



The Pragmatics of Sorry: A Cross-Linguistic Analysis of English and Macedonian Online Communication

Keywords (3 to 5): sorry, Pragmatics, English, Macedonian, communication

Abstract: This paper examines the use of the lexeme *sorry* in English and Macedonian online communication, focusing on its multifunctionality beyond the conventional role of apology. While *sorry* is typically associated with expressions of regret, its pragmatic value extends to discourse management, mitigation, and even ironic or non-apologetic uses. The study outlines the theoretical framework of apology and discourse marker research, describes the methodology used to collect instances of *sorry* and its Macedonian equivalent forms, and analyses their syntactic and pragmatic properties.

The analysis distinguishes three main functions: (1) *sorry* as a prototypical apology speech act, (2) *sorry* as a discourse marker that softens or manages interaction, and (3) *sorry* as a sarcastic or non-apology. Examples from English and Macedonian corpora are examined with attention to syntactic structure, frequency, and pragmatic implications. The findings suggest that English speakers employ *sorry* primarily to convey sympathy and regret in online contexts, often extending its use beyond explicit apologies. Macedonian speakers, however, tend to use *sorry* or the orthographically adapted *sori* to address minor offences, typically accompanied by explanations or justifications. The study also finds that the orthographic adaptation *sori* does not significantly affect the range or frequency of its pragmatic functions.

Although limited in scope, the research identifies valuable patterns in the cross-linguistic use of *sorry* and highlights the need for further investigation on larger corpora to fully capture its role in online discourse and intercultural pragmatics.

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