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(EDS.)



Contemporary Approaches to
Intercultural Pragmatics Research and its
Application in Language Teaching



From Scientific Concepts to Practical Implementation

*Contemporary Approaches to
Intercultural Pragmatics Research
and its Application in Language Teaching –
From Scientific Concepts to
Practical Implementation*

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THE SPEECH ACT OF APOLOGIZING IN MACEDONIAN AND TURKISH

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Abstract

The speech act of apologizing is one of the most studied speech acts in intercultural and cross-cultural pragmatics. The main function of an apology is to restore harmonious communication and social balance after causing an offense, making a mistake, or committing a transgression. The aim of this study is to examine the speech act of apologizing and the apology strategies used by native speakers of Macedonian and Turkish. The comparative analysis also explores the relationship between the speech act of apologizing, politeness, and cultural context.

Keywords: *pragmatics, speech acts, apologizing, culture.*

1. Introduction

In everyday communication, people use language to exchange thoughts, messages, or information with their interlocutors. The communication process is bidirectional process involving a sender who initiates the message and the receiver who processes it. The sender encodes the message by selecting symbols to convey it and transmits it through an appropriate channel. The recipient decodes the message by interpreting it or forming a mental representation of it. Every communicative act occurs within a specific situation, called the context of communication, which provides the necessary framework for the recipient to accurately understand the sender's message. Understanding the message depends on many factors, especially the communicative competence of the participants, that is, their ability to adapt to the conditions of communication. Communication is a social interaction created through contact between people. It has developed and improved through cooperative actions that have allowed progress in society and humanity.

What people say in communication depends on individual thoughts as well as on the conventions established within the social, cultural, ethnic, or religious group to which they belong. The success of communication depends on the degree to which the speaker and the interlocutor understand each other's cultural conventions. Pragmatics studies speech communication and speech acts as its fundamental units in order to help people communicate more effectively. Through a speech act, a communicative action is expressed with a specific intention that the speaker expects the listener to recognize. Successful recognition of the speaker's intention results in effective communication. The

ability to identify a speaker's intention is called pragmatic competence. Knowledge of the pragmatic rules of a language allows speakers to produce language that is appropriate for a given context. As social beings, humans mainly live, learn, and work in groups, where communication helps develop harmonious relationships. However, misunderstandings, offenses, conflicts, and transgressions sometimes occur. Since most misunderstandings and conflicts in families, educational institutions, and workplaces originate from people, it is natural that the control and correction of communication errors also depend on people. Recognizing an offense, mistake, or transgression, taking responsibility for harming one or more people, and then apologizing; can provide a solution to the problem. Apologizing is a valuable strategy for restoring disrupted relationships and achieving reconciliation. Unresolved misunderstandings and conflicts, which violate socially accepted norms, can undermine trust. This may disrupt harmonious relationships and distance family members, classmates, or coworkers, potentially causing hostility and reducing organizational productivity. In such cases, an apology by the person who caused the conflict helps reduce negative effects and creates an environment for correcting mistakes. As a speech act, apologizing involves asking forgiveness from the person or people harmed, enabling forgiveness and reconciliation, and forms a major part of social interaction in families, educational institutions, workplaces, and beyond. It helps maintain harmonious relationships not only among individuals but also between people and society. Societies that learn and practice the speech act of apologizing tend to function more peacefully and harmoniously. This leads to fewer offenses, conflicts and mistakes, and raises the level of politeness and civility in communication within that society.

Scientific research on apologizing as a speech act began within the fields of pragmatics and speech act theory in the second half of the 20th century. Important studies on the speech act of apologizing in Macedonia have been conducted by Mitkovska, Kusevska, and Vuzharovska (Митковска, Кусевска, Бужаровска, 2013), Smichkovska, F., (Смичковска, 2014), Todorovska, A., (Тодоровска, 2018), Donevska S., (Доневска, 2018, 2021), Koseva, A., (Коцева, 2021), Stefan Trajchev and Biljana Ivanovska (Трајчев, Ивановска, 2021), Naumova, B., and Janusheva, V., (Наумова, Јанушева, 2025), among others.

In Turkey, significant research on apology strategies has been carried out by Fatma Mızıkaçı (1991), N. G. Erçetin (1995), Rıdvan Tunçel (1999), A. Erden, I. Özyıldırım (2000), Y. Eğit (2002), Ç. Hatipoğlu (2003), Nilgün Karsan (2005), B. Balcı (2009), Işıl Özyıldırım (2010), Ç. Türkmen (2010), Uğur Recep Çetinavcı (2012), Pelin Özmen (2016), Ece Halime Nazlı (2018), Yasemin Yalçın Çakmak (2023), and others. Despite the growing number of studies, apology strategies in Macedonian and Turkish have not yet been specifically examined comparatively in Macedonia and Turkey. This indicates the need to intensify Macedonian-Turkish and Turkish-Macedonian pragmatic research in the future, especially in the context of intercultural and cross-cultural pragmatics. The aim of this study is to examine apologizing as a speech act in Macedonian and Turkish among native speakers and to compare the apology strategies in both languages.

2. Research Methodology

This study presents a synthetic review of the most commonly used apology strategies and sub-strategies described in contemporary pragmatic literature. These strategies and sub-strategies are illustrated with examples from everyday student life among native speakers of Macedonian and Turkish. The aim is to show the functional and pragmatic realization of these strategies in both languages through real-life examples. These examples of apologizing in Macedonian and Turkish allow for a comparative understanding of the similarities and differences in the use of apology strategies and sub-strategies. They demonstrate how young people can repair communication and improve disrupted relationships with their interlocutors. The analysis is based on a comparison with the results of pragmatic studies by Blagitsa Naumova and Violeta Janusheva (Благоица Наумова, Виолета Јанушева, 2025), Ana Koseva (Ана Коцева, 2021) in North Macedonia; and Esin Özge Esen (2021), Özyıldırım (2010), and Nihâl İşbilen (2024) in Turkey.

3. Defining the Concept of Apologizing in Macedonian and Turkish

In the “Explanatory Dictionary of the Macedonian Language” (Толковен речник на македонскиот јазик, 2005, II, p. 261), the word ‘извинување/izvinuvanje’ (apologizing) is described as: “1. Forgiving someone, not taking someone’s action as wrong; 2. Releasing someone from responsibility, providing justification”. The noun ‘извинение/izvinenie’ (excuse) is defined as: “That which is given as a reason for justification”, while the verb ‘се извини/se izvini’ (to apologize) means “To justify oneself and ask for forgiveness.”

In the Turkish Dictionary (Türkçe Sözlük, 2011, p. 1872), the word ‘özür’ (apology) is defined as: “Claiming that a fault or a crime was committed unintentionally, an excuse”, while the verb ‘özür dilemek’ is described as: “1. Expressing regret to avoid doing something, asking for forgiveness for an act; 2. Asking for forgiveness for a mistake one has made.” Apologizing represents an expressive speech act in which the speaker uses their communicative competence to effectively and appropriately employ language in different social and cultural contexts. It involves creating and understanding messages that are adapted to the situation and the interlocutor.

4. Theories Related to the Speech Act of Apologizing

There are many theories that analyze the motivation for apologizing from different perspectives, and explain behavior during an apology. For the speech act of apologizing, two theories are particularly important: The Speech Act Theory (*mk* Теорија на говорни чинови; *tr* Söz Eylemsel Kuram) and The Politeness Theory (*mk* Теорија на учтивост; *tr* Nezaket Kuramı).

4.1. Politeness Theory and Apologizing

The concept of ‘учтивост/ucjtivost’ (politeness) in the “Explanatory Dictionary of the Macedonian Language” („Толковен речник на македонскиот јазик“, 2014, VI, p. 214), is defined as decent, kind, and appropriate behavior toward others, while the word

‘учтив/ucjtiv’ (polite) refers to a person who behaves properly and shows a positive attitude toward others. In the “Turkish Dictionary” (Türkçe Sözlük, 2011, p. 1769), ‘nezaket’ (politeness) is defined as behavior that shows respect and tact toward others, and ‘nezaketli’ (a polite person) is described as tactful and kind.

When viewed as behavior toward others, politeness represents the expression of respect, kindness, and cordiality. From a linguistic perspective, however, politeness expresses the speaker’s friendly, courteous, and pleasant attitude toward the interlocutor, in accordance with social and cultural norms. The aim of every member of society is to integrate successfully into all spheres of life through polite behavior and language use. According to Richard J. Watts (2003, p. 9), because polite behavior is not innate, it must be learned. Therefore, politeness constitutes a fundamental concept in pragmatics.

Politeness Theory (*mk* Теорија на учтивост; *tr* Nezaket Kuramı) was established by British scholars Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson in 1978 and was later revised in 1987. According to their theory, politeness is universal because all languages contain linguistic means for expressing politeness. A central concept in Politeness Theory is ‘face’, which involves two basic needs: the need to avoid imposition, and the need to receive recognition. The concept of ‘face’ is realized through ‘*positive face*’ and ‘*negative face*’. According to this theory, a person with face – characterized by rationality, honor, reputation, and respect – can communicate successfully. Positive face leaves a favorable impression, because the individual strives to behave and speak in ways that are acceptable and appreciated by other members of the community. Negative face, on the other hand, requires that one’s actions are not impeded, referring to the individual’s need to maintain freedom of action or non-action without external pressure that could threaten their self-image. Brown and Levinson emphasize that politeness in interaction between speakers and interlocutors across different social and cultural settings is shaped by additional variables, including: social distance, power relations, degree of closeness, frequency of interaction, cultural obligations, and related factors. Politeness therefore represents the manner in which one individual behaves and expresses themselves toward another, depending on social distance, power, age, closeness and similar factors. Through such behavior, the speaker demonstrates awareness of the interlocutor’s face, while simultaneously shaping the image of their own face. When the speaker considers the interlocutor’s face during interaction, politeness can be realized and is perceived by society as respect, recognition, formality, cordiality, closeness, friendship, or solidarity. Apologizing represent a virtuous aspect of positive face. It reduces mistakes and rude behavior while increasing polite behavior, thereby raising the overall level of decency in social life.

By acknowledging their mistake and apologizing, the speaker enables the interlocutor to reduce concerns regarding their own face. Geoffrey Leech (1983) emphasizes that the purpose of apologizing is to restore balance between the speaker and the interlocutor within the interaction. The functions of apologizing are an integral part of politeness, and, as Mats Deutschmann (2003) points out, in everyday communication, apologizing represent the most prominent manifestation of politeness. In daily interaction, speakers employ a wide range of linguistic means to realize apologies.

4.2. The Speech Act Theory and Apologizing

The Speech Act Theory (*mk* Теорија на говорни чинови; *tr* Söz Eylemsel Kuram) is a branch of the philosophy of language, founded by the British philosopher of language John L. Austin in his book “How to Do Things with Words” (1962), which occupies an important place in linguistic thought. This book is based on his lectures delivered in 1955 at Harvard, and it was published in 1962, containing an analysis of apologizing. The ideas of Austin were further developed by the American philosopher of language John Searle, whose book “Speech Acts” (1969) made a significant contribution to the further development of Speech Act Theory.

According to Austin, language is not only a tool for conveying thoughts, messages, or information; but also, a means for performing actions. The theory aims to explain how meaning and action are connected in language. According to this theory, when we speak, we perform different types of acts, such as: making statements, asking questions, giving orders, expressing emotions, thanking, promising, and apologizing, among others. Austin calls these actions speech acts, and he explains their structure, function, and effect on communication. He classifies speech acts into three types: the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act, thereby laying the foundation for analyzing speech acts from different perspectives. Austin also emphasizes that for a speech act to be successfully performed, context plays a crucial role in understanding its meaning.

Searle (1969, 1985) expanded Austin’s ideas by incorporating speech acts into linguistic theory, treating them as basic units of communication. In this way, speech acts occupy a central position in studies of language, meaning, and communication. Searle classifies speech acts into the following groups: 1. *Representatives* – speech acts that convey beliefs about reality; 2. *Directives* – speech acts intended to get the listener to do something; 3. *Commissives* – speech acts committing the speaker to a future action; 4. *Declarations* – speech acts that change the status or condition of an object or situation; 5. *Expressives* – speech acts expressing the speaker’s psychological state regarding a situation, such as greetings, thanking, congratulating, or apologizing.

The influence of Austin and Searle on the development of language studies through Speech Act Theory is considerable. Following their work, many linguists continued to research speech acts and made significant contributions. The American linguist Michael L. Geis (1995) proposed the Dynamic Theory of Speech Acts, which defines speech acts as multi-layered interactions, allowing the performance of various actions, such as inviting, requesting, apologizing, and others.

Apologizing as a speech act typically occurs after a mistake has been made, during an event that harms the interlocutor, or when a social norm has been violated. It serves as a means to correct or compensate for the mistake. In the speech act of apologizing, there are two parties: the speaker – the person who apologizes, and the interlocutor – the person who accepts the apology. When the speaker notices that the interlocutor is offended or upset by their words or actions, the speaker feels the need to respond. The speaker takes responsibility for the mistake and strives to correct or compensate for it. However, the apology alone is not enough to fully restore balance in interpersonal

relations. Only after the interlocutor accepts the speaker's apology can the correction or compensation be considered successful, and the balance in the relationship be restored. To perform the speech act of apologizing, a person must have developed cognitive maturity, a sense of responsibility, and self-awareness. Research shows that children who are self-aware care about what others think of them, pay attention to their actions, and, if they make a mistake, take responsibility and apologize. In adolescence and adulthood, people gradually improve their apologizing skills through more sophisticated strategies. This process helps individuals develop communicative competence and politeness. Therefore, many researchers analyze apologizing within Speech Act Theory from the perspective of politeness.

Based on this theoretical foundation, the following sections will examine the speech act of apologizing in Macedonian and Turkish, highlighting different strategies within concrete communicative contexts.

5. Strategies for the Speech Act of Apologizing

Based on various definitions of the speech act of apologizing, different strategies have been developed for its realization. These apology strategies share similar elements, but also have differences. Each pragmatist builds upon the model of their predecessor, while introducing new elements into the strategies for apologizing. All strategies are illustrated with examples in Macedonian and Turkish to facilitate understanding.

One of the first researchers to attempt a classification of apology strategies was the American linguist Bruce Fraser in 1981. He divided apology strategies into nine groups, which can be used independently or combined depending on the context, the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor, and the severity of the mistake. Fraser's classification of apology strategies serves as a foundation for further classifications developed by numerous linguists.

Table 1: Apology Strategies According to Fraser

Fraser's apology strategies (1981) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Фрејзер / tr Fraser'in Özür Stratejileri
1. Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID)¹ / mk Да се изразиш дека се извинуваш / tr Özür dileme ediminin açıkça ifade edilmesi <i>e.g., mk Се извинувам што го скршив пенкалото. / tr Tükenmez kalemi kırdığım için özür dilerim. / I'm sorry that I broke the ballpoint pen.</i>

¹ Within the theoretical frameworks of Fraser (1981) and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) constitutes the core of the speech act of apology.

<p>2. Acknowledgement of responsibility / mk Да се признае одговорност за дејството / tr Eylem için sorumluluğun kabul edilmesi <i>e.g., mk Јас сум виновен што го скршив пенкалото. / tr Tükenmez kalem kırmanın sorumlusu benim. / It's my fault that I broke the ballpoint pen.</i></p>
<p>3. Explanation or account / mk Да се даде објаснување или причина / tr Açıklama veya gerekçe sunulması <i>e.g., mk Брзјќи се, случајно го скршив пенкалото. / tr Acele ederken tükenmez kalem tesadüfen kırdım. / In my haste, I accidentally broke the ballpoint pen.</i></p>
<p>4. Expression of regret / mk Да се изрази каење / tr Pişmanlık ifade edilmesi <i>e.g., mk Жал ми е што го скршив пенкалото. / tr Tükenmez kalem kırdığıma üzgünüm. / I'm sorry I broke the ballpoint pen.</i></p>
<p>5. Offer of repair or compensation / mk Да се понуди надомест или поправка / tr Telafi veya onarım önerilmesi <i>e.g., mk Како надомест, ќе купам ново пенкало. / tr Tazminat olarak yeni tükenmez kalem alacağım. / As compensation, I will buy a new ballpoint pen.</i></p>
<p>6. Promise of forbearance / mk Обврзување дека слични дејства нема да се повторуваат / tr Benzer eylemlerin tekrarlanmayacağına dair söz verme <i>e.g., mk Ќе внимавам да не скршам пенкало повторно. / tr Bir daha tükenmez kalem kırmamaya dikkat edeceğim. / I will be careful not to break a ballpoint pen again.</i></p>
<p>7. Request for forgiveness / mk Барање прошка / tr Affedilme talebinde bulunulması <i>e.g., mk Ве молам, простете ми за мојата грешка. / tr Lütfen hatamı bağışlayın. / Please forgive me for my mistake.</i></p>
<p>8. Self-deprecation or humility / mk Да се користи самоомаловажување или скромност / tr Kendini küçümseme veya alçakgönüllülük gösterme <i>e.g., mk Навистина се чувствувам несмасен што се случи ова. / tr Bu olay yüzünden gerçekten kendimi beceriksiz hissediyorum. / I really feel clumsy about what happened.</i></p>
<p>9. Explanation of mitigating circumstances / mk Да се објаснат олеснителни околности / tr Hafifletici koşulların açıklanması <i>e.g., mk Не знаев дека пенкалото е кршливо, инаку ќе внимавав. / tr Tükenmez kalemin kırılğan olduğunu bilmiyordum; yoksa dikkat ederdim. / I didn't know the ballpoint pen was fragile; otherwise, I would have been careful.</i></p>

Inspired by previous classifications, including Fraser's, the American linguist Andrew D. Cohen and the Israeli linguist Elite Olshtain (1983) developed their own classification of apology strategies. Cohen and Olshtain examine apology strategies from the perspective of intercultural and cross-cultural pragmatics, emphasizing that the same apology strategy may be effective to different degrees in different cultures and contexts. This competence must be learned, as people are not born with pragmatic competence. Cohen and Olshtain were the first to show how apology strategies are acquired when learning a second language.

Table 2: Apology Strategies According to Cohen and Olshtain

Cohen & Olshtain's apology strategies (1983) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Коен и Олштајн / tr Cohen ve Olshtain'in Özür Stratejileri
<p>I. An expression of an apology (Illocutionary force indicating device - IFID) / mk Изразување извинување - IFID / tr Özür ifadesi - IFID</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Жал ми е, не можев да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испит. / <i>tr</i> Üzgünüm, sınava hazırlanman için sana yardım edemedim. / I'm sorry, I couldn't help you prepare for the exam.</p>
<p>II. Acknowledgement of responsibility / mk Признавање на одговорност / tr Sorumluluğun kabul edilmesi</p> <p>1. Accepting the blame / mk Прифаќање вина / tr Suçu üstlenme</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Моја вина е што не можев да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испитот. / <i>tr</i> Sınava hazırlanırken sana yardım edememem benim hatamdı. / It's my fault that I couldn't help you prepare for the exam.</p> <p>2. Expressing self-deficiency / mk Изразување лична недоволност / tr Kendini yetersiz gösterme</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Не сум добар во овој предмет, па не можев да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испитот. / <i>tr</i> Bu derste yeterince iyi değilim, bu yüzden sınava hazırlanırken sana yardım edemedim. / I'm not good at this subject, so I couldn't help you prepare for the exam.</p> <p>3. Recognizing the hearer as entitled to an apology / mk Признавање дека соговорникот има право на извинување / tr Dinleyicinin özrü hak ettiğini kabul etme</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Очекуваше помош од мене додека се подготвуваше за испитот, и жал ми е што не можев да ти помогнам. / <i>tr</i> Sınava hazırlanırken yardımımı bekliyordun; yardım edemediğim için özür dilerim. / You expected my help while preparing for the exam, and I'm sorry I couldn't help you.</p> <p>4. Expressing lack of intent / mk Изразување ненамерност / tr Kasıt olmadığını belirtme</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Немав намера да те разочарам додека се подготвуваше за испитот. / <i>tr</i> Sınavı hazırlarken seni hayal kırıklığına uğratmak istemedim. / I didn't mean to let you down while you were preparing for the exam.</p>
<p>III. Explanation or account / mk Објаснување или оправдување / tr Açıklama veya gerekçe sunma</p> <p><i>e.g., mk</i> Не можев да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испитот, бидејќи утре имам друг испит. / <i>tr</i> Yarın başka bir sınavım olduğundan dolayı sınava hazırlanman için sana yardım edemedim. / I couldn't help you prepare for the exam, because I have another exam tomorrow.</p>

<p>IV. Offer of repair / mk Понуда за поправка или надомест / tr Telafi veya onarım önerme <i>e.g., mk</i> Денес не можев да ти помогнам, но во недела можам да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испитот. / <i>tr</i> Bugün yardım edemem, ama pazar günü sınava hazırlanman için yardım edebilirim. / I couldn't help you today, but I can help you prepare for the exam on Sunday.</p>
<p>V. Promise of forbearance / mk Ветување дека дејството нема да се повтори / tr Tekrar etmeme sözü verme <i>e.g., mk</i> Ветувам дека следниот пат нема да одбијам да ти помогнам да се подготвиш за испит. / <i>tr</i> Bir dahaki sefere sınava hazırlanırken yardım etmeyi reddetmeyeceğime söz veriyorum. / I promise I won't refuse to help you prepare for exams next time.</p>

The apology strategies of the Israeli linguists Shoshana Blum-Kulka and Elite Olshtain were developed within the framework of the international project CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project). Through this project, they brought pragmatics out of purely theoretical research, placed it in different cultural contexts, made it interculturally comparable, and gave apology strategies a clearly defined intercultural character. By the late 1970s, Austin and Searle had developed the Speech Act Theory, Herbert Paul Grice had formulated the Cooperative Principle and conversational maxims (between 1967 and 1975), and Brown and Levinson (between 1978 and 1987) had developed The Politeness Theory; creating a strong theoretical foundation for the development of pragmatics. However, in the 1980s, a turning point occurred as pragmatics began to develop empirically and interculturally, focusing on how speech acts are realized in different languages and cultures. In this context, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, within the CCSARP project, investigated the speech act of apology and developed apology strategies based on the theoretical and empirical findings of their predecessors.

Table 3: Apology Strategies According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain

<p>Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's apology strategies (1984) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Блум-Кулка и Олштајн / tr Blum-Kulka ve Olshtain'in Özür Stratejileri</p>
<p>I. An illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) / mk Индикатор на илокутивната сила (IFID) / tr Edimsel gücü belirten gösterge (IFID) 1. Expression of regret / mk Изразување жалење / tr Üzüntü bildirme <i>e.g., mk</i> Жал ми е за скршениот мобилен телефон. / <i>tr</i> Kırılan cep telefonu için üzgünüm. / I'm sorry about the broken phone. 2. Offer of apology / mk Упатување извинување / tr Özür dileme <i>e.g., mk</i> Се извинувам што го скршив телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonu kırdığım için özür dilerim. / I apologize for breaking the phone. 3. Request for forgiveness / mk Барање прошка / tr Affetme talebi <i>e.g., mk</i> Те молам, прости ми што го скршив телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonu kırdığım için beni affet. / Please forgive me for breaking the phone.</p>

<p>II. Taking on responsibility / mk Преземање на одговорност / tr Sorumluluğu üstlenme</p> <p>1. Explicit self-blame / mk Експлицитно признавање на вината / tr Açıkça suçü kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Моја вина е што се скрши телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonun kırılması benim hatamdı. / It was my fault that the phone broke.</p> <p>2. Expression of lack of intent / mk Изразување ненамерност / tr Kasıt olmadığını ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Немав намера да го скршам телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonu kırmak istemedim. / I didn't mean to break the phone.</p> <p>3. Expression of embarrassment / mk Изразување срам или непријатност / tr Utanç veya mahcubiyet ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Многу ми е непријатно што го скршив телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonu kırdığım için çok mahcubum. / I feel really embarrassed about breaking the phone.</p> <p>4. Expression of self-deficiency / mk Изразување личен недостаток / tr Kişisel yetersizliği ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Бев многу неспретна и го скршив телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Çok sakardım ve telefonu kırdım. / I was very clumsy and broke the phone.</p> <p>5. Justification (minimizing responsibility) / mk Оправдување (намалување на одговорноста) / tr Gerekçelendirme (sorumluluğu azaltma) <i>e.g., mk</i> Телефонот се скрши, бидејќи клупата беше преполна. / <i>tr</i> Telefon kırıldı çünkü sıra dopdoluydu. / The phone broke because the desk was overcrowded.</p>
<p>III. An explanation or account of the situation / mk Објаснување или образложување на ситуацијата / tr Durumun açıklanması veya gerekçelendirilmesi <i>e.g., mk</i> Го скршив телефонот кога случајно удрих во масата. / <i>tr</i> Yanlışlıkla sıraya çarptığım için telefonu kırdım. / I broke the phone when I accidentally bumped into the desk.</p>
<p>IV. Offer of repair / mk Понуда за поправка или надомест / tr Telafi veya onarım teklifi <i>e.g., mk</i> Искршениот телефон ќе го заменам со нов. / <i>tr</i> Kırılan telefonu yenisiyle değiştireceğim. / I will replace the broken phone with a new one.</p>
<p>V. Promise of forbearance / mk Ветување за неповторување / tr Tekrar etmeme sözü <i>e.g., mk</i> Следниот пат ќе бидам повнимателна. / <i>tr</i> Bir dahaki sefere daha dikkatli olacağım. / I'll be more careful next time.</p>

In 1990, Janet Holmes, a linguist from New Zealand, expanded and refined the taxonomy of apologies developed by Cohen and Olshtain. Holmes analyzed apology empirically as a multi-strategy, context-sensitive, and socially conditioned process. She emphasized the interaction between language and the social context, viewing apology as a dynamic and polite negotiation act that adapts to the specific situation and the interlocutor's reaction, while simultaneously enabling the maintenance and restoration of social relationships.

Table 4: Apology Strategies According to Holmes

Holmes' apology strategies (1990) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Холмс / tr Holmes'in Özür Stratejileri
<p>I. An explicit apology (IFID – Illocutionary force indicating device) / mk Експлицитно извинување (IFID – индикатор на илокутивната сила) / tr Açık özür (IFID – Edimsel gücü belirten gösterge) <i>e.g., mk</i> Жал ми е што го изгубив твојот речник. / <i>tr</i> Sözlüğünü kaybettiğim için özür dilerim. / I'm sorry that I lost your dictionary.</p>
<p>II. An explanation or account of the situation / mk Објаснување или оправдување на ситуацијата / tr Durumun açıklanması veya gerekçelendirilmesi <i>e.g., mk</i> Го изгубив твојот речник, бидејќи го заборавив во автобус. / <i>tr</i> Sözlüğünü otobüste unuttuğum için kaybettim. / I lost your dictionary because I left it on the bus.</p>
<p>III. An acknowledgement of responsibility / mk Признавање на одговорноста / tr Sorumluluğun kabul edilmesi</p> <p>1. Accepting the blame / mk Прифаќање на вината / tr Suçu kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Јас сум виновна што го изгубив твојот речник. / <i>tr</i> Sözlüğünü kaybetmem benim hatamdır. / It was my fault that I lost your dictionary.</p> <p>2. Expressing self-deficiency / mk Истакнување личен недостаток / tr Kişisel yetersizliği ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Бев многу расеана, и го изгубив твојот речник. / <i>tr</i> Çok dalgındım ve sözlüğünü kaybettim. / I was very distracted and lost your dictionary.</p> <p>3. Recognizing the hearer as deserving an apology / mk Признавање дека соговорникот заслужува извинување / tr Dinleyicinin özrü hak ettiğini kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Со право си лута што го изгубив твојот речник. / <i>tr</i> Sözlüğünü kaybettiğim için kızmakta haklısın. / You are right to be upset that I lost your dictionary.</p> <p>4. Expressing lack of intent / mk Изразување ненамерност / tr Kasıt olmadığını ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Не сакав да го изгубам твојот речник. / <i>tr</i> Sözlüğünü kaybetmek istemedim. / I didn't mean to lose your dictionary.</p>
<p>IV. An offer of repair / mk Понуда за поправка или надомест / tr Telafi veya onarım önerisi <i>e.g., mk</i> Ке ти купам ист таков нов речник. / <i>tr</i> Sana aynı sözlüğün yenisini satın alacağım. / I'll buy you a new copy of the same dictionary.</p>
<p>V. A promise of forbearance / mk Ветување за воздржаност (неповторување на прекршокот) / tr Kaçınma vaadi (tekrar etmeme sözü) <i>e.g., mk</i> Ова нема да се повтори. / <i>tr</i> Bir daha böyle bir şey olmayacak. / It won't happen again.</p>

In 1995, the Danish linguist Anna Trosborg expanded the model developed by Olshtain and Cohen; she divided apology strategies into sub-levels and emphasizing that

an apology is a complex speech act composed of multiple strategies that are combined according to the speaker's needs. According to her, an apology is a dynamic and culturally conditioned speech act. Particularly important is her concept of taking responsibility as a continuum. Trosborg employs interlanguage and contrastive pragmatic analysis; thereby making speech act theory empirically applicable and contributing significantly to contemporary research on the speech act of apology.

Table 5: Apology Strategies According to Trosborg

Trosborg's apology strategies (1995) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Тросборг (1995) / tr Trosborg'un Özür Stratejileri
<p>I. Explicit apology / mk Експлицитно извинување / tr Açık özür dileme</p> <p>1. Expression of regret / mk Изразување жалење / tr Üzüntü bildirme <i>e.g., mk Жал ми е за грешката во мојата семинарска работа. / tr Seminer ödevimdeki hata için üzgünüm. / I'm sorry for the mistake in my seminar paper.</i></p> <p>2. Offer of apology / mk Понуда за извинување / tr Özür dileme teklifi <i>e.g., mk Се извинувам за забуната предизвикана од мојата семинарска работа. / tr Seminer ödevimin yarattığı karışıklık için özür dilerim. / I apologize for the confusion caused by my seminar paper.</i></p> <p>3. Request for forgiveness / mk Барање прошка / tr Af dileme <i>e.g., mk Ве молам простете ми за несоодветните извори што ги користев во семинарската работа. / tr Seminer ödevimde kullandığım uygun olmayan kaynaklar için beni affedin. / Please forgive me for the inappropriate sources used in the seminar paper.</i></p>
<p>II. Explanation or account / mk Објаснување или оправдување / tr Açıklama veya gerekçe</p> <p>1. Explanation of the situation / mk Објаснување на ситуацијата / tr Durumun açıklanması <i>e.g., mk Библиотеката беше затворена додека ја подготвував семинарската работа. / tr Seminer ödevimi hazırladığım sırada kütüphane kapalıydı. / The library was closed while I was preparing my seminar paper.</i></p> <p>2. Justification or excuse / mk Оправдување или изговор / tr Gerekçe veya bahane <i>e.g., mk Не добив јасни инструкции за подготвување на семинарска работа. / tr Seminer ödevinin hazırlanmasıyla ilgili net talimatlar almadım. / I didn't receive clear instructions for preparing the seminar paper.</i></p>
<p>III. Taking on responsibility (Acknowledgement of responsibility) / mk Признавање, преземање на одговорност / tr Sorumluluğu kabul etme, üstlenme</p> <p>1. Accepting the blame / mk Целосно прифаќање на вината / tr Suçu kabul etme <i>e.g., mk Недоследностите во обработката на проблемот во семинарската работа се целосно моја одговорност. / tr Seminer çalışmasında problemin ele alınışındaki tutarsızlıklar tamamen benim sorumluluğumdur. / The inconsistencies in the treatment of the problem in the seminar paper are entirely my responsibility.</i></p>

<p>2. Expressing self-deficiency / mk Истакнување сопствена недоволност / tr Kişisel yetersizliği ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Не ги проверив деталите доволно внимателно. / <i>tr</i> Detayları yeterince dikkatli kontrol etmedim. / I didn't check the details carefully enough.</p> <p>3. Recognizing the hearer's right to complaint / mk Признавање на правото на соговорникот да се жали / tr Dinleyicinin şikâyet hakkını kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Во право сте што очекувате добро структурирана семинарска работа. / <i>tr</i> Düzgün yapılandırılmış bir seminer ödevi beklemekte haklısınız. / You are right to expect a properly structured seminar paper.</p> <p>4. Expressing lack of intent / mk Истакнување дека немало намера / tr Niyetin olmadığını ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Немав намера да поднесам нецелосна семинарска работа. / <i>tr</i> Eksik bir seminer çalışması teslim etmeyi istemedim. / I did not intend to submit an incomplete seminar paper.</p> <p>5. Refusal to acknowledge responsibility / mk Одбивање да се преземе одговорност / tr Sorumluluğu reddetme <i>e.g., mk</i> Недостасувачките референци се резултат на системска грешка. / <i>tr</i> Eksik kaynaklar sistem hatasından kaynaklandı. / The missing references were due to a system error.</p>
<p>IV. Offer of repair or compensation / mk Понуда за поправка / tr Telafi önerisi</p> <p>1. Material compensation / mk Материјална компензација / tr Maddi telafi <i>e.g., mk</i> Ќе поднесам ревидирана верзија на семинарската работа. / <i>tr</i> Seminer çalışmasının düzeltilmiş bir versiyonunu teslim edeceğim. / I will submit a revised version of the seminar paper.</p> <p>2. Non-material repair / mk Нематеријална поправка / tr Maddi olmayan telafi <i>e.g., mk</i> Внимателно ќе ја ревидирам структурата на семинарската работа. / <i>tr</i> Projenin yapısını dikkatlice gözden geçireceğim. / I will carefully revise the structure of the seminar paper.</p>
<p>V. Promise of forbearance / mk Ветување за воздржаност (неповторување на наредбата) / tr Tekrar etmeme sözü <i>e.g., mk</i> Во иднина повнимателно ќе ги следам упатствата за подготвување семинарска работа. / <i>tr</i> Bundan sonra seminer çalışmasını hazırlarken talimatları daha dikkatli takip edeceğim. / In the future, I will follow the instructions for preparing the seminar paper more carefully.</p>

In 1996, Swedish linguist Karin Aijmer built upon the models of Olshtain and Cohen (1983) and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). Her approach is based on corpus analysis of authentic speech data, providing insight into the real use of language in interaction. Aijmer focuses on the actual use of apology strategies in speech, their frequency and their pragmatic function in interaction. She treats apology as a conversational routine that is a routinized interactive practice realized through conventionalized linguistic formulas. She

views apology strategies as dynamic and contextually conditioned pragmatic choices in discourse.

Table 6: Apology Strategies According to Aijmer

Aijmer's apology strategies (1996) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Ајмер / tr Aijmer'in Özür Stratejileri
<p>I. Explicit-emotional apology / mk Експлицитно емоционално извинување / tr Açık duygusal özür dileme</p> <p>1. Explicitly apologizing / mk Експлицитно извинување / tr Açıkça özür dileme <i>e.g., mk</i> Се извинувам што го испуштив твојот повик. / <i>tr</i> Senin aramanı kaçırdığım için özür dilerim. / I apologize for missing your call.</p> <p>2. Expressing regret / mk Изразување жалење / tr Üzüntü ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Навистина ми е жал што не можев да се јавам порано. / <i>tr</i> Daha önce cevap veremediğim için gerçekten üzgünüm. / I'm really sorry I couldn't answer earlier.</p>
<p>II. Explicit non-emotional apology / mk Експлицитно неемоционално извинување / tr Açık duygusal olmayan özür dileme</p> <p>1. Offering one's apologies / mk Упатување на извинување / tr Özrünü sunma <i>e.g., mk</i> Ве молам прифатете го моето извинување што се јавувам толку доцна. / <i>my.</i> Bu kadar geç aradığım için özrümü kabul edin. / Please accept my apologies for the late call.</p> <p>2. Acknowledging a debt of apology / mk Признавање на должност за извинување / tr Özür borcunu kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Ти должам извинување што не ти одговорив на пораките. / <i>tr</i> Mesajlarına cevap vermediğim için sana bir özür borçluyum. / I owe you an apology for not replying to your messages.</p> <p>3. Demanding forgiveness / mk Барање прошка со инсистирање / tr Af dileme <i>e.g., mk</i> Мора да ми простиш што забравив да се јавам, не беше намерно. / <i>tr</i> Aramayı unuttuğum için beni affetmelisin, bilerek yapmadım. / You have to forgive me for forgetting to call; it wasn't intentional.</p> <p>4. Explicitly requesting forgiveness / mk Експлицитно барање прошка / tr Açıkça af dileme <i>e.g., mk</i> Те молам прости ми што не ти се јавив порано. / <i>tr</i> Daha önce arayamadığım için lütfen beni affet. / <i>англ.</i> Please forgive me for not calling back sooner.</p>
<p>III. Implicit-emotional apology / mk Имплицитно емоционално извинување / tr Dolaylı duygusal özür dileme</p> <p>1. Giving an explanation or account / mk Објаснување или оправдување / tr Açıklama yapma veya gerekçe <i>e.g., mk</i> Ми се испразни батеријата на телефонот, затоа не одговорив. / <i>tr</i> Telefonumun şarjı bitmişti, o yüzden cevap veremedim. / My phone battery died, so I didn't answer.</p>

<p>2. Expressing emotion / mk Изразување емоција / tr Duygu ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Навистина се чувствувам лошо што го испуштив твојот повик. / <i>tr</i> Aramamı kaçırdığım için kendimi gerçekten kötü hissediyorum. / I feel really bad about missing your call.</p>
<p>IV. Implicit non-emotional apology / mk Имплицитно неемоционално извинување / tr Dolaylı duygusal olmayan özür dileme</p> <p>1. Self-denigration / mk Самообвинување / tr Kendini suçlama <i>e.g., mk</i> Бев многу невнимателен што не го наполнив телефонот. / <i>tr</i> Telefonu şarj etmediğim için çok dikkatsizdim. / I was careless not to charge my phone.</p> <p>2. Minimizing responsibility / mk Намалување на одговорноста / tr Sorumluluğu azaltma <i>e.g., mk</i> Сигналот беше многу слаб. / <i>tr</i> Sinyal çok kötüydü. / The signal was really bad.</p> <p>3. Acknowledging responsibility / mk Признавање одговорност / tr Sorumluluğu kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Моја вина е, требаше да ти се јавам. / <i>tr</i> Benim hatam, seni armalıyım. / It's my fault; I should have called you.</p> <p>4. Promising forbearance / mk Ветување за воздржаност (неповторување) / tr Tekrar etmeme sözü <i>e.g., mk</i> Нема повторно да се случи, ќе го држам телефонот вклучен. / <i>tr</i> Bir daha olmayacak, telefonumu açık tutacağım. / It won't happen again; I'll keep my phone on.</p>

In 2003, the Swedish linguist Mats Deutschmann expanded the apology strategies of Holmes, Blum-Kulka, and Olshtain, refining them in terms of context and intensity, and giving them a distinct discourse perspective. He analyzed apology strategies in real speech situations, showing how they function and combine in actual communication. This approach presents apology as a dynamic speech act that develops gradually according to the needs of the participants in communication. As a novelty, Deutschmann introduced the analysis of apology intensity, demonstrating that speakers can adjust the level of apology depending on the relationship between interlocutors and the seriousness of the offense. His analyses also show that the choice and combination of apology strategies depend on institutional, social, and cultural contexts.

Table 7: Apology Strategies According to Deutschmann

<p>Deutschmann's apology strategies (2003) / mk Стратегиите за извинување според Дојчман / tr Deutschmann'ın Özür Stratejileri</p>
<p>I. IFID – Illocutionary force indicating device (Explicit apology) / mk Индикатор на илокутивната сила (експлицитно извинување) / tr IFID – Edimsel gücü belirten gösterge (açık özür dileme)</p> <p>1. Expression of regret / mk Изразување жалење / tr Üzüntü bildirme <i>e.g., mk</i> Жал ми е што задоцнив на час. / <i>tr</i> Derse geç kaldığım için üzgünüm. / I'm sorry for being late to class.</p>

<p>2. Offer of apology / mk Упатување извинување / tr Özür dileme <i>e.g., mk</i> Се извинувам што задоцнив. / <i>tr</i> Geç kaldığım için özür dilerim. / I apologize for being late.</p> <p>3. Request for forgiveness / mk Барање прошка / tr Affetme talebi <i>e.g., mk</i> Те молам, прости ми што задоцнив на час. / <i>tr</i> Derse geç kaldığım için beni affedin. / Please forgive me for being late to class.</p>
<p>II. Taking on responsibility (Acknowledgement of responsibility) / mk Преземање, признавање на одговорност / tr Sorumluluğu üstlenme, kabul etme</p> <p>1. Explicit self-blame / mk Експлицитно признавање на вината / tr Suçu açıkça kabul etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Моја вина е што задоцнив на час. / <i>tr</i> Derse geç kalmam benim hatamdı. / It was my fault that I was late.</p> <p>2. Expression of lack of intent / mk Изразување ненамерност / tr Kasıt olmadığını ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Немав намера да задоцнам. / <i>tr</i> Niyetim geç kalmak değildi. / I didn't mean to be late.</p> <p>3. Expression of embarrassment or shame / mk Изразување срам или непријатност / tr Utanç veya mahcubiyet ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Многу ми е непријатно што задоцнив. / <i>tr</i> Geç kaldığım için çok mahcubum. / I feel very embarrassed about being late.</p> <p>4. Expression of self-deficiency / mk Истакнување личен недостаток / tr Kişisel yetersizliği ifade etme <i>e.g., mk</i> Бев неорганизирана, и затоа не тргнав на училиште на време. / <i>tr</i> Düzensizdim, bu yüzden okula zamanında çıkmadım. / I was disorganized, so I didn't leave for school on time.</p>
<p>III. Explanation or account of the situation / mk Објаснување или образложување на ситуацијата / tr Durumun açıklanması veya gerekçelendirilmesi <i>e.g., mk</i> Задоцнив, бидејќи автобусот доцнеше. / <i>tr</i> Otobüs geciktiği için derse geç kaldım. / I was late because the bus was delayed.</p>
<p>IV. Offer of repair or compensation / mk Понуда за поправка или надомест / tr Telafi veya onarım teklifi <i>e.g., mk</i> Ќе го надоместам пропуштеното од часот. / <i>tr</i> Derste kaçırdıklarımı telafi edeceğim. / I will make up for what I missed in class.</p>
<p>V. A promise of forbearance (promise not to repeat the offence) / mk Ветување за воздржаност (неповторување на прекршокот) / tr Kaçınma vaadi (tekrar etmeme sözü) <i>e.g., mk</i> Следниот пат ќе тргнам порано. / <i>tr</i> Bir dahaki sefere daha erken çıkacağım. / Next time, I'll leave earlier.</p>

One of Deutschmann's key contributions is the insight that an apology is rarely realized through a single strategy; instead, it most often consists of a cluster of strategies. In other words, the IFID (Illocutionary Force Indicating Device) is frequently combined with explanations, acknowledgements of responsibility, and offers for repair. For example:

Table 8: A Combination of Apology Strategies

A cluster of strategies (a combination of apology strategies) / mk Кластер од стратегии (комбинација од стратегии за извинување) / tr Özür Stratejileri Kümesi (Özür Stratejilerinin Birleşimi)
<p><i>e.g., mk</i> 1. Жал ми е што задоцнив на часот. / I'm sorry that I was late for class. (IFID – explicit apology); 2. Моја вина е. / It was my fault. (Explicit self-blame); 3. Бев неорганизирана. / I was disorganized. (Expressing self-deficiency); 4. А и автобусот доцнесе. / And the bus was late as well. (Explanation of the situation); 5. Ќе го надоместам пропуштеното од часот. / I'll make up for what I missed in class. (Offer of compensation or repair); 6. Ова нема да се повтори – утре ќе тргнам порано. / It won't happen again – I'll leave earlier tomorrow. (A promise of forbearance).</p> <p><i>e.g., tr</i> 1. Derse geç kaldığım için özür dilerim. / I'm sorry that I was late for class. (IFID – explicit apology); 2. Benim hatam. / It was my fault. (Explicit self-blame); 3. Düzensizdim. / I was disorganized. (Expressing self-deficiency); 4. Ayrıca otobüs de gecikti. / And the bus was late as well. (Explanation of the situation); 5. Derste kaçırdıklarımı telafi edeceğim. / I'll make up for what I missed in class. (Offer of compensation or repair); 6. Bu tekrarlanmayacak – yarın daha erken çıkacağım. / It won't happen again – I'll leave earlier tomorrow. (A promise of forbearance).</p>

The apology strategies of Fraser (1981), Cohen and Olshtain (1983), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Holmes (1990), Trosborg (1995), Aijmer (1996) and Deutschmann (2003) are widely used in research on the speech act of apology in pragmatic studies in North Macedonia and Turkey. Researchers apply these strategies according to their preferences, or they combine and adapt them to their language.

In this study, we specifically demonstrate the apology strategies of Fraser, Cohen and Olshtain, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, Holmes, Deutschmann, Trosborg and Aijmer through typical apologies in Macedonian and Turkish in common university student situations. These situations include: apologizing for breaking a ballpoint pen; being unable to help a classmate prepare for an exam; breaking a mobile phone; losing a dictionary; being late to class; making a mistake in a seminar paper; and missing a phone call.

6. Discussion

The study of the speech act of apology in Macedonian and Turkish, based on the strategies of Fraser (1981), Cohen and Olshtain (1983), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Holmes (1990), Trosborg (1995), Aijmer (1996), and Deutschmann (2003), showed that all these models are applicable to university students in both languages. The linguistic realization of these strategies and sub-strategies was illustrated with examples in Macedonian and Turkish. This analysis revealed linguistic equivalents and confirmed the universal character of the speech act of apology. In every society, culture, family, and educational institution, young people are taught to apologize, just as they learn the rules of chess, dominoes, backgammon, or various sports. The apology strategies used

by university students in Macedonia and Turkey do not show significant differences, as students in both countries employ the same or similar strategies under the same circumstances.

7. Conclusion

In the university educational process, where cooperation and teamwork are important; offenses, mistakes, and transgressions can affect: the efficiency of teaching, students' satisfaction with their university experience, and the overall functioning of the group during studies. Resolving and overcoming these conflict situations is essential for creating a healthy and productive learning environment. To restore harmonious relationships, cooperation and teamwork, the speech act of apology plays a fundamental role in overcoming conflict and can lead to reconciliation. Students understand that personal and educational development involves learning from mistakes and taking responsibility for their actions, contributing to continuous growth. In this way, apology lays the foundation for mutual understanding, respect for different perspectives, and the maintenance of harmonious relationships among students.

The role of individual characteristics, empathy, maturity, and ethical awareness directly influences students' readiness to apologize. At the same time, tradition and religious upbringing within the family significantly affect this readiness. In both Christian and Muslim belief systems, apology, repentance, and forgiveness hold an important place. For example, in Orthodox Christianity, the holiday Prochka (*mk* Прочка) is observed, during which people forgive each other before the beginning of Lent, a tradition of great importance in Macedonia. On this day, everyone says to one another, younger to older and older to younger: "Forgive me", and the response is: "You are forgiven by me and by God." Repentance and forgiveness should be sincere, reflected in the heart and soul, and expressed through thoughts, words, and actions, enabling harmonious relationships filled with respect and love. When this happens, we have truly forgiven or we have truly been forgiven. Repentance and forgiveness involve changing one's thoughts and actions and committing not to repeat the mistake.

Nihâl İşbilen (2024) investigates the relationship between apology strategies and religiosity in Turkey and concludes: "Individuals with higher levels of religiosity more frequently apply the strategy of directness in the apology process, expressing a more open and responsible attitude. In the Islamic ethical tradition, concepts such as the right of the other (*tr* kul hakkı) and repentance (*tr* tövbe) are emphasized as important moral and spiritual principles that encourage the individual to perform the act of apology within vertical (God-human) and horizontal (human-human) relations. The belief that behavior violating the rights of others cannot be rectified solely through apology, but also requires forgiveness from the harmed party, strengthens the moral responsibility of individuals to compensate and correct the wrong committed (p. 367)".

Students in North Macedonia and Turkey demonstrate similar systems of politeness in the speech act of apology. These similarities in the way Macedonian and Turkish speakers apologize stem from the similar and shared cultural values in Macedonian and Turkish

culture, as well as from the education and upbringing in both countries. The Macedonian and Turkish framework of apology assumes that apology should be applied and regarded as a virtuous act, not a sign of weakness. In both cultures, failing to acknowledge an offense, guilt, or mistake is considered disrespectful toward the interlocutor. For the restoration of harmonious relationships, in addition to apology, compensation for the harm caused is also offered. As a result of these shared attitudes toward apology, students in both cultures have developed similar or identical means and strategies for apologizing. Research findings from North Macedonia and Turkey show similar tendencies. According to Blagitsa Naumova and Violeta Janusjeva (Б. Наумова, В. Јанушева, 2025): “Research results show that young Macedonian speakers use direct strategies more often than indirect strategies in apologizing” (p. 259). Similar findings were observed by Koceva (2021) in a comparative study: “Results showed that, quantitatively, direct apologies and explanations prevail in both Macedonian and American English, most often accompanied by additional strategies to repair the offense” (pp. 14-15). A similar conclusion is drawn by Esin Özge Esen (2021) in comparative studies of Turkish and Korean: “Overall, the findings show that native speakers of Turkish have a tendency to use explicit expression of apology strategy in all situations, no matter how close the participants are or what kind of hierarchical relationship they have” (p. 116). Furthermore, Esen (2021) notes: “When the speakers apologize to an acquaintance, native speakers of Turkish tend to use explicit (direct) expressions of apology and repair in their apologies” (p. 117). In their studies, Özyıldırım (2010) and Nihâl İşbilen (2024) conclude that the use of direct apology strategies by native Turkish speakers increases with higher levels of education.

In Macedonia, students most frequently realize direct apology strategies through several conventional linguistic forms. These include *explicit performative forms* (*mk* Се извинувам/I apologise; Сакам да се извинам/I would like to apologise; Би сакал/а да се извинам/I would like to apologise; Пардон/Pardon me), *conventionalized short forms* (*mk* Извини/Sorry; Извини ме/Excuse me), *expressions of regret* (*mk* Жал ми е/I’m sorry; Жалам/I regret it), *expressions of explicit guilt or remorse* (*mk* Криво ми е/I feel bad about it; Многу ми е криво/I feel really bad; Жал ми е за тоа што го направив/I’m sorry for what I did; Знам дека згрешив/I know I was wrong; Згрешив/I was wrong), and *expressions requesting forgiveness* (*mk* Прости ми/Forgive me). In Turkish, students most frequently realize direct apology strategies through *explicit performative forms* (*tr* Özür dilerim/I apologize, I’m sorry; Özür dilemek istiyorum/I would like to apologize; Pardon/Pardon me), *conventionalized short forms* (*tr* Affedersin/Sorry; Kusura bakma/Excuse me), *expressions of regret* (*tr* Üzgünüm/I’m sorry; Pişmanım/I regret it; Üzüldüm/I regret it; Keşke olmasaydı/I wish it hadn’t happened), *expressions of explicit guilt or remorse* (*tr* Mahcubum/I feel embarrassed; Suçluyum/I feel guilty; Kendimi suçlu hissediyorum/I feel guilty; Benim hatam/It is my fault; Yanlış yaptım/I was wrong; Yanlış yaptığımı biliyorum/I know I was wrong; Yaptığım için üzgünüm/I’m sorry for what I did), and *expressions requesting forgiveness* (*tr* Beni affet/Forgive me; Bağışla/Forgive me).

Direct apology strategies in both Macedonian and Turkish can be modified and intensified. In both languages, there is a tendency for direct apologies to be internally modified, resulting in an intensification of the apology. Intensification is a linguistic and pragmatic device through which the speaker strengthens their expression of apology to emphasize sincerity, show greater empathy and responsibility, or increase support for the affected listener. This can be achieved through the use of adverbs (e.g., *mk* навистина/*tr* gerçekten/really; *mk* многу/*tr* çok/very) and politeness marker (e.g., *mk* те молам/*tr* lütfen/please), which strengthen the message and influence the listener's perception. Examples: *mk* Многу се извинувам/*tr* Çok özür dilerim/I'm very sorry; *mk* Многу се каам/*tr* Çok pişmanım/I'm very sorry; *mk* Многу ми е жал/*tr* Çok üzgünüm/I'm very sorry; *mk* Навистина ми е жал/*tr* Gerçekten üzgünüm/I'm really sorry; *mk* Навистина многу се извинувам/*tr* Gerçekten çok özür diliyorum/I'm really very sorry; *mk* Те молам прифати го моето извинување./*tr* Lütfen özürümü kabul et/Please accept my apologies; *mk* Те молам, прости ми/*tr* Lütfen beni affet/Please, forgive me.

Consequently, in both Macedonian and Turkish cultures, the person who apologizes establishes good relationships and gains trust, while the one who does not apologize creates the impression of arrogance and inability to build good relationships with others. Therefore, in social interaction, apology is valued as a virtuous behavior and represents one of the most studied topics in intercultural and cross-cultural studies worldwide, including Turkey and North Macedonia.

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