A brief background of the theory can give us a picture of the topic under discussion.

Austin (1962, 1971) asserts that an utterance is also the *doing* of some action, that speech is *accomplishing* something with words. In uttering "The courtroom is quiet," one *describes*, but in saying "I promise to come," one is *doing* the act of promising. Such utterances are called *performative utterances* and their verbs *performatives* (See also Malmkjaer 1991: 416).

John Searle, one of Austin's students, extended Austin's ideas in his work *Speech Acts* in 1969. His fundamental assumption is that all utterances constitute acts, not just those containing performative verbs. According to his Speech Act theory, every time we direct language at some audience we perform three simultaneous acts. The *locutionary act* is the act of *simply uttering* a sentence from a language. It is a description of what the speaker says and is composed of a *referring* expression (e.g., a noun phrase) and a *predicating* expression (e.g., a verb phrase or adjective). "The vacation is over" has the referring expression *the vacation* and the predicating expression *is over*.

The *illocutionary* act is what the speaker *intends to do* by an utterance. They include requesting, apologizing, promising, predicting, ordering, threatening, and stating. "Submit your work at the end of the week" spoken by a teacher to her student is an act of ordering. The intent associated with an illocutionary act is called the *illocutionary force*.

The *perlocutionary act* is the *effect* on the hearer of what a speaker says. They include inspiring, irritating, persuading, embarrassing, intimidating, or boring the hearer. The *illocutionary act* of "You'd better study for the exam" might be one of *urging* but when spoken by a teacher to a student in front of the entire class, the *perlocutionary* act is one of *threatening* or *embarrassing* (Searle 1971; Parker 1986).

Significance of the Study of Speech Acts

The speech act theory has stimulated research focussing on speech events and speech acts. Results of this research have contributed to the growing body of knowledge of the interplay of situational, sociolinguistic, and linguistic factors. The study of speech act has provided us with new and fresh insights into the interdependence of *linguistic forms* and *sociocultural contexts*. As mentioned earlier, what one says reflects sociocultural values. Speech acts are thus highly informative. An analysis of the forms people use spontaneously with different interlocutors as well as the rights, obligations, privileges of speakers vis-a-vis one another can yield information about speakers' roles and expectations, how relationships are formed and reaffirmed. Thus, their social behavior, the social

structure of their society, and the dynamics of social interaction which prevail within it are revealed (Wolfson 1989: 128-129).

Focus of the Study

Speech acts can occur in various speech events. Moreover, there are innumerable instances of speech acts since speakers can do a great number of things with their utterances. Because of this, the study of speech acts can be formidable unless one clearly defines his focus. Using Searle's (1976) criterion of *purpose* of speech act, or *illocutionary point,* the investigator can decide which from among the following five classifications of illocutionary acts he wishes to concentrate on. (See also Bautista 1979.)

1. **Representatives**: The speaker conveys his belief in the truth of the expressed proposition in uttering a representative. *Assert, suggest, hypothesize, swear, hint* are thus all representatives.
2. **Directives**: The speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something in uttering a directive. *Order, command, beg, plead, pray, invite, permit, advise* are thus all directives.
3. **Commissives**: The speaker commits himself to some future course of action in uttering a commissive. *Promise, vow, pledge, guarantee* are thus all commissives.
4. **Expressives**: The speaker expresses his psychological state about something—his good or bad feeling about some event—in uttering an expressive. *Thank, congratulate, apologize, condole, deplore, welcome* are thus all expressives.
5. **Declarations**: The speaker brings about a correspondence between the propositional content of his utterance and reality in uttering a declaration. Thus, if he successfully performs the act of declaring a couple as man and wife, then they are married.

To an investigator wanting to restrict his focus some more, the speech act of *apology* classified as an *expressive* above can be an interesting *unit of analysis* since apology involves sociolinguistic and cultural norms, their infringement and remedy—sociolinguistic interchanges that can reveal sociocultural structure. As such, the study of the linguistic formulas of apology can help reveal insights into the interdependence between language and culture posited at the beginning of this paper.

Apologies are postevents—that is, they refer back to events which constitute norm infringements. Bergman and Kasper define apologies as "compensatory action to an offense in the doing of which S, the speaker, was causally involved and which is costly to H, the hearer" (1991: 140). They can also be viewed as remedial interchanges, remedial work serving to reestablish social harmony after a real or virtual offense (Goffman 1971). Thus, the speech act of apology involves two parties or participants: an *apologizer* as having the responsibility for causing the offense and a *recipient* as perceiving himself/herself as deserving an apology. A speech act of apologizing exists only if the person who caused the infraction perceives himself/herself as an apologizer (Olshtain and Cohen 1983: 20-21).

Bautista (1979) asserts that the study of apologies can be rewarding as an entry point to the study of Filipino culture. With this in mind, this exploratory study was conducted in order to discover some *patterns* of apologizing which in turn could reveal some underlying linguistic and social rules of speaking among members of the Tagalog speech community.

Procedures Used in the Study

Guided in part by certain conventions in the study of language and literature, I employed the methodological approach of analyzing texts, literary texts in particular. Also, influenced by my previous training in anthropology and subscribing to the idea that literature has a high cultural load, I attempted to find out how such texts reflect social life. With these tools and assumptions, I analyzed apologies found in a corpus of Tagalog short stories written by Filipino authors. The data were drawn from 20 stories and the instances of the speech act of apology were recorded and analyzed for patterns.

The speech act of apology has a *composite structure* as observed in studies such as those of Bautista (1979), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), and Bergman and Kasper (1991). Bergman and Kasper suggest an efficient coding system which facilitates the analysis of the composite structure of apologies (1991: 157-158).

Henceforth, these codes will be adopted for the rest of the discussion in this paper.

IFID   **Illocutionary Force Indicating Device**
Specifies the force of the apology
Examples: I'm sorry…
            I'm afraid…

UP   **Upgrader**
Element that increases the apologetic force
Examples: I'm terribly sorry.
            I really didn't mean to hurt you.

TR   **Taking on Responsibility**
By admitting the offense: e.g., I did it.
By self-blame: e.g., How stupid of me.
By lack of intent: e.g., I didn't mean to do this.
By admission of fact: e.g., I haven't done it yet.

DG   **Downgrading Responsibility or Severity of Offense**
Utterance that reduces the speaker's accountability for the offense
By an excuse: e.g., My watch has stopped.
By a justification: e.g., I was suddenly called to a meeting.
By claiming ignorance: e.g., I didn't know you were expecting me.
By problematizing a situation: e.g., We weren't supposed to meet before twelve.
Utterance that reduces the severity of the offense: e.g., I'm only 10 minutes late.

RE   **Offer of Repair**
Speaker offers to remedy damage inflicted on offended party by an action to restitute his/her entitlements.
Examples: I'll pay for the damage.
            I'll have it done tomorrow.

VR   **Verbal Redress**
By showing concern for the offended party: e.g., I hope you weren't offended.
By efforts to appease: e.g., Let me buy you a drink.
By a promise of forbearance: e.g., It won't happen again.

It must be noted that in some cases, an expression of apology (IFID) is sufficient; in other cases, two or three subformulas are combined.

As mentioned earlier, apologies involve two participants—the *apologizer* and the *recipient*. Besides determining *who* gives the apology to *whom*, we also need to find out whether there are situational differences between *when* a speaker uses *which* formulas of apologizing. This way we can see the interplay of linguistic formulas with social-cultural factors as posited at the beginning of this paper. To arrive at some picture of the sociocultural aspects that underlie the choice of a linguistic formula, this study analyzed the following four factors in relation to the apology formula used.

Kind of speech situation
Degree of severity of the offense
Kind of compensatory action to the offense
Social distance between apologizer and recipient

The first three are, to use Bergman and Kasper's terms, *context-internal* factors and the last one, is a *context-external* factor. (For a discussion of a different use of these terms see above study 1991: 147). For purposes of this study, *context-internal* factors are defined as those which are intrinsic and which arise from the speech situations. *Context-external* factors are those which are extrinsic that act upon the speech situation. *Context-internal* factors included in this study are the kinds of speech situations (e.g., teacher conference, business transaction, conversations in a canteen and during a picnic, and others), the degree of severity of the offense (e.g., slight or severe), and the kind of compensatory action to the offense (e.g., ritual or substantive).

Goffman (1971) gives two distinctions of compensatory actions which are adopted in this study—the *ritual* and *substantive* compensation. *Ritual* apologies are those "*redressing virtual* offenses which are remedied by the *sole offering* of an apologetic formula,"

while *substantive* apologies are those "*supplying redress* for *actual damage* inflicted on the addressee, sometimes including an offer of material compensation" [italics mine].

The *context-external* factor of social distance between the apologizer and the recipient considered in this exploratory study was analyzed on the basis of the degree of intimacy of the relationship (e.g., intimate and nonintimate). An attempt was made to include age and sex as the other context-external factors that bear upon the speech situation. For sex, the data showed some pattern. For age, they did not since the short stories studied had no explicit indication as to the ages of the participants in the apology speech-act situation. An experiment using broader categories like "older" and "younger" was attempted—apologies from a "younger" apologizer to an "older" recipient and vice-versa.

However, in some cases this could not be determined. A larger corpus can perhaps reveal a clear pattern for sex, and a study design that explicitly elicits information about the ages of the participants can give a reliable basis for judgment regarding the relationship between age and the speech act of apology.

Twenty-two instances of the speech act of apology were noted in the 20 Tagalog short stories. They occurred in varied situations as shown in the random list of speech situations below.

Parent-children conversations
Employer-employee discussion
Confrontations regarding illicit affairs
Quarrels regarding infidelities
Conversation in a picnic
Lovers' talk
Letter correspondence
Bumping into somebody in a school hallway and in a
    crowded market place
Conversation in a canteen
Business transaction/deal
Reminiscence about a dead loved one
Asking and giving information at a Police precinct and at
    an information desk in a home for the aged
Conversation between a parent and her child's friends
Welcoming a visitor to one's home
Men's talk

Small-group teacher conference

The above listing runs the gamut of speech situations from those involving lovers' talk, quarrels or confrontations, to parent-children conversations, to business transaction/deal, and others.

Of the 22 instances of the speech-act of apology noted, two major linguistic formulas used for apologies emerged—the *Patawarin mo ako* "Please forgive me" group (10) and the *I"m sorry group* (6). A third group (6) comprised miscellaneous forms of *Ikinalulungkot ko* "I'm sorry" (2), *Pasensya ka na* "Please put up with…" (2), *Dinaramdam ko* "I'm sorry" (1), and Excuse me (1). It is interesting to note that, of the three groups of apology formulas, the *Patawarin…* group has the clearest and most definite pattern that immediately emerged even at the initial part of the analysis which is as interesting as it is revealing of the important sociocultural factors associated with it as will be shown later. It is also interesting to note that Bautista (1979) in her study of apologies analyzing scripts in Pilipino radio dramas observed similar findings. More varied observations were noted in the two other groups but some patterns are also discernible which reveal some interesting sociocultural insights.

The Linguistic Formulas of Apology
Used in Tagalog Short Stories

The Patawarin Group

An analysis was made of the kinds of speech situations when the apology formula *Patawarin mo ako* or *Patawad* was used, the severity of the offense committed, the kind of compensatory action to the offense, and the social distance between the apologizer and the recipient.

The analysis showed that in 7 of the 10 cases, the apology formula *Patawarin mo ako* was used for serious offenses in intimate relationships in the home involving infidelities, illicit affairs, or parent-children problems which needed compensatory actions of the substantive kind. Some representative cases can show this.

One case of infidelity involved a husband who, after having abandoned his wife for another woman, begged his wife for forgiveness and reconciliation in the following apology structure:

Patawarin mo ako, Aida "Please forgive me, Aida." (IFID)
Patawarin mo ako sa aking pagkakasala. "Please forgive me for what I have done." (TR—taking responsibility with an admission of the offense)

One illicit affair concerned a married man who, after having been found out by his real wife and threatened, begged forgiveness from his other woman saying:

Patawarin mo ako. "Please forgive me." (IFID)
Hindi ako makalilimot, Lucila. "I cannot forget, Lucila." (VR—a verbal redress trying to appease)
Hindi ko pababayaan ang bata…kahit na tuluyan tayong magkalaya. "I will not abandon the child even when we have to separate." (RE—offer of repair by a promise of support)

One parent-child problem involved a father who, after losing his job, signed up for volunteer work in Vietnam to earn for his family. He asked forgiveness rather belatedly from his son who was slain rather ironically in a rally while decrying "American imperialism" and the Vietnam War. He exclaimed:

Patawad. "Forgive me." (IFID)
Kasalanan ko. "It's my fault." (TR—taking responsibility by self-blame).

An attempt was made to find out if severity of the offense, compensatory action, and social distance as well as age and sex influenced the use or choice of *solely* the apologetic formula IFID or its *combination* with one subformula (e.g., IFID + UP, etc.) or two subformulas (e.g., IFID + DG + RE, etc.). This was based on a speculation that perhaps the degree of severity of the offense would motivate the choice of a longer apology structure, or perhaps intimacy, substantive compensatory action would influence its choice, or perhaps a younger or female apologizer would similarly choose such a structure. However, these speculations were not borne out by the data analyzed for no clear pattern emerged except for some pattern on sex. A larger corpus is needed to support or negate these assumptions, and to further validate the finding on sex.

At first no pattern for sex emerged when the data was analyzed separately in the corpus of the *Patawarin mo ako* group, in the *I'm sorry* group and in the miscellaneous group. But when all the data were combined some pattern emerged. In the corpus of 22 speech acts of apology more men (15) made apologies than women (7), and that men made twice as many apologies to women (10) than to other men (5). The apologies made by women (7) were more than half of the time made to men (4) (and 1 was made to another female and 2 to a male-female audience).

Regarding the choice of apology structure, there appears to be no tendency for men to prefer a specific structure—6 men using just the IFID, 7 men using IFID with a combination of one other subformula, and 2 using IFID with a combination of two other subformulas. On the other hand, the females appear to prefer longer structures—only 1 using solely the IFID, 3 using the IFID with a combination of one other subformula, and 3 using IFID with a combination of two other subformulas.

The comparatively few instances (3) when *Patawarin mo ako* was used were when the offenses were slight (such as a waiter eating left-over food), were between nonintimates (like the waiter and his irate employer), and were of the ritualistic kind of compensatory action where there was no actual damage inflicted and where a sole offering of an apologetic formula was sufficient.

On the whole, it appears that the sociolinguistic motivation behind the choice of the apology formula *Patawarin mo ako* were serious infractions perhaps rendered more serious because of the intimacy of the relationship (marred by betrayal, loss of trust, reneging on a vow or promise—violation of cultural norms that are held sacrosanct) and which required substantive compensatory action.

The *I'm sorry* Group

A marked difference can be observed between the *Patawarin* and the *I'm sorry* groups of apology formulas. Whereas the *Patawarin* formula was often used for severe offenses that required a substantive compensatory action to intimates, the 6 instances of the *Sorry* group were used for slight offenses (6), mostly to nonintimates (5), and which were mostly ritualistic (5). The following are illustrative of these cases.

A conversation in a canteen where a young man was trying hard but not succeeding in recalling a lady's name and where they had met before; he said:

Sorry, *ha?* (IFID) *Hindi ko talaga maalala…ang ngalan mo.* "I really can't recall …your name." (TR—an admission of fact)

A conversation where a prospective client was refusing an insurance agent:

I'm sorry. (IFID) *Wala 'kong beneficiaries, wala pa.* "I have no beneficiaries, I still don't have any." (DG—downgrading the severity of the offense by a justification)

A woman reminiscing about a dead loved one and asking forbearance from those who were willing to listen to her tale to forgive her for being emotional; she explained:

Sorry… (IFID) *…medyo humina "guards" ko,* "…it seems my guards are down," (DG—downgrading the offense by a justification)
Let me pause *baka mapaiyak ako.* "Let me pause or I'll cry." (VR—verbal redress asking for forbearance)

An information desk personnel apologizing for a visitor's inconvenience in coming to the office and not finding the manager; she expressed regret:

Sorry, (IFID) *wala siya,* "he's not here," (TR—taking/assuming responsibility for boss's absence) *may dinaluhang "conference."* "he's attending a conference." (DG—downgrading the inconvenience caused with a justification) *Pero hindi bale, 'yong impormasyong kailangan mo'y puwede ko namang ibigay sa iyo.* "But don't worry, I can give you the information you need." (RE—offer of repairing the situation by giving the desired information)

A hotel guest who, receiving her order for food, mistook the hotel-owner's nephew for a bellboy, apologized for her mistake and for the embarrassment caused.

Sorry, (IFID) *hindi ko alam.* "I don't know." (DG—downgrading severity of the offense by claiming ignorance) *Ikaw ang naghatid ng order, siyempre'y iisipin ko na boy ka rito.* "You're the one bringing in the order, so I presumed you're a bellboy here." (DG—downgrading severity of the offense by reducing speaker's accountability with a justification).

Compared to the *Patawarin group,* the *I'm sorry* group was used for comparatively minor offenses unlike the *Patawarin* group which was motivated by serious infractions especially in situations where a breach of social and cultural norms had been committed (infidelities, illicit affairs, etc.). The *I'm sorry* group was also used for different reasons other than those for the regular apology. In the above cases, it was used for causing embarrassment, turning down an offer, causing some confusion or inconvenience. On the whole, the choice of the apology formula *I'm sorry* appears to be motivated by slight offenses made mostly toward nonintimates and which were mostly ritualistic.

The choice of the linguistic form, *I'm sorry,* a loan phrase adopted from another language—English—is an interesting case in point here. It appears that, aside from the factors just mentioned, e.g., slight offenses, nonintimate relationships, ritualistic, there are other factors that bear on its use. The *physical context* of the utterances (e.g. canteen, office, hotel), the *linguistic content* of the discourse (e.g. mixed language or code switching—Tagalog and English—"Sorry," *medyo humina ang "guards" ko… "let me pause" baka mapaiyak ako*), and the *context-external discourse function* (e.g., refusing an insurance agent) are all factors/instances reflecting borrowing or adopting culture traits from another culture. It seems that, for such instances or situations, an adopted or borrowed linguistic form would also be more appropriate. Besides, the nonintimacy of most of the relationships, the lack of severity of the offenses and their mostly ritualistic nature would require a more casual-sounding utterance that is offhanded and mechanical than one which sounds more formal and earnest, apologetic as well as re-

pentant—*Patawarin mo ako*—and which appears to be symbolic of native values or traits.

This appears to be an interesting case of *linguistic change*. At present, it seems that generally, each formula, e.g. *Patawarin mo ako* and *I'm sorry*, has its *separate domains* where each can be appropriately used. It would be interesting to observe when *one form* serves the *same function* as the *other*, thus reaching *a stage of variability*. In John Fischer's work *Social Influence in the Choice of a Linguistic Variant*, he mentions that many linguists have recognized *variability* as a logically necessary stage in most linguistic change. It seems that what we have here is a case of *synchronic* processes of change at work—sociolinguistic factors operating in a speech community (e.g., Tagalog) and an adopted language (e.g., English), as well as *diachronic* processes that bring in some linguistic changes through time. The above are rather large claims for a small study; therefore, more data must be provided to validate them. However, it can not be ignored that even in such a small corpus some pattern, as far as the *Patawarin...* and the *I'm sorry* groups of apology are concerned, can be discerned.

The Miscellanous Group

Compared with the other 2 groups of apology formulas, this one is a miscellany of formulaic expressions each of which has too few instances found in the corpus to be the bases of any reliable analysis.

Only the *Pasensya...* group has some uniform observations. As far as the data show, the *Pasensya...* formula was ritualistic and given to nonintimates for a slight offense and for an instance where no offense was even made. One case was that of a boy who accidentally bumped into a woman in a crowded marketplace. He apologized:

> *Pasensya ka na, ale.* "I'm sorry, ma'am." (IFID) *Hindi ko, ho, sinasadya.* "I didn't mean to do it." (TR—taking responsibility but stating offender's lack of intent)

The other case was that of a poor farmer welcoming a city dweller, a friend of his daughter, to his humble home. Since there was actually no offense made, *Pasensya ka na...* takes on an added

meaning to "I'm sorry" as in the above case—that is, "putting up with..." The farmer said:

> *Pasensya ka na, ineng, kung ganito lang ang aming bahay.* "Young lady, please put up with the poverty of our home." (IFID—*pasensiya ka na*—followed by VR—Verbal redress showing concern for the comfort and convenience of the other person by a plea of forbearance)

In the *Ikinalulungkot ko* group the instances observed are not only too few but also reveal different observations: slight and severe offenses made to an intimate recipient and a nonintimate one, one of which is ritualistic, the other semi-substantive. One case was that of a mother denying the request of his son's friends to allow him to remain and stay with them. She refused:

> *Ikinalulungkot ko.* "I'm sorry." (IFID) *Hindi maaring maiwan siya.* "We can't leave him here." (TR—taking responsibility for the refusal) *Pero magkita rin kayo ng aking anak.* "But you'll see each other again." (VR—verbal redress by trying to appease) *Dadalaw kami sa amin; tapos balik uli.* "We're going to visit our place; after that we'll be back." (DG—reducing the effect of the refusal by giving a justification) *Babalik kami. Huwag ninyong kalimutan ang aking anak.* "We'll be back. Don't forget my son." (VR—verbal redress trying to appease).

The other instance of *Ikinalulungkot ko* was that of a policeman apologizing to a mother for not having any information about her son's mysterious death. Though no actual, physical damage was done, the context of the utterance made the offense severe. The police offered a semi-substantive compensatory action which was more of a verbal appeasement phrased in a promise than actual substantive remedial action. He said:

> *Ikinalulungkot, ho, namin.* "We are very sorry." (IFID) *Gayunma'y gagawin pa rin namin ang aming magagawa.* "But we'll do what we can." (TR—taking responsi-

bility for the offense but DG—downgrading or reducing the apologizer's personal accountability by using the impersonal plural pronoun *namin* "we"; also (VR—verbal redress trying to appease with a promise) *Kung sakali, patalastasan na lang namin kayo.* "Just in case (we get some information), we'll inform you." (RE—offer of repair phrased in another promise)

The single case recorded about the speaker using the apology formula *Dinaramdam ko* was made by a man to his close friends refusing to get involved in their plans. Having made no actual damage, the apology was ritualistic than substantive. *The Excuse me* case, was uttered by a teacher in a small group conference where she interrupted a speaker (a minor breach of etiquette) by giving a trivial comment correcting a misinformation. As such there was no injury done, the apology was ritualistic, and was made to nonintimates.

As mentioned earlier, this miscellaneous group consists of different apology formulas each of which has very few cases. The paucity of information makes arriving at any pattern, difficult, unproductive, and unreliable.

Summary and Conclusion

Working within a broad theoretical framework that language is a part of social life, this study hypothesizes that, as such, one important means of studying the social roles, status, and social structure of a community would be to study its language. Within a narrow theoretical framework, it hypothesizes that language, specifically the speech act of apology in Tagalog short stories, can reveal some dynamics of social interaction within a speech community—the Tagalog speech community.

Raven McDavid, Jr., in his *study Postvocalic -r in South Carolina: A Social Analysis,* states:

…language is primarily a vehicle of social inter-communication, and linguistic formula must always be examined for their correlation with other cultural phenomena.…" (1964: 480)

This exploratory study reveals that linguistic formulas of apology appear to be correlated with sociocultural factors such as social distance, the degree of severity of an offense committed in the social speech situation, and the type of compensatory action needed to repair the situation. It appears that these factors motivate the choice of these formulas of apology: three groups of apology formulas found in 22 instances of apologies in a corpus of 20 Tagalog short stories.

The first group, the *Patawad* group, shows the clearest pattern of observations compared to the other two groups. Its use was motivated by severe infractions against social and cultural norms (e.g., infidelities, illicit affairs) rendered more serious by the intimacy of the relationship between the offender and the recipient requiring a substantive compensatory action to remedy the situation.

The second group, the *I"m sorry* group, is an interesting case in point. It is interesting not only for the sociocultural factors that influence its use but also for its being a borrowed or loan phrase—from English—used for a Tagalog speech situation. Unlike the *Patawarin* group which is a Tagalog phrase, the choice of *I'm sorry* was influenced by relatively minor offenses mostly against nonintimates and was ritualistic in nature. It was suggested that the use of this borrowed phrase was an interesting instance of *linguistic change* indicating *synchronic* and *diachronic* processes of change at work.

The third group, the miscellaneous group, consists of different apology formulas, three in Tagalog (*Pasensya ka na, Ikinalulungkot ko, Dinaramdam ko*) and one in English (Excuse me). Instances observed for each were too few and the observations quite varied to reveal some clear pattern which made any analysis unproductive and unreliable. A larger corpus of these formulas is needed to see some pattern and to come up with reliable observations.

This exploratory analysis has shown that a study of the speech act of apology appears to be a promising investigation that can yield insights into the underlying sociocultural rules of speech behavior as well as the prevailing cultural norms that are held inviolate, social norms that are needed to be observed to make possible smooth interaction within a society. Apologies are

linguistic formulas [that serve] to create and maintain public order in remedial interchanges to remedy potentially unpleasant social situation by offering an explanation or an apology. (Goffman 1971).

Recommendations

It is interesting to note that this study has corroborated many of the findings of Bautista (1979) in her study of apology in scripts of Pilipino radio dramas. This study and that of Bautista's show that speaker's choice of an apology formula is patterned. Since these studies are exploratory and based on a small corpus, it is suggested that studies be conducted based on a larger corpus. And since these are based on radio dramas and short stories, an ethnographic study is also suggested that will record *naturally* occurring utterances. More empirical evidence would establish Filipino features of the speech-act of apology.

It is also suggested that contrastive studies be made on apologies in other cultures to find out if apology is *language universal* and *language specific*. This study made on short stories reveal that the use of an apology formula is *situation specific*—that is, its choice is motivated by the nature of the speech situation. With the study of apologies in other cultures, it would therefore be interesting to find out if apology is *language universal*, that is, if *all* apology acts contain some form of an "expression of responsibility" on the part of the apologizer who has caused some infraction, and *language specific*, that is, if the expression of responsibility varies from culture to culture because notions of offense and obligation are culture-specific. Situations which elicit apologies in one language could easily fail to do so in another language. Extending the scope of study from Western languages and cultures to non-Western ones can advance the fundamental issue in cross-cultural pragmatics, viz the universality and culture-specificity of linguistic action. Also, extending the scope of study from the speech act of apology to other speech acts, e.g. requests, offers, invitations, compliments, thanks, politeness, complaints, and others, would serve to establish features of speech acts and be part of the theory building or language as interdependent with social life. That there are shared similarities in speech act realization between languages and cultures—*language universals*—as well as distinct international styles—

culture specific ones—have been observed in studies of British, American, and European speech acts—Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Greek, Danish, German, Portuguese, French, Spanish (Harlow 1990, Mir 1993, Oliveira 1994, Cenoz 1995), in Japanese (White 1993, Christianson 1994, Spees 1994), in Korean (Kim 1995), in Persian (Eslamirasekh 1992).

Lastly, from the perspective of language teaching, it is suggested that studies be made on the nature of *pragmatic transfer* involving speech acts (see Kasper 1992). These studies can discover what rules of speaking of the *nonnative* is transferred into the *target* language. Employing a cross-cultural approach, these studies can answer such questions as, for instance, how a *nonnative* speaker apologizes in his own culture and how a *native* speaker of English apologizes in his own culture. A study mentions that in some cultures apology is nonlinguistic (Wolfson 1989). This would create some misunderstanding with other cultures which express apology explicitly like speakers of English. Thus, the study of *pragmatic transfer* has important implications for the teaching of English as a second language since it involves the issue of *communicative competence* posited by Dell Hymes (1971)—the use of the right linguistic forms *in English* by the *nonnative* in socially *appropriate* situations (See also Thomas 1983, Blum-Kulka 1991, Bardovi-Harlig 1996). Olshtain and Cohen (1983) succinctly explains this by stating that:

> Sociocultural competence…refers to the speaker's *ability* to determine the *pragmatic appropriateness* of a particular speech act in a *given context*. At the production level, it involves the *selection of one* of *several* grammatically acceptable forms according to the…situation and of the available forms. Therefore, communicative competence needs to be translated into the *choice and preferences* which the [speaker] *will have to be able to make* in order to *perform* speech acts in the *new* language. (Italics mine.)

Our modern world is marked by cultures in contact as a consequence of great social geographic mobility. The success in social interaction rests largely on effective communication—which is LANGUAGE—and understanding other people's way of life—which is CULTURE.

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